

From Stars to Sand: Finding the Roots of Tajik Worldview by Analyzing Nature Conceptual Metaphors as Used in National Literature

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Abstract:

This paper explores conceptual metaphor as a useful tool for the study of Tajik worldview attitudes. Specifically, salient conceptual metaphors gleaned from Tajik fictional stories and fairy tales are identified and found to coincide with the Tajik way of life. Awareness of Tajik use of these specific metaphors are key to producing a more accurate translation of cultural literature.

1.1 Introduction

The area of the world commonly known as Central Asia, consisting of the Southern-most former Soviet states, is one of the least researched and poorly understood in current anthropological studies. Of the research that has been done into the cultures of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, much of it is in Russian and remains inaccessible to non-Russian speaking linguists and anthropologists. This is unfortunate, as the cultures of Central Asia represent a fascinating conflation of ancient religion, Zoroastrianism, Islam, communist ideology, traditional values, and the product and progress orientation of the West. Truly within Central Asia there is a rich field for linguistic and anthropological research. The present papers aims to examine one facet of the worldview of the Tajik-speaking peoples of this area of the world, that of their view of nature. Tajik culture is a fruitful choice since Tajikistan, of all the Central Asian former Soviet states, has retained the most of its traditional values and outlook. No doubt this is due its relative poverty and remote geographic location.

Our research has drawn upon academic papers written by Western authors, popular books describing Tajikistan, anthropological papers authored by Tajiks, translated works of realistic, Soviet-era fiction, translated myths and fairytales, and personal experience.¹ Because Central Asia shares many common cultural features (this in spite of different ethnic identities), we have also examined some works on surrounding cultures such as Uzbek and Kazakh. The Tajik language, essentially a dialect of Persian, shares a common history with Farsi in Persia and Dari in Afghanistan. For this reason we have also drawn upon some Persian literature which Tajiks consider to be part of their literary history. We employ the model of conceptual metaphor to arrive at an understanding of the Tajik worldview of nature.² As relatively little written material is available specifically for Tajikistan and as fieldwork is impractical at this time, our findings are understandably tentative. However we believe that conceptual metaphor provides accurate insights, which can in turn be built upon in future research. It is our hope that the present work will awake interest in this culturally multifaceted region of the world and be a catalyst for further anthropological and linguistic research.

1.2 Geographic, Linguistic, and Cultural Context

Before turning to our basic questions and hypothesis, a brief description of the geographic, cultural, and linguistic context of the Tajiks will be helpful. The current geographic borders of Tajikistan were carved out by Soviet planners intentionally to divide the ethnic identities between political boundaries; the goal was to prevent nationalism from developing. Today this means that the historically significant Tajik cities of Samarqand and Bukhara are within Uzbekistan, and many Tajiks still live in these regions. Tajik people also

¹ See Works Consulted page.

² See Appendix for a description of the conceptual metaphor research model.

populate Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and far Western China. Samarqand and Bukhara are located in the fertile Zarafshon, while rugged Tajikistan is approximately ninety-five percent mountainous. It has well deserved the name "The Roof of the World." The highest mountain peaks are a source of national pride, but are seldom visited by the majority of the population which lives in the more fertile valleys. The capital city, Dushanbe, is bordered by mountain ranges and home to about one million people. The rest of Tajikistan's population, five million at the last reliable census in 1989 but probably closer to seven million at this point, lives in smaller villages and remote locations (Atkin 1997:197). In spite of rugged conditions, all manner of fruits and vegetables have been grown historically in Tajikistan. During the Soviet era, much of the lower lands of Tajikistan were given over to less successful cotton production, and this continues to be the norm today. The highest rainfall is in spring and fall. Winters are cold with high snowfall in the higher mountain areas. Summers in the valleys are quite hot, with temperatures regularly exceeding 105 degrees Fahrenheit. The typical pastoral scene is of a herd of sheep and goats hugging mountainsides, attended by a few shepherds. The typical agricultural scene of fruit trees and grapevines in a private garden is still common, even near to and within the capital city.

Besides its status as poorest, smallest, and least developed of the Central Asian countries, Tajikistan is also unique for speaking a non-Turkic language. Tajik is of the Indo-European language family and is closely related to Persian. Speakers of Farsi in Iran, Dari in Afghanistan, and Tajik in Tajikistan are mutually intelligible. Originally Tajik was also written in the Arabic script, but today it is written in Cyrillic. There is an initiative in the educational system to begin teaching the Arabic script to children in public schools, as a part of increasing national identity and also to make the national epics and histories, written only in Arabic script, accessible once again.

As mentioned above, Tajik culture is a product of various influences; these influences have been applied over a long and complex history. Tajiks are ethnically Persian and have been living in this region for at least 2,500 years, since the earliest recorded history of the area (Atkin 1997: 206). In contrast to surrounding Turkish people groups that arrived in later years, the Tajiks were a sedentary people. Certainly the history of religion in this area plays the most significant role in the Tajik worldview of nature. Prior to the introduction of Zoroastrianism, the Aryan religion was dominant in this part of the world. Notably, Aryan religion was, "the religion of people living close to nature, both reveling in and afraid of it: struck by its life-giving goodness and yet afraid of its life-destroying cruelty." (1983: 177). Though its affects are not entirely clear, it seems that Aryanism must have had some influence on Zoroastrianism, since the latter is typically considered to be one of the most ecological of world religions (Clark 1998:12) The cult of Mithras, a Persian savior God, was also popular in this part of the world and may have influenced Zoroastrianism with its fire rituals (1983: 178). Zoroastrianism, a moralistic monotheistic religion, is notable for the high regard it has for the elements of the earth; because the world was created by god, matter is not evil. The elements of the earth (stone/metal, water, earth, plants, cattle, humanity and fire) are so sacred that they cannot be polluted by burying or cremating bodies; instead the bodies of the dead are exposed in towers to be devoured by the vultures (1983: 281). In the eighth century Islam was introduced to Central Asia and quickly spread and became the dominant religion, though not in its purest form; it was combined with elements of Zoroastrianism that continue to be practiced among Tajiks today. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Russian colonization increased until the time of the Bolshevik revolution, when Central Asia entered seventy years of communism that attempted to flatten religious and traditional beliefs. Today, approximately fifteen years after the fall of communism and independence, Tajikistan is finding its feet as an independent nation, while still firmly rooted in its traditional outlook.

1.3 Questions and Hypothesis

We approached our study of the Tajik worldview of nature with a number of questions in mind: What falls within the definition of “nature”? Is the Tajik attitude towards nature positive or negative? Ambivalent or neutral? Romantic or practical? In what ways do they use nature and how do they interact with it? Are there spiritual or religious aspects associated with nature? Because of prior knowledge regarding Tajik poetry and experience from living among the people, we expected to find a somewhat romanticized view of nature, particularly associated with mountains, the topography that typifies this region of Central Asia. The sometimes harsh conditions of the environment suggest that there may also be negative associations with nature, while the experience of most Tajiks in agricultural settings suggests a practical view. Romantic, fearful, and practical do not usually co-exist, yet each could be surmised from the geographic, linguistic, and cultural contexts of the Tajik people. Examining their conceptual metaphors will shed light on this question and also provide guidance for future translation work in this area of the world.

2. Metaphors with the Sun, Light and Fire

Unsurprisingly in a region where fire rituals have a long history and where the burning of incense and votive candles is still common, metaphors of the sun, light and fire are prevalent among Tajik people. Generally they have a positive association, although some strong, negative emotions, such as anger, are associated with heat. We will first examine metaphors concerning the sun and light together.

2.1 Metaphors of Beauty

In descriptions of beauty, participial verbs such as ‘shining’ are often used in Tajik fairytales. All of the following examples are taken from *The Sandalwood Box*, a collection of traditional Tajik fairytales. Feminine beauty is often described in this way:

- 1) ...he raised his eyes to Farishta-moh’s shining countenance (*Sandalwood* 1971:91).

Often eyes are also described with words like ‘shine’:

- 2) Suddenly a little door opened out of the stomach of the gold cow and a slim young girl, with big, shining eyes set in a pale face, slipped out (*Ibid* 63-64).
- 3) Immediately afterwards they could all see a pale, thin girl with shining eyes standing before the Padishah (*Ibid* 76).

The loss of beauty is sometimes also described as the loss of light:

- 4) Eraj grew pale, a great depression settled on him and his beautiful dark eyes grew dim (*Ibid* 100).

The light in a person’s face can have an affect on observers and surroundings consonant with that of the sun:

- 5) The Padishah was dazzled by her beauty when he at last beheld her (*Ibid* 176).
- 6) One day the Padishah was hunting in a mountain valley when he saw, far off, a young man of extraordinary beauty, whose countenance illumined everything around him (*Ibid* 119).

The last example comes close to a fantastical element of fairytales where the metaphor for beauty crosses over into the physical realm. Instead of a face that is metaphorically shining or brilliant, a woman or man will have a face of such beauty that it actually emits light. This can be strongly emphasized in descriptions of feminine beauty. In two stories, a woman’s

face is light-emitting to the point that she illuminates a city during the night. In the first story, two friends arrive in a city and are shocked to discover that half of the city is lit up at night. When they inquire of an old woman for an explanation of this phenomenon, she tells them,

- 7)...the light you saw in the night is the reflected glory of the beauty of Farishtamoh. That part of the town where she turns her face as she sleeps is light, and all who see this light fall in love with the beautiful girl (Ibid 81).³

In a second story, a young man is surprised to see two moons in the night sky over a certain city. One moon is bright and the other pale. Again, inquiring of an inhabitant of the city, the young man learns that,

- 8) The paler one is the real moon, and the bright one is merely the reflection of the face of beautiful Robia with the forty feet long hair...Her face glows so brightly that wherever she passes by it is suddenly as light as day (Ibid 160).

Unsurprisingly, this young man is also fated to see the light of the face of Robia and fall in love with her.

All of these examples may lead us to the conclusion that Tajiks, at least in their telling of fairytales, have the conceptual metaphor that BEAUTY IS THE SUN. The references to moon and stars as well mean that we must broaden this metaphor to something more general: BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES. It could be possible to construe the metaphor even more broadly to BEAUTY IS LIGHT, however this ignores the sometimes explicit references made to sun or moon or stars. In addition the adjectives and verbs used to describe human physical beauty most frequently correlate to adjectives and verbs used for the sun, moon, and stars. The fact that this occurs in descriptions of humans and not landscape or animals signals that we should narrow the conceptual metaphor somewhat to HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES. The source domain is that of heavenly bodies and the target domain is human physical beauty, both masculine and feminine. The mappings between the two domains are fairly simple:

human face → face of sun or moon
eyes → stars
manifestation of beauty → physical light
affect on others → dazzled by light
affect on surroundings → illumination

Of course not all of the aspects of heavenly bodies are present in the conceptual metaphor. The size of the sun, moon, and stars is a hidden aspect, as well as great distance from the earth (although some sense of distance or loftiness may be retained in the entailments). The rising and setting of the sun and moon are other aspects that are not usually manifested, although in the tale of Robia with the Forty-Foot Hair, the beautiful maiden Robia does make regular appearances and withdrawals, much like the moon.

It is interesting to consider what entailments are implied by the conceptual metaphor HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES. To some extent, it conjures the idea of distance or inaccessibility. This is evident in the stories where the beautiful maiden with the shining face rejects suitor after suitor; she is not easy to obtain. Another entailment is power in the sense of an ability to overwhelm the senses. Those who witness the beauty of people so described are struck by their appearance, and if it is a young man beholding a woman, he invariably falls in love. HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES also

³ The name Farishta-moh means "Angel Moon" in Tajik.

implies uniqueness. There is only one sun and one moon. In the same way the heroes and heroines of these stories are uniquely beautiful. There is even sometimes a sense of the beauty of another nourishing or providing for those who surround that individual. In the story of Farishta-Moh, the inhabitants of the city can work and carry out daily tasks by the light of Farishta-Moh's face. In Robia with the Forty-Foot Hair, the people of the city wait in order to behold the glory of Robia's face as she walks through the streets. When she does not appear for several weeks, the people become sad and miss the manifestation of their local beautiful maiden. In general, the HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES conceptual metaphor carries with it powerful and positive entailments.

The examples of women whose faces actually light up their surroundings is a case of mythical reification of metaphor. Zoltan Kovesces describes how conceptual metaphors can "turn into social-physical reality" (Kovesces 2005:164). In Tajik fairytales we have an example of the source domain transforming into a physical reality. Beauty is conceptualized as the sun, and the conceptualization is realized by a woman whose face actually emits light, providing people with the benefits usually provided by the sun. In the Robia story, the light of the woman's face actually even the light of the moon. Here the reification is to such an extent that the source domain is eclipsed by the physical realization of its attribute in the target domain.

2.2 Metaphors of Emotion

While heavenly bodies are specifically used for physical depictions, metaphors of fire, heat, and flames frequently correlate with emotions and specifically with anger. A few examples follow from The Sandalwood Box:

- 7) When the Padishah's first three wives saw these beautiful children they were devoured by flames of hatred and jealousy against the young wife (Sandalwood 1971:118).
- 8) The young man inwardly boiled with rage (Ibid 184).
- 9) Hot anger flooded through him (Ibid 139).

The last two examples include elements of anger as liquid, with the verbs 'boil' and 'flood.' Examples of anger and heat or flame metaphors also occur in other fiction work besides fairytales:

- 10) Her eyes blazed with anger...face flushed, eyes flashing angrily (Aini 1983: 46).
- 11) I was burning with anger (Ibid 69).
- 12) One of the boys said hotly, "Why are you asking him a question like that?" (Ibid 83).
- 13) Mukhammadmurad was breathing harshly in his seething rage (Mukhammadiev 1983:130).

These metaphors might lead us to conclude that the conceptual metaphor exists ANGER IS FIRE. Yet further examples in the texts show that flame and heat can be associated with other emotions as well. In one of the fairy tales, a young man, Shirak, tries to incite his fellow slaves into revolting against their cruel master:

- 14) "Let us do battle with this Dev!" cried Shirak full of fire to the slaves in the underground cellar. "We *will* conquer them!" (Sandalwood 1971:150).

Here fire is associated with intense passion and will to act. In another tale a young man encounters an older man in a bread shop. Unbeknownst to him, this older man is actually his father who was separated from his son at birth. The young man observes that:

15) This man always regarded him with a burning glance (Ibid 61-62).

Here flames are related to longing and probably also sadness. Something similar is probably happening with the description of a captured slave who encounters her betrothed, and then again with the affect of the young woman on the man:

16) And at once a pale face with liquid, burning eyes was pressed against the barred window (Ibid 149).

17) The girl's tearful, imploring gaze burned in his heart (Ibid 150).

The familiar verb 'shining' occurs again with intense emotion in the story of Farishta-Moh:

18) At this moment the bright rays of the rising sun fell on Farishta-moh's face, which was shining with excitement (Ibid 90).

These other examples suggest that the conceptual metaphor must be broadened from ANGER IS FIRE to INTENSE EMOTION IS FIRE.

The mappings of this conceptual metaphor are not immediately evident, but we suggest the following:

circumstances that cause the emotion → igniting of the fire
experience of the emotion → flames
physical manifestation of the emotion → increased flames
effect on others → burning
effect on experiencer of the emotion → burning
intensity of emotion → intensity of the fire

The entailments that follow the conceptual metaphor INTENSE EMOTION IS FIRE are regarding the power of and lack of control over fire. The strongest expressions of anger and the expressions with a direct reference to fire are frequently those that precede action, as in Shirak, who "full of fire" incites his fellow slaves into revolting against their master, or the wives of the Padishah who are "consumed with flames of jealousy and hatred" and subsequently steal the newborn children of their husband. The fire metaphor chiefly captures the intensity and power of passionate emotions.

The preceding conceptual metaphors HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES and INTENSE EMOTION IS FIRE are quite evident in the texts that we examined. There were, in addition, some uses of the sun, light, and fire which do not exactly fit into the conceptual metaphors, but which nonetheless shed light on the Tajik perception of the sun and fire in general. In one of the fairytales from The Sandalwood Box, a dying father is giving his last words of instruction to his son; he tells him:

19) I shall soon be gone, but do not neglect the work that I have started—do not extinguish the light that still burns brightly—do honest work; be good and just (Sandalwood 1971:187).

This links fire and flames with moral actions and possibly also with life. Several Soviet-era authors do the same:

20) And so he faded slowly, like the dying embers of a fire" (Aini 1983: 42).

21) There were the crystal clear springs that had quenched his thirst, but not the flame that burned bright in his youthful heart (Hadi-Zade 1983:165).

In example 20, Sadriddin Aini also links fire to human life. In example 21, flame is linked to life and also to youthful vigor. There are a few examples in the fairytales where the sun is personified or where it provides symbolic illumination. In the first example, a human slave observes as the sun rises from bathing in a mountain lake:

- 22) A moment later the slave saw the sparkling, beaming sun rise up out of the lake. It mounted higher and higher, sending its dazzling rays down to earth until the entire landscape round about was ablaze with warmth and golden light (Sandalwood 1971:55).

In the second example the sun is not quite personified, yet is certainly significant to the storyline. The setting is a dark room where a boy, Musaffar, has been kept for the whole of his short life, studying books and never seeing the outside or the light of the sun:

- 23) One fine day when the sun was shining like fire in the heavens, the tutor removed a brick from the domed roof of the house where Musaffar lived and did his lessons. A sudden shaft of light lit up the dark chamber. Musaffar was dazzled by this bright sunlight. He jumped off his bed and tried to capture the golden beam with his hands (Ibid 26).

On a few occasions, light is also linked to happiness:

- 24) Akhmadbek's good mood vanished. A dark cloud enveloped his soul (Mukhammadiev 1983:117).
25) My humble shelter is filled with rays of joy (Hadi-Zade 1983:161).

In Zoroastrian beliefs, fire is the manifestation of the sun upon the earth, and among the seven essential elements, fire and the sun are not divided (Clark 1998:12). Because of the persisting and pervading affects of Zoroastrianism in Central Asia, it is not untenable to link the sun and fire. For this reason the conceptual metaphors HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES and INTENSE EMOTION IS FIRE can both contribute towards an understanding of the Tajik view of the sun and fire taken together.⁴ The associations suggest that the sun is viewed both as intensely beautiful and intensely powerful. This correlates with the veneration and awe that is due to the sun in Zoroastrian belief and with folk customs that are still practiced in Tajikistan and surrounding areas. Ravsan quotes an old female soothsayer in his article on Tajik customs, "We use fire; fire is a powerful thing, it cleanses a person's surroundings of calamity" (Ravsan 2001:300). The association of fire with anger suggest the power and force of the sun, which at times is not controllable. The positive associations with fire, especially on occasion with moral strength, suggest the positive nature of the sun. It is to be held in awe and reverence by humans, but is essentially a positive force in human experience.

3. Plants

In the texts, it is hard to determine to what extent Tajiks use plants as metaphors. A few possibilities will be explored here, but before continuing, we must understand the deep love and appreciation Tajiks have for their natural surroundings. This evident in the words of Timur Zulfikarov "How I love this mountain pass. I know and love every rock, every tree, and every animal here. Living and obscure" (Zulfikarov 1983:229)

As members of an agriculturalist society, Tajiks highly value gardens, and orchards and farming references signal this. Stories often mention various crops: cotton, sorghum,

⁴ For ease of discussion, "the sun" will be used alone instead of both "the sun and fire" in the remainder of the article.

mulberries, grapes, pumpkins, wheat, melons and quince. References are often made to wild plants: poppies, tulips and mushrooms; and trees: juniper, pine, quince, plane, apricot, plum, apple, elm, Chinese elm, poplar, white willow. Tajik authors often refer to plants casually not just with a generic word, but with its specific name. Thus, it is not just a tree, but a *mulberry* tree. Not only does this practice indicate both a sensitivity to, and thorough knowledge of, nature, but it also suggests the basic level PLANT (or at least TREE) is higher on the spectrum than American English PLANT/TREE.

While not thoroughly used as a metaphor, the notion that PLANTS ARE LIFE emerges from the stories. Often stories contrast gardens with deserts, and flowering pasturelands with sand dunes. In one story, it is only in the flowering meadow that something good happens to the character: "In the meantime the old woman had crossed a high mountain and a waterless desert . . . she was walking through a large flowering meadow . . ." (Sandlewood 1971:118). Where there are plants, there is prosperous life.

- 26) "An apricot stone. You must plant it and after a mere forty days it will have grown into a large tree . . . And any old man, be he ever so frail, will grow young and vigorous again if he eats of this fruit." (Ibid 86).
- 27) "Tender green wheat and barley shoots blanketed the earth." (Ibid 17)
- 28) "the garden which just the day before had been a joy to behold" (Ibid 20)

This concept is helpful for understanding the entailments of other metaphors which make use of the plant model, and how they fit into the overall cognitive image of the domestic and natural landscape in the Tajik mind.

Many stories featured the metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS. Note the following examples:

- 29) "they at once turned into three tall poplar trees." (Ibid 136).
- 30) "He seemed to grow taller and taller until his head almost touched the sky." (Aini 1983:35)
- 31) "Man is harder than stone and more fragile than a flower." (Atabaev 1983:188)
- 32) "the local people call [the juniper] the Bride of Kukhistan" (Ortykov 1983:208)
- 33) "Mother! You are like a withered tree. . . hold me in you branch-arms . . ."
- (Zulfikarov 1983:225)
- 34) "Take it all in while your branch is still brimming with sap." (Ibid 245)

Sentence (33) occurs in a story in which the author speaks of his mother as a dying elm tree. The last sentence, (34), was spoken to a young man by an old man, urging him to experience the delights of the harem now.

Growth, strength, fruits/flowers and especially life are highlighted aspects in this Tajik metaphor. Other factors, like seasonal harvests or products made from trees were hidden. The following mappings may be construed from the references in the story.

branches → arms
sap → youthful vigor
green → life
fruits/nuts → eyes
fruit → sexuality

Beauty is one of the inferences made from this metaphor and is often utilized in the description of women. We can see this especially in the mapping "fruits/nuts → eyes" as exemplified in the examples below.

- 35) "sweet narcissus, come to my eyes, love." (van den Berg 2001:7)

- 36) [describing young girls] "All three were beautiful as the full moon and slender as ms . . ." (Sandlewood 1971:32)
- 38) "The miller's daughter looked like the first tulip of spring in her bright red dress." (Rabiev 1983:200)
- 39) "two fresh plums among the quince fruit [referring to his love's eyes]" (Zulfikarov 1983:250)
- 40) "The willowy harem dancers . . ." (Ibid 238)

An explanation needs to be provided for the last mapping listed above. A few times, it was noted how fruit was used to allude to a young person's sexual state. In the story, *Musaffar and His Horse*, (Sandwood 1971:32), three daughters present melons in differing states of ripeness to represent their own different states of sexual maturity. The overly ripe melon represented the oldest daughter, a hint that her father needed to find a husband soon. The under-ripe melon represented the youngest daughter, not yet ready for marriage, but still aware of the impending fact. A second allusion occurred when the main character (the young boy spoken to in (34)) was now no longer a virgin: "But the fallen fruit cannot be put back upon the cool, slippery, autumn branches . . ." (Zulfikarov 1983:247).

There seems to be a deep cultural connection between quince tree/orchards and sexuality. In Timur Zulfikarov's story "Hodja Nasreddin's Dreams of Quince" the boy dreams of quince trees, and interprets these dreams as signs of his coming of age, quoting a sheik "when does one reach manhood? . . . passionate dreams at night" (Ibid 227). The quince metaphor in this story is rather obtuse, leading me to conclude that the author simply referenced a common Tajik cultural model.

Because this metaphor draws upon correlation between agriculture and desert, mapping green as a sign of life, a particularly potent entailment emerges in the stories. This entailment is that life, evidenced by vigor, green and growth, is more valuable than inanimate things.

This entailment is blended with another cultural metaphor (not discussed in this paper, but equally culturally potent) that LIFE IS A STRUGGLE and illustrated in a fascinating story about a rock and a tree. The story starts with a juniper tree, which sprouts and starts to grow on the rock one day. The rock and the juniper tree struggle, the tree grasping for life, the rock trying to squeeze it to death. Harmony in this tension is reached when "'Alright,' [the rock] said to the Juniper, 'go ahead and live.'" (Ortykov 1983:208). This story is a clear allegory of the struggle of the Tajik people to eek out a living among the mountainous terrain of the Pamirs. This is made even more salient in the story, as the older people are quoted saying about the juniper "'Look here-that's how you have to struggle for life!'" (Ibid 209).

However, the story does not end here. As will be discussed later, the struggle for existence is broadened to include histosociological concepts. A "chairman" comes to build a road through the mountains. Despite the entreaties of his Tajik workmen to save what they considered beautiful, he takes an ax and chops down the tree. The rock, broken by the tree's fall, "was shedding tears of pity for the Juniper . . . Shocked by the crime committed by this human being with a heart of stone" (Ibid 211).

Below are the mappings made within this story.

Tajik people → juniper tree
Tajikistan → rock
agriculture → the tree growing roots
country on the crossroad of caravans/trade → tree provides travelers shade
Russian officials → "chairman"
Russian value of efficiency over beauty → chairman cuts the tree down
desertification of land due to agriculture mismanagement → pain the rock feels as evidenced by it crying

The last, wasting of land, as mapped onto the rock crying, may be stretching the allegory beyond what was intended. It is worth stating, though, that the fact the rock cried does betoken the deep connection Tajiks feel to their land and assume the land feels to them. In another story, the author says "I know that the rocks and trees love me, too" (Zulfikarov 1983:229)

4. Sand and Sand-storms

In the fourth metaphor, SAND IS A PREDATOR, there was a metonymical substitution of "(d/D)ev" for "sand-storm" because a dev, to the Tajik, is a very prototypical predator. It should be clarified, however, that this metonymy occurred in only two stories, both of which were characteristic fairy tales. The reason for the absence of this metonymy in the other authors may be because since they lived in the Soviet era, which emphasized realism. The metaphor SAND IS WATER did occur predominantly by one author, although it is interesting that embedded in all the water allusions, the "predator" idea still managed to creep out as he recounted the coming of a sand-storm "the animals ran home in terror, as if being chased by wild beasts" (Aini 1983: 18).

This dev/sand-storm, is a mythical monster and, as the sand-storm, acts as the predator which preys upon helpless caravans, villages, heroes and heroines. Note the following examples taken from the story "Shirak the Brave" in which a sand-storm is pictured as a Dev attacking a village.

- 41) "[the Dev] came crawling out of his den in the fortress" (Sandlewood 1971:145)
- 42) "the pitiless Dev pounced on his prey" (Ibid 146)
- 43) "the cruel dev had his sport with his captives" (Ibid 147)

Some hidden aspects of this metaphor are the seasonal variations of sand-storms and the cardinal points of their source. The mappings that are made by Tajik authors are listed below, and a few pertinent ones will be addressed in more detail.

deposits sand on ground → pounces
physical location is up → physical location is up
fast movement → flies
destroys villages → eats villages and people
noise of wind → roars, shouts
people get lost in it → carries off prey
a force → moves earth
brings drought → brings death
cannot be stopped → cannot be deterred from prey
occur in desert → possible to kill with huge amounts of water

The dev's capacity to fly or move quickly at great heights is mapped to the type of movement of a sand storm. Also, various allusions are drawn between the sound of a sand-storm and the predator/dev's cry.

- 44) "[the Dev] flew like the wind to the edge of the desert" (Ibid 113)
- 45) "he whirled up a sand-spout" (Ibid 146)
- 46) "[the Dev] roared like a wild beast" (Ibid 114)
- 47) "A few days later, toward evening, the wind was howling and there was a rumble of thunder . . . 'The Dev is coming; hide as fast as you can!'" (Ibid 133)

Interestingly, like a predator carrying off prey, there is always an allusion to the sand-storm/dev's ability to kidnap people. This idea of "separation/lost-from-home" may be alluding how sometimes sand-storms separate a person from companions as the sand whirls and cuts off visibility.

- 48) "how the Dev had destroyed it, devoured her parents and taken her prisoner," (Ibid 133)

One common malicious action by a dev is to somehow block off water, an allusion to how sand clogs the canals and produces drought. For little villages poised on the edge of a desert, cutting off the water supply means sure death.

- 49) "the blocked-up mountain-stream, their only source of life-giving water." (Ibid 147)

The destructive force of a sand-storm/dev is highlighted. While sand-storms have no literal will of their own, the dev always exhibits intentional destructive action (11-13). An implication for this destructive force is inevitability, that nothing anybody can do will prevent the sand-storm from coming and destroying (see (13) below).

- 50) "[the deve was] barring the way" (Ibid 111)
51) "bury kingdoms under the desert sands" (Ibid 112)
52) "drove dust and sand through the desert in violent gusts of wind" (Ibid 144).
53) "This Dev would conjure up dreadful sand-storms" (Ibid 144)
54) "If the cruel Dev is determined to destroy us . . . we cannot escape him" (Ibid 129)

Two major entailments may be inferred from this metaphor: dependency on water and dependency on agriculture. The latter has already been presented in the previous section, but should not be forgotten when considering this metaphor. Because of this dependency on agriculture and water, sand, then is an enemy. To a Tajik, then, this fits broader cultural model for existence, that LIFE IS A STRUGGLE.

To better understand the idea that SAND IS AN ENEMY, we have to understand the placement of Tajikistan in terms of climactic zones. Western Tajikistan, where most of our stories used for this research originated, hovers on the edge of a zone shift between the high, glacier-fed mountains of Tajikistan and the low-lying desert of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. The Korakum desert buttresses up to western Tajikistan, near its capital Dushanbe. As an example of the dramatic difference of environment features, it is helpful to know that from Dushanbe, Tajikistan's capital on the western edge of the country, due west about 300 miles into Uzbekistan, the number of dust storms per year increases from less than five to over fifty (Kharin, 2002).

Understanding how all these metaphors, SAND IS A PREDATOR, PEOPLE ARE PLANTS, and LIFE IS A STRUGGLE, interrelate will help us grasp the broader Tajik gestalt image of what it means to live. The allegory "Shirak the Brave" best exemplifies this. In this story, the Dev, a great sand-storm, destroys a village and carries off the hero and heroine to work as slaves in the desert fortress. This fortress is filled with all sorts of plants and flowers, all made of precious stones and metals. It is all very beautiful, however, nothing is alive, as one fellow prisoner points out to the hero: "Hey, you stupid fellow, what's the use of admiring fruit that you can't bite into?" (Sandlewood 1971:148).

The hero, with communal help from fellow slaves, eventually overcomes the dev by flooding the fortress with water, then escaping back home, where his friends and family had

survived by fleeing up into the mountains. They reunite, then "lived long and happy lives in new palaces and in their flourishing gardens" (Ibid 154).

Reading carefully and by placing the story within its historical context, the following mappings between actual historical facts and story components can be drawn.

coming of communism → coming of the dev
desertification under communism → drought caused by the dev
drying up of rivers (due to overly aggressive irrigation/poor water management)
 blocking of mountain stream
urbanization (sometimes forced) → removal to fortress
promised prosperity → jewels in fortress but no real food
forced labor → slavery to dev
influx of ethnic Russians → Padishah's guards and servants
foreign invader → enemy
resistance movements took refuge in mountains → remnants of village hid in mountains
overthrow of dev with flood of water → grassroots uprising
return and reunion with friends in mountains → unification of Tajikistan gardens → utopia after fall of Communism

The interesting feature about this story was that it was written in 1971, *before* the fall of Communism, which makes the latter three mappings actually only idealized reality. The inference is that once the canals are unclogged, once Communism removed, once the struggle is won, utopia will descend in the form of gardens, a Tajik nation and the good life. Benefits of Communism, such as socioeconomic stability and cheap coal and food, are hidden aspects which the people of Tajikistan may have done well to consider when they gained their independence in 1991.

5. Metaphors and Other Linguistic Features with Water and Earth

Conceptual metaphors concerning the sun, sand, and plants are prevalent and obvious, but metaphors also occur with other elements of nature, including water, air, and earth. They are not as frequent, but those that we discovered in our research do shed light on Tajik worldviews. They will be briefly examined in the following section.

5.1 Linguistic Features of Water

In the Sandalwood Box, water is used occasionally in descriptions:

- 55) Curls caressed their faces like running water-drops (Sandalwood 1971:32).
- 56) The whole landscape was bathed in the silvery radiance of the moon (Ibid 54).

In example (55), a water simile is used in a description of three beautiful sisters, while in (56), a conceptual metaphor is used to describe natural beauty. Water is personified in both fairytales and, notably, in the more literal, realistic fiction work; the adjectival participle "life-giving" often occurs:

- 57) They sat weeping in the fields with their ruined young crops, lamenting the disaster that had befallen them; the disappearance of the two young people and the blocked up mountain-stream, their only source of life-giving water (Ibid 148).
- 58) Life-giving water flowed once more, bringing prosperity to the environs (Aini 1983:42).

Rivers are directly personified, both as beloved and as enemy. In one story, a man is far from his home city, Bukhara, and he reflects how the river there is calling to him:

- 59) Splashing and sparkling, the Mulien calls me home. She whom I love calls me home (Hadi-Zade 1983:169).

The same river is used as a point of comparison later:

- 60) Pure, calm, and fresh as the crystal clear water of the Mulien (Ibid 169).

Yet in another story, a swollen river at flood time is personified as an enemy read to destroy human life:

- 61) The water roared as if indignant that the teacher had escaped its icy embrace alive (Rabiev 1983:201).

Adjectives that occur frequently with water include “pure” and “crystal”:

- 62) Be as pure, my son, as these trout from the crystal stream. Live among pure people as the trout live in the pure waters...crystal waters (Zulfikarov 1983:229-230).

5.2 Earth and Mountains

Similar references to earth and mountains (linked together metonymically) are less frequent, but are even more strongly personified where they occur. This happens more in the realistic short-stories. In a story by Rakhim Jalil, a child observes how his father, a potter, works with clay on his wheel:

- 63) Clay would literally come to life in his father’s hands, and, as if sensing his tender love, would obediently shape itself into whatever he wished (Jalil 1983:212).

In another description (one which ties together several other conceptual metaphors, including metaphors having to do with fire and heart as container), the scenery in the open steppe is said to fill the heart of the observer, as though it were a liquid substance that filled the container of his heart:

- 64) He sat motionless for a long time, filled with the quiet and spaciousness of the steppe, at one with nature, pouring the riotous joy that seized his soul into the flaming verses that poured unbidden from his subconscious and would not be subdued by his reason (Hadi-Zade 1983:169).

Mountains are a dominating feature of Tajik topography, and not surprisingly in also plays a role in individual conceptions of self:

- 65) This mountain pass is my cradle, my crib, my life-source...(Zulfikarov 1983:229).

All of these descriptions are thus far positive, but there are also more negative uses of mountains and earth. From an interview by Gulnara Abikeyeva with Tajik film director Bakhtiyar Khudoinazarov, we get this insightful quote about human experience:

- 66) This rest makes him think deeply—because another struggle, with mountains, with deserts, and himself, lies ahead of him.

Another evidence of the sometimes threatening view of mountains is that in fairytale after fairytale, it is in the mountains that the fearsome *devs* live and to the mountains that the heroes (or heroines) must go to fight their battles and win their beautiful, clever maidens. Mountains are both familiar and fearsome.

Admittedly none of these examples regarding water and earth constitute clear evidence of conceptual metaphor, but it is still not possible to disregard them. They obviously communicate something about the way in which these elements are regarded, and they correspond noticeably with the view of the sun: water and earth are both beautiful and threatening. Again, this correlates with Zoroastrian beliefs. Like the sun and its earthly counterpart, fire, water is sacred in Zoroastrianism and must be revered and respected. Above all, water is seen as pure. In Tajikistan, an adjective that is used to describe a person of exceptional moral character is *sof* 'clear'. More typically used to speak of clear water or clear weather, when used of a person it means that the person in question is pure and honest. The respect that is given to mountains and earth makes one think of the reverence that moved the Zoroastrians to not bury their dead, lest they sully the ground.

6. Conclusion

This paper has analyzed some of the more salient nature metaphors as they appear in fictional stories and fairy tales. The natural phenomenon of light emanating from the sun, moon and stars is reflected in the metaphor HUMAN PHYSICAL BEAUTY IS HEAVENLY BODIES, and to the related metaphor INTENSE EMOTION IS FIRE. Clearly, the importance of this conceptual metaphor is greatly increased by the influences of Zoroastrianism and its emphasis on the element of fire.

Mountains pose a prominent factor in Tajik life. Water also is especially important for agriculture and the maintenance of orchards and vineyard. While indeed, these geographical features were often mentioned, no one clear metaphor could be constructed from the stories. However, it is clear that mountains signify both beauty and danger in the Tajik mind. Furthermore, the aqueous properties, clearness and life-sustaining, are also commonly highlighted in the texts.

In the context of agriculture and water, plants pose a significant aspect in Tajik life and literature. People are often described to be like plants, or even metaphorized to be plants. The existence of life is connected to plants, as also the presence of water. Conversely, these ideas shine in stark contrast to the darker images surrounding sand and sand-storm metaphors. Sand is a prominent feature, especially since Tajikistan borders a vast desert to the west. Sand-storms cause great amounts of destruction to farmers, and are construed as predators. The mythical figure of the *dev*, who also is considered to live in the mountains, is used metonymically for a sand-storm. Thus, in summary, the inferences from agriculture are combined with the ideas of plants as life, people as living plants, need for water and light, and the mountainous geographical location, which produces a larger gestalt of the symbiotic relationship characterized by love and danger these people perceive between them and their natural surroundings.

Because of the paucity of material involved, we present these metaphors as only surface indicators of the much more fruitful fields of cognitive concepts below. Tajikistan has incorporated many cultures which add a rich spectrum to its literature. However, due to particular influences in some of these cultures, like Soviet realistic style writing and Islam, which dims expression of animistic beliefs, some of the rich metaphor heritage is no longer quite so prominent in the literature. Thus, it will be the necessity of future researchers to reach beyond published works to oral traditions, stories told by adults to other adults and grandparents to children. The fact that, despite Soviet induced literalness, authors cultivated some very poignant metaphors and allegories, should encourage any researcher with the power the strong heritage roots Tajiks still retain.

Appendix

As stated in our introduction, we use the conceptual metaphor theory for our research model. Conceptual metaphor is essentially the idea that abstract concepts are understood through physical terms. These physical perceptions of abstractions are formed from human bodily experience. Thus the conceptual metaphor MORE IS UP is derived from the physical experience of filling up a glass of water; as volume increases, the level of water rises. A slightly more complex, but very common, conceptual metaphor is LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Conceptual metaphor is composed of source domain and target domain, the first being the area of physical experience in terms of which the metaphor is expressed, and the second being the abstract concept that is finding expression in physical language. In the examples above, UP and JOURNEY are the source domain and MORE and LIFE are the target domain. The mappings of the metaphor are the corresponding features of the two domains. In the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor, we might get the following mappings:

death → end of journey
birth → beginning of journey
events in life → experiences along the path

Not every feature of the source domain is mapped over into the target domain; these are termed “hidden features”. Thus putting on one’s shoes to get ready for the trip is not typically mapped over to some experience in life, and neither is packing trail mix for the walk. Entailments are those inferences that can be made about life based upon the metaphor. From the concept of journey, we can assume that life is long, that it is going somewhere, and that it can be tiring. Entailments can be very useful in revealing underlying attitudes about the target domain.

Conceptual metaphors seem to have some cross-linguistic and cross-cultural manifestations, however it seems too much of a leap to be universal. Human experience has much in common across cultures, but it can also be drastically different. These different experiences result in differing attitudes, which are subsequently expressed in a variety of conceptual metaphors. Because of the way in which conceptual metaphor is tied in with culture, it can be a useful tool for the study of attitudes and worldview specific to a certain people.

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