

Sarbasto Surkhan: A Literary Reflection by Mengziyo Safarov

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Abstract: *The article presents preliminary analyses of the essay genre and Mengziyo Safarov's essay "Sarbasto Surxon." In Mengziyo Safarov's works, the themes of nature and humanity are dominant, with the relationship and conflict between humans and nature taking a central place.*

Keywords: *Essay, nature, human, emotion, philosophical, sarbasto, hidden, Surxon, artistic.*

Literature plays a vital role as a lofty manifestation of human thought, reflecting history, culture, and traditions. In this context, the essay genre holds a special place, as it presents a particular topic through the author's personal opinions and emotions. As is well known, the term *essay* (derived from the Latin word *exigo*, meaning "to weigh" or "to estimate") refers to a genre with a free structure that conveys personal reflections and viewpoints on diverse subjects and issues. In an essay, the author seeks to support their views with arguments, although these arguments are not necessarily required to be proven from a strictly scientific perspective. Essays can be philosophical, journalistic, literary-critical, historical-biographical, or purely belletristic in nature. In Uzbek literature, beautiful examples of the essay genre can be found in the works of P. Qodirov, O. Yoqubov, Sh. Xolmirzayev, O. Sharafiddinov, and X. Davron.

In Mengziyo Safarov's creative work, the essay genre occupies a prominent place. His essays such as *"Sarbasto Surxon," "Bobotog," "Ona Tuproq Qo'shig'i,"* and *"Payg'ambar Orol"* are well known to readers. Among them, the essay *"Sarbasto Surxon"* stands out as a work in which the author interprets the rich history, cultural heritage, and natural beauty of the Surxon oasis through an artistic lens. This essay is dedicated to the author's homeland – the Surxon region – and offers an extensive portrayal of its nature, cultural legacy, and historical significance. Through this piece, the author expresses his deep patriotism and invites the reader into the mysterious world of the oasis. The essay spans from ancient monuments of the Surxon region to its modern cultural development.

The work is structured in three parts:

- **Introduction** – The author shares his affection for the oasis, presenting general thoughts about its history and present condition.
- **Main part** – A detailed depiction is given of the Surxon region's nature, ancient landmarks, and the lifestyle of its people.
- **Conclusion** – The author expresses his loyalty to the region and offers his vision for its future development.

The word *"Sarbasto"* originates from Persian and literally means "tied, closed, hidden, secret." In this essay, the author imbues the term with a metaphorical meaning: *"Surxon with bound hands and feet."* Through this work, the writer not only expresses his personal pain (his father, Mulla Rahmonqul, was a victim of Stalinist repression), but also bears the collective sorrow of the people of the Surxon oasis. We have conditionally referred to the genre of the work as an essay. In essence, however, it is a lament — a cry of pain, grief, and protest from a talented writer whose heart was shattered by the ecological tragedies in the region, the helplessness of a nation that witnessed it, and the blind, authoritarian policies of Soviet-era leaders. It is often said: *"If you want to understand a writer's soul, first look at the place where they were born and raised."*

Indeed, family and surroundings leave an indelible mark on a writer's memory. They shape the themes, characters, and spiritual tone of the writer's works. For many, this native source becomes a lifelong wellspring of inspiration. In this sense, *Sarbasta Surxon* can be seen as a work that addresses a person's duty — to fellow humans, to society, to nature, to one's own history, to the spirit of the ancestors, and to the future. The essay calls upon the reader to value the history of their homeland and to cherish its cultural heritage. By portraying the unparalleled beauty and historical significance of the Surxon region in his unique literary style, the author encourages the reader to deeply reflect on this land. Moreover, the essay strengthens patriotic sentiment and inspires younger generations to know and respect their history.

Mengziyo Safarov — the devoted bard of the Surxon oasis, a true admirer of Mother Nature, a keen-hearted connoisseur of the region's rich history, and a sensitive soul — placed the themes of nature and humanity at the heart of his works. In his writing, the issues concerning the relationship between humans and the natural world are not only prevalent, but central.

Safarov never overlooked the mysteries of nature. He understood — perhaps more than anyone else — that the problems of nature are, in fact, human problems. As a humble citizen and modest son of the society in which we live and the oasis in which we were raised, he perceived the ecological issues of Surxon as deeply personal concerns.

What set him apart from others was his ability not only to feel this pain but to pour it onto the page. And he did so not superficially or wrapped in ornamented language, but with raw authenticity — capturing the truth of events and emotions just as they were. His unique quality lay in his empathy: he could not bear to see harm done to nature without feeling wounded himself. He suffered alongside it.

"In patriotism lies the love for one's homeland, in humanism — the love for life, and in selflessness — the thirst for labor," declared the writer, clearly signaling his core beliefs. These words were more than sentiments — they were the pulse of his soul, the echo of his lifelong credo. Indeed, as our ancestors taught and as still echoes in our ears today: "*Homeland begins at the doorstep.*" This timeless truth remains a guiding commandment for us all.

Nature is the mother, and the human is the child — this expression, in both form and meaning, carries a deep and enduring truth, fully embodying a timeless wisdom. As the writer emphasizes, "*Nature always expects compassion from her child — the human,*" and this is indeed a natural expectation. So, what does this compassion from humans toward nature entail? It is a cry — a demand — for a wise and respectful attitude toward the environment. "*Otherwise, the ungrateful human will face the wrath of nature,*" warns the author, and this is a truth from which no one can escape.

Mengziyo Safarov's "*Sarbasta Surxon*" is not merely a literary piece — it is a significant work that teaches historical and cultural heritage, encouraging the reader to think deeply and reflect consciously. Through the author's vivid and heartfelt descriptions, the reader feels the uniqueness of the Surxon oasis and becomes immersed in its ancient monuments and natural beauty. This essay invites the reader to contemplation and can become an important step toward understanding both history and culture.

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