Mythologization and Demyfologization In the Tatar Poetry of the 1960–1980s

Landysh Robertovna Faezova¹
Nurfiya Marsova Yusupova²
Gulfia Rasilevna Gaynyllina³
Tagir Shamsegalievich Gilazov⁴
Aigul Raisova Gilmudtinova⁵

Kazan Federal University

Corresponding Author: Aigul Raisova Gilmudtinova
e-mail:kaiigel@mail.ru


Received Date: August 10, 2020
Accepted Date: August 18, 2020
Online Date: November 5, 2020

Publisher: Kare Publishing

© 2020 Applied Linguistics Research Journal
E-ISSN: 2651-2629

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of the features of mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 1980s against the background of a change in literary, aesthetic and sociocultural orienting points. It reveals the forms of mythologization and demythologization, the transformation of mythological images and plots in lyrical and lyric-epic works in terms of their functions, role and artistic value. The timeliness of the study is determined by insufficient coverage of studies of the phenomena of mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s–1980s. As part of the study, it is argued, that in the course of mythologization the Tatar literature an idea of national problems is formed; moreover, a new socio-philosophical concept, that combines the national idea, social and universal philosophy, is developed. Demythologization is aimed at criticizing the totalitarian regime, where the hero’s tragedy is associated with a social and political background. The fundamental approach of the research is the hermeneutic one, directing the receptive activity of the reader towards the analysis of the principles and techniques of the image, the determination of typological similarities and peculiarity of artistic searches, which coincide and have differences in different periods of oral culture and different literary genres. In this vein, features of mythologization and demythologization in Tatar poetry of the 1960s – 1980s are revealed.

Keywords: Tatar poetry, mythologization, demythologization, mythological images, mythological plots, structure.

1. Introduction

Tatar literature of the second half of the twentieth century is characterized by developments in social and conceptual thinking, shifts in literary and aesthetic thinking, as a transitional stage connected with the rejection of the former ideological and cultural standards. The processes of disclosing national identity are triggered at this stage of verbal art, on the one hand. After that, in Tatar works, the issues of national self-identification, national self-awareness come to the fore. The Tatar literature of the second half of the twentieth century is distinguished by the age of return in general to national sources. Innovation, on the other hand, is structured by an aggressive quest for new instruments and means of figurative expressiveness, enriching the literary work’s content and form, and enhancing symbolic thought. The Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 80s is a transitional stage in the history of oral culture. In the 1960s the denial of previous ideological and cultural guidelines, innovations in social and philosophical thought led to changes in literary and aesthetic thought. These innovations are characterized by the weakening of rigid ideological attitudes, which results in the humanization of the entire literary process. Traditionally, research into the origins of ideological extremism has concentrated on social, economic, and demographic variables that make individuals vulnerable to hostile attitudes towards outgroups.
However, in implicit cognition and data processing types, there is inadequate empirical work on individual differences that exacerbate the vulnerability of an individual to endorsing violence to defend an ideological cause or community (Zmigrod et al., 2019). Anyway, such transformations, on the one hand, enhance the process of identifying national identity, “growth of national consciousness, accentuation of national culture and originality” (Gilmudtina, Safiullina, et al., 2016), the reflection of “cultural and social differences of various nations and their national identity” (Gilmudtina, Biktemirov, et al., 2016). Following this, the problems of national self-identification, national identity or being and non-being come to the fore in Tatar poetic works.

On the other hand, innovations are structured by an active search for new methods and means of artistic expression, enriching the content and form of a work of fiction. This trend contributes to the activation of mythologizing and demythologization in an oral culture. Poets refer to the subjects of Turkic-Tatar mythology, mythological beliefs, use “updated, interpreted” myths or create neo-myths. In the Tatar poetry of this period, the use of mythological images and plots in the status of a symbol is observed, as in Russian literature, the myth acts “as a universal model for constructing symbols” (Wachtel, 1994; West, 1970; Yengsebay, 2020).

Certain studies of this issue on the material of the folklore of the Baraba Tatars were undertaken by V. V. Radlovand analyzed by (Sayfulina & Karabulatova, 2014). The main mechanisms for the use and transformation of mythological plots, folklore images in Tatar literature, the language of literary works, the dialogue of cultural traditions have been studied by Tatar scholars in one aspect or another (Kajumova et al., 2017; Mingazova et al., 2016; Motigullina et al., 2016). The problem of mythologism in Tatar literature of the given period has been highlighted by scholars (F Yusupov et al., 2019; Galimullina et al., 2019; Ibragimov et al., 2016). However, special studies on the problems of mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 1980s have not yet been conducted. In this paper, the indicated problems are analyzed in a broader literary and aesthetic context. The object of the research is the Tatar poetry of the 1960–1980s, in particular, the poetic works of I. Yuzeev, H. Tufan and Zulfat. The subject of the study is mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960-1980s.

1.1 Objective

In the light of a shift in literary, esthetic and sociocultural orientation points, the paper is devoted to the study of the characteristics of mythologization and demythologization in Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 1980s.

2. Methods

The basic approach of the study is the hermeneutic approach (Abrams & Harpham, 2011; Audi & Audi, 1999), which suggests that the reader, acquiring the diverse cultural values, enshrined in literature, finds his own place on their borders. It directs the reader’s receptive activity towards comprehending the principles and techniques of the image, artistic forms of opening up the reality, highlighting and understanding typological similarities and peculiarity of artistic trends, which coincide and have differences in different kinds of literature.

Thus, using the hermeneutic approach, we intend to penetrate into the essence of mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 1980s, to reveal the specifics of adaptation or transformation of mythological images and plots in the structure of poetic works.

3. Results and Discussion

The reflection of myth in literature, on the one hand, is characterized by a “play” of traditional mythological images and plots, on the other hand, by reconstructing the myth in accordance with the author’s idea and creating a new mythological reality. This new reality contains a “memory” (anamnesis) of an ancient myth, of the twilight movement of primitive consciousness. In the first case, the described events and characters lose their individuality and start to live as one of the repeating variants of the previously known pattern adopted in ancient legends.

In the second case, in his work the writer creates an imaginary reality according to the rules established by him, “the literary text represents the subjective picture of the world” (Nureeva et al., 2019). The idea of E. M. Meletinsky that mythologism is a characteristic phenomenon of the literature of the 20th century, “both as an artistic device and as a perception of the world behind it” (Meletinsky, 2014), and the well-known idea that literature is genetically connected with mythology through folklore, is confirmed by the Tatar material poetry of the 1960–80s. Under analysis are the texts “in which the complex interaction of the linguistic and cultural worldview of the ethnic group and individual author’s creative consciousness is being completed, and the artistic concepts are being modelled, due not only to the individual aesthetic worldview of the author but the collective memory of culture and its value priorities” (Nagumanova et al., 2017). Poets, going beyond the framework of traditional thinking, resort to the use of mythological subjects or to their transformation, to peculiar methods and means of depiction. Against the background of such transformations in the work
of I. Yuzeev, poetic works offering a mythological model of the world appear. His poems use mythological subjects genetically related to ancient pagan beliefs or characteristic of world mythology. For example, in his poems such as “The Three of us went on a long journey” (1965), “The Last Night” (1972), “It was cramped in the cage of the world...” (1980), “Meeting with Eternity” (1982) there is an increase of conditional imagery, peculiar to him, which is based on allegory, incorporating mythological motifs. The criteria of reality are measured against the background of universal and national moral values.

For example, in the poem ”The Three of us went on a long journey” (1965), beliefs associated with ornithomorphic mythology are used. The work, compositionally conceived as a synthesis of realistic, romantic and philosophical layers, integrates the mythological legend about cuckoo that counts years of human life. Since ancient times, the Tatar people have believed that the cuckoo counts the years of human life, and a man will live as many years as the bird has counted. In this regard, in the structure of the work, the cuckoo becomes an image warning a person of tragedies.

Through the romantic images of the spring and wind associated with the legend, I. Yuzeyev tells about the beauty and innocence of childhood, emphasizes that a person’s life begins as beautifully as the source of the spring. The image of a romantic song that sounded in childhood, expressing the course of being, reveals the idea of the unity of being and non-being. Thus, I. Yuzeev shows the complexity of being and human destiny. The mythological symbolism of numbers – repeating the numbers three, seven – strengthens the mentioned author’s position.

In the poem of I. Yuzeev “Meeting with Eternity” (1982), the mythological plot, underlying the work, is a myth, a legend about lost Atlantis written down by Plato. In the mythological story about a happy land – Atlantis – artistic conditionality turns into an effective means of a generalized embodiment of the worldview and a deep disclosure of the author’s position.

The island, as the main component of the chronotope, is sacralized and likened to a “sacred island” and constitutes the opposition “sacral / secular”: “We, Atlanteans, were a proud people, / We lived on the island of Atlantis, / Renouncing disputes and wars, / Won Freedom, sowed Joy, reaped Happiness. / The leader was the hero Atlant, his mind was the Earth, / the Strength was the ocean, feelings – the great sea... / “The kings are we, and the god are we, and the titan are we, / On this island, all Atlanteans are equal” (Zakirzyanov, 2014). Through the image of Atlantis, the poet builds an ideal model of life. The two worlds are connected by the Rainbow, which, from a symbolic perspective, is perceived as a reunion of real and unreal worlds. The main characters of the work Atlas and his son Icarus, other mythologemes—mythical Greek gods—are perceived as symbols, and serve the philosophical idea of the work. Thus, in the poem, the main conflict is reduced to the collision of Man and the Gods; from a subjective perspective, it is perceived as Good versus Evil. The eternity of the gods turns into a means of revealing eternity and forces of evil.

In the story-poem “Mountain of lovers” (1985-86) I. Yuzeyev refers to the plot of the legend of the Mysterious duck and the Mountain of lovers. The poem begins with an ancient legend used as an epigraph: “They say that in ancient times there was around, deep lake on Mountain of lovers. In spring, birds returned here, yearning for their native lands. Once a hunter shot a wild duck swimming with its ducklings on the lake, wanting to cook it, he put it in a cauldron hanging over a fire. The duck stewed for a day, two days, three days, but it could not get ready. On the seventh day, the mysterious duck flew out of the cauldron into the blue sky. Since that day, the beauty of Mountain of lovers faded away, and the lake dried up” (Vessev, 1985).

The mythological plot is the key to the interpretation of the work and the identification of the author’s position. The idea that the loss of pure love, abandoning the dream of spiritual, platonic love leads to the loss of harmony in life permeates the whole plot and is the core of the philosophy of love. The disappearance of a dream in a romantic concept is equivalent to the disappearance of being, which is symbolized in the text structure by the tragedy of Mountain of lovers. In this vein, Mountain of lovers becomes a sacred centre and reflects the author’s position. According to the romantic poet, a force capable of preserving the integrity of an individual’s soul is an ideal, divine love with sacrality and spiritual purity. Mountain of lovers, as the main component of the chronotope, is sacralized and likened to a “sacred mountain” and, in contrast to the earth, constitutes the opposition of “sacral/secular”.

The image of the duck, associated with a mythological plot, ensures the compositional integrity of the work. In mythology, it is believed that the duck created the earth, and is perceived as the spirit of the mountains. In world literature, the duck symbolizes family, happiness and loyalty. The mysterious duck in the structure of the text is interpreted as the biggest secret of Munira about love. Through parallelism, the magic duck—Munira, the image of the girl is perceived as a symbol of loyalty and spiritual, platonic love. She acts as a kind of ideal that preserves spiritual greatness and the purity of the soul. The scene of the return of Munira in the guise of a duck at the very end of the plot restores the mythological motive of rebirth. Thus, remaining true to her love, at the end of the work Munira herself turns into a symbol of pure love, an idea, a divine woman who has achieved the unity of body and soul, the embodiment of beauty and goodness.
Philosophically, this motive reminds of one of V. Solovyov’s doctrine of love (in particular, the doctrine of Sophia), imposing love by force, which turns the body and soul into a single whole.

In another vein, because of renovation processes in social, philosophical thought, a search for other possibilities for developing poetry starts. The activation of the Aesopian language is considered one of the main trends in the 1960s as a whole. All this contributes to the enrichment of mythological images and plots in Tatar poetry with new shades: on the one hand, informed opinion about ideology or reality is traceable through them, which indicates demythologization in Tatar poetry. Although the mythological component is retained in the content of the poems, mythological images make it possible to interpret the text in two ways.

A critical attitude to the Soviet system and government representatives, a perspective on everyday problems of life through the prism of the fate of the nation, the morality and traditions of the people lead to a deeper content; in works that recreate the social situation, the socio-political subtext is manifested. This phenomenon also affects the concept of the person, the status of the lyrical hero changes: it is a person who has his own opinion to everything, who is able to assess life, which seeks to find his place in it. The lyrical hero points to the imperfection of reality, its laws and being in general, begins a conversation about universal values.

Thus, in Zulfat’s poem “The Immortal Dastan” (1980), the mythological plot serves to reveal the author’s assessment of being and its moral laws in general. The poet himself forms his position at the very beginning of the poem as “Learn to think not the opposite, but to think anew!”

In the poem, the fairy tale— the legend of the tribe “Six barchans”—is the bearer of the fate of the Tatar people and thoughts about the present and future; a series of events is often interspersed with lyrical digressions and thoughts. Through a mythological plot, the poet constructs a model of being; a conditional device— the fusion of the past and the present— intertwines mythological being and reality. Through philosophical representation, the author tries to express an assessment and attitude to the laws of being and reality in which he lives and writes. Along with the theme of truth, the work is marked by the philosophy of cognition of oneself and being by the personality.

In the poem, a fairy tale is used as an ideal embodying the features of being that the poet wants to see. Reality consists of computers created by man, machines and wars that take place with the participation of man. Each chapter of the poem highlights one feature of the tale: the concentration of mercy, sincerity, benevolence, spiritual wealth, moral perfection, the connection of generations, historical memory, love (love, based on the teachings of V. Soloviev, is perceived as unifying power), unity, the harmony of the earth and the sky, conscience, purity, beauty.

Exactly such a being, “assembled” from these qualities, is elevated to the rank of ideal and contrasted with reality by the author. All manifestations of life collected in the fairy tale seem to be ideal to Zulfat. Through the picture of people burning a fairy-tale girl at stake, the poet conveys the idea that humanity itself destroys the dream of a happy life. In this case, a bonfire is a symbol of evil power. Linked to this is the sense of anxiety of the lyrical hero, which is embedded in the sensual layer of the poem. In the poem, the lines are repeated every now and then: “Souls will moan out of frustration / And every heart will sink: / If we decide to keep the Earth intact, / The tale must be preserved…” (Amineva & Yuzmukhametova, 2017). Humanity, as it developed, drifted away from natural sensitivity, from its nature, and ultimately completely lost them.

Therefore, the author rejects the absurd “civilization”, argues that today humankind is in the state of “cosmic sleep.” However, the last stanza of the poem still serves as a hope for future generations. The winged horse metaphor embodies this hope: “… The winged horse galloping on the ground – / A free soul is Dream and Hope! Immortal Dastan – Happiness! / It must be forever…” (Amineva & Yuzmukhametova, 2017).

In the poem by H. Tufan “Where do you fly, stars?” (1967) through Aesopian language the political system is assessed, the problem of human self-awareness is raised. In the poem, the question “why are we like that?” caused anxiety and regret over the injustice in life. Giving ambiguity to the symbols of a careless star, wind, haystack, felt boots, Tufan creates the image of a totalitarian system in the country: “… Where is the trace, even of felt boots? / It is impossible to see … Such darkness. / Those who are in heaven do not see my condition, / And I see, I see them… / Do not sparkle, do not remind! / It’s already / In my memory: / When in the night in Kazan it was said, “Take care” / You were behind the clouds, / Behind the clouds…” (Uluțaș, n.d.; Yusupova et al., 2018).

The reason for the sorrowful feelings of the lyrical hero is the political situation in the country, orders that have not changed much since the thirties. The absence of a consolation part, the duration of suffering indicates the poet’s anxiety for the future, a sense of hopelessness.
4. Conclusion

1. The intensification of artistic searches in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 80s, strengthening of the role of the symbol as a structure-forming component contributes to the activation of the phenomenon of mythologization or demythologization.

2. In the poems of I. Yuzeev, mythological heroes and plots are dating back to Turkic and world mythology become a unique and peculiar code of culture, thereby determining the two-dimensional nature of the content in the structure of the text. They form an idea of national and social problems; through them, the authors develop a new social and philosophical concept that combines the universal human and national idea.

3. The mythological images and plots which are traditional for Tatar poetry, in contrast to the rigid determinism of culture by socio-political factors, are the mouthpiece of the “anti-ideological” author’s position. This trend in the works of H. Tufan, Zulfat contributes to the enrichment of mythological images and plots with new shades. The message of folklore or mythological images and plots demonstrates the transformation of their semantic structure, the subjective layer, which in this period acquires a public sound that gives an assessment of reality. The intensification of the “hidden content” deepens the subtext in poetry and gives poets the opportunity to more clearly express their attitude to existing public order and conditions of reality.

Thus, the study of mythological plots and images evidences the existence of the phenomenon of mythologization and demythologization in the Tatar poetry of the 1960s and 80s, allows to determine the transformations in the artistic thinking of poets, and also to highlight new dimensions of development in the history of the national literature of the 1960s and 1980s.

Acknowledgements
The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

References


