ОБЩЕМИРОВЫЕ МИФОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ ОБРАЗЫ И СЮЖЕТЫ В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ А.С.ПУШКИНА
Научная статья

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Аннотация

Творчество А.С.Пушкина является культурным достоянием не только национального, но и мирового значения. Воспитанный на блестящих образцах мирового художественного наследия, А.С.Пушкин в своем творчестве неоднократно обращался к образам и сюжетным ходам европейской художественной литературы и мировой мифологии. Через творчество Пушкина носители русской культуры выходят за рамки узко национального сознания и разделяют со всем человечеством культурные и эстетические ценности, что обеспечивает единство культурных традиций в условиях современного информационного общества.

Ключевые слова: миф, культура, культурное сознание, мировоззрение, мотив, мифологические сюжеты и образы, национальная литература.

MOTIFS OF WORLD MYTHOLOGY IN THE WORKS OF A.S. PUSHKIN
Research article

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Abstract

The work of A.S. Pushkin is a cultural asset not only of national but also of global importance. Brought up on brilliant examples of world artistic heritage, A.S. Pushkin in his work repeatedly turned to the images and plot moves of European fiction and world mythology. Through Pushkin's work, Russian cultural community members go beyond the framework of a narrowly national consciousness and share cultural and aesthetic values with all of humanity, which ensures the unity of cultural traditions in the modern information society.

Keywords: myth, culture, cultural consciousness, worldview, motif, mythological plots and images, national literature.

Introduction

The formation of a person's worldview and mindset is largely determined by the type of culture and literature that his consciousness assimilates at the earliest stages of their formation. For a Russian-speaking person, the main factor determining the axiological, artistic and worldview position is the heritage of A.S. Pushkin, which is an uncontestable and universally recognized paragon of Russian and world literature. With all the seemingly exhausted topics of Pushkin's heritage, numerous and detailed studies of each of his works, his legacy will never enter the purely historical sphere, since it reflects the essence of the Russian language and culture. Modern era is marked by simplification of language forms, which causes the inevitable simplification of thought forms, hence — simplification and vulgar understanding of culture as a phenomenon of everyday life. The inevitable consequence of the objective globalization of culture is its subjective nationalization, which will necessarily result in a lack of understanding of the common roots of European civilization. Therefore, the appeal to the phenomenon that reflects the internal cultural unity of people of different nationalities, and a common style of thinking, will always be relevant. The legacy of A.S.Pushkin presents such a phenomenon, despite all its conventional national color, since it shares common features of Indo-European mythology. Since the Russian literary language created by A. S. Pushkin is perceived by modern people as an unquestionable cultural norm of the Russian-speaking consciousness, there is often a vulgar understanding of his heritage as a purely national phenomenon. Meanwhile, Russian literature is certainly part of the world's artistic process. As a result, along with the unique features peculiar only to it, Russian literature in general, and the legacy of A. S. Pushkin in particular, reflects the dynamics of the entire world of literary creativity. It is our task to show this by the analysis of a number of plot moves and images in Pushkin's fairy tales. Despite the fact that Pushkin's studies have existed for a long time, attempts to go into the general mythological context of his works have not been made yet.

Fiction in general is a form of symbolic representation of a subject, a form of expression of worldview. In this regard, the dynamics of literature is always a consequence of the formation and complication of the worldview of mankind as a whole.

Methods

A.S. Pushkin was one of the first to understand the multi-ethnic nature and significance of folklore. He dwells with particular interest on subjects that were known to him from both Russian and Western European sources. Even a cursory glance at his work shows that A.S. Pushkin was well acquainted with Slavic and world mythology in general. Therefore, his tales are characterized by a certain mixture of mythological images that the poet creatively reinterprets in the style of his modern era. This is definitely noticeable in his widely known fairy tales "The Tale of the Dead Princess and the Seven Knights", "The Tale of Tsar Saltan", "The Tale of the Golden Cockerel", the poem "Ruslan and Lyudmila".

A key role in the formation of modern European peoples' artistic thinking played, along with the Germanic, Celtic tribal group. And, as a result, Germanic and Celtic mythology received maximum reflection in the literary work of Europe. In connection with the socio-political processes of the first half of the 19th century, Russian educated class showed interest in European culture and, therefore, German and Celtic mythology. This interest is most fully represented in the creative heritage of A.S. Pushkin.

In what follows, we will focus on some of the most obvious motifs and images of world mythology in Pushkin's creative work. Here we mostly focus our research on "The Tale of Tsar Saltan" and "Ruslan and Ludmila", as far as these two poetic fairy tales are most relevant to the purpose of our investigation and contain the brightest plots and images coherent with Indo-European basic mythological landmarks. Sad enough the frame of a journal article doesn't suppose a wider range of plots and images to be engaged in the research. It seems appropriate to consider the images of the Swan Princess, the oak (World Tree), the island of Buyan, the Living Head of the Hero, and the story of Guidon's voyage in a barrel, as the most typical plot-figurative constructions of Indo-European mythology.

In this research we employed the following methods: the method of literary, contextual and comparative analysis, the method of diachronic continuality.

Discussion

In "The Tale of Tsar Saltan…" one of the central places is occupied by the image of the Swan Princess. The transformation of a Swan into a human being is described by Pushkin as follows:

"Then she spread her wings, to soar
O'er the waves towards the shore.
There, amid a clump of trees, ,
Folded them with graceful ease,
Shook herself, and then and there
Turned into a maiden fair–" [8]

Pushkin was undoubtedly not the first to exploit the motif for turning an animal into a human and back again. Similar stories can be found in all national mythologies. However, they, in turn, are not the original version of the myth. These motifs are the result of one of the first phases of mythological thinking — totemism. Following naturalism (the worship of the forces of nature, the elements), totemism transferred this worship from the impersonal realm of the natural elements to the real animal world. Already early forms of art in the form of rock paintings or animal statues have a pronounced character of hunting magic and quite clearly demonstrate the magical relationship between animal and human. In mythological thinking, there is no distance between man and animal, and as a result, all subsequent mythologies of the world will to some extent preserve zoomorphic features, and, while maintaining a connection with the animal world, cultivate this motif. This is why in fairy tales, including Russian ones, animals are endowed with the gift of speech, have purely human characteristics of behavior, but, at the same time, as a rule, they are stronger beings than humans. It is no coincidence that in Pushkin's fairy tale all the magic actions performed by the Princess are performed by her only in the image of a Swan. Thus, the very appeal of Pushkin to the motif of the sorceress in the form of an animal goes back to the earliest examples of magical mythology, which has a worldwide distribution area.

Some researchers (R. Graves) believe that the image of the Swan is generally steadily associated with the Northern countries. The Etruscan myth tells of Quicne, a Ligurian king who was transformed into a Swan, and his son Cupavon, upon learning of this, decorated his Royal diadem and battle helmet with Swan feathers [5].

Aeschylus in the tragedy "Prometheus Bound" writes:

"When you have crossed the stream that bounds the two continents, toward the flaming east, where the sun walks, crossing the surging sea until you reach the Gorgonean plains of Cisthene, where the daughters of Phorcys dwell, ancient maids, three in number, shaped like swans, possessing one eye amongst them and a single tooth; neither does the sun with his beams look down upon them, nor ever the nightly moon. And near them are their three winged sisters, the snake-haired Gorgons, loathed of mankind, whom no one of mortal kind shall look upon and still draw breath"[1].

The hero of the tales of King Arthur, the son of Parsifal, Lohengrin, sails from unknown countries in a boat drawn by swans. The image of the Swan is also widely represented in Russian fairy tales, which Pushkin widely relied on. This image is known to have been presented by Pushkin in two forms: as an epithet of a beautiful girl and as an image of a defender (for example, in the famous fairy tale "Geese-Swans"). The image of the Swan Princess from the "Tale of Tsar Saltan" organically combines both of these motifs of Russian folklore, since on the one hand she helps Guidon with her witchcraft, and on the other hand she appears as a beautiful girl.

In Celtic mythology, the image of a Swan also plays a very important and singular role. This is one of the most popular animals that a person turns into. For example, the evil stepmother Aoife turns the children of Lear into swans. In another famous legend, Midhir turns himself and his beloved Etain into swans. However, the most famous myth in Celtic mythology, containing the image of swans, is the myth of the dream of Angus. In this myth, Angus saw the girl he fell in love with. It was Caer Ormaith, who lived one year in human form and one in the form of a Swan. It is noteworthy that in this myth, "disenchantment" does not occur, but, on the contrary, Angus turns into a Swan himself.

From what has been said, it follows that the image of the Swan Princess has many common features with general psychological ideas about the Swan. However, Pushkin puts much more human traits into this image. The image of a Living Head from the poem "Ruslan and Ludmila" has a much narrower specification.

"But now the pale orb born to range
The sleepy skies, lights up the nightly,
Mist-covered plain and mound more brightly,
A sight revealing wondrous strange.
Can pen describe the like?… A Head,
A living Head is there! In slumber
Its eyes are shut, it snores, is dead
To all the world, but every rumble,
Each breath and wheeze that from it comes
The helmet stirs and sends the plumes

That reach the shadowed heights a'swaying" [9]

This image is not of Pushkin's coinage either, but an allusion to Bran the Blessed — a character of the famous Welsh medieval cycle of stories "Mabinogion". Bran, who was, according to Welsh mythology, the British king, orders after death to take his head back to Britain. After Bran's death, his head continues to speak and prophesy. Bran claims that burying his head facing France will serve to protect Britain from invasion. According to the Welsh triads, King Arthur once dug up the head, believing that the best protection for Britain was not the head of Bran, but he himself. It is with this action of Arthur that the "Welsh triads" link the subsequent tragic events, including the death of Arthur himself and the collapse of the Order of the Knights of the Round table. It should be noted that from the moment of Bran's death to his burial, almost 90 years pass, during which the head behaves as if it is not separated from the body. Both in this legend, and in Pushkin's poem some magic force is involved:

"The sword raised. Dastardly attack!-
It sang, a death-blow to me dealing.
Ere I could turn, my poor head was
No longer in its place, alas.
Preserved by some dark, occult force,
It lives (which is no boon, of course),
But all the rest of me, unburied,
Rots in a place to man unknown;
With blackthorn thickly overgrown
My frame is; by the midget carried
I (Just the head) was to this spot
And left to guard-ignoble lot!-
The magic sword" [9].

Of greater prominence and universal significance is the plot of the voyage of the son of Tsar Saltan in a barrel. In the process of swimming across the endless ocean, the child is constantly growing rapidly, and when the wave takes them to the shore, he breaks the barrel, just straightening up in it. This story is very similar to the cosmogonic Indian and Chinese myths. In the Chinese version, the first man Pangu of the myths recorded in the 3rd century AD, matured in a universal egg that floated among the formless chaos. According to the Chinese myth, Pangu separates Yin from Yang, the sky from the earth, from it come the wind, thunder, sun, moon, stars, etc. In other words, the universe was formed from the body of Pangu. In the same way, Guidon, having arrived on the island, begins to create his own kingdom with the help of magic power, which will become the place of his life. A similar story can be found in Hinduism, where the first man Hiranyagarbha is understood as a "Golden germ" that initially floated in the cosmic waters, and subsequently gave rise to all life. This is the version stated in the Rigveda [10]. In later Vedic literature (in the Brahmanas and Upanishads), Brahma himself emerges from the body of Hiranyagarbha, splitting the body shell in two, one half of which becomes heaven and the other half becomes earth. In general, a similar picture is drawn by Pushkin: among the raging waves of the vast and empty ocean, a closed capsule floats, inside which a certain life matures, develops and grows.

It is easy to see that both the mythological Golden egg and the Pushkin barrel are very similar in form and are absolutely identical in content – both contain a sprout – the beginning of life, which this outer shell on the one hand restrains, and on the other – protects from the furious blind external element. As soon as the hero is strong enough, he frees himself from it. In many mythologies, the ocean is perceived as a kind of evil inclination, and therefore overcoming it by the carrier of life will inevitably lead to the development of this very life. In Pushkin's fairy tale, both the surviving Guidon and the merchants who visited him later repeatedly cross the ocean, which is no longer an infinitely frightening force.

In world mythology, the story of a baby swimming on water is generally widespread. Such is, for example, the biblical legend of Noah, which is exactly the same way the Sumerian-Akkadian king Sargon I described his childhood [3]. This story symbolizes the death of a child, but the birth of an adult man. It is no accident that Pushkin's Prince Guidon is put into a barrel as an infant, and he comes out of it as an adult. Such stories are clearly interpreted by the mythological consciousness as a rite of initiation, that is, the initiation of a young man into a full member of the family. It is widely known that in many primitive tribes, during the rite of initiation, the initiated youth had to survive a symbolic death, followed by a rebirth in a new social status. For example, an outstanding ethnographer and anthropologist Julius Lips writes about this in his fundamental work "The Origin of Things"[6]. Therefore, the child who is initially doomed to death in mythological tales of this kind is always reborn as a hero, thus embodying the victory over death and over his childhood past. Another interesting detail should be noted: Guidon from infancy passes into adulthood, skipping the teenage period of life. This kind of denial of the adolescent period in human life is characteristic of most primitive peoples and the entire Paleolithic era of mankind. Julius Lips discusses it in the work mentioned above. Thus, in the tribal consciousness, the idea of gradual maturation of a person does not exist: a child who has passed through the rite of initiation is immediately considered an adult, regardless of their biological age. Therefore, the process of turning a child into an adult man is not natural in such mythological thinking, but magical.

It should be noted that all myths of this type always have a happy ending – the child always survives. This is due not so much to ideas about fate as to a specific vision of death. Mythological consciousness does not consider death as something inevitable, but perceives it as the machinations of forces hostile to man, which he is quite able to defeat [6]. That is why Pushkin's Guidon overcomes all the dangers of swimming in a magical way – by conjuring the sea:

"O, you wanton waves so blue —
Free to come and go are you,
Dashing when and where you please,
Wearing rocks away with ease —
You, who flood the mountains high,

You, who ships raise to the sky —
Hear my prayer, o waves, and spare us —
Safely onto dry land bear us." [8]

M. K. Azadovsky writes: "But the motif of searching for a lover is very common in the Western European tradition, in particular it is to be found in the tales of Brothers Grimm. From their collection, Pushkin borrowed such a detail as an appeal to the sun, the month and the wind. In the fairy tale "Der singende-springende Löweneckerchen", the young Queen finds her husband turned into a white dove. In search of it, she turns to the sun, the month, and the winds: the sun, the month, and the three winds can not help her, and only at last the South wind reveals to her the whereabouts of her husband" [2].

The peculiarity of this plot in Pushkin's creative work is that Guidon does not sail alone, but with his mother. Here Pushkin indirectly refers to the cult of the great Mother, which was formed in the Paleolithic. It is associated with the features of the Paleolithic social structure, which assumed female hierarchical dominance, already reflected in the mythological pantheons of the Middle East and the Greco-Roman world in the cults of such goddesses as Astarte, Isis, Nut, Maat, Gaia, Demeter, Ceres, and many others. It is noteworthy that all goddesses belonging to the cult of the great Mother do not have an equal spouse. This is a consequence of the lack of understanding of the role of men in the birth of life and in the nurturing of the baby, characteristic of that era. It is probably for this reason that Pushkin's Tsar-father Saltan is absent at the birth of the child, condemns the child and his mother to death through ignorance, does not take any part in the difficulties that have befallen them, but treats him as an equal and even the main one, only when Guidon himself becomes a king and ruler.

Curiously, the final transformation of Guidon from a child to a strong ruler takes place on an island endowed with magical properties. This motif easily finds its prototype in the Celtic Avalon, to which the mortally wounded king Arthur is sent for healing. The medieval treatment of Celtic myths about Avalon is clearly represented in the work of Galfrid of Monmouth[4]. Thus, in the Acts of the Briton Kings, he says that it was on Avalon that Arthur's sword was forged, and in the Life of Merlin, he describes Avalon as a magical place–a kind of analogue of the Greek "Islands of the Blessed". The commonality of the story lines of the cycle of legends about Arthur and Pushkin's poem is also proved by the fact that both King Arthur and Guidon arrive on the wonderful island greatly weakened, and upon landing on it, they get rid of all the misfortunes that haunt them and gain magical power. That is, in fact, the island saves them. However, it should be noted that in the second version of the legends about King Arthur, the British hero still dies, and Avalon becomes a sacred place for his burial. This fully corresponds to the representations of Geoffrey of Monmouth about the Avalon as a sacred underworld. In this regard, we can assume that the island of Guidon is also the "Island of the Blessed". Like Avalon, the island of Guidon is difficult to access and has magical powers. Like most mythological representations of the realm of the dead, it is well protected. From all this it follows that the Kingdom of Guidon is described by the same artistic means as the Kingdom of the dead. After the magic transformation Guidon changes his essence. He is not the same as was before. This fully corresponds to the medieval alchemical idea of transformation achieved through transmutation, in which the object is so changed that it can be recognized as the original purely hypothetically. So, after getting acquainted with the world of magic, Guidon only somewhat resembles his former self. And since his Kingdom is located in a kind of Kingdom of the dead, his being alive is rather tentative. However, Guidon is not the source of magic, but only the person undergoing its action. There is only one witch on the island, the Swan Princess, who forces Guidon to change his appearance. Most likely, it is she who is the true ruler of the island. In this case, we meet with an explicit allusion to Circe from the Odyssey, only with a positive connotation. It is characteristic of Greek mythology that magic is a female occupation.

One of the constitutive motifs both in "Ruslan and Ludmila" and in "The Tale of Tsar Saltan" is the image of a tree, which definitely symbolizes the World Tree. It is known in many mythological concepts, the most common of which is considered to be the German-Scandinavian version. Pushkin describes the fir-tree as follows:

"There, beneath a fir- behold! —
Cracking nuts all made of gold,
Emeralds left and right a-flinging,
Sat that wonder-squirrel, singing:
«Through the garden there she goes,
Tripping on her dainty toes.»" [8]

Note that in German- Norse mythology, it is a squirrel named Ratatosk that jumps on the Yggdrasil tree:[7].

In Pushkin's works the image of the World Tree is not limited exclusively to spruce. In the same "Tale of Tsar Saltan", initially upon arrival on the island, Guidon sees an oak tree.

"Son and mother, free again,
Saw a hillock on a plain;
On its crest, an oak tree grew" [8]

The image of the oak tree is also used by Pushkin in the poem "Ruslan and Ludmila". It is noteworthy that the oak plays a key role in the plot in both works – in "Ruslan and Ludmila" the author, by his own admission, only retells a fairy tale he heard from a learned cat walking around the oak, and in the "Tale of Tsar Saltan", Guidon makes a bow from the oak branch, without which it would be impossible to further develop the plot.In traditional Germanic-Scandinavian mythology, the World Tree is an ash tree, which is not mentioned by Pushkin. However, in the mythology of the Celtic and Finno-Ugric peoples, spruce and oak are sacred trees, a sacred element of their cosmos and an indispensable participant in all magical rituals. The image of the World Tree is to be found not only in European mythology. For example, the Australian myth of the end of the world tells about the World Tree — the baobab, in the branches of which sits a possum, embodying the world's good, and under the tree it is guarded by an emu-ostrich, personifying the world's evil. From what has been said, it becomes obvious that the image of the World Tree is one of the main subjects of world mythology in general.

The question is bound to arise if the discussed motifs and images in Pushkin's works were directly borrowed from different mythological and cultural sources, or they were employed by the poet as the so-called "wandering" plots, motifs and

images. In this respect we tend to share the opinion of the most recognized Pushkinologists (Anichkova, Azadovsky, Bondi,Volkova) and others, who unanimously and non-hesitantly affirm Pushkin's superb artistic rendering of the famous world mythological plots and images to the extent, which makes them recognizable, but looking purely national.

The modern fairy-tale consciousness of the Russian-speaking person is largely formed by the tales of A. S. Pushkin, whose work incorporated the main plots and motifs of most mythological complexes in Europe and the world, and since they were presented in a modern literary language, this wealth contributed to their success and a more complete and deep perception. Thus, through Pushkin's fairy tales, the mythological roots of modern Russian-speaking people's thinking go back to the global tradition and its most universal subjects.

Конфликт интересов	**Conflict of Interest**
Не указан.	None declared.

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