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SCOTTISH BALLAD: COMPARATIVE ASPECT (ON THE MATERIAL OF FOLKLORE BALLAD "CLYDE WATER" AND H. AINSLIE'S BALLAD "WILLY AN' ELLEN")

Research article

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Abstract

The article examines the ballad as a genre prevalent in the works of Scottish poet-emigrants to the United States in the nineteenth century. The novelty of the study is connected to the comparative aspect of the study and the material of the study. The folklore ballad "Clyde Water" and the ballad of Scottish poet-emigrant H. Ainslie, "Willy an' Ellen" are compared, and the integral and differential features of the Scottish ballad are determined at the motif, plot-character, and chronotopic levels. Common to both ballads is unequal love, innocent lovers, their deaths, the motif of separation, and the water that implements this separation, the motif of "love to the grave". In H. Ainslie's ballad, the motif of separation has a more hysterical tone, which is quite expected for an emigrant poet. The occurrence of a large number of similarities proves the vitality and relevance of the folklore tradition even in conditions of emigration.

Keywords: Scotland, emigration, XIXth c., poetry, folklore, ballad.

ШОТЛАНДСКАЯ БАЛЛАДА: КОМПАРАТИВНЫЙ АСПЕКТ (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ ФОЛЬКЛОРНОЙ БАЛЛАДЫ «CLYDE WATER» И БАЛЛАДЫ Х. ЭЙНСЛИ «WILLY AN' ELLEN»)

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена анализу баллады как жанровой доминанты в творчестве шотландских поэтов-эмигрантов США XIX в. Новизна исследования обусловлена компаративным аспектом и материалом исследования. В компаративном аспекте исследованы фольклорная баллада «Clyde Water» и баллада шотландского поэта-эмигранта Х. Эйнсли «Willy an' Ellen», определены интегральные и дифференциальные признаки шотландской баллады на мотивном, сюжетно-персонажном и хронотопном уровнях. Общим для обеих баллад является неравная любовь, невинные возлюбленные и их гибель, мотив разлуки и вода, имплементирующая эту разлуку, мотив «любви до гроба». В балладе Х. Эйнсли мотив разлуки имеет более надрывное звучание, что вполне ожидаемо для поэта-эмигранта. Наличие большого количества сходств доказывает живучесть и актуальность фольклорной традиции даже в условиях эмиграции.

Ключевые слова: Шотландия, эмиграция, XIX в., поэзия, фольклор, баллада.

Introduction

The emigration of nineteenth-century Scots to the United States was a significant phenomenon not only in the history of the two states, Scotland and the United States, but also in the economy, culture, and, as it turned out, literature. As a result of this process, a special group of poets emerged in world literature: Scottish Americans. This group was special not only because of the socio-historical conditions of its appearance but also because of the poet-emigrants' worldview, their attitude towards their homeland, and their literary tradition.

Among the genre preferences of Scottish poets-emigrants, the ballad occupies a special place. Full-fledged studies of English and Scottish ballads started after the publication of ballad collections, among which were those of A. Ramsay (The Tea-Table Miscellany. A Collection of Choice Songs, Scots and English, 1724) [7], T. Percy (Reliques of ancient English poetry, 1765) [6], J. Ritson (Scottish Song in Two Volumes, London, 1794) [8], F. J. Child (English and Scottish Ballads, Boston, 1857) [5] Sir William Scott (Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 1869) [10], D. Herd (Songs from David Herd's Manuscript, Edinburgh, 1904) [11], W. Beattie (Border Ballads, 1952) [3]. The most fundamental and resonant was an edition by the American scholar F.J. Child, consisting of five books. This publication revived scholarly interest in the ballad in the United States, a country closely connected with the culture and history of the British Isles [4].

The novelty of the study is provided by the comparative aspect in which the Scottish folk ballad and the ballad of the Scottish poet-emigrant H. Ainslie are considered.

The aim of the article is to examine the genre of the Scottish ballad from a comparative aspect. This aim implies the solution of the following tasks:

- 1) to scrutinize the major trends in the history of Scottish ballads;
- 2) to compare the folklore ballad "Clyde Water" and H. Ainslie's ballad "Willy and Ellen";
- 3) to identify the integral and differential characteristics of the Scottish folklore ballad and the poet-emigrant ballad.

The work is based on theoretical research and comparative research methods, as well as on the method of genre analysis and motif analysis.

Main results

The appeal of Scottish poets-emigrants to the genre of the ballad emphasizes their connection with Scottish folklore tradition because the ballad, as originally a folklore genre, was extremely widespread in Scotland. Among the most popular ballads are "The Twa Corbies" [9, P. 210], "Lord Randal" [9, P. 214], "True Thomas" [9, P. 223], "The Wife of Usher's Well" [9, P. 226], "The Twa Sisters" [9, P. 228], "Edward" [9, P. 230], "Tak' Your Auld Cloak About Ye" [9, P. 244], etc. Scottish folk ballads can be divided into love ballads, family ballads, and socio-historical ballads. Each of these types of ballads has undergone changes in both synchronic and diachronic aspects.

Among the most popular subjects are heroic-historical plots, where love themes have developed in parallel. The historical context, which influenced both the plot and the characters, added to the drama, so one of the most common motifs in Scottish folk ballads was the motif of separation. It was most often realized through the death of the lover. So, in the medieval ballad about two sisters (The Twa Sisters), the elder sister did not allow the lovers to be together and killed the younger sister [9, P. 228].

The folk ballad "Clyde Water" and H. Ainslie's ballad "Willy an' Ellen" were chosen for comparative analysis. The comparative analysis is to be carried out on the following levels: chronotopic, plot and character, and motif.

Chronotopic level. In the folklore ballad, the action takes place at night and in the cold season, as evidenced by the inclement weather. There is more information in the text regarding the location of the action. So, first, it is Willie's stable, then it is the river Clyde, and then it is the castle where Margaret lives. In H. Ainslie's ballad, we can guess that the setting is the landlord's lands, and at the end, it is the slope of the river or the hill (brae) where the lily and rose blossom, symbolizing lovers.

As for the time, it is vast; in fact, Ellen speaks of their whole life, doomed to separation and longing for each other: "<...> Will it be time to praise this cheek / When years and tears ha'e blench't it? / Will it be time to talk o' love / When could an' care ha'e quenched it? <...>" [2, P. 82].

Plot and character level. The plot in both ballads has a love theme. The dialogue between the lovers in H. Ainslie's ballad is a dialogue about the impending separation because of Willy's (the father of the bride in reality) desire to indulge his beloved with beautiful clothes and jewels ("<...> It's a' to buy you pearlins bright, An' busk ye like a leddy <...>" [2, P. 82]), the money for which he has to earn across the sea. Ellen does not aspire to this at all. She is worried about Willy and doubts that she will survive the separation and wait for her beloved. The ballad's conclusion is revealed in the final stanzas: Lord Knockdon is dead, but there is no one to mourn him: "<...> The auld laird o' Knockdon is dead / There's few for him who will sorrow <...>" [2, P. 83]. Following him, Willy and his lover, Ellen, also die. On the hill where Willy and Ellen are buried, a lily and a rose grow intertwined, symbolizing the unity of the souls of the lovers: "The lily leans out of the brae; / The rose leans into the lily; / And there the bonny twa some lay; / Fair Ellen and her Willy" [2, P. 83].

Willie is rushing to his beloved in the folklore ballad, despite his mother's warnings not to go out in bad weather and the fact that his path crosses the River Clyde, which becomes especially dangerous during a storm: "<...> O stay at home, my son Willie / The wind blows cauld and soured / The nicht will be baith mirk and late / Before ye reach her brook <...>" [1, P. 39-40]. His beloved, Margaret, was asleep when he arrived. Willie is approached by her mother, who sends him back and does not let him go home in the inclement weather. Willie realizes the doom of his fate: he will not make it home alive. He drowns in the River Clyde. He is followed by Margaret, who has a disturbing dream. She learns of her beloved's arrival and sets out to catch up with him on the banks of the Clyde.

Motif level. Both ballads are united by unequal love. The Scottish poet-emigrant's ballad mentions it explicitly: Ellen is the daughter of the Lord of Knockdon. In the folk ballad, Margaret lives in a castle. What is common is that the dominant motif of separation is implemented in the fates of the characters through water as an element. The lovers drown in the cold and dangerous waters of Clyde in the folk ballad: "<...> But we sall sleep in Clyde's water / Like sister an' like brother" [1, P. 46]. Willy goes beyond the sea-ocean in search of wages in H. Ainslie's ballad: "Wherefore should ye talk of love? When ye say the sea separates us?" [2, P. 82]. As a result, the water here also becomes the cause of separation.

The motif of separation is closely related to the motif of "love till the grave". In H. Ainslie's ballad, however, we can only speculate that Willy returns lifeless from across the sea and that Ellen is dying of loneliness. In both ballads, the main characters are pure and innocent, and their love is first and sincere. The poetic texts prove this. The folk ballad ends with the words: "But we will sleep in Clyde's water, like sisters and like brothers" [1, P. 46]. The chastity of Willy and Ellen is expressed by the lily and the rose that have grown in the place of their graves.

Conclusion

The research conducted allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1. The ballad is not just a literary genre with its own set of constant features. To understand the picture of the world of a certain people or a certain period in the history of the people (concerning folklore ballads) and the picture of the world of a particular author (for us, this is a Scottish expatriate poet), the ballad is also a poetized form of social consciousness, reflecting the worldview positions and the system of cultural and historical values and traditions.

2. The Scottish folk ballad and H. Ainslie's ballad are indisputably similar in plot, main characters, and thematic-motif lines. However, in the ballad, H. Ainslie also focuses on parting, which is to be expected for the poet-emigrant.

3. This similarity confirms the vitality of the Scottish folk tradition, its relevance, and its value for Scottish poets-emigrants.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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