



Image-Symbols in the Tatar Poetry Between the 1920s-1930s

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Abstract

This article reveals the functional and semantic field of image-symbols in the Tatar poetry of the 1920s-1930s as exemplified by the poetic texts of Hadi Taqtaş, Musa Cəlil, Hasan Tufan and Ahmed Faizi. The structural and semantic field of the image-symbols formed in the literature between the 1920s and the 1930s significantly differs from the artistic and aesthetic search of the previous periods in the development of literature. Avant-garde experiments with the form of verses of the 1920s, complex literary devices and techniques, as well as the possibility of creating an image from a large number of mosaic details led poets to folklore image-symbols. At the same time, the authors observed the diversity of ideological images that often serve as symbols and structure-forming components in the structure of a poetic text. The research aims to study folklore and ideological image-symbols in the Tatar poetry of the 1920s-1930s and to reveal their structural-semantic and functional field in poetic texts. The scientific novelty of this article is determined by a different approach to the study of the system of images in poetic works, i.e. in the course of the study, the authors focus their attention on the symbolic use of images as structure-forming components. Within the framework of this research, the authors have proved that folklore and ideological symbols act as structure-forming components and are perceived as an opportunity to change artistic paradigms, restore ideological and philosophical depth, polysemy, the possibility of double interpretation and national traditions of the Tatar poetry. The fundamental method used in the course of this study is the hermeneutic approach that guides the reader's receptive activity to the analysis of principles and techniques for creating images and image-symbols.

Keywords: Image-Symbol, Tatar Poetry, Poetic Text, Structural-Semantic Field, Function.

1. Introduction

The period between the 1920s and the 1930s in the history of Tatar poetry is characterized by the emergence of a new ideological and artistic orientation, "the change of ideological guidelines and artistic paradigms, and active searches for new means of artistic expressiveness" [1, p. 228]. The development of the Tatar literature in the 1920s was marked by numerous creative searches and experiments, change of ideological guidelines and the renewal of imagery, subject to the affirmation of ideologically tinged mythological slogans. This tendency gave rise to "a new quality of literature... based on the existing literary tradition, both classical and refined, that was formed at the turn of the century" [2, p. 17]. Since the second half of the 1920s, poets had begun to deeper analyze life, changed their attitude towards ideology and schematic thinking, which helped to enrich the imagery of the Tatar poetry. On the one hand, symbolic images showed a conscious view of ideology; on the other hand, the spiritual world of a lyrical hero drew closer attention. L. Kolobaeva believes that "an artistically valuable symbol is often a forecast or foreshadowing of changes coming to the life of any given society, nation or even the world. These symbols are vital during life-changing events when everyone anticipates the new and the unknown. An artistic meaning in these times can become an anticipatory reflection of the historical reality that has come into motion if an artist intuitively feels the truth and the main trends in social being" [3, p. 216] since it establishes the principle of prohibition (taboo) and an allegorical Aesopian language. The 1920s and the 1930s were the turning point in the history of the

Tatar literature. This factor is particularly relevant to the Tatar poetry of this period and reveals the functions of symbols and their possible use in poetic works. In this regard, the relevance of this study is determined by a need to analyze the role played by folklore and ideological image-symbols in renewing the poetic system of the Tatar poetry between the 1920s and the 1930s.

The authors of the article have considered certain aspects of symbolization in the Tatar poetry on the material of the Sufi poetry of the 19th century [4] and the Tatar poetry of the early 20th century [5] within the framework of studying ideological motifs and archetypes in poetic texts of the 1920s-1950s [1]. While examining this aspect, the authors were also concerned with the studies of D.F. Zagidullina [6], A.A. Khaybullina, A.Z. Khabibullina and E.F. Nagumanova [7].

2. Methods

The hermeneutic approach [8, p. 11] was selected as fundamental for this study since it assumes that readers become familiar with diverse cultural values contained in literary works and find their own place at their intersection. This approach directs the reader's receptive activity to analyzing the principles and techniques of imagery, artistic forms of mastering reality, the definition of typological analogies and the specificity of artistic searches similar and different in various verbal arts. Thus, the authors use the hermeneutic approach to reveal the structural and semantic field of ideological and folklore image-symbols in poetic texts of the 1920s and the 1930s.

3. Results

1. Conducting the research, the authors of the article have established that folklore and ideological image-symbols prevail in poetic texts of the 1920s and the 1930s. At the same time, verbal arts clearly express the process of national and cultural self-identification.
2. The structural and semantic field of image-symbols in the Tatar poetry of the 1920s-1930s and the definition of their diachronic transformations reveal changes in artistic thinking. The revival of folklore images and artistic devices in the Tatar poetry of this period indicates the key role of poets supported by their search for the form and content of poetic works in the general literary process.
3. The parallel use of ideological and folklore image-symbols and stylistic expressive means common for the Soviet literature encourages the rapid development of the Tatar poetry in accordance with the Soviet literary trends while preserving a special flair of the national literature.

4. Discussion

The Tatar literature in the period between the 1920s and the 1930s was characterized by a variety of images that often served as symbols and structure-forming components in the structure of texts. The world model and the functional and semantic field of image-symbols formed in the literature of the 1920s and the 1930s significantly differs from artistic and aesthetic searches of previous decades.

Inspired by a new society and ideological conditions, poets showed the events taking place in the country through ideological image-symbols. For example, M. Çalil's poem "Skylights" (1923) describes the struggle for the construction of a new life. The mythological image of the Red Banner in the text structure symbolizes the country that builds a new life and gives rise to the motif of the struggle for the construction of socialism. In addition, the semantic field of this symbol expresses the idea that a new life can be built only with labor efforts. When the Banner of Labor is planted at a height, it is interpreted as the foreshadowing of a new system and a different way of life in the country. The Soviet values filed as a history, including labor, ideology and a heroic cult that results in immortality, are expressed in the poem as the basis of social life. This symbol can be found in other works of the poet where it acquires new meanings. For instance, it calls for a holy struggle in "The Internationale" (1921). The same symbol used in "Burn, the world, I'm watching this fire burn..." (1922) is interpreted as a messenger of freedom.

In addition, the motif of the struggle for a new life in M. Çalil's poetry is closely connected with the image-symbol of the Motherland, which, in the end, is expressed as a country fighting for a brighter future and nationwide happiness. The artistic worldview of Çalil's poems "From the past days" (1924), "After the father's death" (1924), "The birth of Lenin" (1924) and "Our village" (1927) is characterized by the past/present opposition. Comparing the past and the present, the poet glorified the new life and denied the past. The image-symbols of a dried birch and an old plow represent the loss, the disappearance of the past and the old life while a young birch and a tractor serve as the symbols of the present and the future in the structure of this poetic text.

H. Tufan's poem "Tatarstan" (1925) interprets the past/present opposition as the before/now comparison. Such details as a saz (a plucked string instrument), guberniya (a province) and kishlak (a wintering place) are perceived as the symbols of the past and the causes of past misfortunes. At the same time, the images of a tractor and a route march represent the present times. The past is associated with the bloody field left after Khans; painful feelings in an autumn village; curses; weep; peasants seen as slaves; bloodied knives; orphanhood and a dark night. The present is connected with the unification of the eastern and western part of

Tatarstan; the appearance of tractors in villages; peasants seen as masters of their lives; a fighting march; laughter; Tatarstan is the father of the nation and a bright day. All these symbolic details in the text structure form the complex imagery of the past and the present. The motif of belief in a promising future is reflected in the poem "Fussy days" (1926). The poet described the spring of peaceful post-revolutionary years. In addition, the structure of the text reveals the symbolic meaning of the chosen image. The poet renewed the traditional meaning of spring and complemented it by the image of a bright, beautiful future. The beauty of modern reality expressed through the symbolic details of freedom, labor and the sun is perceived as a road leading to a sunny spring and a better future. H. Tufan also used symbolic images in his poem "At the foot of one's years" (1925). The wind symbolizing the past is perceived as people demolishing the country, "disturbing the peace", and is generally associated with the revolution itself.

Within the framework of social aesthetics, such image-details as winter and night symbolize the unattractiveness of the past life, and dawn is seen as the bright future the revolution will bring. The same imagery can be found in other H. Tufan's poems: "Blue wolf" (1925), "Between two epochs" (1927), "Take me, the Party" (1926), "On songs unsung" (1926), "Near the last palace" (1927), "Their daughter" (1927) and "The old Russia died" (1927).

Avant-garde experiments with the form of verses of the 1920s, complex literary devices and techniques, as well as the possibility of creating an image from a large number of mosaic details led poets to folklore image-symbols. Following these creative searches and experiments, folklore image-symbols are perceived as an opportunity to change artistic paradigms, restore ideological and philosophical depth, polysemy, the opportunity for double interpretation and national traditions of the Tatar poetry.

Such changes in the artistic paradigm can be observed in H. Taqtaş's poems. Symbolist and Romantic works appeal to myths and actively use mythological symbols (H. Taqtaş's "Exiled from Heaven" (1918), "Tragedy of the sons of land" (1923); M. Çalil's "Cain and Abel" (1923), "New history of the prophets" (1923); M. Gafuri's "Songs of Heaven" (1923), etc.). H. Taqtaş's romantic poems like "Exiles of Heaven" (1918) and "The killed Prophet" (1918) show wars that follow one another and famine in the country perceived by the young poet as incredible cruelty and injustice. In the poem "Tragedy of the sons of the land" (1921), all images are symbolic and embody certain ideas. The first group of abstract ideas stresses the need to obey the canons and destiny. The second group addresses the problem of struggling against them and proclaims the individual's freedom. In H. Taqtaş's poem, Adam, Eve and Abel correspond with the ideas of the first group, while Cain and Gazzil represent the ideas of the second group.

The conducted studies demonstrate that H. Tufan had started admiring the national thinking and the traditions of classic poetry since the early 1930s. This trend is evident in the following poems: "Seeing off" (1933), "White birch" (1933), "Warning bell" (1933), "Wings" (1933), etc. A.F. Galimullina and F.G. Galimullin emphasize that the poet used folklore images especially in "love poetry to describe the emotional state of his lyrical hero" [9, p. 129]. For example, the motif of separation in the poem "Seeing off" (1933) is expressed by the images of a valiant young man who is going to fight the invaders and a beautiful girl that sees him off. The motif is based on recognizable details of the Tatar folklore, including checkers, a proud steed and the image of a young man ready to sacrifice his life to protect his homeland. A piece of native land wrapped in an embroidered handkerchief and presented to the young man symbolizes, on the one hand, the power of the girl's love to her beloved, and represents, on the other hand, the trust shown to the valiant fellow by the country and the desire to see him again at home.

The poem "White birch" (1933) resembles with its lyricism, the simplicity of presented feelings and musicality typical of oral folk arts resembles folk songs. From the compositional perspective, the poem is a dialogue between Haibullah and a white birch.

Symbolic images and a conversation with the birch recreate the form of a folk song. The image-symbol of a birch and its derivatives symbolize a girl in the Russian folklore. In the Tatar literature, these objects traditionally mark the psychological state of one's soul and express melancholy, grief and sadness. The subjective layer of the poem renews traditions of the Tatar folklore and interprets the image of a white birch as grief and longing. When a birch sheds its leaves, it symbolizes the strength and depth of melancholy or mourning.

Since the mid-1930s, H. Tufan had been using folklore images to convey his firm and tragic belief about the prevalence of evil in those years. A complex image-symbol becomes the ideological center [6, p. 154] in the following poems: "And the stars are silent" (1937), "No words" (1937), "Do not lean to the ground, December" (1937), "Songs about Timercai" (1938) and "Send my regards" (1940). Like the Russian poetry, these works mostly focus on "other principles of typification regarding historical time as violence against a person" [10, p. 176].

M. Cəlil's poems of the 1930s also address recognizable image-symbols of folklore. Although his works preserve the ideological component, the folklore image-symbols the poet used grant readers the possibility of double interpretation. The poet's deeper understanding of the development of the society, his improvement as a person resulted in philosophical and aesthetic changes. In turn, the softer attitude to one's inner world enriched lexical means and gave rise to various symbols, other types of semantic comparison and poetic images closely connected with folklore. The poem "The song of a spring" (1936) written in the odic stanza typical of folk art represents the image of a spring that purifies and rejuvenates nature. The poem emphasizes the love of the lyric hero to humanity and his desire to cleanse the earth.

While working on the "young man – heroic fighter" pattern, M. Cəlil also appealed to folklore. Such poems as "Gray pacer" (1933), "The song of a bold Dzhigit" (1936), "Longing" (1936) and others reveal the image of a brave young man through the following details: a white-gray horse and a sharp saber. This imagery is based on national-mythological features: a Baghaturs (a valiant warrior) who came from the Tatar tales, turned into a fighter. Resembling a fairy-tale hero, he fights against enemies alone and defeats them. Stylizing poems to look like old Tatar folk songs, the poet reinforced this impression. Thus, he created the mythological image of a fighter not influenced by socialist realism.

A. Faizi also used images, poetic meters and structures typical of folk songs. These folklore image-symbols and artistic techniques that would become common to his works first appeared in "Lullaby", "The song of a glove" and "Swan" (1927). They begin to use the images of a swan, a snowdrop, a shawl and rain. For example, the poem "Swan" (1927) is stylized to resemble a folk song.

Influenced by the growing philosophical generalization and symbolic expressiveness of lyric-epic works, the poet wrote "The steppe and a man" (1936) in which he skillfully used conventional and polysemantic symbolic images. Through the use of symbolic images of the steppe, water and horse, as well as the relationship between these entities and a person, A. Faizi described the development and adaptation of a person to the conditions of a new life, the formation of new values. According to the poet, people living in the steppe spend all their lives paying a yasak (being responsible for everything done) and seeking water (life values).

Following H. Tufan's lead, A. Faizi began using the so-called "Aesopian language" in his poems. The symbols derived from folklore images started to be perceived as a shift away from ideological pressure. For instance, "Snowdrop" (1933), "Youth" (1938), "Autumn" (1939) and "Leaf and nut" (1939) refer to image-symbols and details that can be interpreted in different ways. These poems evaluate a person, their spiritual beauty and role in society in accordance with the benefit brought to the nation.

The poem "Snowdrop" (1933) represents this flower as a symbol of the hopes of the lyrical hero who makes his way through everyday activities to reach a new life and realize his bright dreams. The fast withering of a snowdrop symbolizes a relatively short life. At the same time, the subjective layer of the poem enables to interpret this symbol from the ideological viewpoint. In this regard, ice cover represents a cold reality and an ideology far from the truth while a snowdrop is perceived as a short-term truth.

5. Conclusion

Therefore, the Tatar poetry of the 1920s-1930s began to widely use numerous ideological symbols and folklore symbols stylization, ensuring different ways of interpreting texts. As a result, the opportunity for double interpretation of the poetic texts arose. Complex image-symbols simultaneously became components of the other, main symbol. Thus, the complexity of the symbol emerges, creating a microtext in the context of a poem. A microtext in the text enables the reader to interpret a poem from the ideological, general Soviet and national viewpoint. The parallel use of folklore and ideological image-symbols in poetic texts emphasizes transformations and new facets of development in the artistic thinking of the poets.

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