

**МОВОЗНАВСТВО. ЛІТЕРАТУРОЗНАВСТВО**

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**ARTISTIC EXPRESSIVENESS OF MYTHS**

*The scientific problem of this article is the presence of a number of artistic features in Azerbaijani myths; therefore the task is to identify the features of the plot and images in the myths of the Azerbaijani people, the artistic means used here. For this purpose, mythological texts were analyzed, their artistic features were determined according to the division into types adopted in modern literary criticism. It was revealed that the main way of presentation is the first-person narrative, and the plot twists are determined by the nature of the characters involved. Artistic analysis also revealed an emphasis on interaction with the forces of good and evil, the struggle between them. As a metaphor, hyperbole, comparison, epithets, as well as personification based on the transfer of human qualities and actions to surrounding objects and phenomena are most often used. The possibilities of artistic metaphor are being used more and more as the plot draws closer to other genres of oral folk art, in particular, to fairy tales and epics. The syncretism of the worldview of ancient people contributed to the emergence of only individual sprouts of artistic thinking. This is also characteristic of Azerbaijani myths, where genre and poetic diversity grows as new features of the human worldview and social relations themselves emerge. In the artistic sense, the difference between a myth and a fairy tale lies in the structural construction, in the plot, in how the plot is presented. The myth is built according to the simplest rules: no introduction, no beginning. Immediately begins the presentation of the main actions and ideas. There is much more fantasy in the fairy tale, magic is the main method of unfolding the leading conflict and its resolution. Myths interspersed in fairy tales through the use of individual images, principles, values, and worldview in general. In general, we can conclude that thanks to myths, fairy tales acquire an instructive character, since it will be possible to easily separate evil from good and determine the conditions under which the latter wins.*

**Key words:** myths, artistic analysis, South Caucasian region, Eastern civilizations, folk beliefs and ideas.

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**ХУДОЖНЯ ВИРАЗНІСТЬ МІФІВ**

*Науковою проблемою даної статті є наявність ряду художніх особливостей в азербайджанських міфах; тому завдання полягає у виявленні особливостей сюжету та образів у міфах азербайджанського народу, використаних тут художніх засобів. З цією метою проаналізовано міфологічні тексти, визначено їх художні особливості відповідно до прийнятого в сучасному літературознавстві поділу на види. Виявлено, що основним способом викладу є розповідь від першої особи, а повороти сюжету визначаються характером задіяних героїв. Художній аналіз також виявив акцент на взаємодії сил добра і зла, боротьбі між ними. Як метафора найчастіше використовуються гіпербола, порівняння, епітети, а також персоніфікація, заснована на перенесенні якостей і дій людини на навколишні предмети і явища. Дедалі ширше використовуються можливості художньої метафори в міру наближення сюжету до інших жанрів усної народної творчості, зокрема до казки та билин. Синкретизм світогляду давніх людей сприяв появі лише окремих паростків художнього мислення. Це характерно і для азербайджанських міфів, де зростає жанрове і поетичне розмаїття в міру появи нових рис людського світосприйняття і самих соціальних відносин. У художньому сенсі відмінність міфу від казки полягає в структурній побудові, в сюжеті, в тому, як сюжет подається. Міф будується за найпростішими правилами: ні вступу, ні початку. Відразу починається презентація основних дій та ідей. У казці набагато більше фантазії, магія є основним прийомом розгортання провідного конфлікту та його вирішення. Міфи, вкраплені в казки через використання окремих образів, принципів, цінностей, світогляду в цілому. Загалом можна зробити висновок, що завдяки міфам казки набувають повчального характеру, оскільки можна буде легко відокремити зло від добра та визначити умови, за яких останнє перемагає.*

**Ключові слова:** міфи, художній аналіз, південнокавказький регіон, східні цивілізації, народні вірування та уявлення.

**Introduction to the problem.** The problem of the origin of mankind, as well as life on Earth, is not ignored in Azerbaijani oral folk art, which is based on everyday knowledge accumulated by numerous generations of people. Mythological ideas often depict the history of the Universe, the Earth, and human civilization in a fantastic (especially in the minds of modern people) form. This is natural, given their antiquity, but from this they do not lose their attractiveness.

In mythology, at certain stages of the ancient period of human development, the artistic side, that is, creativity, through the use of various metaphors and a certain style, is quite strongly expressed. Consideration of the reasons for this will allow us to trace the process of the formation of the public consciousness of people, and above all its component – artistic thinking.

**The degree of research of the problem.** Today myths (in a more concrete sense – stereotypes) live not only in the historical consciousness. Politics, economics, and the moral sphere have been mythologized, and the vacuum that formed during the period of the restoration of modern statehood in many countries is being filled today with mythologems that do not reflect either historical consciousness or the political ideals declared in the Constitution (Гаджиев А., Султанзаде В., 2004). The origins of myths are in the psychology of people, which is often supported by the corporate community (Среди мифов, 1989).

Starting from the 19th century, numerous anthropological expeditions were carried out to study various cultures, there was a great interest in myth-making, its foundations, influence on other forms and spheres of human creativity and social activity, as a result, significant material was collected on the history of the formation of the mythological base of the human worldview, its influence on other spheres of spiritual activity, up to the present day.

These are the works of the most famous researchers M. Eliade (Eliade, 1967), D. Campbell (Кэмпбелл, 1997), A. Camus (Камю А., 1990), C. Jung (Юнг, 1996), Hamilton (Hamilton, 1942), R. Barth (Барт, 1994), Karen (Karen, 2000), K. Armstrong (Армстронг, 2011), K. Huebner (Хюбнер, 1996) and others. Each of them to some extent touched upon the features of the artistic style in myths, their language and genre originality. The scope of this study does not allow us to fully analyze the essence of these studies, which have largely influenced such areas of science as literary criticism, cultural anthropology, philosophy, history, sociology, religious studies, etc. at the same time, this allows us to bring a certain methodological, conceptual basis for the ideas put forward.

There is also quite a large literature of Azerbaijani researchers of myths and legends, legends and epics, once created on the territory of Azerbaijan. Among them, the publications of R. Kafarly (Qafarlı, 2015), A. Adzhalov (Azərbaycan mifoloji mətnləri, 1988), J. Baidili (Bəydili, 2003), O. Bahaddin (Bahəddin, 2004), M. Seyidov (Seyidov, 1983 (1); Seyidov, 1983 (2), R. Aliev (Əliyev, 2018). A. Kamal (Abdulla, 2009), and others. Note that these are mainly studies concerning the influence of myths, their ideological and moral content on the work of individual writers and poets, on literary trends, on ethnic self-consciousness. In addition, there are many works on the characterization and classification of myths. At the same time, there is no separate study in Azerbaijani literary criticism concerning the artistic features of myth-making.

**Purpose and objectives of the study.** Hence, the purpose of this study is to analyze the mythological texts of different genres related to the Azerbaijani region in order to determine their artistic features.

**Research methods.** The scientific and theoretical literature is involved in the analysis, which makes it possible to formulate a conceptual basis for the study, as well as textbook texts containing myths of different genres and directions, since the historical period of their formation is quite long.

## Results

### Features of the artistic analysis of myths

There is a large literature on the mythology of various peoples, as well as on a qualitative analysis of mythology as a social phenomenon. We, as noted above, are interested in the reflection of social life in mythological creativity through the metaphorization of created images and, in turn, the influence of this mythological element on the further process of the formation of aesthetic thinking, including modern, in general, the artistic features of mythological representations. This task still requires its further development.

The artistic expressiveness of mythological works is associated with many aspects of myth-making, as a conscious formation of ideas about the unity of man and nature. We list the main ones:

- The level of development of the self-consciousness of ancient people, whose consciousness was syncretic, connected with the sensory-emotional world, one with the cosmos and the environment as a whole;
- The level of metaphor, that is, the aesthetic assessment of the described facts and events within the framework of the dichotomy of beauty and ugliness, harmony and perfection;
- Evaluative factor associated with the era, this includes religion, ideology, art as elements of public consciousness;

- Language as a universal sign system that links generations and serves as a communicative tool to maintain the viability of myths;

- The general level of development of spiritual culture, including universal, because thanks to it, myths live as wandering plots that replenish the folklore and written literature of each people in accordance with the historical period;

- Artistic expressiveness was also reflected, in our opinion, by paleo contacts associated with the communicative activity of ancient peoples, and also, possibly, foreign civilizations.

We believe that artistic expressiveness cannot be assessed according to today's literary norms, since the myth, as the fruit of oral folk art, is fundamentally different from other folklore works, for example, fairy tales. The essence of the artistic expressiveness of myths is the following elements of mythological works: the fantastic nature of images, where the tendency of animism, personification is strong, the hyperbolization of the actions of heroes and other events and phenomena, the clarity of the author's position, which manifests itself in an unshakable belief in what is happening, the main idea, connected by the need to streamline the life position of each of a person, the formation of his worldview, and where the elements of the composition are absolutely unlimited in their use in the formation of the plot.

Myths as a literary work (although it is not entirely correct to call them that, since they do not meet many parameters of written literature), created in the oral practice of different peoples, are also a source of artistic analysis. According to the rules of this analysis, we first briefly characterize the historical aspect of the formation of myths. This is an archaic period in the development of human civilization, going back to its very origins, when the primitive communal system was just taking shape. The most important condition for the emergence of myths is human speech. The way of thinking of ancient people was associated with cosmocentric ideas about themselves and the world around them. Animism and anthropocentrism are clearly traced. The influence of paleocontacts at the level of extra-terrestrial civilizations is possible, although this has not been proven. Close interaction with nature, proceeding from the very necessity of existence, predetermined the need for ancient people to explain the essence of the phenomena occurring around, both to themselves and to others.

**Artistic means in myths.** Classification of metaphors used in ancient Azerbaijani myths. There are not so many of these metaphors, given the narrative nature of this type of folk art, designed for a real per-

ception of life, adaptation to it within the framework of unity with nature and the whole world as a whole.

The most widely represented **hyperbolos**:

*Özü də bir pəhlivan olur ki gəl görəsən, əl atmağı ilə yüz illik çinari kökündən çıxarmağı bir olur. Nərəsi gələndə şir-pələng girməyə dəşik axtarır* (He was such a hero that it was a feast for the eyes: he could uproot a hundred-year-old plane tree. When his voice was heard, the lions and tigers were looking for a place to hide) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 39).

*Vaxt gəlir, bir yağış yağır, bir yağış yağır, tut ucundan çıx göyə* (The day came, it started to rain, and it started to rain so much that you take hold of the tip of it and you will climb into the sky) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 43).

*Qari, dünyanı su aldı, sən bunu görmədinmi? bilmədinmi? Yer üzünü su almağını ondan bildim ki, piltələrim biraz nəm oldu* (Oh, old lady, water has taken over the world, haven't you seen? Don't you understand? I realized that the ground was covered with water from the fact that my woolen threads became a little wet). (Əsatirlər, 2005: 43).

*Gördü bu dünya bir xəlbir kimi görsənir* (He saw that this world had become the size of a sieve) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 38).

*Dünya durduqca mən durdum* (I stood as long as this world stands) [(Əsatirlər, 2005: 38).

*At quş kimi uçub dərənin o tayına düşür* (The horse took off like a bird and landed at the other end of the abyss) [(Əsatirlər, 2005: 49).

*Hər dəli dağın başına yetmiş yeddi daş qaldırır* (Each fighter lifted seventy-seven stones to the top of the mountain at once) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 50).

*Yetmiş yeddi günə burada böyük qala tikilir* (Here a great fortress was built in seventy-seven days) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 50).

*Kişi baxıb görür ki, düz dünyanı bunun inəkləri tutub* (The hero looked and saw that the whole world was filled with cows) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 64).

*Boyu bir qarış, saqqalı yeddi qarış insana oxşayır, ancaq gözə görünmür* (An inch tall, and a beard seven inches, looks like a man, but we don't see it with the eye) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 114).

*Ağacların gövdəsinə qırx arşın ip-kəndir çatmazdı* (A rope of forty arshins long would not be enough to cover the tree trunk) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 44).

*Qıratın ayağının biri sal daşın üstə bərk dəyir, daşa nalın dərin izi düşür* (One of Gyrat's hooves hit hard on a flat stone, and his deep imprint was left there) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 49).

Let us note that hyperbolos are most of all represented in certain types of myths, namely in cult, anthropogonic, totemic, heroic, and combined with traditions and legends.

During the narration, certain figures were actively used for persuasive exaggeration: the Koroglu squad built a fortress on the top of a mountain, and each brave man raised 77 stones there, the entire fortress was built in 77 days, etc. (Əsatirlər, 2005: 49).

At the same time, individual artistic decorations are used to more actively influence the mind of the listener:

*bala, içmə, mən içib dadını görmüşəm: yaşım keçib, bütün bədən çürüyüb əldən gedib, ancaq ölə bilmirəm. Ölüm də bir gözəl şeymiş, bala. Bu sudan içib mənim günümə düşmə* (Əsatirlər, 2005: 48). (child, do not drink living water, I **knew (saw) its taste**: my whole body rotted, became worthless (literally: **out of hand**), but at the same time I cannot die).

*Qadın gəlir ki, inəyi aparсын, baxıb görür ki, söyüd başını yuxarı qaldırıb, inək də söyüdü başında böğulub ölüb* (a woman came for a cow, but saw that the willow straightened (literally: raised her head), and the cow on top of her suffocated (Əsatirlər, 2005: 66).

In each of these examples, the possibilities of **metonymy** are used, as associations by contiguity.

**Comparisons** are used: *Nərə çəkib Qıratı çapır, at quş kimi uçub dərənin o tayına düşür* (he issued a mighty voice and spurred Gyrat, the horse took off like a bird and sank to the other side of the gorge) [(Əsatirlər, 2005: 49).

*Maral qayanın başından elə atıldı ki, quş kimi uçub əldən çıxdı* (Mother maral, like a bird, jumped from the mountain and became inaccessible) (Əsatirlər, 2005: 68).

#### **Reflection of myths in other forms of oral folk art.**

The artistic design of myths is connected with their themes, proximity to other genres of oral folk art. In order to determine the level of metaphorical nature of a particular myth, it should be remembered that among them there are myths that describe cosmic catastrophes and storms, myths associated with human life, for example, with the use of living water, myths that tell about the very first people, ancestors associated with the origin of animals and plants, with hunting, with holy places, including stones, telling how someone turns into stone, etc., myths associated with goodness, prosperity, moral purity and, finally, a group of myths associated with extraordinary creatures: these are genies, werewolves, forest people, and so on. There are mythological tales and epics, mythological beliefs, prohibitions, trials, interpretations of spells, and so on.

For example, the problems associated with death, with how a person passes into another world, are considered within the framework of ideas that are characteristic of a certain period of people's residence.

This is how the longevity of crows is explained: one of the myths tells that when creating a person, one of the prophets takes living water in order to transfer it to people. Upon returning, he lay down to rest and accidentally spilled water from the glove box. Two crows flew up and drank the spilled water. That is why they live 300 years (Əsatirlər, 2005: 48).

As the historical periods of the life of society changed, myths acquired details related to basic beliefs, religions, way of life and way of life. Myths were in the nature of worldly stories that had to be adopted in everyday life (Əsatirlər, 2005: 29). They became the basis for the formation of the worldview of people, and artistic expressiveness practically faded into the background. This can be seen in virtually all areas of mythological creativity. The myths were of a brief nature, were instructive, because they should have been easily perceived and assimilated by a person from any social group. Their simplicity and brevity should have served as an impetus to encourage further myth-making, as well as artistic creativity in general. Thanks to this, myths were easily intertwined with everyday problems, ideas, and needs to explain certain phenomena. Thanks to this, they were perceived by grateful listeners as the basis for making a particular decision or action.

It is known that "part of the myths found their place in ancient written and material monuments (rock paintings of Gamigaya and Gobustan, stone inscriptions, household items found in various burial mounds during archaeological excavations, etc.), and the other part has come down to our time orally. The mythological texts of the works of our classical writers were also one of their sources, as well as folk rituals, traditions, games and performances, and left a deep mark on beliefs. In the epic tradition, the main carriers of the ancient myths of the Azerbaijani Turks were epics and archaic legends, such as "Kitabi-Dede Gorgud", "Koroglu", "Ashug Garib", "Asli and Kerem" (Азербайджанские сказки, 1988: 9).

It should be noted that individual myths, the images of which are presented here, were reflected in various spheres of cultural activity, including art. However, do not forget that the image of people, certain heroes of myths in art was not accepted in the Islamic world. And therefore, if we trace the development of art in many of its areas in the Islamic world, including in Azerbaijan, we will find few elements associated with the myth there. But these elements are quite extensively represented in fairy tales of various types, an example of which is given above.

**Conclusion.** An analysis of the artistic features of Azerbaijani myths indicates that the style here is narrative, simple, but the character of the heroes and their

actions are associated with important features of the thinking of ancient people, namely, animism, and personification emanating from it. Hence – the features of the plot, where the conflict occurs between events and natural phenomena, closely related to the life of people, their character, customs and traditions, the natural environment. We have not delved into those types of metaphors that were clearly created in the style of fairy tales, since here the characters already have a more elevated, “magical” character, and are more con-

nected with social relations. In the most ancient layer of myths, namely, cosmogonic and ethnogonic, as well as those associated with various natural phenomena, there is a minimal amount of metaphorical ornaments. Basically, these are hyperboles, since the text itself is a fantastic representation of a phenomenon or event. The question of the artistic features of myths has a rich base for research, due to their multiplicity and close connection with the thinking and worldview of modern people, and requires further consideration.

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