POETICS OF THE FAIRY IMAGE IN THE POEM «WATER FAIRY»

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18323059

Abstract. *This article explores the evolution and poetics of the water fairy archetype, transitioning from mythological roots to contemporary Karakalpak literature. By analyzing B. Genjemuratov's poem «Water Fairy», the study examines how the protagonist's encounter with a supernatural being serves as an allegory for the «muse of inspiration». The research highlights the synthesis of Eastern «Peri» motifs and Western romanticism, illustrating the water fairy as a symbol of spiritual purity.*

Keywords: *water fairy, Poetics, Karakalpak poetry, B. Genjemuratov, Archetype, Muse of inspiration, Comparative literature.*

Introduction

The water fairy image is considered one of the oldest archetypes in human folklore and written literature. The water fairy image is interpreted as an element of nature, a mythological and epic creature related to water, whose appearance and function change according to various legends, sometimes appearing as a very beautiful and human-like being, and sometimes as a dangerous force of nature [1, pp. 5-6]. In contemporary literary studies, examining this character not only as a fairy tale hero but also as an artistic representation of social and psychological conflicts is becoming increasingly important.

The transformation of the water fairy image in literature is manifested in the following stages:

– Mythological foundations and demonological views. The Sirens in ancient Greek mythology and the Rusalkas among Slavic peoples were initially described as evil forces. With their voices and beauty, they lure men to destruction. During this period, the image was interpreted as an «unconquerable, dangerous force of nature».

– Romantic interpretation: A creature searching for a soul. In the 19th century, the image changed dramatically. In Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's novella «Undine» (1811), the water fairy strives to obtain an «eternal soul» by falling in love with a human. Here, the water fairy transforms not into an evil force, but into a tragic hero, yearning for human emotions.

– The Andersen phenomenon and the concept of «sacrifice». In H.C. Andersen's work «The Little Mermaid» (1837), a new aspect of the character emerges – self-sacrifice. To become human, she renounces her most precious possession – her voice. Here, the mermaid's tail is a symbol of restrictions, while her legs are symbols of both freedom and suffering.

Literature Review

For a deeper understanding of the literature and philosophy of the mermaid image, we can examine the fairy tale «The Little Mermaid» (1837) [2] by Hans Christian Andersen, a masterpiece of world literature. This work is not just a fairy tale for children, but a complex allegory about existentialism, religion, and psychological transformation. The image of a water spirit is also found in A.S. Pushkin's «Rusalka» (1832) [3]. In Slavic mythology, «rusalka» is not a fish-woman, but

the spirit of a girl who died by throwing herself into water due to unhappy love or humiliation. Pushkin combined this folk belief with realistic tragedy. Pushkin's heroine (Tatyana/Water spirit) is the daughter of a deceived man. When abandoned by the prince, she throws herself into the river to escape humiliation.

In Eastern classical literature and folklore, water spirits are often synthesized with the concept of «Peri». Unlike in the West, in Eastern poetics, purity and divine beauty predominate in the images of water spirits. They frequently appear as «masters of the unseen», providing assistance to the hero from the invisible realm. As noted by literary scholar E.M. Meletinsky, the image of the water spirit is an artistic representation of a civilized person's longing for their natural roots and, simultaneously, their fear of them [4, p. 75].

Although the image of «Peri» in Eastern classical literature is close to the concept of a water spirit, it carries a more divine connotation. Through the image of a peri, Lutfiy depicts the unattainable beauty of the beloved. For him, a peri represents an ideal that transcends humanity. In Navoiy's works, however, the image of a peri takes on a Sufi meaning. In his epic poem «Sab'ai sayyor», Navoiy portrays peris as the deepest layers of the human spirit, mediators of the spiritual world. The Eastern peri, unlike the Western water spirit, serves not to «become human», but to guide humanity towards «divinity». While the water nymph in the West represents existential solitude, the peri in Eastern literature is a means of attaining divine love and absolute beauty.

Research Methods

The study employs comparative-historical analysis to trace the transformation of the water spirit across Western and Eastern literary traditions. Additionally, hermeneutic and structural methods are used to interpret the metaphors within Genjemuratov’s poem, while mythopoetic analysis identifies the archetypal foundations and psychological symbolism inherent in the character's evolution.

Results and Discussion

The famous Karakalpak poet B. Genjemuratov's work «Water Fairy» [5, pp. 55-60] can be called a romantic poem in terms of its pathos. This poem became one of the major innovations in Karakalpak poetry. The water fairy is a symbol of ecological and spiritual purity. The enemies threatening them are right beside us – among us. A society that disregards spiritual freedom and its laws never appreciates beauty and tramples on human rights. These issues are depicted figuratively in the poem. Although the poet's phrasing and style are reminiscent of Eastern classical traditions, there is an attempt to imbue the image of the water fairy with a new meaning. The composition of the poem consists of 4 parts. In the first part, the lyrical hero, in the form of an address to the beks, recounts his fall from the splendor of bekship, the reason for which is an arrow shot from the bow of love. This involuntarily brings to mind the lyrics of the classic poet Ajiniyaz.

Beklik saltanatım qıyradı, bekler, taxtımnan qulattı sáwgi sadaǵı. Meniń tasqa megzes júregime ótkir, záhár, pal qarılǵan bir oq qadaldı.	My lordly splendor has crumbled, beks, The arrow of love knocked me from my throne. Into my stone-like heart, sharp, An arrow laced with poison and honey was pierced.

The poet's mastery lies in their ability to combine the contrasting concepts of «poison» and «honey» into a single arrow, serving as a unique way to vividly portray both the sweet and the agonizing moments within the poet's heart. In particular, the portrayal of inner emotional turmoil through metaphors like «golden crown», «steed of power», «horse of rule», «love's bow», and

«roaring tiger dispersing its sorrow» stands out as a sign of the poet's high intellectual and aesthetic sophistication.

In the second part, the spirit of the water involuntarily calls the lyrical hero, drawing him in. We know that water is, first and foremost, a symbol of purity. Thus, the lyrical hero needs inner purification, and therefore, he is following his attraction to water:

suwdıń ruwxı tarttı biradarlarım, meni suw shaqırdı sessiz, hawazsız. «Kimdur duwaladı» hám baǵdar aldım, «Quwlı kól» tamanǵa japadan jalǵız:	the spirit of the water drew me, my brothers, water called me silently, without sound. «Someone cast a spell», and I set out, Towards «Quvli Lake» all alone:

The lyrical hero sees a creature in the lake that involuntarily called him, namely a water fairy. The poet's verbal portrayal of the water fairy brings to mind an incredibly beautiful and captivating image:

Aydın suwda appaq quwdı janbaslap, jınısı – nasharzad taraqlar shashın, qamıs arasınan jutınıp kóz taslap, aqıldan azdım, waq, bekler, ırasım. Jasıl shashlarınıń arası menen, suw emes gúmis, zer shashılıp atır, túymesi shiyedey torsıq mámmesinen, súyiwge tolqınlar asıǵıp atar. Shúberek kórmegen, belin, bóksesin, shashları jat kózden jasırıp atır, siynesin sıypaǵan aydıń sáwlesi, Allanı alǵıslap másirip atır...	In the clear water, a white swan reclining, gender – female, combing her hair, peering through the reeds, swallowing, I lost my mind, oh, lords, truly. Between her green hair, not water, but silver and gold are scattered, buttons like cherries on her flask-shaped breasts, Waves rush to kiss. Cloth has never seen her waist, her hips, Her hair hides them from strange eyes, Moonlight caressing her bosom, She rejoices, praising God...

In the poem, the image of the lyrical hero is directly connected to and harmonious with the image of the lover. Professor A. Hayitmetov, in his major research «Navoi's Lyrics», writes the following about this character: «The image of the beloved is the life-and-death support of the main lyrical hero – the lover. Without understanding the meaning of this image, it is impossible to give a correct assessment of the lover's image» [6, p. 180]. In the third part of the poem, the lyrical hero, in love with the water fairy, rushes towards her and tries to catch her. Then the water fairy commands the lyrical hero not to approach her and, warning that whatever action occurs will be of her own doing, says that he must fulfill all her conditions. Then, telling him to close his eyes tightly, she kisses the lyrical hero on the lips.

The lyrical hero in the poem calls for loving, cherishing, and seeking the presence of the water fairy, understanding her as a symbol of beauty and a beautiful life. The poet, who glorifies falling in love with a fairy and loving her wholeheartedly, calls upon us to love the one-time gift of life and to utilize all its possibilities and blessings. The poet portrays the water fairy as exceptionally beautiful, well-rounded, and harmonious. The unparalleled beauty of the water fairy is its primary and most fundamental characteristic. The lyrical hero has always strived for beauty. He considers the water fairy a symbol of life's beauty, therefore he always describes her as dearer than everyone else, even his own life. The water fairy's beautiful features are depicted through

traditional comparisons: delicate flower-like lips, a slender waist, eyes, and green hair. Along with the effective and appropriate use of traditional similes, the poet also employs original comparisons:

Dúnya – shırgúbelek, jelpárrik yańlı, gúmis kúlki, sharap hám de posalar, yaq! yaq! hesh umıta almaspan – máńgi: appaq sawsaqlar hám tilla kesalar!..	The world is like a whirligig, like a fan, silver laughter, wine and kisses, no! no! I can never forget – forever: white fingers and golden cups!..

When the lyrical hero opens his eyes at dawn, he is at home, while the water fairy sits in the bathtub, coquettishly looking in the mirror and combing her hair. At that moment, the lyrical hero's wife's angry voice rings out, trying to interfere with the naked water fairy, jealously attempting to drive her away from her husband. The lyrical hero then pleads with his life partner, «This is a water fairy, don't harm her». Another of the poem's successes is that the poet skillfully portrays the wisdom, nobility, and modesty of true Karakalpak women through words and context:

Hasıl ǵoy qızları qaraqalpaqtıń, bir nárse uqtıma – qapını japtı. «Shayırlarǵa – mıń qız sadaǵa! Yaqshı... Bádenin jawsın..». dep kók maqpal taptı...	Noble are the daughters of the Karakalpaks, she understood something – she closed the door. «To poets – a thousand girls in sacrifice! Good... «May your body be blessed..». she said and found a blue velvet...

In the fourth part of the poem, the lyrical hero keeps the water nymph at home, despite his spouse's jealousy. From then on, his fame spreads throughout the world. Sometimes an artist friend wants to paint her picture, sometimes a billionaire cooperative owner wants to marry her, sometimes the quick-witted boys from a film company ask about her, sometimes a surgeon friend defends the water nymph theme, and finally, even the government inquires, saying she can't be given to private ownership, intensifying the competition for the water nymph. The lyrical hero, however, considers the water nymph a source of life and spiritual beauty. Living in the same cage with the water nymph is like living in paradise for him. Nevertheless, the lyrical hero is forced to bid farewell to the water nymph:

Aysız aqshamlardıń birinde, bekler, Kólde perim menen álwidaǵlastım. Dúnya – qápes yańlı. Onı erkinlikke, Bosattım. Qálbimdi qara zil bastı. Shashımdı, júzimdi, erinlerimdi, Qol hám ayaǵımdı aymaladı ol, Zilzila oyatıp ǵárip júregimde, Tap adam sıyaqlı qıynaladı ol…	On one moonless night, my lords, I bid farewell to my nymph on the lake. The world is like a cage. To freedom, I released her. A heavy grief overwhelmed my heart. My hair, my face, my lips, She caressed my hands and feet, Awakening an earthquake in my poor heart, She suffers like a human...

The depiction of landscapes (a moonless evening, a darkened lake) at the moment of farewell also had a unique impact on the poem's artistic composition and romantic atmosphere. Finally, the lyrical hero realizes that the society around him would torment him endlessly while he's alive. And the poem concludes with these lines:

Men qáytip jasayın mına dúnyada?! Suw tartar, suw tartar – shaqırar meni…	How can I live in this world?!

esimnen ketpeydi erkelep, aymalap… jalań ayaǵımdı sıńsılap súygeni…	The water will draw, the water will draw – it will call me... I won't forget how, cherishing and caressing... she kissed my bare feet, whimpering...

If we interpret the water fairy image in the poem literally, it appears as a product of mythological depiction, far removed from real life. In truth, through the water fairy image, the poet portrays the muse of inspiration, as essential to creative individuals as water and air. This is confirmed by the following opinion of the famous poet Saginbay Ibragimov: «The water fairy in the poem 'Water Fairy' is a muse of inspiration. It's difficult for her to live among people – ignorant ones scratch her delicate body, pull out her hair..». [7, p. 61]. Through the muse of inspiration, poets express their deep spiritual state and inner turmoil. In this process, they experience spiritual pleasure. The main idea of the poem is also built on valuing the muse of inspiration, protecting her, and appreciating every moment spent with her.

Conclusion

Overall, B. Genjemuratov's poem «Water Fairy» entered Karakalpak poetry as a novelty in the form of a lyrical-romantic poem, and through the water fairy image in it, for the first time in Karakalpak literature, artistic words were created that metaphorized the image of the muse of inspiration.

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