

THE SYMBOLIC SYSTEM IN TATAR POETRY OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: THE TRANSFORMATION OF NOMINATIVE MEANINGS

Ayrat F. Yusupov^{1*}, Nurfiya M. Yusupova², Alfina T. Sibgatullina³

^{1,2}Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia, ³Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia.

Email: *faikovich@mail.ru

Article History: Received on 29th September 2019, Revised on 30th October 2019, Published on 24th November 2019

Abstract

Purpose: This research is the first to study the image-symbol as a system of nominations, theoretically conceptualizes and verifies the term of “nomination” in relation to poetic images-symbols. The interconnection of literary and cultural linguistics methods of analysis through the concept of nominations to the images-symbols made it possible to apply a new theoretical approach to the study of the symbolic system.

Methodology: in our study, we rely on the methodology of considering the symbol in the aspect of a system of nominations, which, in our opinion, expands the views on the process of symbolization.

Result: Thus, symbols characterize the national peculiarities of poets’ creativity and the artistic world of poetic works, the principles of organizing the subject level and the ideological and semantic potential of works. As a result, symbols have become a kind of “codes” that defines the unique and universal features of Tatar poetry.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of The Symbolic System in Tatar Poetry of the First Half of the Twentieth Century: The Transformation of Nominative Meanings is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *Tatar poetry, Symbolic system, Nominative meaning, Transformation, Nomination.*

INTRODUCTION

The turn of the 19th and the early 20th centuries became the period of great accomplishments and new, as yet unclear endeavors. It is well known that in such periods of the development of oral culture, symbols are widely disseminated in literature. Our observations suggest that any external changes that lead to transformations in the national artistic thinking contributed to the enrichment of the symbolic system and individual symbols with new semantic variations. First, the new processes that took place in social and philosophical thought at the beginning of the 20th century were conditioned by the strengthening of national ideas in Tatar society. In the conditions of cultural renewal and growth of national self-identification, images-symbols acquire unprecedented meanings accumulating the idea of national self-actualization. On the other hand, Tatar poetry of the early 20th century is under the influence of European and Russian literature. In the conditions of a new cultural orientation to the West, complimenting symbols with different and new meanings leads to the renewal not only of the artistic structure of the symbol but also of Tatar's oral culture in general. In the work of poets, the content of the symbolic image arises as the complementarity of various meanings.

The national literary process, in particular, the symbolic system in the 1920s and 30s, reinterprets the transformation in connection with the change of socio-cultural and literary and aesthetic landmarks. M.M. Golubkov notes that the history of Soviet literature is a history of the interaction of two trends – the aesthetic, artistic and creative processes of the literary movement, and political pressure, directly projected onto the literary process. In the national literature, this phenomenon had its own peculiarities ([Ibragimov, Yusupova, & Zakirzyanov, 2016](#)).

We used the semiotic idea of opposition, “binarity”, between texts in the national literature to study the nominative function of symbols in Tatar poetry of the 1920s–1950s, to clarify the dialogue in the structure of one symbol of different nominative meanings “belonging” to different concepts: monistic (political) and alternative (aesthetic). The images that are typical for Tatar poetry often appear as ideological symbols ([Zagidullina, 2018](#)); the semantic and structure-forming transformation of the symbol can be traced in the process of meaning generation. Despite this, Tatar literature intuitively or consciously tries to protect former literary traditions, which is manifested in preserving the foundations of the national symbolic system, primarily with the help of images-symbols, genetically associated with the folk traditions, that continue the traditions of symbolization of the early 20th century.

The basic mechanisms for the use and transformation of various images-symbols in Tatar literature by Tatar scholars have been studied in one way or another ([Mingazova, Galimullin, & Galimullina, 2016](#); [Motigullina, Golikova, Zamalieva, & Shamsutdinov, 2016](#); [Kajumova, Galiullina, Yusupov, & Sibgatullina, 2017](#)). However, special studies on the transformation of nominative meanings of symbols on the material of Tatar poetry of the first half of the twentieth century have not yet been carried out. In this paper, this problem is analyzed in a wider literary and linguistic and culturological context.

METHODS

In accordance with the tasks assigned, the hermeneutics became the methodological basis of the thesis; hermeneutics regards works of art as a “repository of symbols and hidden meanings”. We resorted to motivating poetics, developed by B.L. Borukhov when analyzing the evolution of crosscutting images-symbols. Working on the thesis, we used conventional motivation, which allows interpretation of images-symbols, revelation of their poetic peculiarities at each stage of the development of Tatar literature in the first half of the 20th century. During the research into the change in socio-cultural, literary and aesthetic guidelines that affect the transformation of the symbolic system, a synergistic approach proved to be in demand. Synergetic semiotics is an approach to symbolic systems as open ones. The synergistic approach makes it possible to present the interaction of artistic and ethnocultural consciousness when forming new semantic variations, as well as to identify the ability of the symbolic system – “linguistic signs of secondary nomination” – to self-regulation, to determine the “synergistic integrity of interaction” of nominative units (in this case, symbols) of artistic consciousness and culture in the context of Tatar poetry of the first half of the 20th century ([Khaybullina, Khabibullina, Nagumanova, & Almenova, 2017](#); [Husnutdinov, Sagdieva, & Mirzagitov, 2016](#))

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The focus on secular literature and the change of sociocultural and artistic and aesthetic preferences contribute to the formation of a new semantic space of symbols in Tatar poetry of the early twentieth century. First, this trend is observed in the system of Sufi symbols.

On the one hand, they carry a mystical content, on the other, they transform and acquire “secular” content, begin to serve as the main means of narration, naming a particular philosophical concept, giving the assessment to life and being. Being the result of the transformation, the two-dimensional nature of the poetic content is accompanied by understatement, mysticism, so that the poetics of complicated and stylistically elegant poems manifests itself, and this poetic peculiarity becomes a tradition ([Zagidullina, & Yusupova, 2017](#)). The poetry of the early 20th century manifests the most important feature of Sufi gnoseology that is a symbolic way of perceiving life. A similar phenomenon accompanies the main mechanism of symbolization that is the process of meaning generation and semantic enrichment of a symbol within a literary text in the poems “Whether the Wind Blows Across the Meadows”, “Trusting in God”, “The Cloud Has Passed Away”, “Sometimes I Lie Full of Sadness...” by Dardmend, and “Towards Freedom” (1907) by G. Tukai, etc.

The increased attention to national problems is also manifested in the content of the Sufi concept of “The Perfect Man”. In the new environment, the poets are entrusted with the mission of developing the concept of a national hero. Thus, the works developed a new image of a person caring about the welfare of the people and devoting himself to serving them. In terms of literature, aesthetics, and philosophy, the national hero model corresponds to the traditions of the Sufi concept of “Al-Insan al-Kamil”. In Tatar poetry of the early 20th century, the model is modified and implemented, for example, in the portrayal of G. Tukai as a poet-prophet. G. Tukai became a symbol of Tatar poetry and Tatar people, filled with the features actualized in the Sufi concept. In such poems as “Prayer” (1913), “To the Poet” (1913) by S. Sunchaliai, “Why the Candles Go Out” (1914) by Kh. Gabidov, the image of G. Tukai is recreated in accordance with the ideas of the perfect man (like Prophet Mohammed), who possesses moral purity and strength of mind, and who is able to unite the Tatar nation.

The individual Sufi symbols are imbued with existential content and convey the idea of the finitude of being. In such works, the technique of forming symbols is related to the layering of Western and Oriental semantic motifs on the structure of symbols, which is relevant to external synthetism. For example, in Dardmend’s poem “We” (1908), the narrator’s understanding of the meaning of life is described with Sufi symbols «wind», «wanderer», «fire». This tendency is clearly manifested in Dardmend’s poem “I Have Not Been Able to Sprinkle My Shroud Yet” by.

Divine love is the semantic center of Sufi literature. Therefore, in most Sufi symbols, the meaning of “divine love” is the dominant one, but other interpretation variants are also possible. In the poems by Dardmend, G. Tukai, Kh. Gabidov, M. Gafuri, Sh. Babich and proved the transformation of the meaning of such symbols as Garib (a wanderer), Leila and Majnun, the flower, the nightingale, the ice, the needle, the butterfly, the candle, fire. They are transformed and acquire secular meaning and are perceived in the meaning of «Love for the Nation» or «Love for the beloved».

Tatar poetry of that period generated a series of “cross-cutting” landscape symbols (the wind, the sea, the sun, the star, the moon, the fire, etc.), which acquired new semantic variations and became polysemantic symbols and leitmotifs, complex author’s individual symbols, reflecting the poet’s ideological and aesthetic concept. The structural and semantic field of landscape images correlates with the ethnic worldview, with the mentality and the view of life of Tatar people.

This triggers the mechanism of meaning-generation, in which transformation dominates. This mechanism ensures the ambiguity of the semantic structure of landscape symbols in Tatar poetry of the early 20th century. On the one hand, the philosophical component comes to the fore in nominations; on the other hand, nominations serve to present national and socio-cultural ideas, civic views. Later, a similar trend becomes another tradition in symbolization.

The most frequent symbols in Tatar poetry of that period are cosmogonic symbols. The social component is enhanced in

the semantic field of cosmogonic images. The main ideologies of that period, national revival and social progress, determined their nominative function associated with the socio-cultural situation that had developed in Tatar society.

In Tatar poetry of the early 20th century, seasons often appear as symbols. These symbols reveal the spiritual beauty of the human, who is able to discern and convey the unique charm of nature to others (“Autumn” (1906) by G. Tukai, “Love”, “A Summer Night in the Moonlight” by M. Gafuri, etc.). ([Villalobos Antúnez, Hernández, & Palmar, 2012](#); [Mendoza, & Mendoza, 2018](#)).

Tatar poets also widely used images of natural elements – Fire and Water, Air and Earth – as symbols. They first appeared in such a role at this stage of the development of Tatar oral tradition and over time developed into one of the tendencies of symbolization. Tatar poets often used the images comparing the events that “turned Russia upside down” with the angry sea, or the storm (“The Time of Revolution” (1906) by N. Dumavi, “The Ship” by Dardmend, “Life and Being” (1911) by Z. Bashiri, “Life” (1912) by K. Iuldashev, etc.). The image of the wind is a nomination of social values, the country, the human life, and the emotional state of the individual. The formation and the development of author’s individual symbols in Tatar poetry of the early 20th century is based on three main trends: the continuation and gaining new aesthetic meanings of Sufi and mythological symbols, the use of landscape (folk) symbolism, the creation and the development of qualitatively new images-symbols on the basis of landscape symbolism ([Matandare, 2018](#); [Močinić & Feresin, 2017](#)).

From the second half of the 1930s, the appeal of the word art to folk art, the usage of traditional images of Tatar literature as details of ideological and mythological images allowed the poets to overcome the political schematism of social realism. Poetry overcame the monosemy of folklore images and their unidirectional functionality, as they became polysemantic. Similar changes in the artistic paradigm can be noticed in such works as “Farewell” (1933), “White Birch” (1933), “Nabat” (1933), “Wings” (1933) by Kh. Tufan, “Twin Apple Tree” (1937), “We Parted” (1936), “Yearn” (1936), “The Love Song” (1937), “Your Views” (1937), “The Postman” (1938) by M. Jalil, “Down the Street...” (1928), “It’s Probably Spring” (1942) by F. Karim, “Lullaby” (1927), “The Song of the Glove” (1927), “The Swan” (1927) by A. Faizi, “A Drop of Rain and the Poet” (1939) by S. Khakim, etc. ([Kanashiro, Ribeiro, Silva, Meirelles, & Terceiro, 2018](#)).

Since the second half of the 1930s, Tatar poets often resorted to the image of a brave young man. A falcon, a ray of light, a saber with a silver hilt, a blue sash as parts of the image of a young fighter are associated with folklore plots and motifs. The image of the Motherland was subjected to the same semantic transformation. It began to appear as the Motherland (“Mother”, etc.), complemented by such details as an auburn horse, a forest, a willow, red flowers, which give the texts the national color. This tendency is intensified in the military lyrics of M. Jalil and F. Karim.

SUMMARY

1. Images-symbols as a system of nominations are peculiar “codes” that determine the unique and universal characteristics of Tatar poetry of the first half of the 20th century. Crosscutting images-symbols are transmitted from one stage to another, thus forming a single artistic system, in which each component is connected with the previous one. Images-symbols help to identify transformations in the artistic concept of Tatar poets, reveal new facets and deep mechanisms of development in the socio-cultural, literary and aesthetic thought of the first half of the 20th century.
2. Image-symbolic thinking generates an indirect nomination, forming a symbolic meaning, which allows us to identify the nominative function of symbols. The study of the symbol in the system of nominations expands the views on the symbolization process.
3. Being one of the principles of artistic thinking, symbolization was widely adopted in Tatar poetry at the beginning of the 20th century primarily within the modernist artistic paradigm. Sufi and landscape symbols, as settled codes of poetic thinking, have national peculiarities: firstly, their semantics is formed on the basis of cultural and literary traditions, and secondly, it is determined by the cultural and historical context.
4. Images-symbols in the Tatar poetry of the 1920–1950s indicate changes in the national artistic thinking. The dialogue in the symbolic system of nominative meanings “belonging” to various concepts – monistic (political) and alternative (aesthetic) – represents the semiotic idea of opposition. Landscape, folklore and traditional images-symbols are perceived by poets as an opportunity to change artistic paradigms. They indicate that oral culture is not limited to socialist realism, but it begins the process of returning to national classical traditions.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, symbols characterize the national peculiarities of poets’ creativity and the artistic world of poetic works, the principles of organizing the subject level and the ideological and semantic potential of works. As a result, symbols have become a kind of “codes” that defines the unique and universal features of Tatar poetry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

This study was conducted with within of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) and the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan within the framework of scientific project No. 18-412-160008.

REFERENCES

1. Husnutdinov, D. H., Sagdieva, R. K., & Mirzagitov, R. H. (2016). Comparative constructions in G. Ibragimov's works. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 7(4), 42-45.
2. Ibragimov, B., Yusupova, N., & Zakirzyanov, A. (2016). Ideological myth and archetypes in tatar poetry of years 1920-50s. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 7(3), 228-231.
3. Kajumova, Z. M., Galiullina, G. R., Yusupov, A. F., & Sibgatullina, A. T. (2017). The anthroponymicon of small genres of tatar folklore in the context of the sufi picture of the world. *Journal of Fundamental and Applied Sciences*, 9(7S), 1148-1156.
4. Kanashiro, L., Ribeiro, A., Silva, D., Meirelles, P., & Terceiro, A. (2018). Predicting Software Flaws with Low Complexity Models based on Static Analysis Data. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering & Management*, 3(2), 17. <https://doi.org/10.20897/jisem.201817>
5. Khaybullina, A., Khabibullina, A. Z., Nagumanova, E., & Almenova, A. (2017). Figurative in the works of russian classics and tatar poets of the early XX century. *Revista publicando*, 4(13 (2)), 763-772.
6. Matandare, M. A. (2018). Botswana Unemployment Rate Trends by Gender: Relative Analysis with Upper Middle Income Southern African Countries (2000-2016). *Dutch Journal of Finance and Management*, 2(2), 04. <https://doi.org/10.20897/djfm/3837>
7. Mendoza, D. J., & Mendoza, D. I. (2018). Information and Communication Technologies as a Didactic Tool for the Construction of Meaningful Learning in the Area of Mathematics. *International Electronic Journal of Mathematics Education*, 13(3), 261-271. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iejme/3907>
8. Mingazova, L. I., Galimullin, F. G., & Galimullina, A. F. (2016). the mythological image of Shuralen and its reflection in the folklore of Volga-Ural region. *Turkish online journal of design art and communication.–Turkey, TOJDAC*, 6, 3256-3262.
9. Močinić, S., & Feresin, C. (2017). THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL SPACE IN PRESCHOOLERS' LEARNING PROCESSES. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 5(2), 98-108. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2017.525>
10. Motigullina, A., Golikova, G., Zamalieva, L., & Shamsutdinov, R. (2016). LINGUISTIC AND SEMANTIC ASPECTS OF REALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT " BIRD " IN NARRATIVE BY VI BELOV " STARLING " AND NOVELLA BY MS MAGDEEV " WHERE THE CRANES BUILD THEIR NESTS ". *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods*, 48-53.
11. Villalobos Antúnez, J. V., Hernández, J. P., & Palmar, M. (2012). El estatuto bioético de los derechos humanos de cuarta generación. *Frónesis*, 19(3).
12. Zagidullina, D. F. (2013). Modernizm v tatarskoi literature pervoi treti XX veka (Modernism in the Tatar literature of the first third of the 20th century)". Kazan, 207.
13. Zagidullina, D., & Yusupova, N. (2017). Pair Sufi symbols in Tatar poetry of the 20th century: Complexity and transformation of symbols. <https://doi.org/10.18355/XL.2017.10.03.06>
14. Latypova, A. V., Yusupova, N. M., Zakirzyanov, A. M., & Yusupov, A. F. (2016). STYLE AND POETICS OF TATAR SUFI WORKS OF XIX-TH CENTURY. *Turkish online journal of design art and communication*, 6, 3082-3087.
15. Cieslik, A., & Verkuyten, M. (2006). National, ethnic and religious identities: Hybridity and the case of the Polish Tatars. *National Identities*, 8(2), 77-93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608940600703650>
16. Vertheim, S. (2012). Reclamation, revalorization and re-Tatarization via changing Tatar orthographies. Orthography as Social Action: Scripts, Spelling, Identity and Power Language and Social Processes, 3, 65-98. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614511038.65>
17. Dziekan, M. M. (2011). History and culture of Polish Tatars. Muslims in Poland and Eastern Europe. Widening the European Discourse on Islam, 27-39.
18. Fisher, A. W. (2014). Crimean Tatars. Hoover Press.
19. Rorlich, A. A. (2017). Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience. Hoover Press.