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XALQ RIVOYATIDAN BADIIY OBRAZGACHA: O‘ZBEK VA RUS ADABIY AN’ANALARIDA AMIR TEMURNING MIFOPOETIK MODELLARI

Annotatsiya

Amir Temur adabiy qahramonga aylanishidan ancha avval uning siymosi afsonalar, xalq hikoyalari va e’tiqodlardan iborat boy qatlam bilan o‘ralgan edi. Maqolada ana shu mifologik qatlam qayta tiklanadi va uning badiiy matnga kirib borishda qanday qayta ishlanishi ko‘rsatiladi. Tadqiqot materialini o‘zbek xalq rivoyatlari (Sohibqironning tug‘ilishi haqidagi afsona, «Temur» ismining «temir» ma’nosi, so‘ziga sodiq hukmdor haqidagi hikoya), rus afsonalari (ma’naviy ustoz Mir Sayyid Baraka, 1395-yildagi Vladimir ikonasi mo‘jizasi) hamda Go‘ri Amir maqbarasi bilan bog‘liq zamonaviy miflar – «Temurlang la’nati» va «qondek qizil yoqut» tashkil etadi. Mifopoetik va qiyosiy-tipologik usullar yordamida takrorlanuvchi modellar – mo‘jizaviy tug‘ilish, bashorat, ilohiy tanlanganlik, muqaddas ism va taqiqlangan xazina aniqlanadi. Qiyoslash ikki xil urg‘uni yuzaga chiqaradi: o‘zbek folklori ma’naviy himoya va qahramon qismatini birinchi o‘ringa qo‘ysa, rus xalq xotirasi Temur yurishini samoviy shafoat bilan hal bo‘lgan ikki ma’naviy olam uchrashuvi sifatida talqin qiladi. Shuningdek, bu motivlar publitsistika, OAV va Samarqandning turistik rivoyatlarida yashashda davom etib, Temurning keyingi adabiy tasviri uchun madaniyatlararo poydevor bo‘lib xizmat qilishi ko‘rsatib beriladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Amir Temur, Sohibqiron, afsona, mif, mifopoetika, o‘zbek folklori, rus afsonalari, Go‘ri Amir, «Temurlang la’nati», «Temir Aqsak haqida qissa», adabiy obraz.

FROM FOLK LEGEND TO LITERARY IMAGE: MYTHOPOETIC MODELS OF AMIR TIMUR IN UZBEK AND RUSSIAN TRADITIONS

Annotation

Long before Amir Timur became a literary character, his figure had been shaped by a rich layer of legends, folk tales and beliefs. The present article reconstructs this mythological layer and shows how it is reworked when it enters literary texts. The material comprises Uzbek folk narratives (the legend of the Sahibqiran's birth, the meaning of the name “Temur” as “iron”, the story of the ruler who keeps his word), Russian legends (the spiritual mentor Mir Sayyid Baraka, the miracle of the Vladimir Icon in 1395) and modern myths centred on the Gur-Emir mausoleum - the “curse of Tamerlane” and Timur's “blood-red ruby”. Mythopoetic and comparative-typological methods are applied to identify recurring patterns: miraculous birth, prophecy, divine election, the sacred name and the forbidden treasure. The comparison reveals two distinct emphases: Uzbek folklore stresses spiritual protection and the hero's destiny, whereas Russian folk memory frames Timur's campaign as an encounter between two spiritual worlds resolved by heavenly intervention. The study also demonstrates that these motifs continue to circulate in journalism, the mass media and the tourist lore of Samarkand, forming an intercultural foundation for the later literary portrayal of Timur in both Uzbek and Russian literature.

Key words: Amir Timur, Sahibqiran, legend, myth, mythopoetics, Uzbek folklore, Russian legends, Gur-Emir, “curse of Tamerlane”, The Tale of Temir Aksak, literary image.

ОТ НАРОДНЫХ ПРЕДАНИЙ К ЛИТЕРАТУРНОМУ ОБРАЗУ: МИФОПОЭТИЧЕСКИЕ МОДЕЛИ АМИРА ТИМУРА В УЗБЕКСКОЙ И РУССКОЙ ТРАДИЦИЯХ

Аннотация

Задолго до того, как Амир Тимур стал литературным персонажем, его фигура была окружена плотным слоем легенд, народных рассказов и поверий. В статье реконструируется этот мифологический пласт и показывается, как он перерабатывается при вхождении в художественный текст. Материалом служат узбекские народные предания (легенда о рождении Сахибкирана, значение имени «Темур» - «железо», рассказ о правителе, верном своему слову), русские легенды (о духовном наставнике Мир Сейиде Береке, о чуде Владимирской иконы в 1395 году) и современные мифы, связанные с мавзолеем Гур-Эмир, о «проклятии Тамерлана» и «кроваво-красном рубине». С помощью мифопоэтического и сравнительно-типологического методов выделяются повторяющиеся модели: чудесное рождение, пророчество, божественное избранничество, сакральное имя, запретный клад. Сопоставление выявляет два различных акцента: узбекский фольклор подчёркивает духовную защиту и предназначение героя, тогда как русская народная память осмысляет поход Тимура как встречу двух духовных миров, разрешённую небесным заступничеством. Показано также, что эти мотивы продолжают бытовать в публицистике, СМИ и туристических преданиях Самарканда, образуя межкультурную основу для последующего литературного изображения Тимура.

Ключевые слова: Амир Тимур, Сахибкиран, легенда, миф, мифопоэтика, узбекский фольклор, русские легенды, Гур-Эмир, «проклятие Тамерлана», «Повесть о Темир-Аксаке», литературный образ.

Introduction. The historical perception of Amir Timur was shaped not only by documentary chronicles but also by the rich mythological tradition that surrounded his personality. Legends, folk traditions, oral stories and symbolic motifs created a complex cultural formation that became an integral part of the historical memory of the peoples of the East. The

mythopoetic image of Timur included elements of sacrality, the notion of a “lucky star”, chosenness, supernatural power and the ruler's justice. These notions took deep root in the collective consciousness and for centuries served as the basis for interpretations of his personality in literature, art and folklore.

The relevance of the study lies in the fact that the mythological layer of Timur's image, which emerged long before its artistic embodiments, has not yet been sufficiently systematised from a comparative perspective. The aim of the article is to identify the basic mythological models formed in the Uzbek and Russian folk traditions and to show how these models are transformed when they pass into a literary text

Research Methodology. The research material comprises Uzbek folk legends collected by F. Ruziev in the book Sohibqiron haqida rivoyatlar ("Legends about the Sahibqiran", 2005), Russian folk legends about Timur's campaign against Rus' in 1395, the Old Russian Tale of Temir Aksak, as well as contemporary journalistic and media texts reflecting the myth of the “curse of Tamerlane” and “Timur's ruby”. The use of heterogeneous sources - from a classic folklore collection to online publications - is dictated by the very nature of myth, which lives simultaneously in archaic and in the most recent forms.

The methodological basis of the work is formed by mythopoetic and comparative-typological approaches. Mythopoetic analysis makes it possible to single out stable motifs (miraculous birth, prophecy, chosenness, the sacredness of the name, forbidden treasure) and to describe their symbolic structure. The comparative-typological method allows the Uzbek and Russian folklore traditions to be compared and makes it possible to trace how mythological models are transformed when they pass into a literary text. The analytical procedure included grouping the legends thematically, identifying their archetypal basis and interpreting the functions of myth in shaping the literary image of Timur.

Results and Discussions. The legendary image of Amir Timur took shape long before its artistic embodiments. In the memory of the Uzbeks, Persians, Turks, Russians and other peoples, he remained a warrior and statesman, and also a personality endowed with exceptional inner strength and a special destiny. The legendary tradition is particularly rich in Uzbek folklore, where Timur appears as a just, wise and far-sighted ruler whose deeds acquire miraculous details. In these traditions the ruler's power is inseparably linked with his justice, his spiritual purpose and his special mission; it is they that create the basic mythological models subsequently transformed in fiction.

These traditions became part of the common cultural heritage of the East and, having spread far beyond Central Asia, significantly influenced the perception of Timur's personality in European and Russian sources. Turning to his image, authors of different traditions relied on folklore motifs, reinterpreting them in accordance with the aesthetics and ideology of their epoch: in some texts Timur appears as a founding hero, in others as a bearer of fate, a “lord of time”, and in still others as a symbol of culture or strength of spirit. Thus, stable folk models become the source material for subsequent artistic interpretations.

The folklore tradition has preserved many legends connected with the birth of the future Sahibqiran. A special place belongs to the legend of Timur's birth recorded by F. Ruziev, which sets the tone for the ruler's entire mythopoetic biography [2]. According to the legend, Timur's mother, Tegina Khatun, was the youngest and favourite wife of Taraghay Bahadur; her pregnancy arouses anxiety and envy among the other wives, who perceive the future birth of an heir as a threat to their position. Hired assassins, having learned of the pregnancy, do not dare to kill the woman but leave her bound in the steppe. She is rescued by a shepherd - a widespread folklore motif in which the intervention of a simple but pure-hearted person changes the course of fate. Concealing her name, Tegina Khatun becomes a renowned healer, and a symbolic line is introduced into the legend: Taraghay Bahadur meets his own wife without recognising her. Her words that her husband's ailment is not bodily but spiritual – the loss of connection with those who long for him («uni sog‘inayotganlar», “those who miss him”) – underline a motif important for the future image: a ruler must be able to hear the pain of his loved ones and of his people.

The hero's very name also carries a symbolic load. In the Turkic languages the word temir (timur) means “iron”; the meaning of physical strength attached to the name symbolises firmness of spirit, will and the ability to endure trials. This turns the naming into an act of prophecy: the name predetermines the fate of the future ruler, and Timur's birth becomes a symbolic event foreshadowing his historical role [2].

A special place is occupied by the legend “Temurning so‘zi - so‘z! Ammo...” (“Timur's Word Is His Word! But...”), which reveals how the Sahibqiran understood and valued the power of the word [3]. Timur besieged the fortress of Chin for six months; on entering the city, he saw a princess ready to throw herself down from the porch of the citadel. He calls her «Chin quyoshi» (“the Sun of Chin”), but the girl replies that with his arrival «bu quyosh so‘ndi» (“this sun has gone out”) and that «osmonda ikki quyoshga o‘rin yo‘q» (“there is no place for two suns in the sky”). Timur persuades her to stay, but on hearing a brief «Ket!» (“Go away!”) he turns and leaves, true to his word. Some time later the princess sends him a letter: «Ket, dedim – ketding! Ammo qaytma, demagan edim-ku!..» (“I told you to go – and you went! But I did not tell you not to come back!..”). The elevated rhetoric of the forms of address («Ey mulk sohibi!» “O possessor of the realm!”, «shahanshoh» “king of kings”) emphasises the greatness of the addressee, while the epithet «so‘ziga sodiq» (“true to his word”) forms the moral portrait of a ruler whose word can be relied upon. The legend makes Timur not only a hero of war but also a figure with a deep emotional world, capable of hearing and respecting the feelings of others.

Samarkand urban legends include the story of the construction of the Bibi-Khanym Mosque: the architect, inspired by the beauty of Timur's wife, delayed the construction and was punished for it, and since then, according to popular belief, the stones of the mosque have acquired «особую прочность и величие» (“special strength and grandeur”) as a reminder of the union of love, power and passion. In the “Legend of Amir Temur”, Bekbuva, the bek of Shahrisabz, having learned from an astrologer of the forthcoming birth of a mighty warrior named Timur, decides to destroy the child, but a faithful maidservant warns the mother, who goes into hiding; the premature birth takes place in Chiroqchi [6]. The astrologer's prophecy and the "radiance" of the birthplace emphasise the idea of the hero's divine election, while the plot of the rescued infant brings Timur close to the archetype of the “rescued child-hero”; the path “from the bottom to the summit” reinforces the symbolism of self-perfection and destiny.

Taken together, the Uzbek legends about Timur's birth and youth reveal a single archetypal structure. The motifs of miraculous birth, the rescued infant, initiation and the ascent “from the bottom to the summit” build the universal mythological path of a hero who is separated from the world and tempers his will until his victorious triumph. Even a physical defect – the broken leg and the subsequent “iron lameness” – is reinterpreted not as a shortcoming but as a symbol of endurance and uniqueness that justifies the ruler's very nickname. Thus, folklore endows the historical figure in advance with the features of one chosen by fate, predetermining its future greatness.

Legends about Timur have been preserved among different peoples, and the Russian folklore tradition is no exception. One of the most widespread Uzbek plots is the legend of Mir Sayyid Baraka, Timur's spiritual mentor: during the battle with Tokhtamysh, when the advantage was on the enemy's side, Baraka threw a handful of sand towards the enemy, panic arose in its ranks, and victory went to Timur. In popular memory this episode lives not as a military stratagem but as evidence of a spiritual power standing above weapons: the handful of sand turns into a symbol of blessing and invisible support, strengthening the image of a ruler whose victories are linked with spiritual patronage.

Russian legends focus on something else – on the clash of two spiritual worlds. According to folk sources, shortly before the supposed siege of Moscow in 1395, the Most Holy Mother of God in purple robes appeared to Tamerlane in a dream, leading a

countless host to defend the city; the vision so frightened the conqueror that he took flight [7]. A similar plot is associated with the capture of Yelets, where, according to legend, the Mother of God again appeared to Timur, after which he hastily retreated [8]. Historians explain Timur's retreat rationally – by the military fatigue of the army, shortage of provisions, the onset of cold weather and the absence of political advantage – yet the popular consciousness added to these factors the sacred motif of a "divine vision" that saved the Russian land.

It was precisely such notions that formed the basis of one of the earliest literary works on the image of Timur – the Old Russian Tale of Temir Aksak [1]. In this monument of the 14th–15th centuries, folk legends acquired a symbolically condensed form: the historical figure of Timur appears as the embodiment of an “alien force” sent from above as an admonition or punishment. Thus, the Russian tradition incorporates the commander not so much into the image of an enemy as into a figure built into the divine design for the salvation of the land.

Narratives about the Gur-Emir, Timur's mausoleum in Samarkand, are connected with mythological imagery. As early as the 19th century, residents of the city and pilgrims held the belief that disturbing the rest of the Sahibqiran could bring disasters – wars, epidemics, earthquakes [7]. Historians explain the origin of this “curse” as a late folklore layer that arose from notions of the sanctity of great rulers' burials and fear of violating sacred space. Nevertheless, such legends continue to live in popular memory, becoming part of contemporary culture and the tourist mythology of Samarkand.

Over time the legends were supplemented with new plots, the best known of which is the story of the «кроваво-красный рубин» (“blood-red ruby”) allegedly buried with Timur in the Gur-Emir. According to beliefs, this stone was the source of the Sahibqiran's power and a symbol of his authority, and its bright colour was associated with the blood of enemies. After the opening of the tomb in 1941 the legend received a new lease of life: stories about the «проклятие Тамерлана» (“curse of Tamerlane”) began to appear in the press and later on television, claiming that the opening of the sarcophagus had triggered the outbreak of war [9], [4].

In contemporary publications the myth of the ruby is interpreted in various ways. The REN TV channel notes that the famous Timur Ruby, now kept in the British Royal Collection, is in fact not a ruby but a large red spinel; the names of Eastern rulers engraved on the stone – Timur, Mirzo Ulugbek, Shah Abbas – gave rise to the legend of its “journey” through dynasties, but there is no reliable evidence of the stone's connection with the Samarkand tomb [10]. The Life.ru outlet recalls that rumours of «сокровища под нефритовой плитой» (“treasures under the jade slab”) were one of the reasons for opening the mausoleum in 1941, but the archaeologists found only a massive jade slab bearing the genealogy of the dynasty [4]. In Soviet mass culture the expression «проклятие Тамерлана», linking the opening of the tomb with the outbreak of war, became firmly established.

The development of the myth in Uzbek journalism is particularly revealing. The article by historian Rustam Jabborov, "Amir Temurning bebaho yoquti haqida eshitganmisiz?" ("Have You Heard of Amir Timur's Priceless Ruby?"), tells of the "journey" of the precious stone from Timur and Mirzo Ulugbek to Shah Abbas, the Afghan emirs and, finally, the British Crown; the author cites folklore motifs – a snake that presented the stone to a newborn, and a boy who hid the relic in a vessel with a thousand holes [3]. The absence of references to reliable sources shows how the mythological layer displaces the historical one. Contemporary researchers interpret this plot as an example of the vitality of the “forbidden treasure” archetype [5], which combines the striving for mystery, the desire to touch the power of a great ancestor and the fear of violating sacred peace. The image of the ruby as a symbol of blood and war, found in both Eastern and European traditions (rubies as «капли крови драконов», “drops of dragons' blood”), reinforces the legendary status of the conqueror-commander.

The legend of the "blood-red ruby" is a vivid example of how folklore, faith and history intertwine to create an aura of mystery around Timur. The story of the stone is perceived simultaneously as a folk tale and as a symbolic metaphor – a reflection of the people's attitude to memory, power and history. Its vitality is explained by the fact that it combines three stable layers of meaning: the human striving for mystery, the desire to touch the power of a great ancestor and the fear of violating sacred peace. It is telling that in publications of the late 20th century the ruby is described no longer as a historical relic but as a «символ кровавой судьбы полководца» (“symbol of the commander's bloody fate”) – a stone that seems to have absorbed the energy of his military might and poses a danger to those who disturb the ruler's peace.

Conclusion. The analysis shows that the legends about Timur are not merely folklore stories: they reflect the people's deep reverence for their ancestor and form stable mythological models in which the ruler's power is inseparably linked with justice, spiritual purpose and a special mission. It is these models that, passing through the prism of artistic consciousness, turn into poetic symbols uniting historical memory and the philosophy of the epoch.

A comparison of the two traditions reveals their fundamental difference. Uzbek mythopoetics emphasises the spiritual patronage of the mentor and the chosenness of the hero, whereas Russian legends focus on the clash of two spiritual worlds and explain the outcome of events by the intervention of heavenly forces. This diversity of folk interpretations creates a rich intercultural environment that shapes the further artistic image of Timur in both the Uzbek and the Russian literary traditions.

As a prospect for further research, it appears expedient to trace the transformation of the mythologemes considered here directly in the fiction of the 20th–21st centuries, to study the mechanisms by which the "tourist mythology" of Samarkand functions, and to compare the mythological image of Timur with the legendary images of other conquerors in world history.

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