

THE GENRE STRUCTURE OF S.G. CHAVAYN'S STORIES IN THE CONTEXT OF FOLKLORISM'S PROBLEMS OF THE MARI LITERATURE OF THE FIRST THIRD OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract

The urgent direction of modern Mari and Finno-Ugric literary criticism is the study of genesis and dynamics of poetics prose's genres. Small genres of the Mari prose are the least studied in this plan.

This article covers the problem of formation of the Mari story's poetics on the basis of imitation, loan and creative assimilation of oral and poetic experience of the people. The genre structure of Sergey Grigorievich Chavayn's stories is analyzed in the context of folklorism of the Mari literature of the first third of the twentieth century. It reveals the connection between the literary and folklore poetics and defines the specific of folklorism in Chavayn's stories.

It is proved that one of founders of the Mari literature, language and cultures Chavayn had strong influenced from folklore genres, traditional plots and images, and the folk language.

The Influence from folk elements is felt almost at all levels of his works: moral and imaginative, plot and composition, stylistic, etc.

At the same time the writer mastered the literary form of the life's representation, created a literary poetics. This is evidenced by such phenomena of genre content and structure of the stories, as the changing of the ending of folk legend («Yulanda»), the second-guessing of the character of a folk personage (strengthening of the image's dominant), the deviation from the ordinary folk scheme and the creation of new characters of the personage (personages Yulanda and the Russian Tsar in the story («Yulanda»); the alteration of old folk songs and the composing their songs by analogy with them («The fugitive»); the single event storyline, which is accomplished and integral, with one or two (depending on the nature of the conflict) characters; synthetic genre forms of the story (an oral story develops from the story-essay and the story, which is similar to the novella); the development of the methods of a psychologization of the narration ("the internal gesture", landscape details in psychological functions); the lyricism; the author's digression in the form of appeal –

direct (to heroes or readers) or rhetorical; the use of verbal images in the art purposes in all types of descriptions; the expansion of the art functions of the landscape; the circular composition («Okaviy»), etc.

Keywords: Mari literature of the first third of the XXth century, genre, story, poetics, S.G. Chavayn, genre structure, folklorism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sergei Grigoriyevich Chavayn's stories are the large and bright layer of the Mari story of the first third of the 20th century. They were analyzed mainly in the in the context of his oeuvre (Asylbaev, 1963; Vasin, 1987) as well as in the study of such literary problems as, for example, the development of realism and historicism (Vasin, 1980) in Mari literature (Vasin, 1975). There is a brief overview of Chavayn's stories in connection with the formation of a general history of Mari literature's development in «Essays of the History of Mari Literature» (1960) (Essays on the history of Mari literature, 1960), «The Histories of Mari literature» (1989) (The history of Mari literature, 1989), and also in the A.E. Ivanov's textbook «Mari literature» (1993) (Ivanov, 1993).

These studies are full of factual material and historically dated information, contain valuable observations and conclusions on topics, problematics, ideological orientation of Chavayn's stories. They have the elements of interpretation of the characters' behavior, as well as analysis of the writer's language. All of this is irreplaceable empirical material for the contemporary Mari literary criticism, which is involved in searches of new approaches to the study of artistic phenomena of national literature. Thus, today it is very important to study the genesis and dynamics of the poetics of genres, including the Mari story (Kudryavtseva, 2009 Kudryavtseva, 2011). The Mari story requires a deep study of forming its genre content and genre structure in the genres system of the Mari verbal culture of the first third of the 20th century and from the actual problems of theoretical poetics (artistic integrity and poetic imagery, principles and techniques of composition etc.). In this context, such questions as the story and poetics of folklore genres, the story and other genres of flash fiction, the story and poetics of educational realism, the story and poetics of Russian literature, the factors of the literary organization of the text, the formation of narrative discourse, etc. are actualized.

This article is devoted to the research of the interaction of folklore and literary poetics in the genre structure of the Mari story as exemplified by the Chavayn's literary oeuvre. It should be noted that the Mari researchers, for example, K.K. Vasin (Vasin, 1975), wrote that S. Chavayn referred to folk forms, borrowed themes, images from the Mari verbal folklore. There were also some attempts of local analysis of his individual stories in respect of the aspect of creative absorption of folk forms (Ivanov, 1993). However, the question of general principles of transformation of folk material in the genre structure of the story and as well as ways of forming literary poetics are still unexplored.

2. OPINIONS AND DISCUSSION

A peculiarity feature of the folk and mythological consciousness is the unity of the natural and spiritual, the alive and unalive. Chavayn's stories associated with this consciousness convey to the Mari reader the eternal dream of man about a life in unity with nature, where everything is arranged harmoniously, where there is a hierarchy, a soul, where everything is necessary and there is nothing superfluous. That is why Sergei Chavayn so often refers to natural world. It is the subject of the image, the direct content of a number of his stories and the real background of event-based action for him.

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The influence of folklore works most of all is visible through the poetics level of Chavayn's stories. This is not surprising, because in the field of poetics, as it is noted by D.N. Medrish, «folklore impulses are especially active, and their impacts are stable and long-term» (Medrish, 1980). A vivid example of the reflection of the

folk and mythological elements in the compositional and linguistic means are the pre-revolutionary Chavayn's stories «On shallow snow», «In the forest», «Yulanda», «The Fugitive», as well as prose lyric studies of the writer about the native nature which are included in the «Third book for reading» (1910) and are correlated with the genre of the story. They also demonstrate how the poetics of the story forms through the literary forms of traditional culture and the poetics of folklore genres.

These works are characterized by a direct verbal folklore inclusions among which folkloric reminiscences were the most common. They are associated with well-known folk songs, which revealed themselves as a new poetic design in the individual creative writing. Often semantics of the image (for example, the life drama of Chachaviy from «Yulanda», the fugitive in the self titled Chavayn's story), the theme and the ideologic content of the work («The Fugitive») are clarified through folk-song reminiscences. In the early Chavayn's stories also there is a quote (it's mostly proverbs and sayings in the speech of heroes) and the transformation of folk aphorisms.

Chavayn's desire to escape from the folk elements (like the desires of other pioneers of the Mari prose) was manifested in second-guessing the character sketch, turning it into a living image, moving away from the inherent set course and schemes («Yulanda»), changing old folk songs and composing his own («The Fugitive»), etc.

S. Chavayn's «Julanda» story is the example of the creative using of the content and structural elements of the legend. The writer refers to the spreading in the Morko district folklore material about the Yulanda, which is associated with the era of the Mongol invasion and is aligned with the other Mari tale about Akpars. It has another ending. Sergei Chavayn saves the plot of the legend: the khan's servants separate the lovers (Yulanda and Chachaviy); Yulanda and his friends Mustay and Chavay are waiting for help from the Russian tsar; Yulanda makes a tunnel under the fortress wall, but at the final stage of his work he dies.

The character of Yulanda is built mostly according to folk poetics. As for the Russian Tsar Ivan the Terrible, in the story there are attempts to «complicate» the folk hero. He is angry, he kills the leader of the Mari, at the same time he is represented as a king who is realized his mistake: «Only one Russian tsar stayed near the body of Yulanda. For a long time he stood thinking, without raising his head ...» (Chavayn, 1980. Trans. from Mari here and further ours – RK). It's strengthened the dominant feature of his character – «dreadfulness» and «cruelty». This is the main difference between the S. Chavayn's story and legends about Yulanda (Zilante – the Russian version of the name) and Akparse, where Ivan the Terrible respects Mari people and often showers them with gifts. In the story there are proprietary assessments, the author's understanding of the history. It is also manifested in deepening the folk image of the Russian Tsar.

The latest Chavayn's stories (for example, 1910-1920s: «Mikak Korchev» and «Okaviy») show that national prose continues to be influenced by folklore poetics for a long time. The influence of folk elements is felt almost at all levels of the works: ideological, images, composition, stylistic, etc. But gradually the dimension and multidimensionality of the material of life begins to encroach the oral story. In consequence of it a detailed story-essay appears and replaces feature-stories and sketches, which are occupied a significant place in pre-revolutionary S. Chavayn's prose. They were close to the novella by the «volume of content». A vivid example of such an active interaction of folk and literary poetics, the development of literary forms in the Mari prose of the 1920-ies is the Chavayn's «Okaviy» story.

A comparative analysis of the two versions of the «Okaviy» story testifies about complication of the folk images and characterization of Ermak and the proprietary assessment (from the spontaneous rebel, which is completely justified by the author – to the self-reflect hero who understands the meaning of his actions and has the author's sympathy). The traditional attention to describe the external characteristics of the personage, what is typical for oral-poetic traditions is supplemented by an internal characteristic. Sergei Chavayn widely used the method of «inner gestures», which in his stories of the 1920s will become one of the important means of the narrative's psychologization. Objective correlative character appears instead of image-symbols, image-masks. The author's individual beginning, what distinguishes the literary text from folk, manifests in different ways in the Chavayn's stories 1920-ies. The writer widely uses the author's digression, which is most often given in the form of address – direct (to heroes or readers) or rhetorical. This form of self-expression K.K. Vasin connects with the «open publicity» (Ivanov, 1993). This is typical for writer's works, written in the 1920-ies. We think these digressions and addresses should be seen not also as the fact of intrusion into the literary publicistic text, but as a manifestation of the lyricism, which is proper to Chavayn, who probably forms the lyrical tendency in the Mari prose.

The verbal images, taken from the oral poetry, create an excitedly lyrical intonation in the story «Okaviy», as well as images, created by the author, as before, by the type of folklore. At first thought, they are same-type,

repetitive and associated with the natural phenomena, but they are already used not only in landscape sketches, as it was in the pre-revolutionary stories, they apply in all types of descriptions, including the description of character's appearance, man's mental world: «the eyes are black as a currant», «Okaviy's eyes are gray, sky blue colour», «eyes flashed like lightning» (Chavayn, 1980).

The art functions of the landscape are expanding in the short stories of 1920-ies. Descriptions of nature are already emotional background. They reveal the moods of the characters, their internality. For example, the Ermak's mental world, when he thinks about his past life, his fate, correlates with the picture of the silent autumn forest and the calm before the sunset. A picture of a thunderstorm, which brings alarming premonitions on the reader, plays an important narrative and compositional role, adjusts to new turns of events.

In addition, there is a landscape ring frame in the story «Akaviy». The work begins with a description of the deserted, quiet autumn forest and ends with a picture of the awakening after the animating rain wood. This technique gives the narration a compositional wholeness and completeness, and also helps the reader to focus on the author's concern about the eternal questions, which is related between the nature and human life. Nature is diverse and infinite, there is an eternal change of the phenomena in it, and so human life is a chain of phenomena and events replacing each other, including serious trials. Chavayn delivers to the reader something special that has always distinguished the philosophy of the Mari people – optimism, hope and faith.

The analysis of Chavayn's stories testifies that initially the writer did not be under the «heavy burden» of traditional folk stories. He escaped from folk elements by thinking up the character of a folk hero, using plot allusions and folk quotes («On the depthless snow», «Yulanda», «Okaviy», etc.). It seems that this encourages him, like other Mari writers, to refer to the laws of narrative, role prose.

Chavayn's sketches, which is included in the «Third reading book», have significant importance for the formation of the poetics of the story's genre. They are cognitive in content, depicting seasonal scenes of nature and human life («Winter», «Autumn», «Summer», «Spring»), the usual farm labor on the land («Haymaking», «Work»). There are no actions in them. Accordingly the reader's attention is focused not on the event, but on the psychological side of the text, on the emotional state of the narrator. The author's subjectivity of the lyrical story of the 1920s is born from means of creating emotional narrative, which is present in the sketches.

Each punctuation mark is important in them. So, in Chavayn's «In the spring» sketch (1910) emotional expressiveness is created using shout marks. They turn the neutral on semantics sentences into an «exclamative» (it is colored by author's major) speech. There are also direct apostrophes in combination with exclamations. Together they express the joy of the narrator's communication with nature and his tribesmen («Haymaking»): «How the air is light! The grass and flowers clippings smell fragrant!» (Chavayn, 1980).

Compositional principles and methods of Mari art prose developed in the lyrical sketches. So, the compositional principle of the Chavayn's «Springlet» sketch is the comparison between the spring and the nicesoul. It is preserved until the very end, where the spring is addressed to people: «Everyone wants to drink... Anyone wants to hear a good word, to see a good deed... Therefore make sure that no one is left without your kind words...» (Chavayn, 1980). An art description is actively introduced in the descriptions that contain folk colored images.

In the Chavayn's flash fiction the narrative structure of the story is formed (events and mediating authority of the narrator). It is testified that the author departure from the simple folk (archaic) plot and that the narrative discourse designs in Mari the literature. The character of narrative history was revealed through episodes, which was arranged by Chavayn in a certain sequence and configuration. The first person narration prevailed in the formal organization of his stories of the early twentieth century. The evolution of the story, which has a first person narrative in its structure, is connected with the movement from the personal narrator (it has literary speech) (stories «On depthless snow», «Winter Feast»), to the narrative with a brightly outlined figure (it is not identical to the author) (for example, the children's stories of the 1920s «The Acorn», «The hare», etc.).

3. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the analysis of Chavayn's stories of the first third of the twentieth century makes it possible to say that the writer was strongly influenced by folklore genres, traditional subjects and images, and folk.

At the same time, he mastered the literary forms, created literary poetics. Individual art creativity developed. This is evidenced by: deeping the character of a folk hero; using different images; a one-line plot of the story,

which is distinguished by its completeness and integrity; characterization one or two characters (it depends the nature of the conflict); psychologization of the narrative; lyricism; ring composition; art description; the image of the narrator; the formal signs of the tale etc.

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