

The Image of Trees in Folklore: Genesis and Poetic Interpretations

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Abstract--- *This article discusses the genesis of the image of trees in folklore, mythology, and artistic interpretations of folklore. It is known that each nation has its own way of life. In folklore, this originality is notable for its artistic expression. It is noteworthy that they contain motives and images typical of the epic tradition. In the system of images in folklore, the interpretation of religious views related to the image of trees has a special place. Such trees include poplar, willow, maple, spruce, willow, cypress, pine, walnut, mulberry, juniper and others. The depiction and interpretation of the image of the tree in epic and lyrical works seems to be based on the ancient mythological notions of our ancestors related to totemism. Well-known scientists, such as E. Taylor, J. Fraser, D. Zelenin, who studied the totemistic beliefs of primitive people, especially recognized the folk beliefs, ideas, views on the cult of plants in relation to trees, plants and flowers. reached. The genetic roots of images associated with trees are very complex. Because they still have faith in mythological cults. They are based on the totemistic ideas of primitive people and their beliefs about the plant and world.*

Keywords--- *The Image of Trees, Mythology, Rituals, Poetic Interpretations, Fertility, Totemism, Traditions and Ceremonies.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In world folklore, special attention is paid to the role, genesis, semantics, poetics, principles of imagery, epic and lyrical interpretation of the image of the tree. A global study of the image of the tree, the root of which is closely linked to ancient mythological notions, shows that it has common features and appropriate meanings for the mythology and folklore of the peoples of the world. This means the need to determine the historical and mythological basis of the image of the tree in Uzbek folklore, its place in folk ceremonies and traditions, poetic interpretations of oral lyrical and epic works.

In world folklore, the genesis of the image of the tree, the processes of formation, stages, poetic interpretations and functions in folklore are studied in terms of the concepts of historical and ritual-mythological school theory. The image of the tree, which has gained an international scale, found in the folklore of all nations. Therefore, the identification of mutually compatible poetic, semantic-structural features of the tree images in the historical-evolutionary and comparative-typological aspect makes an important contribution to the theoretical development of image poetics.

The research has been studied to which the problem. The image of the tree has been researched to varying degrees

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in many studies, but its poetic meanings, genesis, developmental features, artistic interpretations, and functions have been overlooked. Approaches to the image of the tree Zelenin, E.B.Taylor, J.J.Fraser, S.A.Tokarev, K.G.Yung, Hikmat Tanyu, A.S.Taptygov, V.N.Toporov, E.M. Meletinskiy, V.Ya.Propp, I.V.Stebleva, M.Seyidov, H.Zarifov, M.Afzalov, M.Alaviya, T.Mirzaev, K.Imomov, G.Jalolov, B.Sarimsoqov, O.Safarov, S.Ruzimbaev, A.Musakulov, M.Juraev, Sh.Turdimov, J.Eshonkulov, D.Uraeva stand out in their researches. They show that tree-based myths have been researched in the fields of anthropology, ethnography, theology, psychoanalysis, history, linguistics, folklore, and literature.

It seems that the image of the tree, the principles of its application in folk epic and lyrical genres, its place, semantic scale, artistic interpretations have not become a direct object of study of Uzbek folklore. However, the existing materials in Uzbek folklore require a separate, special study of the image of the trees.

The Main Tasks of Research

- to reveal the basics of the origin of the image of the tree, historical and mythological roots, stages of artistic development, original poetic interpretations of the Uzbek folklore;
- to illuminate the artistic expression of the ancient beliefs of the Uzbek people about totemism, the origin of mankind, the structure of the earth in connection with the image of the tree;
- to substantiate the artistic depiction in folklore, ceremonies, and customs of the notions of the connection between the tree and the life of the protagonist;
- identify and classify the types and appearances of tree images depicted in Uzbek folklore;
- to show the features and aspects of meaning, poetic functions of tree images in Uzbek folklore;
- notions about the image of a tree in the mythology and folklore of the fraternal Turkic and world peoples, to prove that it is a traditional image in comparison with the interpretations of artistic interpretations in mythology and folklore.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The object of the research is the image of a trees in folklore. The subject of the research is the images depicting the symbolic and artistic essence of the image of the trees in the epic, lyrical and paremic genres of folklore.

Methods of classification, description, historical-comparative, component, contextual, ethno-folkloric analysis have been used in the coverage of this research.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Humankind came into the world for being and evolving as an integral part and child of nature. Therefore, the most ancient traditions, ceremonies and holidays of mankind are directly connected with nature, changes in it, seasons and labor processes.

In our country, where the culture of agriculture has been highly developed since ancient times, there are many traditions associated with the worship of nature and the cult of plants. Mythological beliefs about the tree of life are also based on primitive beliefs about the immortality of nature. The rebirth of the trees in the early spring of the

trees, which our ancestors lost their leaves in the fall, as well as the symbolic death of nature in the covering of the fields with grasses and flowers with the advent of spring. Mythological views in the spring awakening of nature paved the way for the emergence of rituals consisting of agrarian cults based on the representation of plants and trees, and a system of symbolic actions of a magical nature.

The fact that the trees change shape at different times of the year and re-emerge every spring is in line with the archaic worldview and the idea of the soul moving. Indeed, from ancient times the trees have been compared to human life.

The emergence of the cult of trees is associated with the era of primitive culture and is one of the manifestations of ancient beliefs that have played an important role in the history, rituals, customs and worldview of mankind and religions. In the archaic worldview, trees, like nature as a whole, were understood as living and conscious, and many peoples associated their first ancestors with the totem of trees.

According to Islamic doctrine, trees and plants are considered alive, just like humans and animals. The means of survival and reproduction of these creatures is the law of pairing. [4] Belief in the cult of plants and animals may have originated from their natural properties. Because the first ancestors of mankind lived on hunting and gathering. Our ancestors discovered the spirits of many trees and plants by seeing the yield of plants and trees, their healing properties, and the poisonous-killing properties of some of them.

Trees have long been considered living things by all peoples. Trees, which are considered living, are also divided into rocks in archaic ideas. For this reason, the ancients believed that the productivity of trees had a magical effect on humans, and that human fertility had a magical effect on the productivity of trees. A woman's infertility was considered a disaster not only for her or her family's unhappiness, but also for society and whole nature.

As a result of the idea that trees are alive, in folk lyricism, women and humanity in general are likened to the image of different trees. According to mythological viewpoints, there is no death at all – only the transition of the essence, the soul (spirit) from one form to another. Many folk songs, along with their living backgrounds, have retained their mythological foundations and are the fruit of mytho-poetic thinking:

It seems that our people's deep confidence in trees goes back to ancient times. When our primitive ancestors observed that trees were fruitful and fruitless, they thought that they were completely human. In the long past, such early observations, experiences and ideas of our ancestors about trees played a key role in shaping the current relationship with them.

Our ancient ancestors believed that fruitful, fragrant trees possessed a good spirit, while fruitless and unpleasant-smelling trees, as a habitat for evil spirits, brought to mankind either happiness or misfortune, various diseases and calamities, and natural disasters.

Imaginations about the origin of the universe and man are also linked to trees. Accordingly, the trees are directly compared to girls, lovers or boyfriends.

Myths about the origin of some of the trees and plants are widely used to describe a person being dratted or accursed and turned into a tree. This motif did not appear in the legends by chance. It is based, of course, on the

ancient notion that the human soul is in the tree both before birth and after death. It is as if a person, whose spirit came out of a tree by birth, returns to it by death. Death is a magical means of bringing the soul back to its destination. In the legends, the curse is interpreted in the same way.

According to D.Zelenin, the ancestors of ancient man originally lived on a tree. Therefore, the dead were hanged in the trees to be sent back to their destination. Also, the idea of hanging the dead on a tree is connected with the mythological beliefs about the "tree of life" that is thought to be the source of eternal life [2].

While people associated trees with the concept of spirits, they believed that good and evil spirits visit trees not at any time, but at certain times. Good spirits often come to people in the spring, when the trees bloom. The idea that evil spirits roam more in the winter is common among the ancient peoples.

People thought that good spirits could be summoned by fragrant smell and evil spirits could be driven away by pungent, bitter, salty things. Through such views, shamans sought to treat patients with tree branches. Trees such as figs and walnuts are considered to be the abode of evil spirits. It is said that if a person is careless and falls asleep under these trees, he will be harmed by an evil spirit.

Folklorist B. Sarimsakov admits that people believe that black willow has a stronger magical power. In this case, black willow is not considered a benefactor. It may be seen as a means of attracting evil spirits, demons, and harming living things, especially humans. [8]

The primary reason for the transfer of the image of the tree to the human concept is the notion of the ancient people related to the emergence of man, while the secondary, tree and human characteristics (for example, upright, beautiful figure to cypress, slender figure to willow, arrogance to poplar) are compared. As people continue their lives and genealogies through their children, fruit trees similar to sprout again from their seeds, become young and old, wither or wither (if they were born and died like human beings).

The poetic image of the trees are a part of the living nature that is actively found in folk songs. In folk songs, the image of trees is usually associated with the ideas of children and family. The ancients thought that because trees were fruitful and fruitless, they had the same sex as humans. It is said in this folk song:

**Tog`da archa gullaydi olmurutman,
Pastda terak gullaydi erkak tutman.**

Apparently, the name of the male mulberry is mentioned in the byte. As the folklorist A.Musakulov noted: "Since a mulberry has a male, it is natural for it to have a wife. In the imagination of the Turkic peoples, they believed that the father tree, the mother tree, the seed tree, everyone would have their own tree of life. In essence, human life is related to the life of one's own twin tree"[3].

Apricot is one of the most common tree images in folk songs. The following is his interpretation of the mourning song:

**O`rikdan toylar qilay-ov,
Bargiga maktub bitay-ov,
Hayit kuni bolajonimni,**

Yig`lab-yig`lab yod etay-ov.

Or:

Olmadan otlar qilayin,

Bargiga xatlar bitayin.

Hayit kuni onajonimni,

Yig`lab-yig`lab yod etayin.

Apricots and apples are considered to be one of the fruits of paradise. Through such perceptions, the songs of persecution express the desire to have a loved one who has left this world in heaven, the desire to see him in heaven, and the possibility of communicating with a person who has become a representative of the mysterious afterlife through magical objects.

The genesis of the motifs associated with fruits also goes back to the ancient mythological worldview, the idea that man came from a tree, the existence of a God of fertility and beliefs [10.110-139].

Yorning bog`i bor ekan,

Bog`da anori bor ekan.

Yolg`iz deb ko`ngil bersam,

Bo`lak yori bor ekan.[6.28]

The garden in the song is life, family; and the pomegranate is used in the image of a married woman, a mother. Therefore, in the following verses, the lyrical protagonist restrains himself from harassing his lover, whom he suspects is alone, when he finds out that he is married and has children. In folklore, red is often associated with women. Therefore, the pomegranate is also red in color, so it is easy to add it to songs as a symbol of womanhood. Sometimes the pomegranate helps to symbolize the image of girls whose hearts are full of blood in captivity.

Willow is one of the most widely used symbols in Uzbek folk songs. The image of a willow is also found in the following verses from the folk play "The Child runs Away":

Hovligacha mayda tol,

Mayda tolga payvand sol,

Olgan yoring yosh bo`lsa,

Aldab- suldab yo`lga sol.

In this song, the image of the "mayda tol" reflects the age of man - childhood.

In our way of life it is customary to cover the roof with willow, poplar or reeds and willow twigs. A reference to this reality can be seen in the following verses:

Quda xolam tomini

Toldan yopgan yor-yor.

Tol xivichdek qamishni

Qaydan topgan, yor-yor.

It is also common for shepherds to make a shepherd's staff out of willow. The following verses point to this:

**Erta sahar boraman qo'yxonamga,
Kevaganim yarashar bo'yginamga.
Tol tayog'im tayanib, turib qolsam,
Suluv qizlar keladi uyginamga [7.73].**

The following song compares a fruitless mulberry tree with a fruitless willow tree:

**Qanday onam bor edi,
Tol yog'ochday soyalim,
Tut yog'ochday mevalim.
Soyasida yotganim,
Mevasidan totganim.[1.83]**

The totemistic and poetic views on trees are unique not only to the Uzbek people, but also to the primitive worldview of all mankind. Even in ancient European mythology, the gods of fertility were originally conceived in the form of a tree. It is said that Attis, the goddess of fertility, was raised to the level of the spirit of the trees, then the king of plants, and finally the god of human form. In an ancient painting, Attis is depicted with wheat ears and fruits in his hand, pine seeds, pomegranates and other fruits on his head, and wheat ears sticking out of his hat. [7]

**Voy jigarim, teragim,
Bor kunimga keragim.**

In the song, Terak is chosen not only as an image, but also as a rhyme for the word "kerak" in the second verse. A similar situation is observed in the following verses:

**Bog'ing bo'lsa teraklik,
Imoratga keraklik.
Ering bo'lsa chiroylik,
Yur, bazmga kiraylik [1.7].**

The poplar in the example is an expression of the idea of a future family. In the songs, the images of poplar and willow, in contrast to spruce, maple, and elm, are often accompanied by the image of water due to the influence of the cult of water, and in real life, willows and poplars are often planted on the banks of ditches.

Numerous sources confirm that poplar was also a cult object among the Turkic peoples. For example, L.I.Klimovich says there was a shrine called Bogozterak in Turkestan's Ili Valley [3]. Childless women bowed to the tree three times, hugged it three times, and bowed three more times. Other sources make it clear that in ancient times, willows were believed to have the ability to produce offspring. The wedding applause for the bride and groom in the ceremonial songs is also indicated by the image of a willow:

**Eshik oldi mavjim tol,¹
Mavjim tolga qo`ling sol.
Men fотиha aytayin,**

¹ willow

**Katta-kichi(k) quloq sol.
Atta bo`lsin, fatta bo`lsin,
Zuvalasi katta bo`lsin.
Tol chivig`i qildan bo`lsin.
Chilobchini puldan bo`lsin.**

The poetic image of the willow has become a symbol under the influence of ancient beliefs, the cult of trees. For this reason, willow is associated with water or its determinant in songs, and when we talk about willow, we usually mean willow. True, the comparison of willow twigs to hair can be the result of a simple simulation. But it is also important to remember that the image of the hair is associated with magic. The ancients' views on the magic of hair, and the fact that the willow tree grows on the water's edge in real life, according to the magic of contagion, also gave the willow magical functions.

The people's belief in trees is also reflected in proverbs and riddles. In particular, articles about trees suggest the following: "Payti kelsa daraxt gullar", "Yolg'iz daraxt o'rmon bo'lmas, Yolg'iz yog'och pana bo'lmas", "Daraxt bir joyda ko'karar", "Daraxt yaprog'i bilan ko'rkam, Odam – mehnati bilan", "Daraxt –havodan, odam –mehnatdan", "Daraxtni –mevasi, otni –siynasi, odamni mehnati bezaydi", "Do'lanani ko'rganda tog' esingdan chiqmasin". It seems that in these proverbs the images of the tree and the man are interpreted in parallel.

The trees mentioned in the ceremonial songs usually have both magical and artistic-aesthetic significance. But over time, as magical-mythological views waned, the artistic and aesthetic meaning grew stronger, and the original historical basis was forgotten. As a result, today's listeners often do not understand the meaning of the verses that form the basis of the songs. In romantic songs, the image of trees serves as a poetic re-enactment of love and family life.

IV. CONCLUSION

Our people have a long history of concepts and traditions related to trees. They are of scientific and aesthetic importance due to their antiquity, tradition, and the fact that they contain evidence of various beliefs. In them, the image of the trees has a special symbolic meaning.

The genetic roots of images associated with trees are very complicated. Because they still have faith in mythological cults. They are based on the totemistic ideas of primitive people and their beliefs about the plant kingdom.

Religious beliefs about trees are rooted in pre-Islamic religious and mythological concepts, more precisely, totemistic concepts. Belief in tree spirits has long been practiced among our people in the form of a broad and integrated system. Some ceremonial traditions and customs, formed in the primitive times on the basis of beliefs in the cult of the tree, still exist due to the fact that they fully meet the aesthetic requirements of modern man, so their comprehensive study, their peculiarities, One of the most important issues is to reveal the aesthetic impact of folklore. The images associated with the tree have the form of a certain artistic system. They have their own content, aesthetic functions, artistic features, symbolism.

Images of trees are common in folk lyric and ceremonial songs. Traditions associated with trees promote great ideas and moral ideas, such as respect for man. It is because of this moral and educational content that the symbolic images of the tree have stood the test of time and are still alive today.

The educational value of the tree-shaped images created to praise, applaud and cherish the beauty of nature is that they create a favorable environment for everyone to become a lover of nature, a protector of its inherent beauty. It also harmonizes the relationship between nature and man.

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