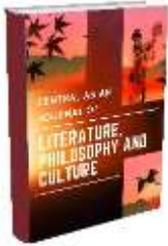




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SYMBOLISM IN WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS' POETRY

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Abstract: The purpose of this work is to identify the patterns of symbolism, its system, language, and material - in modern times, in modern literary creativity, outside the conditions that existed in the era of pre-logical thinking. Yeats's work as a subject of such consideration is especially indicative. Firstly, even against the background of special attention to the symbolism that existed at the turn of the century, Yeats stands out as one of the brightest symbol-makers, and secondly, his poetry can be considered a transitional phenomenon between romantic symbolism and modernism, which makes it possible to study some of the features of both directions.

Keywords: modern poetry, symbolism, mysticism, occultism, symbol, poetry analyses, interpretation of symbols in poetry.

I. INTRODUCTION

The symbol can serve as an intermediary between the human and divine principles. Since, on the one hand, it has a material form, and, on the

other, it is endowed with spiritual content. Through the symbol comes the understanding that all forms of life on Earth are unique and sacred, for they carry a spark of divine fire. The quite traditional - as we can see - definition of the subject leads Yeats to the distinction of the symbol. The difference among types of images for Yeats is obvious. And the main question that interests him is the choice of one or another poetic medium which is preferable for modern artistic creativity.

Yeats dwells on the symbol, guided by philosophical and aesthetic criteria: "Metaphors are not deep enough to touch the heart if they are not symbols, and when they are symbols, they represent perfection itself ..." [4; 68] Metaphors, moreover, do not have a systematic character, the ability to build leitmotif series in which one element complements another. Probably, this fact also confirmed Yeats in his choice, since the poet, throughout his entire work, built his own - systemic - symbolism.

II. MAIN PART

In the introduction to his philosophical and mystical treatise "The Vision", Yeats wrote that complex symbolism "always accompanied a mode of expression that united a sleeping mind and awaking mind" [5; 326]. Yeats used symbols that include the artist's experiences. In the 1890s, to reinforce his symbolist poetry, Yeats wrote several articles on the theory of symbolism. Among the most significant works on this subject should be called the essay "The Autumn of the Body" (1898) "The Moods" (1895), "The Symbolism of Poetry" (1900).

Not accepting the materialistic approach in science and art, Yeats sees in man and the world around him as symbols of spiritual being. World literature, according to Yeats, is created by various moods of artists, and moods are the essence of divine messengers connecting the visible and invisible worlds. "The Universal Mood", which absorbs the most subtle shades of emotions, is God himself. In the symbol, Yeats sees the only way to absorb "universal moods" and thus approach God: "With the help of symbolism, we enter the unity of God" [5; 327-328].

Yeats creates his own classification of symbols, distinguishing two types: emotional and intellectual symbols. Emotional symbols have an impact on sound, color, shape. The harmony of music, color, and form in the symbol excites various shades of emotions, which gradually merge into a single "universal" emotion. Such an impressionistic effect turns out to be more important than the described object and phenomenon, the main task of emotional symbols is to influence not the mind, but the feelings of the reader. Intellectual symbols presuppose that the reader has certain knowledge; the individual flow of associations and impressions is not enough for an adequate "reading" of the second type of symbols. The main intention of intellectual symbols is to evoke ideas, although the unconscious,

emotional perception of these symbols can also accompany the informational load of the image.

In his essay "The Symbolism of Poetry," Yeats cites the example of color symbols - white and purple - that can evoke different emotions, sometimes inexplicable, indifferent readers; but if you combine these colors with the images of the cross and the crown of thorns, intellectual saturation will increase, and the number of possible associations will decrease. Such a symbol will refer to quite specific images that have formed throughout the history of Christianity: white in this context will symbolize purity and royalty, crimson - the torment of the cross.

III. DISCUSSIONS

The symbol for Yeats means a return to the imagination, lost in the modern world, a return to the mainstream of traditions, the preservation of the historical memory of mankind. The symbol not only serves as a mediator between the material and the spiritual world but also supports cultural memory, ensures the continuity of generations. For the entire poet's reliance on tradition, the individuality of his symbols is undeniable and often leads researchers of Yeats's work to a dead end when deciphering possible allusions and associations. According to the Irish poet, a new poetic attitude (symbolism) must necessarily lead to a change in technique, style, and the rhythm of works of art. Yeats says this about the origin of symbols in his poetry: "When I wrote these poems, I thought so much about the images that came to me in the process of creating" Ballads and Poems ", " Rose ", "Oisin's Travels" and other images from Irish folklore that they became real symbols" [5; 400]. Reflections on symbols predetermined a creative approach to tradition, and symbols in Yeats' poetry were distinguished by their novelty and individuality.

The sources of Yeats' symbolic system were multifaceted. These are images from the poetry of

romantics, and the cosmological system of William Blake, and the idealistic dialectic of romanticism, and readings from Boehme and Swedenborg. A serious influence on the symbolic system of Yeats was exerted by Eastern philosophy, with a large part of which the poet became acquainted through the mediation of the mystical teachings of H.P. Blavatsky and members of the Rosicrucian Order of the Golden Dawn, as well as in-person with the Hindu Mohini Chatterji. Yeats constantly turned to the symbolism of the Kabbalah and Tarot cards. Finally, the most important source of symbols for Yeats was Celtic mythology and folklore. According to Northrop Fry, "Yeats sought symbolic language in two places: in the mythology of Ireland, including both heroic sagas and folklore, and in modern occultism, including theosophical doctrine and spiritualism" [4; 222]. Despite Yeats' serious attention to the occult, the Irish tradition remained paramount for the poet, both as a source of motives and images and as a reservoir of poetic language and style.

IV. RESULTS

Yeats wrote his poem "The Secret Rose" (1896), reminding mindfully of Blake's words about the stars, extinguished like a lamp, and under Blake's influence were born the final lines of the verse:

"When shall the stars be blown about the sky
Like the sparks blown out of a smithy, and die?"

"The Secret Rose" (1896)

This apocalyptic question is addressed to Rose, distant, hidden, and undefiled ("far-off, most secret and inviolate Rose"). Rose for Yeats is not just a flower, but an important and ambiguous symbol. Frank Kaynahan roughly summed up the multifaceted meaning of the rose symbol in his study "Yates, folklore and the occult": the kingdom, the love of God, the divine nature and - even more generalized - the symbolic heart of things. If you

take the Rose together with the Cross, the Rose means the reunification of religion and beauty, the spirit of nature, ideal and natural beauty, immortal and mortal, eternity and time, soul and body, sleep and awakening, life and death, and - in the most generalized sense - "to all." [6; 131] Rose beckons the lyric hero of the poem, who awaits the arrival of her hour along with magicians, druids, kings and epic Celtic heroes...

But getting into the world of the Rose is impossible until the stars disappear - until the mortal world is destroyed. The Western and Eastern traditions of rose symbolism are intertwined in the symbolic system of Yeats: this is, on the one hand, a Kabbalistic rose, each petal of which means a new Sefirot, and a rose in Gothic cathedrals, among the troubadours and Dante, where it appears as a symbol of the highest divine truth and beauty.

In 1892, while working on Blake's edition, Yeats published "Rose of the World", another poem in which Blake's theme appears alongside the image of the rose. An allusion to Blake, namely to his work "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell", here were the last lines of the poem:

And God would bid His warfare cease,
Saying all things were well;
And softly make a rosy peace,
A peace of Heaven with Hell

"Rose of the World" (1892)

Yeats is ironic about the possible union of Heaven and Hell since Yates represents their unity ("marriage") with the symbol of the rose ("rosy peace"), one of the most serious and important symbols of his mythological system.

Yeats' stars appear much earlier than in The Secret Rose. Having designated the theme in the epigraph to "Crossroads", the poet reveals it in the very first poem of the collection, "The Song of the Happy Shepherd" (1885).

...New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth

*Saving in thine own heart.
Seek, then, No learning from the starry men,
Who follow with the optic glass
The whirling ways of stars that passes –
Seek, then, for this is also sooth,
No word of theirs - the cold star-bane
Has cloven and rent their hearts in twain,
And dead is all their human truth.*

The hero of the poem, the shepherd, is happy, as indicated in the title since he lives with his heart, not his mind. The hero of the poem, close to antiquity, is also close to the truth, which he advises to seek exclusively in the heart. The scientific "truth" of stargazers is cold, dead and superficial. The superficiality lies at least in the fact that the paths of the stars that scientists investigate are finite ("the whirling ways of stars that pass"). The verb "to pass", in addition to the meaning of movement, also has the meaning of ending that is not only "move" but also "pass". The shepherd calls this truth "human", who inside presupposes finitude and the living truth of the heart is eternal.

CONCLUSION

Yeats is among the artists who were looking for inspiration, not in the Christian tradition, but in the forbidden, secret, occult knowledge, be it Kabbalah, alchemy, hermeticism, magic or unorthodox Christianity. Having once departed from the orthodox religion, this author greatly expanded the world of symbols for himself and could absolutely freely accept, reject, interpret or combine these symbols. Folk legends and complex philosophies complemented each other and created, citing Yeats' favorite thesis, "unity from diversity".

Art, for Yeats, is higher than life, but the attitude to nature for the symbolist is different. For Yeats, the natural is opposed to the artificial, the elements are opposed to civilization, and priority is unconditionally given to the first member of the opposition. Art is a product of divine inspiration,

and nature really comes to life only when it is "fertilized" with a spark of poetic imagination.

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