

ELEMENTS OF ZOROASTRIANISM AND FIRE MYTHOLOGEMS IN VIKTOR TSOI'S ROCK POETRY

ELEMENTOS DO ZOROASTRISMO E MITOLOGEMAS DO FOGO NA POESIA ROCK DE VIKTOR TSOI

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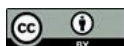
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Abstract

Fire seems to be a special sign in literature: on the one hand, it is characterized by inconsistency, on the other hand, by mythology in its embodiment. In the era of postmodernism, the mythopoetic principle becomes even more intense. You can see a whole complex of connections with different mythologies and religions of the world in one creative element. Russian rock poetry is song poetry within the framework of postmodern poetics. In the rock poetry of Viktor Tsoi, the image of fire is endowed with similarities to the image presented in the Iranian culture of Zoroastrianism. In this study, only the lexeme itself is analyzed - "fire", although other words are associated with this image, but due to the volume of the work, only one element is considered so far. In the poet's early work, this is an internal fire, which he talks about in songs dedicated to a sensual worldview and the expression of love. In Zoroastrianism, people are also endowed with inner fire. In the subsequent period, in the song "In Our Eyes," the poet creates the image of a living fire, which is endowed with the human property of death. Viktor Tsoi also addresses the problem of choice in this context, which also brings his concept closer to Zoroastrianism, while at the same time he continues to develop the theme of the inner world - the spiritual fire inside a person. In later work, in the work "Try to Sing with Me," the image becomes more complex and is endowed with divine meaning - it acts as a special symbol together with the image of water, encouraging action, struggle and movement. In the song "Cuckoo (kukushka)" the image of fire is endowed with the property of strength, a sign of help that can open up opportunities to overcome the catastrophic problems of the existence. Thus, in the rock poetry of Viktor Tsoi, the image of

Resumo

O fogo parece ser um símbolo especial na literatura: por um lado, caracteriza-se pela inconsistência; por outro, pela mitologia em sua concretização. Na era do pós-modernismo, o princípio mitopoético torna-se ainda mais intenso. É possível perceber todo um complexo de conexões com diferentes mitologias e religiões do mundo em um único elemento criativo. A poesia rock russa é poesia cantada dentro da estrutura da poética pós-moderna. Na poesia rock de Viktor Tsoi, a imagem do fogo é dotada de semelhanças com a imagem apresentada na cultura iraniana do zoroastrismo. Neste estudo, apenas o próprio lexema é analisado — "fogo", embora outras palavras estejam associadas a essa imagem; no entanto, devido ao volume do trabalho, apenas um elemento é considerado até o momento. Na obra inicial do poeta, trata-se de um fogo interno, sobre o qual ele fala em canções dedicadas a uma visão de mundo sensual e à expressão do amor. No zoroastrismo, as pessoas também são dotadas de fogo interior. No período subsequente, na canção "In Our Eyes", o poeta cria a imagem de um fogo vivo, dotado da propriedade humana da morte. Viktor Tsoi também aborda o problema da escolha nesse contexto, o que aproxima ainda mais seu conceito do zoroastrismo, ao mesmo tempo em que continua a desenvolver o tema do mundo interior — o fogo espiritual dentro de uma pessoa. Em trabalhos posteriores, na obra "Try to Sing with Me", a imagem torna-se mais complexa e é dotada de significado divino — ela atua como um símbolo especial juntamente com a imagem da água, incentivando a ação, a luta e o movimento. Na canção "Cuckoo (kukushka)", a imagem do fogo é dotada da propriedade da força, um sinal de ajuda que pode abrir



fire has similarities with a similar image of Iranian culture, but at the same time, the author also puts his own individual aspects into its embodiment.

Keywords: Image of Fire. Mythopoetic. Rock Poetry. Viktor Tsoi. Zoroastrianism. Iranian Culture. Interactions.

oportunidades para superar os problemas catastróficos da existência. Assim, na poesia rock de Viktor Tsoi, a imagem do fogo apresenta semelhanças com uma imagem semelhante da cultura iraniana, mas, ao mesmo tempo, o autor também incorpora seus próprios aspectos individuais à sua representação.

Palavras-chave: Imagem do Fogo. Mitopoética. Poesia Rock. Viktor Tsoi. Zoroastrismo. Cultura Iraniana. Interações.

1 INTRODUCTION

The intercultural interaction between Russia and Iran has been going on for quite a few centuries, which is also reflected in various literary forms and trends. In the era of Romanticism at the turn of the XVIII – XIX centuries, the authors pay attention to the culture of the East, being in search of something special, something different from the immoral aristocratic world of Europe. Translations of Iranian texts are becoming widespread in Russian literature (Dunaeva 2014. 135-136), and Iranian or Persian motifs and images are increasingly mentioned in the works of Russian classics, in particular, A.S. Pushkin, in the texts of A.S. Griboyedov and others. (Masume 2012). Then contacts began to intensify during the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries, and there was an interest in mythological images and Zoroastrianism. The mysticism of the romantic worldview is becoming part of the modernist era of the Silver Age of Russian poetry, the authors of this period also turn to Iranian motifs, for example, Velimir Khlebnikov (Masume 2021). And in the Soviet era, intercultural contacts did not stop until 1979. (Dunaeva 2014. 136). In general, since the late 1990s, intercultural communication has been resumed and continues to this day.

It is quite natural for subsequent Russian literary trends to interact with the already established tradition of artistic interpretation of Iranian images and motifs. Russian rock poetry, which was formed at the end of the twentieth century, uses and develops the trends of Russian Romanticism and modernism in general. Although the influence of Western rock authors in Russia is strong, especially the Beatles, it is interesting in this regard that intercultural interaction and the use of oriental motifs, myths

and images in rock art are also recorded in Europe. Orientalism is also inherent in world rock poetry in general. In the group we have identified, the Beatles, for example, George Harrison was fond of Buddhism and spread it among the band members. In the work of the Russian rock poet Viktor Tsoi, this aspect is reflected in one of the songs "Sitar played" (Tsoi 1991. 296), which also speaks in favor of the influence of a foreign band, at the same time shows an interest in oriental themes and motifs in the works of the Russian rock author.

In general, orientalism was characteristic of the rock poet both in connection with his parents, or rather his Korean ancestry on his father's side, and on the other hand, in connection with his own interest in Oriental culture. According to the researchers, for example, he had a fascination with martial arts and the image of Bruce Lee (Kalgin 2016). At the same time, there are corresponding artistic elements in his texts, including mythopoeic ones, for example, a comparison with Indra, the god in Vedism and Hinduism (Tsoi 1991. 300).

It is also significant that in the dominant trend of postmodernism in recent decades, one of the key components is mythopoeics, which draws the attention of authors to various Eastern religions and mythological systems, including Iranian Zoroastrianism. In a postmodern work, references to different contexts can be presented in the structure of a single image, which is necessary to create a multiplicity of interpretations, as well as game forms.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In Russia, interest in Zoroastrianism is generally associated with mythological elements, as well as with a number of archaeological finds. On the one hand, this interest developed until 1917 in connection with the creation of the first Zoroastrian community in St. Petersburg by Ivan Nikolaevich Gantimurov, who was from an Iranian family (Kovalev 2019). After the revolution, the community did not develop due to ideological factors. It was only in the early 1980s that interactions with Zoroastrianism began to form again in Russian society thanks to the activities of I.N.'s grandson. Pavel Pavlovich Globa Gantimurov, who began to popularize these ideas along with astrology among his students (Kovalev 2019). The period of Perestroika since 1985 has finally opened the

borders for various teachings, including Zoroastrianism in the USSR (Kovalev 2019). Given these circumstances, as well as the popularity of astrology and the fame of Pavel Globa's name during this period, it can be argued that the rock poet also knew about this information. It is also important to emphasize, as mentioned above, that Viktor Tsoi had a common interest in Eastern cultures, which the author's biographer also wrote about (Kalgin 2016).

About ancient Iranian mythology, N.H. Sarvaretdinova writes: "The main sources of Iranian mythology are texts, artifacts of art and archeology, but, nevertheless, the main source of its study is the Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrianism, a religion that has dominated among Iranians for many years" (Sarvaretdinova 2019-130). It is also noted that the mythology of Ancient Iran has similarities with Vedic and Indo-European mythology in general (Sarvaretdinova 2019-131).

It should be noted that the image of fire chosen as the object of analysis in this work is generally presented ambiguously in different religions and in Zoroastrianism in particular. In Zoroastrianism, the personification of fire is Atar. According to legend, fire filled the entire created universe: the sky, water, earth and vegetation, as well as man. This aspect explains why fire was especially revered in Zoroastrianism. An entire month was set aside to worship him. A similar thing is found in Slavic beliefs. A special attitude to this image in general in culture is indicated in the work of the philologist A. Potebnia: "If we did not know that the deities of fire and light occupied an important place in the pagan beliefs of the Slavs, we could see this from the abundance of words based on the representations of fire and light. Both the soul and life, as well as the private manifestations of life: hunger, thirst, desire, love, sadness, joy, anger – were presented to the people and depicted in the language of fire" (Potebnia 2000. 9). In verbal art, fire is represented in various aspects: using a mythological component, and aesthetic, and metaphorical, and associative, etc. (Gruzan, Petishev 2014). Fire can be the basis of existence, a destructive force, and a purifying element, combining both chaos and harmony of the world.

Another important characteristic of the image of fire in connection with its versatility and symbolic and philosophical interpretation is its intermediate content - the ability to combine different types of art: music, words, painting, etc. As E.A. Radaeva notes, fire in expressionism becomes a sign of syncretic art, i.e. there is a potential for

such interactions inside it (Radaeva 2019). It is important to note that rock poetry is also an intermediate art. Within the framework of one work, music, literature, theater, painting, etc. can be combined here. This aspect also creates the appropriate conditions for the embodiment of the image of fire at the junction of different artistic methods.

It should also be noted that rock poetry in the field of postmodernism actively turns to mythology. In particular, mythopoeics in Viktor Tsoi's work is one of the systematically used techniques, in particular, it was noted, for example, that in the song "Trolleybus" the author used mythologems from the initiation rite (Kurbanovsky 1992), and in the album "A Star named the Sun" he develops a mythologeme about a dying and resurrecting God (Petrova 2007).

In terms of this study, it is assumed that the image of fire is endowed with such features that exist in the Iranian culture of Zoroastrianism. As Vyacheslav Ivanov writes: "In the history of modern world religions, it is believed that the "cult of fire" or "worship of fire" is primarily associated with the dogmas of Zoroastrianism, and its function is believed to have served as an intermediary between gods and people" (Ivanov 2009. 53). Scientists associate the development of the cult of fire with the general development of human consciousness and generally show the ideological similarity of the content of this image in various Eastern mythologies (Shaidullayeva, Kurbonov 2023). This symbol is also considered the most mysterious of all the elements, as it appears extremely rarely in nature without a person. It is mined by people, nourished like something alive, and birth, life, and death are associated with it. It is associated with the dynamics of existence, the active (masculine) principle. It combines the everyday and the mystical, deadly to the living and at the same time necessary and useful to man (Okhotsimsky 2011). Fire appears in many religions and mythologies, denoting the presence of the divine principle.

3 METHODOLOGY

Let us turn to the analysis of the lexeme "fire" in the works of V. Tsoi, although other words are associated with this image, but due to the volume of the issue, so far only this element is considered in our work.

Already in the early period from 1982 to 1986, when such albums were created: "45", "46", "The Chief of Kamchatka", "This is not love", "Night" – a multifaceted image

of fire is formed in the works of the rock author. As part of the study of rock poetry, it was indicated that the album is a form similar to a literary cycle, in which appropriate artistic connections are formed, but at the same time songs can be presented independently (Domansky 2000). Based on this, in this paper we will turn to songs outside of their cyclical connections.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the very first work "There is time, but there is no money" of the first album "45" there is a mention of the lexeme:

It's been raining since morning, it will be, it was, and it is,
And my pocket is empty, it's six o'clock.
There are no cigarettes and no fire,
And there is no light in the window of a friend. (Tsoi 1991. 292)

Based on the context, we can consider the meaning of fire in this example as a household tool that is used to light and smoke cigarettes. But in associative terms, the lexeme "fire" sounds separate from cigarettes, in fact, emphasizing another – the metaphysical meaning of the image – a description of the inner state of the hero, who "fell into some kind of different circle", as it sounds further in the song.:

There is time, but there is no money.
And there's nowhere to visit.
And suddenly everyone was gone.
I'm in a different kind of circle.
I'm thirsty, I'm hungry,
I just want to sit down somewhere. (Tsoi 1991. 292)

The hero's consciousness is connected exclusively with everyday problems and cannot go beyond them. Such walking in a "wrong circle" emphasizes the symbolic semantics of the image of fire, which determines the tragic loneliness of the hero, his lack of support and the ability to stop negative obsessive actions. Metaphysically, the hero finds himself alone, he does not have the opportunity to communicate, which also

becomes "not such a circle" for him. The song highlights the problem of isolating consciousness, in which there is no "fire" caused by the negative environment.

In the next album "46" there will be a second use of the lexeme "fire" in the refrain of the song "Sasha":

The master of the word and the blade,
He looks into his palm.
He came from far away.
And he went through the fire. (Tsoi 1991. 303)

In this case, we can talk about using the meaning of the fire of purification, tempering, and this is the fire of difficulties and struggle. Although the song is ironic, this irony does not apply to the fire, it concerns the image of Sasha, the hero of the narrative.

Interestingly, later in the album "Chief of Kamchatka" this lexeme is not used in his own works by V. R. Tsoi. But he includes in the album's composition a quotation song "Mr. X's Aria" from Imre Kalman's operetta "Mr. X", which contains the following lines:

I'm tired of basking by someone else's fire.
But where is the heart that will love me... (Tsoi 1991. 308)

According to the researchers, the performance of this song is associated with respect for I. Kalman on the part of V. Tsoi, it was his favorite composer. They also recall that Tsoi considered himself close to the very image of the hero of the Hungarian composer Mr. X (Kalgin 2016). In this quote, fire also symbolizes a certain space, a house that turns out to be not native, and it is also an image of a sensual relationship that does not suit the hero. The image as a whole is dual, it is considered both in terms of material and metaphysical. In fact, it is also the inner version of the embodiment of this artistic element that is presented here, as a filling of the inner world and a reflection of its sensory state.

And in the album "This is not love" the image of fire is also presented in the context of deep inner sensual experiences.:

And in the evening I'm standing under your window.
You water the flowers, you water the flowers.

And I'm standing in the dark and burning up with fire.
 And it's your fault, only you.
 But this is not Love (Tsoi 1991. 311)

In this case, it is an inner fire that resembles the image of the mythological fire in Zoroastrianism. But at the same time, the poet distinguishes the fire of passion from the feeling of love, which translates this meaning into a negative plan. As in Zoroastrianism, fire can be a negative and destructive principle. The album also repeats the song "Sasha", which we wrote about above.

Further, two mentions of the lexeme are related to its plural form, denoting luminous dots or lighting elements. In the album "Night" in the first song "the lights went out":

We left the house.,
 When in all windows
 The lights went out,
 One by one,
 We saw him leaving
 The last tram. (Tsoi 1991. 316)

And also in the late period 1987-1990, when the most popular albums "Blood Type", "A Star named the Sun" and the posthumous "Black Album" were created, the poet continues to turn to the image of fire.

In the album "Blood Type", the song "Goodnight" again presents an image, as in the previous composition "Night":

The roofs of the houses are shaking under the weight of the days.
 A heavenly shepherd grazes the clouds.
 The city shoots out into the night with a shot of lights,
 But the night is stronger, its power is great. (Tsoi 1991. 325)

The lexeme becomes part of a metaphor, showing some kind of active and aggressive action that should protect against the "night", although in the next line this attempt turns out to be futile. Everyday and natural phenomena and objects in this song are transferred to a different mythological format. The author creates a picture of the world in which warring forces and fantastic subjects are fixed: "the heavenly shepherd",

"the night is stronger, its power is great". Alliteration and assonance are also intensively used in this verse, enhancing perception on the sound and musical levels. The lights become part of a weapon that must defeat something dark, although the latter at the same time saves from the "heaviness of the days."

The next song "Mom, we are all seriously ill" from this album also uses the image of an inner fire:

The grains have fallen into the ground, the grains are asking for rain.
They need rain.
Cut open my chest, look inside me,
You'll see, everything is on fire there.
In a day it will be too late, in an hour it will be too late,
In a moment it will be impossible to get up.
If the keys don't fit the doors, kick the doors down with your shoulder. (Tsoi 1991. 325)

The image of fire functions again in the sense of fixing the inner state. It is in Zoroastrianism that fire is also the inner essence of man. All the higher realities of the universe are concentrated in its symbolism, and by its upward orientation it also shows the spiritual growth of a person. One of the functions of fire in Zoroastrianism is also participation in the act of creation of the world, the cosmogonic line: it connects the material and the spiritual, earthly and cosmic. In this case, man is considered as a creation of God and, accordingly, there is a spirit of fire in him, which is embodied in talents and giftedness (Khadikova 2018. 56). The lyrics of Viktor Tsoi's song show just the process of active upward movement in the symbols of grains that have fallen into the ground and should grow. It is the collective image "in grains" that appears in the work – the metaphorical image of humanity, which goes through the stages of painful growth. The song itself, from the perspective of the intermediate connections with the musical and performing embodiment, is very dynamic, has a strong accelerated tempo in the melody and during its auditory performance.

In the text from the same album of the composition "In our eyes", the image of fire becomes more complicated, endowed with the human property of mortality.:

In our eyes, shouts of "Go ahead",
In our eyes, shouts of "Stop",

In our eyes, the birth of the day
And the death of fire. (Tsoi 1991. 327)

Viktor Tsoi also addresses the problem of Tsoice in this song, which also brings his concept closer to Zoroastrianism. In this religious system, as the researchers write, it is believed that there is fire in every person, but only by connecting with other people can evil be resisted (Khadikova 2018. 57). And in this case, a person must make a Tsoice with whom to go, on whose side to be.

Finally, in the next song, "Stand Next to Me," the image is already explicitly included in the mythological structure.:

This is our day, we've learned it.
By the location of the stars.
The signs of fire and water, the views of the gods.
And so we take a step
To the unfinished bridge,
We believed the stars
And everyone is shouting I'm ready. (Tsoi 1991. 327)

The image of fire becomes a mythological element along with the sign of water, followed by the "views of the gods" – this includes a connection with pre-Christian religious systems, where there is a pantheon of deities who are masters of different elements. But in this case, the fire symbol is paired with water, which forms a similarity with Zoroastrianism. In rituals with fiery forms in this system, "holy water" is also used, which can perform the function of purifying space for further sacred action with fire. The sign of fire itself is considered as evidence of the presence of a deity, which is also emphasized in V. Tsoi's song: first it talks about fire, and then the gods appear.

In the album "A Star named the Sun", the mythologized image of fire is also used in the work "Sad Song".:

Army commanders of the years –
We lost in battle day after day.,
And when we lit the fire,
Our fire was extinguished by rain.
We're sitting by the broken troughs
And we're guessing on the wind rose.,
And when it's time to get up,

We're sitting, we're waiting. (Tsoi 1991. 331)

In this context, the image can also be viewed in different aspects. In material terms, fire is like a flame that goes out because of water, but in the metaphysical aspect it is also a way of acting, a desire for active things, but impossible in these circumstances due to the aggressive environment.

The latest "Black Album" also features the song "Cuckoo", in which the author uses the lexeme "fire":

My sun, look at me
My palm turned into a fist.
And if you have gunpowder, give me fire.
Like that. (Tsoi 1991. 340)

In this song, the image of fire acquires the property of a certain power, becomes a special sign of help that should help overcome negative forms. In fact, this is where the Zoroastrian idea of the need to combine one's own fire with the fire of others is embodied in order to defeat the evil principle of existence. As we noted earlier, fire in Zoroastrianism represented a paradigm in which the sensual and the intellectual, the image and the idea, religious ritual experience and the transcendental principle were combined. In his song, Viktor Tsoi is very close to this paradigm, at the same time, the poet includes the image in the context of the steady turnover "there is gunpowder in the flasks." Russian poet Nikolai Gogol's classic "Taras Bulba" is a quotation from this expression, which already fits these elements into Russian conceptualism. Figuratively, this expression is defined in dictionaries as having the energy or strength to do something. But the poet transforms this aphorism, leaving only what is needed to express his own idea, thus connecting his author's intentions with an associative connection with the mythological semantics of the image of fire.

In addition, it is important that, compositionally, the image of fire is included in the refrain (chorus) of the song, which is repetitive and thus enhances the significance of what is being played. The first line of the chorus mentions the image of the sun, which in Zoroastrianism is also associated with the concept of fire, defines the symbolism of the mythological principle. In general, the song presents the Russian folklore image of the

cuckoo – this bird in folk beliefs can determine the number of years of a person's life. Thus, on the one hand, the poet uses the mythologeme of fire, which includes the Zoroastrian idea of divinity in the context, and on the other hand, combines it with the Russian artistic tradition and embodies his own individual picture of the world in the text using this technique.

It should be mentioned about another piece that was not included in any album, but is quite famous – this is the song "Changes". It also uses a token in a line.: "Instead of fire, there is smoke" (Tsoi 1991. 346). An antinomy is used, in which the active and active fiery principle is contrasted with its emptiness of smoke. Smoke is not so useful and multifunctional, rather the opposite. In general, the individualization of the image is preserved here, at the same time, there is also an associative connection with the mythologeme of the fire figure.

5 CONCLUSION

In the works of Viktor Tsoi, the image of fire is used in various aspects, and in its semantic content it has similarities with a similar element of ancient Iranian culture. As in Zoroastrianism, the author uses the aspect of inner fire in rock poetry, which is a mythological indicator of the human condition. But at the same time, it should be said that he also demonstrates his individual ideas in the embodiment of this image. The question of the influence of Zoroastrianism in general on the rock poetry of V.R. Tsoi is debatable, it is also necessary to consider other lexemes related to the image of fire, for example: "spark", "bonfires", "sun", etc. But the lines of similarity of his concept with Zoroastrianism are already clearly visible at the level of interaction of mythological and intermediate principles. The image of fire in Viktor Tsoi's work is included in the problems of the confrontation between good and evil, in the reflection of the inner sensual and spiritual state, in the transmission of struggle and in the decision-making process of the issue of Tsoice, in ideas about the meaning of being and the universe as a whole.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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