

DARMONOV O'RAYEVA'S VIEWS ON MYTHOLOGY

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Annotation: This article provides a scientific-theoretical analysis of Darmonov O'rayeva's views on Uzbek oral prose genres within the framework of global folkloristics. It examines her classification of oral prose into myth, legend, narrative, joke, and fairy tale based on functional, semantic, and aesthetic criteria. The article highlights the significance of the narrator-listener relationship in defining genre boundaries and discusses the division of Uzbek oral prose into two main groups: artistic and narrative-informative genres. O'rayeva's seven-criteria typology is emphasized as a modern, multi-dimensional approach that deepens the understanding of oral prose's multifunctionality and serves as a solid theoretical basis for comparative folkloristics. The article underscores the necessity of integrating communicative, semantic, and functional perspectives in the study of folk oral creativity to ensure a systematic and analytical approach.

Keywords: Darmonov O'rayeva, Uzbek oral prose, folkloristics, genre classification, myth, legend, narrative, fairy tale, oral tradition, communicative approach, typology, functional-semantic criteria, artistic genres, narrative-informative genres.

Myth is one of the primitive yet profound stages of human thought, embodying the earliest conceptions of ancient humans about existence, nature, humans, life and death, and the origin of the universe. Mythological thinking, in essence, is the initial form of human consciousness that seeks to comprehend reality not through rationality but through emotional and aesthetic criteria. Ancient humans, unable to separate themselves from nature, attributed symbolic, legendary, and divine meanings to every phenomenon and object in existence. Therefore, myth is an ancient form of knowledge, formed from unconscious emotional attitudes towards reality, combined with imagination and belief.

In the structure of mythological thinking, issues such as the creation of the universe, the origin of humans, natural phenomena, and the emergence of living beings are interpreted in an imaginative and miraculous manner. In myth, symbolic truth prevails over literal fact; although events may appear fictitious, within the context and environment where the myth was created and popularized, they were accepted as truth. From this perspective, myth is not only a product of religious or legendary consciousness but also a reflection of the artistic-aesthetic approach of the people's thinking.

The Importance of Myth in Artistic Works

Mythological ideas play a profound aesthetic role in literary works, particularly in prose, epics, drama, and lyrical genres. Myth is important in the following ways:

1. **Source of Aesthetic Basis and Imagery.** Mythological motifs provide artistic works with vivid imagery, symbolic layers, and deep aesthetic expression. The inner drama of myths and the system of archetypal images (hero, journey, trial, magical helper, etc.) enhance the artistic power of the work and grant it national and universal significance.
2. **Spiritual Depth through Archetypal Structures.** As noted by C. G. Jung, every mythological image is an archetype belonging to the shared spiritual experience of humanity. Therefore, when myth elements are used in literary works, they directly influence the reader's deep spiritual-intuitive consciousness. This transforms the work into not only an aesthetic but also a spiritual and moral experience.
3. **Means of Expressing Reality through Symbolic and Figurative Language.** Myth is a language of symbols. Through it, writers often convey complex social, philosophical, or ethical

issues symbolically, which cannot be expressed directly. For example, the universal structures of myth are embodied in plot models such as “eternal struggle,” “the path to self-awareness,” and “hero’s trials.”

4. **National Identity and Cultural Memory.** Every nation’s myths reflect its historical, cultural, and spiritual experience. The use of mythological elements in artistic works serves as a means of expressing the people’s identity, restoring cultural memory, and aesthetically conveying national self-awareness. Especially in the independence era literature, mythological motifs reveal national spirit, ancient beliefs, and folk thinking.

5. **Philosophical Interpretation Possibility/** Although mythological images have lost their original religious function over time, in contemporary literature they become a means of philosophical generalization. For example, creation myths serve as literary attempts to answer eternal questions about the meaning of life and the place of humans in existence.

Thus, mythology is not only the primitive form of human thought but also the birth point of artistic thinking. Through myth, humans formed an emotional-aesthetic approach to reality, aiming to comprehend and express the essence of life in understandable forms. Literature reinterprets this mythological layer, revitalizing it for modern consciousness and deepening the aesthetics of the work, providing the reader with the opportunity to understand contemporary reality through ancient symbols.

Literary scholar Darmonoy O’rayeva’s ideas focus on scientifically classifying Uzbek oral prose genres. She addresses one of folkloristics’ main challenges—the identification of genre boundaries of oral prose, differentiating them on functional, aesthetic, and semantic grounds. Below is a scientific-theoretical analysis of her views.

Darmonoy O’rayeva relies on major representatives of world folkloristics such as L.M. Zemlyanova, K. Imomov, and American folklore researchers, classifying oral prose genres as myth, legend, narrative, joke, and fairy tale. This corresponds to the universal classification system in contemporary folkloristics.

For example, according to the classification accepted in the USA cited by L.M. Zemlyanova:

- **Myth:** Explanatory, belief-based story about nature and the cosmos.
- **Legend:** Narrative about events related to specific persons or places.
- **Fairy tale:** Fictional story with a miraculous plot.

This approach shows that genres differ not only formally but also in terms of function and the level of informational and emotional impact. Thus, each genre is analyzed based on its purpose, the degree of listener’s trust, and the proximity or distance of content to reality.

Darmonoy O’rayeva highlights the narrator’s and listener’s attitude towards the story as a key genre-defining criterion. This is a significant point because oral creation is not merely a text but a complex communicative process. As K. Imomov points out:

“When a legend is told, it evokes relative trust in the listener, while a fairy tale is always understood as fiction.”

This approach is based on reception theory—how the text is perceived. The nature of a genre is defined not only by its internal structure but also by how it is accepted. This opens the way in modern folkloristics to viewing genre as an interactive phenomenon.

O’rayeva divides Uzbek oral prose into two main groups:

1. **Artistic prose genres** – fairy tale, anecdote, joke, lof (boast) → These genres rely on imagination, artistic texture, and aesthetic pleasure.
2. **Narrative-informative prose genres** – myth, legend, narrative, oral story → These genres are based on information, historical memory, and belief.

This classification is based on functional-semantic criteria, focusing on the informational purpose and aesthetic orientation (fantasy vs. reality). In particular, including myth and legend in the narrative-informative group indicates their religious-philosophical and historical context. The seven-criteria typological approach proposed by O'rayeva (functional scope, listener-narrator relation, artistic level, attitude to reality, temporal interpretation, spatial scope, and narration method) allows interpreting Uzbek oral prose as a multi-layered structure.

This approach:

- Enables evaluating each genre in a multi-dimensional context.
- Demonstrates the multifunctionality of oral prose (spiritual-informative, didactic, aesthetic, informational, ritual).
- Creates a solid theoretical basis for modern comparative folkloristics (comparative analysis).

Darmonoy O'rayeva's approach shows the necessity of analyzing Uzbek oral prose genres not only by thematic or formal features but also by communicative, semantic, and aesthetic-functional aspects. This aligns folk oral creativity with modern theoretical approaches, enabling its more systematic and analytical study.

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