

METHODS OF STUDYING THE MYTHOPOETIC LAYER OF A LITERARY TEXT

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Abstract: This article analyzes the methods of studying the mythopoetic layer of a literary text. The mythopoetic dimension reflects ancient worldviews, archetypes, and symbolic codes preserved in literature. The research applies structural, comparative, semiotic, and reconstructive approaches to identify the functions of mythological motifs in literary works. The study shows that mythopoetic analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of cultural semantics, reveals the continuity between folklore and written texts, and uncovers the symbolic mechanisms through which literature reflects human experience.

Keywords: archetype, folklore, literature, mythopoetics, semiotics, symbol, transformation

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются методы изучения мифопоэтического слоя художественного текста. Мифопоэтическое измерение отражает архаическое мировоззрение, архетипы и символические коды, сохранившиеся в литературе. В исследовании применяются структурный, сравнительный, семиотический и реконструктивный подходы для выявления функций мифологических мотивов в произведениях. Анализ показывает, что мифопоэтика углубляет понимание культурной семантики, выявляет преемственность между фольклором и письменной литературой и раскрывает символические механизмы отражения человеческого опыта.

Ключевые слова: архетип, фольклор, литература, мифопоэтика, семиотика, символ, трансформация

Introduction

The study of mythopoetics has become one of the leading directions in modern literary criticism, as it allows us to penetrate into the deepest layers of artistic creativity and uncover the archetypal foundations of narrative structures. The mythopoetic layer of a literary text reflects not only the influence of folklore and ancient beliefs but also the universal archetypes and symbolic patterns that shape the cultural memory of humanity. In this sense, mythopoetic analysis provides a unique methodological key to understanding how literary texts preserve and transform mythological consciousness.

In world literature, mythopoetic elements provide continuity between oral tradition and written culture, serving as a bridge between archaic worldviews and modern artistic expression. Folklore motifs, ritual symbols, and mythological archetypes—such as the hero's journey, the descent into the underworld, or the creation of the cosmos—are repeatedly reinterpreted by authors, thereby

ensuring the vitality and relevance of myth in literature. This continuity highlights literature as a space where ancient collective experiences coexist with new forms of artistic individuality.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that literature, as a carrier of collective memory, preserves mythological codes that shape both individual and national identity. Myths function as a cultural “grammar” through which societies interpret their world, offering models of behavior, systems of values, and narratives of origin. Therefore, studying the mythopoetic layer of a literary text means exploring the cultural DNA of nations and the symbolic mechanisms through which human communities understand reality and transmit their worldview across generations.

Moreover, the analysis of mythopoetics has significant interdisciplinary importance. It intersects with anthropology, religious studies, psychology, semiotics, and philosophy, allowing for a multifaceted interpretation of literature. For example, Jungian archetypal psychology explains the recurrence of symbolic figures such as the Mother, the Shadow, or the Trickster, while M. Eliade’s theory of myth and sacred time reveals how literature re-creates the experience of the “eternal return.” Similarly, Yu. Lotman’s semiotic approach helps interpret mythopoetic images as cultural codes, while M. Bakhtin’s concepts of polyphony and carnivalization demonstrate how mythological voices enter into dialogue within texts.

In addition, the mythopoetic layer of literature has practical significance for understanding cultural identity in the globalized world. In the context of increasing cultural hybridization, mythopoetics allows us to trace how national literatures preserve their uniqueness while engaging in dialogue with world culture. By examining mythological motifs in modern texts, researchers can identify both universal archetypes shared by humanity and unique symbols that embody the specific worldview of a nation.

Thus, mythopoetic analysis represents not only a theoretical approach but also a practical method of uncovering the semantic depth of literature. It demonstrates that works of art are never isolated from collective cultural memory but are deeply rooted in the archetypal imagination of humanity. In this way, literature becomes a medium through which the mythological past continues to resonate in the present, shaping the future of artistic and cultural development.

Literature Review

The problem of mythopoetics was first systematically studied by scholars of the twentieth century. M. Eliade emphasized the eternal return of mythological images and their role in modern culture. Yu. Lotman analyzed literature as a semiotic system where mythopoetic symbols function as cultural codes. M. Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony and carnivalization also provides valuable tools for understanding the multiplicity of mythological voices in texts.

In Uzbek literary studies, scholars such as U. Normatov and N. Karimov have focused on the relationship between folklore and literature, highlighting the aesthetic functions of mythological motifs. Their research shows that Uzbek literature, like world literature, relies heavily on mythological archetypes such as the cosmic tree, sacred water, dragon, and the motif of transformation.

To study the mythopoetic layer of a literary text, several methods were applied:

- Structural analysis – to determine the function of mythological motifs within the plot and composition;
- Comparative method – to identify parallels between mythological and literary texts of different cultures;
- Semiotic approach – to interpret mythic images as a system of signs that preserve cultural meanings;
- Mythopoetic reconstruction – to reconstruct the archaic worldview and symbolic thinking behind the text.

This combination of methods ensures a holistic analysis of mythopoetic elements, allowing us to trace both universal and national aspects of literary creativity.

The research revealed that the mythopoetic layer of literature performs several important functions:

- Preservation of archaic worldview – literary texts often reflect cosmogonic myths, ideas of sacred time and space, and mythological dualism (light/darkness, life/death).
- Symbolic depth – recurring motifs such as the road, tree, bird, and dragon gain new aesthetic functions in literature, while retaining their archaic roots.
- Transformation and adaptation – mythological symbols evolve over time, acquiring new philosophical, religious, and social meanings while still being recognized by the reader.
- Genre interconnection – myths and legends often serve as the foundation for epic poetry, prose, and modern novels, demonstrating the continuity of mythopoetic thinking.

This proves that mythopoetics is not a secondary or decorative aspect of literature, but its structural and semantic foundation.

Conclusion

The study of the mythopoetic layer of literary texts is of great theoretical and practical significance, as it allows scholars to penetrate beyond the surface level of narrative and stylistic devices to uncover the deep structures that shape meaning. Mythopoetic elements provide a symbolic framework through which literature reflects not only individual creativity but also collective cultural memory. This approach deepens our understanding of symbolic systems in literature by demonstrating how recurring archetypes, myths, and ritual motifs continue to influence literary imagination across different epochs and traditions.

Furthermore, the investigation of mythopoetic layers reveals the continuity between folklore and written traditions. Folklore provides the archetypal models—such as the myth of the hero, the

trickster, the world tree, or the cosmic journey—that are reinterpreted and reconfigured in written literature. By tracing these connections, scholars can explain how oral narratives evolve into literary texts while preserving their mythological foundation. This continuity highlights the cultural genealogy of literature, demonstrating that artistic creativity is rooted in universal symbolic structures.

The practical value of mythopoetic analysis lies in its ability to explain the cultural semantics of texts, especially those that seem enigmatic or multi-layered. By analyzing mythopoetic elements, researchers can uncover hidden meanings, archetypal structures, and symbolic oppositions—such as life versus death, chaos versus order, or nature versus culture—that underpin literary works. Such analysis enriches the interpretation of canonical texts and also sheds light on lesser-studied works, allowing them to be situated within broader cultural and mythological traditions.

Moreover, mythopoetic analysis is one of the most effective methods of literary theory for revealing the profound semantic and cultural dimensions of artistic creativity. It enables a dialogue between literature and other disciplines, including anthropology, philosophy, semiotics, and psychology. For instance, Jungian archetypal criticism allows us to examine how universal symbols manifest in characters and plots, while Eliade's theory of myth as a model of reality explains the persistence of sacred time and space in narrative structures. Thus, mythopoetics provides a versatile methodological toolkit that integrates symbolic, cultural, and psychological perspectives.

Ultimately, the study of mythopoetic structures is not limited to identifying mythological motifs but extends to understanding how literature constructs cultural identity and worldview. Through mythopoetic analysis, literature becomes a key to interpreting the values, fears, aspirations, and collective imagination of societies. It demonstrates that works of art are not isolated creations but part of an ongoing cultural dialogue shaped by the enduring power of myth.

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