

# Creativity of M.I. Tsvetaeva and E.T.A. Hoffmann in the Space of World Culture

## Folk Tradition in Poetics\*

Marianna Dudareva

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia  
(RUDN University)  
Moscow, Russia  
E-mail: marianna.galieva@yandex.ru

Marina Shtanko

Taganrog Institute of Management and Economics  
Taganrog, Russia

Olga Murashova

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia  
(RUDN University)  
Moscow, Russia

Denis Bronnikov

State University of Russia A.N. Kosygin  
(Technology.Design.Art)  
Moscow, Russia

**Abstract**—The article examines in a typological aspect the work of M.I. Tsvetaeva and E.T.A. Hoffmann. The lyrics of the Russian poetess and the fairy tale “The Golden Pot” of the German classic are analyzed in a wide cultural space, since both authors were well aware of the world mythological and folk tradition. In the poetics of the claimed writers archetypal constructions are revealed. Much attention is paid to the archetype of the snake, snake symbolism, which we find in the Slavic cultural tradition, and in the Indian. There is a reference to the latter in the tale of Hoffmann. We turn to the comparative-typological and systematic methods of analysis. The methodological basis of the work was the work of V.M. Zhirmunsky, B.A. Rybakov, R. Graves, D. Fraser, W. Turner.

**Keywords**—*myth; folklore; cultural tradition; archetype; Tsvetaeva; Hoffman*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The writer's appeal to the archaic strata of culture, myth and folklore is usually due to his personal interest. For example, M.I. Tsvetaeva in the last years of her life, especially valued two books - this is a German mythological collection and tales by A.N. Afanasyev [1], which was addressed by many poets of the Silver Age. However, sometimes it happens that the artist of the word at an unconscious level uses folklore formulas, archetypes and cultural codes in his work. In this case, we are talking about latent forms of functioning of the folklore tradition in literature, and not about stylization and borrowing.

The Silver Age, as some scholars note, has passed under the auspices of the destruction of “classic pseudo-antiquity” [2] [3], which no longer suits romantics. It is this theoretical problem of the clash of two cultures, the author's literary word and folklore, mythological thinking, that will interest

us.

### II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For research, we turn to two bright poetic figures, the works of Marina Tsvetaeva and Amadeus Hoffmann. German poetry and literature were close to the Russian poetess (this can be traced even from her correspondence with Boris Pasternak), but German romanticism attracted her special attention. Tsvetaeva wrote in her memoirs: “From my mother I inherited music, Romanticism and Germany. Just Music. All of myself”. [4] In this regard, let us turn at the typological level to the artistic world of Hoffmann, whose work was widespread in Russia already in the 1820-1840s [5]. The object of the study is Hoffmann's fairy tale “The Golden Pot” and Tsvetaeva's lyrics of different periods, since all her poems went under the same theme and mood, organically absorbing the “lived through” myth, transformations of ancient culture. Tsvetaeva never used ready-made myths, she did not obey “no system, never entered anything”, as S.G. Bocharov rightly remarks [6].

### III. RESULTS

Romanticism is characterized by the desire for a certain ideal that is outside the limits of the earth's space - it is always something incomprehensible, unknown, but only for the ordinary person, uninitiated in the secrets of the universe of man. For the poet, the unknown and the ideal are a native element in which he can be truly happy. Hoffmann, through the mouth of his suffering heroes, says this: “Is Anselm's bliss really nothing more than life in poetry, to which the sacred harmony of all things is revealed as the deepest of the secrets of nature!” [7]. Hoffmann's romanticism is considered tragic, even gloomy [8]. This quote from a fairy tale seems to be key to understanding the entire work. Anselm is a young man, poetic nature, suffering and striving beyond the earth: “<...> it was not a dream, and until I die of

\*Project: The publication has been prepared with the support of the “RUDN University Program 5-100”.

love and desire, I will believe in golden-green snakes ..." [7]. This is what the student said, justifying his imaginary madness (it was simply that everyone around him considered it to be such) and trying to prove the authenticity of these ideal images to the rest.

The natural-philosophical language of the four elements is manifested in the work (we borrow the concept from G.D. Gachev [9]), which is hostile, harmful to some and living, revealing its secrets to others. If the former are still easy to distinguish in the work - this is the family of Mr. Paulman, then the heroes who feel this language are not so easily attributed to this class. If the archivist, his daughters-snakes, Serpentine and even, finally, the sorceress Lisa are familiar with the language of nature, then Anselm is between the two, he is still in search, in other words, in a state of liminality (we borrow the concept from V. Turner [10]). Thus, two chronotopes are formed in the fairy tale, but not isolated from each other. The spaces are connected by a seeking, wandering image of the young man Anselm, who is so characteristic of the poetics of romanticism. We will be interested in precisely this "secret", natural-philosophical language of nature and relations, the connection of heroes with it, since for the romantic poets themselves, nature, understanding its secrets is the main element of an ideal world.

Let us turn to Anselm and Serpentine, which is the determining Highest Principle in his fate. Firstly, from the beginning of the tale, the symbol of the snake appears: "<...> he looked up and saw three snakes shining with green gold ..." [7]. How to perceive this symbol? From a mythological point of view, we will encounter a number of difficulties that are caused by the fact that the motive of snake-fighting, "snake" symbolism, underwent great changes at different stages of its development and being [11] - the snake / snake was perceived negatively at a certain stage of development. It is no coincidence that Hoffmann's Serpent has a woman. It is through the female archetype that this is represented in ancient culture - the female totem [12]. Here we recall the myth of Isis, who made a sacred serpent from the earth and the saliva of Ra, to deceive God. As such, it was perceived in India.

We carry out our analysis of the text in the context of oriental culture and literature. It is no coincidence that the sages from the Bhagavat Gita (part of the Indian epic Mahabharata) appear in the Golden Pot; the author knew this cultural tradition. It is important in the tale that the female snake is perceived as a source of higher sacred knowledge: "Be faithful to her and keep her in your soul, her, who loves you, and you will see the magnificent wonders of the golden pot and you will be happy forever" [7]. In ancient Ireland, Greece, in India, such a higher principle was the Triple Goddess. It could be Vesta - kind, helping; The White Goddess, who "requires full trust and faithfulness on the part of her lovers" and the Black Goddess, personifying "the mysterious fidelity of love, according to which the poet who seeks her love must go through the torment that the White Goddess exposes him to" [13]. "Be faithful to her" are the keywords that characterize Serpentine, that is, worship as a true poet Muse. Anselm must overcome the hypothesis of the

White Goddess and reach a "poetic trance", which is based on "ecstatic worship of the ancient Greek matriarchal goddess Muse" [13]. Thus, Serpentina, seeing the purposefulness of her lover, gives him the opportunity to touch the secret world of the Golden Pot.

The Golden Pot is a symbol of an ideal world inaccessible to people. This world belongs precisely to Serpentina, who embodies the highest principle. If we distract from the German literary context and turn to our Slavic culture, we will see that snakes accompanied (traces, patterns) all ritual drawings that were of a cult sunny character [14], therefore, the color scheme - gold / green is also not accidental. In India, the Great Mother Goddess is at the same time the mother of all gods and demons [15], that is, the building, giving life force and destroying energy is embodied in it. For these reasons, Mr. Archivist himself almost died from a love of a beautiful snake, as his ancestor suffered from a fire lily: "And he began to mourn the lost girlfriend, because he was attracted to a lonely valley only by an endless love for a beautiful lily, and granite the rocks bowed their heads, taking part in the grief of the youth" [7]. But what happens to Anselm? The history of his trials begins not in a simple hour, but in a sacred one. Everything, like time, can be divided into "sacred and worldly" [16]. Note that Anselm "begins" a new life at noon: "On the day of the ascension, at about three in the afternoon, a young man walked quickly through the Black Gate in Dresden and just hit the basket with apples ..." [7]. Why is it still a black gate? Indeed, in medieval architecture *Porte aure* prevails, that is, a golden color. It is likely that the answer should be sought in fairy tale symbolism, where the way out of the state of mediocrity, "dark", "black", "copper kingdom" is due to the very semantics of copper, silver, and gold. If we draw a parallel with the verses of Marina Tsvetaeva, her myth-making, we will see that for the Russian poet the question of "time" is one of the important questions: "<...> noon of all hours of the day is the most solid, material, with bodies without shadows and with bodies sleeping without dreams <...> the most magical, mythical and mystical hour of the day, the same magic-mytho-mystical as midnight" [4]. The most common question in her lyrics is:

What time is it? -

Rang out. [4]

.....

Soon evening: not to hide from the darkness,

Someone's shadow flickers in the window...

Go away, leave, my knight,

On his golden horse! [4]

The lyrical hero is a knight. It is possible that Tsvetaeva's lyrics go into a romantic epic: "<...> understanding of love as a knightly ministry, the image of love languor, numbness, into which the lover falls into the sight of his beloved ..." [11]. At Hoffmann, Anselm also feels this knightly spirit, the strength that gives him love for the snake: "Ah, could you have done this if you hadn't worn it in your mind and heart, if you didn't believe in it, in its love?" [7]. Returning to the

question of time and space, we note that Anselm worked with the archivist during the day: “Adieu, goodbye, tomorrow at twelve o’clock” [7]. It is also important that snake festivities were held in spring and autumn, and Veronica and Lisa conjured on the night of September 23, the night of the equinox [7]. In the context of the cosmic annual cycle, it is important that at this time bears and snakes hide on a stone, that is, fall asleep. The heroines wanted the Salamander to die, and Anselm was with Veronica - that was the turning point in the tale, another sacred hour. A symbol of fire appears (an element of the four elements), but the sacred fire belongs only to the Salamanders. This is confirmed by color semantics, which at the typological level can also be revealed in Tsvetaeva’s poetry:

In the unknown, in a shining light  
Remember the stranger with good!  
The choppy wind is playing  
Gold and green feather. [4]

Firstly, as we found out, gold is a symbol of the ideal, solar, fiery kingdom (in Hoffmann); green, constantly accompanying it (textually it is very clearly visible) - the color of snake skin, which is a female totem. Secondly, this may be connected with knightly symbolism, heraldry, in which strict “color” laws were observed: “The science of making up the coat of arms divides six colors into two groups: in the first, silver and gold, and scarlet, black, azure and greens - in the second category. The most important rule prohibits the proximity or overlapping <...> of two colors that belong to the same category” [17]. Thus, this clear distribution, both higher and lower, can be projected onto the lyrical hero Tsvetaeva, in which the woman is the bearer of the highest, gold, and the man only, like Anselm, strives for this ideal and achieves it if he understands the natural philosophical language of nature. In his works, Hoffmann portrays a sensitive person, a poet, striving to comprehend the secret of nature: “Is it not true, brother, that your heart has opened, and you comprehend the blissful secret of forest solitude?” [7]. Tsvetaeva’s lyrical hero, unlike the hero of the German classic, is not always such, not always ideal — only in her early poem does the poetess portray a man who has touched the secrets of nature — this is the poem “The Wizard”. We turn to her. In this poem, a rush is felt upwards, to “beyond limits”:

He was our angel, was our demon,  
Our tutor is our sorcerer,  
Our prince and knight. - He was to us all  
Among the people. [4]

The lyrical hero is not an ordinary person, but a “knight”, a sorcerer, a poet. Even if we move away from the typological method and resort to the biographical one, we find out that Tsvetaeva addressed this poem to L.L. Kobylinsky. He is attached to the “serpentine” female cult:

Cheek fracture, dry and sharp,  
Green eye

.....  
(Who with our roving knight  
Now he wanders in the ray of gold? ...) [4]

And in a separate poem (also dedicated to Kobylinsky) Tsvetaeva compares the poet with a snake:

- “Throw a stone, do not spare! I’m waiting, get sick sting!” [4]

..... ..  
And the one who dared the poet to be a judge gasps! [4]

The same color scheme appears in the poem and the same image of the vulnerable person:

With the hiss of an irritated cobra  
He cursed the universe and us, -  
And again he became kind ...  
Almost an hour. [4]

The lyrical hero is counted by the heroine as “Fire Serpents”:

By magical power of the hand  
On the keys - already flying!  
Booming sounds  
Like a waterfall.

.....  
Two horses on fire and in soap -  
Here we are! - Catch, when not laziness! - [4]

Recall that the archivist fired a fire in Hoffmann’s tale with his hands: “<...> he snaps the fire with his fingers and burns holes in the frock coat in the manner of a fiery sponge” [7].

There are many more similarities between Tsvetaeva’s poetry and Hoffmann’s tales, since our poetess felt the mysticism of German romanticism [18], felt the tragedy of Hoffmann’s romanticism when she wrote in my essay “My answer to Osip Mandelstam”: “There is something Hoffmann’s being, which Osip Mandelstam claims to be a child” [4].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In the verses of Tsvetaeva, the power of myth, ancient cults, and magic of rhythm is revealed, because in “rhythm,” says E.V. Anichkov, “that winning and rising power of man, which makes him the most powerful and powerful of all animals, is rooted ... With his help, everything it was possible to do: magically help the work, force God to appear, draw near and listen, you could fix the future of your own free will, free your soul from any abnormality, and not only your own soul, but also the soul of the worst demon; without verse man was nothing, and with verse he became almost a god” [19]. In her poems, we also find a synthesis of cultures, arts, which was a characteristic feature of Hoffmann’s poetics:

“One of the most important features, the development of which in the romantic direction was greatly facilitated by Hoffmann, was a synthesis of arts” [20]. Thus, a comparison of the Tsvetaeva-Hoffman creative pair proves to be productive, especially with regard to revealing the functioning of the folk tradition in literature.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] A.A. Gorelov Notes on folklore M.I. Tsvetaeva (article 1) // Russian folklore. St. Petersburg: Nauka, 2011. V. XXXIV. S. 282 - 295.
- [2] G.S. Knabe Russian Antiquity as a Type of Culture // Content, Role and Fate of the Ancient Heritage in Russian Culture. Moscow: Russian State Humanitarian University, 2000.
- [3] V.A. Smirnov Semantics of the image of Astarte in the poetic world A.A. Kondratyev // Alexander Kondratyev: research, materials, publications. Rivne: Volinsky Amulets, 2008.
- [4] M.I. Tsvetaeva *Sobr. Op.* : V 7 T. Moscow: Ellis Luck, 1994
- [5] M. A. Dudareva, G. B. Atalyan. Transformation of the folk tradition in N. V. Prose. Gogol ("The Night Before Christmas") and E.T.A. Hoffmann ("Adventure on New Year's Eve") // Philological Sciences. Questions of theory and practice. 2019. No. 5. P. 101–104.
- [6] S.G. Bocharov Twentieth Century. Plots of Russian literature. Moscow: Languages of Russian Culture, 1999.
- [7] E. T. A. Hoffmann Novels. Moscow: True, 1991.
- [8] A.B. Botnikova Russian fate of Hoffmann. The reasons for its popularity in Russia. THIS. Hoffmann and Russian literature. Voronezh: Voronezh University Press, 1997.
- [9] G.D. Gachev National images of the world. Cosmo - Psycho - Logos. Moscow: Progress, 1995.
- [10] V. Turner Liminality and communitas. Symbol and ritual. Moscow: Science, 1983.
- [11] V.M. Zhirmunsky Literary relations of East and West and the development of the epic. Folk heroic epic. Comparative historical essays. Moscow; Leningrad: Goslitizdat, 1962. From 11 - 48.
- [12] D. Fraser Golden Branch. Moscow: AST: Transitbook, 2006.
- [13] R. Graves of Mammon and the Black Goddess. Ekaterinburg: U-Factoria, 2010.S. 144 - 154
- [14] B.A. Fishermen Paganism of the ancient Slavs. Moscow: Science, 1981.
- [15] T. Cleary, S. Aziz The Divine Matrix. Mother Goddess. Goddess of Twilight. Nizhny Novgorod: DECOM, 2007.
- [16] M. Eliade Sacred and worldly. Moscow: Moscow State University. 1994.
- [17] M. Paustro Figures and colors of coats of arms. Heraldry. Moscow: AST, 2003.
- [18] V. Svaton Romanticism in the drama of Marina Tsvetaeva. Marina Cvetajevová a Československo: Sborník přednášek z konference. Marina Tsvetaeva and Czechoslovakia: International Conference. Prague-Brno, 1993.
- [19] A.A. Block Poetry of conspiracies and spells. *Sobr. Op.* : 6 vol. Moscow: Pravda, 1971.
- [20] I. Belza E. T. A. Hoffmann and the romantic synthesis of art. The art world of Hoffmann. Moscow: Science. 1982.