

# Folk Motives in Modern Russian Literature

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**Abstract.** The article discusses folklore motifs in modern Russian literature, the use of folklore elements in their various genres, as well as issues of enriching literature with folklore elements. The main goal of the study is to show not only folklorists but also professional readers the trends of modern literature. As Academician D.S. Likhachev noted, works that do not have an author are called folklore works. In folklore, there may be a performer and a storyteller, but there is no author or writer as a unique element of the artistic structure. Folklore, like literature, is the art of words. This gives rise to the use of literary terms: epic, lyricism, dramaturgy. They are usually called birth. Each type covers a group of works of a certain type. Genre is a type of artistic form (fairy tale, song, proverb, etc.).

**Key words:** *works, literature, terms, epic, lyricism, drama, folklore, motive, artistic structure, genre, reader.*

**Introduction.** Folk motifs in modern Russian literature refer to the use of traditional folk themes, characters, and storytelling techniques in contemporary works of Russian literature. These motifs often serve to capture the essence of Russian culture, history, and mythology, and are used to explore themes of identity, national pride, and the human condition. One prominent example of folk motifs in modern Russian literature is found in the works of Nikolai Gogol. Gogol's collection of short stories, "Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka," features tales that draw heavily from Ukrainian folklore and rural life. These stories, such as "The Night Before Christmas" and "Viy," incorporate supernatural elements, traditional folk characters, and vivid descriptions of village life.

**Literary review and methodology.** Another notable author who employs folk motifs is Fyodor Dostoevsky. In his novel "The Brothers Karamazov," Dostoevsky weaves elements of Russian Orthodox beliefs, folklore, and mythology into the narrative. The character of the Elder Zosima, for example, is portrayed as a holy man with mystical powers, reminiscent of the traditional Russian folk healer or wise elder figure. Modern authors such as Mikhail Bulgakov and Boris Akunin also incorporate folk motifs in their works. Bulgakov's novel "The Master and Margarita," for instance, features characters from Russian folklore, such as the devil Woland and his retinue of supernatural beings. Akunin's historical detective novels, such as the Erast Fandorin series, often utilize Russian folk tales and legends as plot elements or sources of inspiration. Overall, the use of folk motifs in modern Russian literature serves to connect contemporary readers to their cultural roots and highlight the richness of Russian folklore and mythology. These motifs provide a glimpse into the collective imagination and heritage of the Russian people, while also adding depth and complexity to the narratives in which they are embedded.

In modern Russian literature, the approach to the problem of folklore motifs, the folklore-mythological component in prose, on the one hand, corresponds to the concept of postmodernism, which creatively rethinks the achievements and characteristic features of artistic systems as a phenomenon that emphasizes their originality. History of world culture. On the other hand, it is worth noting that domestic postmodernist prose with elements of folklore and myth was created under the certain influence of a literary movement conventionally called "mythological realism," which became active in domestic literature in the 70s and 80s. Mythological realism turned out to be part of this branch of literature, which centered on moral and philosophical issues.

The study of folklore motifs in modern Russian literature in some cases leads to difficulties in understanding modern literature: the reader, especially a young man with an underdeveloped mind, gets lost in the flow of literary creativity, which is due to the chaotic and unsystematic nature of reading. At this time, the reader must be ready to fully master modern literature. A special place in this issue is given to the school, which should contribute to the formation of the education of younger schoolchildren, give general instructions, and activate their independent thinking.

Here we will look at three main aspects of modern folkloristics.

1. From a formal point of view, in the absence of unity at the “surface” level of the text (style), the motive is available for specific research as a result of the analysis of the syntagmatic sequence (the plot as a set of motives is the first level of the “deep” structure of the text) [1].

2. From a semantic point of view, a motive is the sum/ratio of the values of the constructive elements of the plot (actants and predicates), which are simultaneously components of the worldview of the bearer of the zero-paradigmatic-level “deep” structure of the text).

3. From a functional point of view, the motive acts as a mental operation that transforms the components of the picture of the world into a statement (“task data”, “equation”/“system of equations”) and a plot and transforming a situation into a plot (motivating action). Above this main function of the motive are specific pragmatic and stylistic models offered by the genre system of a given tradition (conspiracy, lamentation, mythological narrative, fairy tale, ballad, etc.) and used by the agent of the tradition (doctor, healer), they are mourners, storytellers, singers ) are built and are its spectators[1].

1) We would like to think about Denis Osokin, one of the brightest representatives of modern Russian literature, in the folklore motifs of modern Russian literature. First of all, he is a poet, philologist, and folklorist. His prose and poetry were published in such prestigious magazines as “Znamya”, “October”, “Babylon”, and “Catch”. We would like to emphasize that the writer is (in 2001, Osokin was awarded his debut prize in the category “Short Fiction” for the cycle of stories “Angels and Revolution”). Vyatka, 1923. The writer was also nominated for the Andrei Bely Prize. Prizes (2004) and Yuri Kazakov (2005), however, the writer’s work has not yet been fully studied by the younger generation.

2) As a result of our research, we have witnessed that modern literature is represented by many talented writers, poets, playwrights who have created many works that are destined to live a long life in art.

3) In modern Russian literature, along with folklore motifs, the concept of postmodernism is often found in the works of writers, and we considered it permissible to dwell on this concept in detail. Postmodernism is an unconventional, non-classical aesthetic system of the end of the century, a natural stage in the development of transitional literature and art. Based on the concept of “postmodernism”, as a rule, in relation to the fields of philosophy, literature and art, a derivative concept “postmodernism” arose, which is used to describe certain areas of culture as a whole. It serves to designate[12]:

4) a new era in cultural development;

5) non-classical scientific way of thinking;

6) a new artistic style, characteristic of various types of modern art;

7) new artistic direction (architecture, painting, literature, etc.);

8) artistic and aesthetic system that developed in the second half of the century;

9) theoretical reflection on these phenomena (in philosophy, aesthetics)[12].

Until now, the term “postmodernism” has not been established; it is used in the field of aesthetics and literary criticism along with similar terms “poststructuralism”. At the same time, “Postavant-garde”, “deconstructivist

art” also gives completely arbitrary concepts. This is due to the fact that we are dealing with a relatively new, little-studied cultural phenomenon that continues to develop[2].

It has been established that the term “postmodernism,” which gave life to the term “postmodernism,” appeared early, when this phenomenon did not yet exist, and was first used by R. Ranwitz in the book “The Crisis of European Culture” [3].

Considering the modern literary process, it is impossible to ignore the phenomenon of Lyudmila Stefanovna Petrushevskaya.

Lyudmila Stefanovna Petrushevskaya was born in 1938 in Moscow. Soon his mother's parents were repressed, as a result of which his father left the family. Since childhood, the future writer had to learn about life not only from textbooks. Among his half-starved relatives, in an orphanage near Ufa during the war, where he was first fed and taught to live “well-fed,” he instinctively pushed his spines forward. He graduated from the Faculty of Journalism of Moscow State University and, in his words, “with a guitar in his pocket, like a fool,” he set off to “conquer virgin soil” [8].

One of the writers who created folklore motifs in modern Russian literature is L.S. Petrushevskaya, her example revealed a paradox: while advocating bringing literature closer to life, official criticism did not forgive the author when he tried to enter into this Soviet reality and beautiful life in excellent literature.[9] .

According to the writer, the motivation for creativity is someone’s misfortune: you start to think about how to help the person, and a story or game by L.S. is born. Petrushevskaya loves and knows how to listen to the living language of the crowd. In an interview, he said: “We were stuck in the crowd. The crowd is talking. He can't help himself and talks, talks, talks. He doesn't call anywhere, doesn't lead... Oh, our great and powerful, honest and free interlocutor, he talks about anything, but he never lies”[10].

In the plays of L.S. Petrushevskaya, the live conversational speech of a contemporary sounds as if recorded on film, and a well-known life situation is reflected in the smallest detail. The usual structure of a dramatic narrative is blurred, there are no “black-and-white” conflicts, the characters are not given a clear, comprehensive assessment: the characters are studied in their natural conditions, so to speak, “among themselves,” “one of their own,” without a moral duel with the positive heroes [8].

Creators who embody folklore motifs in modern Russian literature in their work (Dm. Bavilsky, D. Davydov, A. Uritsky) note the clear connection of Osokin’s book with folklore, write about the element of folk speech in his work, describe the writer’s style as “the rhythm of lyrical prose” they describe as “conspiracy-like pieces.” In the works of D. Osokin, we can talk about a change in the traditions of everyday folklore forms. The appeal to national traditions in his work is expressed primarily in the fairy-tale type of story, in which the story tells the story of the narrator in a mysterious conversation with the reader, told in the form of an oral monologue [7].

In modern Russian literature, the work of D. Osokin organically includes folklore motifs and various folk poetic genres - legends, songs, fairy tales, and proverbs, anecdotes, and anecdotes. A unique folklore feature of the book “The Poplars” is: “The bear and the coward are friends, he is digging in the basement of a scary old house, and gunpowder for cattle hangs next to him” [7].

**Discussion and results.** In modern Russian literature, folklore motifs and folklore are the art of words, just like literature. This gives rise to the use of literary terms: epic, lyricism, dramaturgy. They are usually called birth. Each type covers a group of works of a certain type. Genre is a type of artistic form (fairy tale, song, proverb, etc.). This is a narrower group of works than a genre. So, gender means a way of depicting reality, and genre means a type of artistic form. The history of folklore is the history of changes in its genres. In folklore they are more stable compared to literature, and genre boundaries in literature are wider. In folklore, new genre forms do not arise as a result of the creative activity of individuals, as in literature, but must be supported by the entire mass of participants in the collective creative process. Therefore, their change does not occur without the necessary historical grounds. At the same time, the genres of folklore have not changed. They appear, develop,

and die, being replaced by others. For example, epics originated in Ancient Rus', developed in the Middle Ages, and in the 19th century, the century was slowly forgotten and disappeared.

Genres disappear and are forgotten as living conditions change. But this does not mean that folk art has declined.

Osokin's description of the unclean zones of the human body preserves the archaic essence of pagan beliefs, in which the body was called upon to stimulate abundance, and fertility, and protect a person from hostile forces. In Osokin's work, as in folklore, taboo parts of the body are often associated with utilitarian purposes. Songs, chants, and riddles remind us that the harmony of the masculine and feminine principles gave birth not only to man but also to the entire animal and plant world[6].

According to national traditions, the image of death as one of the main constants of the author's world has also been changed; poplars, fish, balconies, some herbs, stuffed animals, and mirrors are symbolic in Osokin's work. In Osokin, death always interacts with life, in the author's own opinion, with "world number 1," which is associated with the writer's folklore and mythological worldview[6].

The interaction of folklore motifs in modern Russian literature at the present stage of folklore and literature, mythology, and literature lies in the syncretism of their genre and stylistic features. Modern writers use several types of conventions, the main ones being fairy tale, mythological, and fantasy conventions. We studied the methodology for researching folklore in the context of the work of the modern writer L.S. Petrushevskaya.

In modern Russian literature, folklore motifs are called "mythological realism" or "typically metaphorical prose" within the framework of an artistic movement in which the prose of the 70s-80s of the 20th century interacts with mythology and folklore. However, the literature of postmodernism developed differently: in postmodern works, the process of interaction between myth, folklore, and the author's text itself is very vague.

**Conclusion.** Based on the results of this small study of folklore motifs in modern Russian literature, the following conclusions can be drawn.

In D. Osokin's prose, illustrative material is of particular importance, and its folklore source is the physical principle. The drawings in Osokin's books are deliberately primitivist, which indicates their genetic connection with lubok. Like the popular print, Osokin's original drawings are accompanied by explanatory notes. In the writer's work, the verbal text and the image "are interconnected as a theme and its development: the signature plays like a drawing and makes it be perceived as movement, and not static"[5]. Osokin takes the main popular printing techniques, such as simplicity of technique and conciseness of visual means.

Folklore and mythological motifs are clearly defined by the facts of the author's biography: Denis Osokin is a philologist who studies folklore, including the folklore of the Perm Finns. But the phenomenon of Osokin's creativity is more complex, and multi-layered, and his work includes such textual levels as narrative (in a stylized story), rhythmic and intonation (the tale is based on rhythmic and melodic), syntactic, and figurative.

In the prose of L.S. Petrushevskaya, it is contrasted with popular literature due to the introduction of universal human motifs (life and death, misfortune and apocalypse, etc.), as well as a type of miracle that is impossible in reality (not Cinderella, but fairies), fairy tales, influence, as in popular literature). As can be seen from the analyzed material, the writer's favorite characters are women, old people, and children, the most harmless and defenseless creatures who need to be protected in the real world.

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