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The image of Ship in English Romantic poetry: Reinterpreting Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and Shelley's 'Vision of the Sea' / Образ корабля в поэзии английского романтизма: к вопросу об интерпретации "Баллады о Старом Мореходе" Колриджа и "Видения на море" Шелли

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Аннотация: Образ корабля, наряду с образом Мирового Древа и Rosa Mundi справедливо считается одним из трех наиболее популярных топосов

западноевропейского искусства, начиная с древнейших времен и заканчивая современной эпохой. Мифопоэтический образ корабля, своими корнями уходящий в шумеро-аккадскую мифологию, со временем развил собственное образное поле, ключевые элементы которого широко представлены в различных произведениях искусства – от живописи до музыки. В эпоху романтизма корабль получил свое художественное воплощение в двух основных направлениях: как символ человека, бросающего вызов природе, и в качестве символа одиссеи человеческой души по волнам судьбы – образ Летучего Голландца, оформленный в европейском фольклоре в эпоху Великих географических открытий. Предметом настоящего исследования является изучение интерпретации образа корабля в англоязычной романтической традиции на материале текстов двух ключевых представителей эпохи – «Баллады о Старом Мореходе» Колриджа и «Видения на море» Шелли. В ходе реализации предпринятого исследования был использован комплекс различных методов, к числу которых относятся метод компаративистского анализа, а также литературоведческий и историко-культурный методы. Научная новизна предложенной вниманию работы заключается в попытке рассмотреть особенности художественной эволюции мифопоэтического образа корабля в поэзии английского романтизма на примере текстов ключевых представителей эпохи, сквозь призму социокультурной трансформации образа на протяжении столетий. Так, «Баллада о Старом Мореходе» (1797) Сэмюэля Тейлора Колриджа демонстрирует трагическое плавание корабля, команда которого обречена на вечные муки. В свою очередь, в «Видении на море» (1820) Шелли раскрывается образ сильного человеческого духа, воплощенного в корабле, что вступает в неравную схватку со стихией. В дальнейшем обе тенденции найдут свое воплощение в многочисленных художественных произведениях будущих эпох, способствуя развитию образного поля «Корабль». При этом доминантной окажется именно интерпретация, предложенная Колриджеем.

Ключевые слова:

образ, поэзия, литература, романтизм, Колридж, Шелли, образное поле, интерпретация, Летучий Голландец, английские поэты

In the art of late XVIII – first half of XIX cent. marine art emerged full blown. According to some scientists (Khorvat, 1973) that was in Romanticism where the topic "was fully explored." The immense vast of ocean, mysterious depths, unruly power of sea and a lonely sailing-ship became one of the most attractive artistic images capable to convey allegorically the thoughts and feeling connected with the new epoch advent (Callaghan, 2022). One of the Russian art experts (Chekalov, 2005) mentions, the image of sea "is closely associated with Romanticists' favourite circle of ideologemes: the cult of loneliness, internal reflection, the man's travails, overcoming difficulties, and the most important – the cult of freedom."

Among some brightest illustrations embodying the Romantic worldview is the work of an early Romantic German artist – Kaspar David Friedrich and one of his major paintings "The Stages of Life" in particular. Five sails depicted on the canvas correspond with five human figures: children, a married couple and the old man. Shown against the sunset, they symbolize rigorous time evoking sharp grief and helplessness in front of Kronos power, which is on the masterpiece of a painter-philosopher is embodied in the sea form.

The hymn to the sea sounds in numerous poems created by Romanticists. Exemplary are

the lines of an Irish poet Thomas Moore and the last verse of the fourth canto of Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage": "Solemn address to the sea" at the end of the poem creates the image of unruly power symbolizing "uncontrollable laws of eternal movement of life..." (Yelistratova, 1973). Opposing the ocean to the man, the poet develops this artistic image transforming it in the symbol of Universe. In poetic cycles "The North Sea" by Henrich Heine preaching "the open-mindness, spiritual renewal..., courage in front of storm" (Berkovskiy, 2001) a similar idea is conveyed. Futility of man's struggle against nature is revealed in another poem of Heine – "The Storm". The lines glorifying the might of sea in "Thalatta" are full of delight.

Russian literary historian Tatyana Strukova analyzing various codes used by the representatives of the sea novel, the genre formed in Romantic literature, points at the embodiment of the image of sea in such philosophemes as "ocean – man, ship – world." (Strukova, 2001) Applying this approach to the mythopoetic image of ship it is possible to figure out two key metaphors connecting the man and the sea vessel in Romanticism: ship – the hero's internal world and ship – human destiny. So, if the first is revealed in numerous poems and novels glorifying the man's free spirit, his longing to break the rules and laws to enjoy the unbound existence, the other is illustrated by one of the most peculiar transformations of the image of ship – the Flying Dutchman which, along with the Noah's Ark and the Ship of Fools, has become one of the dominating images of the Western-European art (Makarova, 2021).

The detailed study of two pieces of Romantic literature considered allowed to investigate the peculiar symbolism of the poems by Coleridge and Shelley revealing the special role the image of ship plays in both of them.

In 1797 the English reading public was offered the first literary adaptation of the Dutch folk legend in which it turned out to be a story with much more profound message than that traditionally associated with an old sea tale (Makarova, 2021). One of the most prominent representatives of the so called "Lake school" Samuel Taylor Coleridge published "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in which a popular story was transformed into the allegory of the human's life.

As the poet admitted himself, "The Rime" was written by him instead of "Wanderings of Cain" thus "throwing light on possible biblical motives and allusions." (Coleridge, 1974) The poem included in the first edition of "Lyrical Ballads" (1798) also comprising the works of Wordsworth (the author of one of the opening lines of "The Rime" – "He holds him with his glittering eye") was supposed to be its title poem. However, two years later, in the edition of 1800, Coleridge's ballad was relocated from the first place to the twenty-third one, which was probably the result of numerous negative reviews. Wordsworth was finally forced to admit: "'The Ancient Mariner' has upon the whole been an injury to the volume, I mean that the old words and the strangeness of it have deterred readers from going on" (Brawley, 2014).

In the ballad stylized in the folk legend well known to the poet from "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" by Thomas Percy (1765) with its unique metre and songful intonation introduces the mysterious personality of the Mariner – the character of the same Romantic kind as, Cain, for example. As it follows from the poet's journal of that time, while working on his ballad Coleridge was mainly busy with creating the "epic story of the origin of evil in Milton's manner. He was reflecting on the conflict of belief and sense, God and Nature, mechanic and transcendental world view, about the mysteries of life and pangs of conscience" (Gorbunov, 2004).

"The Rime"’s narrator is the Old Mariner "by thy long grey beard and glittering eye" racked with remorse for the atrocity committed in youth – the shooting of a sacred bird of the seas – the albatross. According to Professor Dyakonova, the Rime "represents the research on the soul and contrasting psychological states" (Dyakonova, Yakovleva, 1987) showing to the reader the odyssey taken by the protagonist, which description is to depict "spiritual torments of the man overwhelmed with the repentance in the committed crime and the realization of its finality". In his turn, the author of the monograph devoted to the philosophical aspects of Coleridge’s poetry, the researcher from Cambridge Ewan Jones interprets the slaving of the albatross as "a denial of the natural or 'ordinary' word, a frustration with its finite and... tautological aspects". (Jones, 2014) According to some American literary critics (Brawley, Williams, Watson) the shooting of the bird is the metaphor of the Fall: "Shooting the albatross, the Mariner destroys the mistily pleasurable community of sailors and bird" (Williams, 1995). In her monograph "Art of Darkness" Anne Williams points at the first case of Coleridge’s use of the first person "I" in the line "I shot the ALBATROSS" as a sign of the separation from unity, the evidence of the first independent deed of the main character (Williams, 1995). Its price is the voyage of a doomed ship symbolizing the purge after having broken the taboo.

The Mariner’s confession to the Wedding-Guest overwhelmed with the hilarity and not willing to despond though at the same time enchanted by the burning sight of the old man, changes the life of a young fellow also influencing the reader’s state of mind. The necessity to reflect in order to learn the truth was of primary importance for Coleridge rigorously postulated by the poet in his essay: "There is one art of which every man should be master, the art of reflection. If you are not a thinking man, to what purpose are you a man at all? In like manner, there is one knowledge, which it is every man’s interest and duty to acquire, namely, self-knowledge." (Coleridge, 1839)

The story of the Mariner in which he tells about his fatal voyage to the Equator comes to the foreground in the ballad. Recollecting those days he says that the crew firstly judging the slaving of an albatross soon justified him thus sharing his guilt for the sacred bird’s spilled blood. As a punishment, the ship stopped its move. Not willing to admit their fault, the crew blamed the Mariner. The vessel that soon appeared on the horizon turned out to be a ghost boat on which Life and Death were playing human souls in dice. The Mariner stayed alive while others turned into half-decayed corpses. The ship continued its move though without wind and the steersman, and while it was sailing the mariner was revealing the beauty of the surrounding world blessing God’s creation. Since that moment every night the deadmen would take on life to fall on their duties. In the verses given below Coleridge literally retells the content of a classical variant of the fable about the Flying Dutchman. At dawn, they start praying and then sink into a sleep to restart their labour the next night. On completing the time period, when the Mariner sees the native seashore, the crew receives mercy, while the Mariner himself is rescued on the boat of Hermit who becomes the first person to whom he purifies his heart. As Dyakonova claims, the "fantastic episodes of the ballad symbolize... the stages in the development of the human soul, its inevitable falls and the final victory over its dark powers." (Dyakonova, Yakovleva, 1987)

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" full of "dualism, the unsolvable play on contrasts – chaos and harmony, natural and supernatural, water and air, the Sun and the Moon, unexpected blessing, the loss of God and Grace of God" (Gorbunov, 2004), showed to its readers a new, Romantic, odyssey to secret depths of human soul. According to the British literary critic G. Beer, everything that was created by Coleridge (and in this respect, "The Rime" is a bright example) "was done with the ultimate aim of solving the riddle of the universe and the

puzzle of man's role within that universe." (Beer, 1986)

The ballad of the Lake poet greatly influenced subsequent interpretations of the Dutch folk legend. Firstly, the manner in which the captain used to be portrayed changed radically – from a heartless drunkard he turns into a man with deep emotional stress, a complex personality with tragic fate. Secondly, more attention is now paid to the atmosphere prevailing on board, expectations and passions of the cursed crew. Thirdly, the motives of repentance, and hope for mercy and salvation have become much stronger.

Now let us proceed to the second poem – "A Vision of the Sea" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, which tells the story of a devastating shipwreck. This "gruesome chronicle of a doomed ship's voyage" (McEathron, 1994) which evokes the tragic death of the author in a sudden storm off the coast of Spezia at the age of 29 two years later when his boat went down, was deliberately left incomplete "with the addition of 'Whilst – ' to the fair copy emphasizing fragmentation (Mayer, 1979). As stated by Marry Shelly, the poem was composed at Pisa in 1820, though, as Elsie Mayer claims, "the poem had its genesis not at Pisa but at Livorno in the summer of 1819" (Mayer, 1979) and was then published with "Prometheus Unbound." For the Shelleys that period of time was full of grief and sorrow – they arrived at Livorno on June 17, 1819 only eight days after their son's death presumably of cholera or typhoid infection. "The Shelleys' anguish at William's death... resound in "A Vision of the Sea". Shelley's counterpart in the poem to Mary grieving over William is the panic-stricken woman clasping a child against her breast as death encroaches in the form of the rising sea." (Mayer, 1979)

McEathron in his paper "Death as 'Refuge and Ruin': Shelley's 'A Vision of the Sea' and Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'" (McEathron, 1994) mentions that "for 'A Vision of the Sea' Percy Shelley adopted from Coleridge's poem not only the governing aesthetic and the ocean setting but particular images and plot details; a pestilent sea, the grisly death of the crew, a fearful and desperate solitude" (read about the retentive memory of Shelly in Crook, 2024). The poet fascinated by Coleridge's Mariner, one of his favourite poems, which he enjoyed reciting aloud, was largely "captivated by its supernatural elements" (McEathron, 1994). However, as the researcher states, the poet's "greater interest was in the excruciating existential crisis faced by the Mariner in his solitary confrontation with death and approaching divine judgment." (McEathron, 1994)

Though the poem "comes with little in the way of historical and critical context" (McEathron, 1994), there is a number of attempts to place it in both the Romantic context as a whole and the Shelleyan one in particular. For example, in the article mentioned above, its author analyzes the way Shelley echoes Coleridge arguing with the evangelical Christianity of his ballad and, what is much more important, expressing his own thoughts about the death's significance. The poem, which can be regarded in many ways, as, for example, the treatment of man vs. nature, the construction of an alternative metaphysical framework or even the articulation of the author's sense of human spiritual isolation, is open to more upcoming interpretations. Here, we would like to focus on the way the poet reflected on the idea principal for the Romantic worldview – the one of everlasting hope (Cohen-Vrignaud, 2024) and will which is embodied in the key image of the poem – the wrecked ship, and unite it with a famous Romantic painting which appears to be the best ever illustration of the verse.

The canvas created a year before – "The Raft of the Medusa" by a French artist Théodore Géricault, evidently stands shoulder to Shelley's poem. The masterpiece, which will be so much echoed in "Vision" a year after, was created in memory of the tragedy that took place

on July 2, 1816. In Géricault's artistic interpretation the raft, which turned out to be the only shelter for the cast adrift, is transformed into the symbol of the man's strong belief to survive in any circumstances. The timber painted by Gericault with no less accuracy as the figures of the miserables symbolize their firm hope for the rescue though shaken by the accident. The painting first exhibited in depicts the favourite metaphor of an English Romanticist which opens his unfinished poem, is "life as a voyage over a dangerous sea of time – mortality" (Reiman, 1962). The same fierce storm in which grip we will then see the Shelly's persona tortures the victims portrayed on Géricault's canvas a year before. The atmosphere of despair and inevitable death penetrates into both works' worlds. Similarly to the outlives from the Medusa's raft who symbolize the firmness of the man's spirit, the mother saving her child in Shelly's Vision serves as a symbol of faith and hope.

The image of the twin tigers at first bringing back the one created by William Blake soon turns out to be no more "burning bright" or boasting "fearful symmetry" – instead, with "radiance of fear" in their eyes, Shelley's tigers "stand rigid with horror" forced to accept "the brutal finality of their struggle for survival" (McEathron, 1994). Helpless to fight the stormy sea wild animals are overshadowed by the fragile woman finding support in the piece of the wrecked ship – that is her who shows "supreme animating energy and vitality" (McEathron, 1994) which drive her to start seemingly pointless fight against alien environment in order to save her dear child. Thus, the image of a little human drowning amidst the raging sea embodies the central idea of Romantic movement as a whole – the one of unbroken human spirit in the poem symbolized by the piece of the wrecked ship which is the only capable of saving the mother and her child.

So, in both pieces of art, the painting by Géricault and the poem by Shelley, the ship is introduced as a "deep metaphor" – the term used by a prominent Russian philologist Vladimir Toporov (Toporov, 1995) while analyzing the poetic complex of sea and its psychophysiological basics in the literature of Romanticism. The vessel, whatever shape it takes, symbolizes the powerful human nature for which exist no boundaries or obstacles, the spirit strong enough to survive in any wreck. The interpretation suggested by Shelley and Géricault turned out to be in tune with a new tendency in artistic comprehension of this mythologeme, according to which the ship was now associated with the man's strong and unbound nature.

To sum everything up, we would like to mention one more literary interpretation of ship in Romantic literature, now created by a German writer – the poem "Salas y Gomez" by poet and botanist Adalbert von Chamisso. The sea voyage depicted by Chamisso nine years after Shelley portrayed his vision of ship, is connected with the author's life experience – a round-the world scientific expedition on board of Russian "Rurik". The poem introduces two major lines characteristic of German Romanticism: the relationship of man and nature, and the image of ship as a symbol of destiny. Chamisso brightly introduces the stages of the hero's transformation – from the fear of staying alone on a desert island far from the society, to the disgust at the thought of returning to civilization. Here, the image of ship has several symbolic interpretations. Firstly, it embodies the protagonist's hope for bright and prosperous future, he is dreaming to have after his return with goods from India. The storm rising amidst the open sea dramatically changes the symbolism of ship turning it into the symbol of death waiting in deep waves. Having found himself on a desert island, the main character sees his broken ship as a black spot stuck between rocks, unable to move – now it symbolizes despair and loneliness. After some time spent on the island, the man sees a new ship sailing on the horizon. Longing for reuniting with the society, he rushes to the vessel, waving to people on board. Now, ship becomes the symbol of hope. However,

soon the main character realizes that all his efforts are in vain, so from now on ship becomes the symbol of doom. This interpretation of ship changing its symbolism through narration echoes the one introduced by Daniel Defoe in his "Robinson Crusoe" and embodying the spirit of Enlightenment. Created a hundred years before the Chamisso's poem, as well as the poems by Coleridge and Shelley, it reveals deep symbolism of this mythologeme, though, it is already subject of another research.

The poems by Coleridge and Shelley introduce both directions of the image development in the literature of Romanticism: while "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" spotlights the mysterious wanderer and his deathly crew, "A Vision of the Sea" reveals the image of a strong human spirit embodied in the ship struggling against the storm. So, if the ship in Shelley's "Vision of the Sea" shows the ship as a symbol of a man freed of the boundaries of natural life, brave to challenge its laws, who strives to overcome its prejudices, the ship in Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" highlights the image formed long before in European folklore and symbolizing the odyssey of human soul across the sea of fate.

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В связи с политикой двойного слепого рецензирования личность рецензента не раскрывается.

Со списком рецензентов издательства можно ознакомиться [здесь](#).

Предметом исследования в рецензируемой работе является образ корабля в поэзии английского романтизма. Материалом исследования послужили поэмы английских поэтов Перси Биши Шелли «Видение на море» (1820) и Сэмюэла Кольриджа «Баллада о Старом Мореходе» (следует отметить, что данное название представлено автором(ами), нам же встречалось это произведение под названием «Сказание о старом мореходе» (англ. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner)). Актуальность работы определяется необходимостью углублённого изучения символического содержания мифопоэтического образа корабля в поэзии английского романтизма как значимого фрагмента западноевропейской культуры в целом и литературы в частности: «...можно выделить две ключевые метафоры, связывающие человека и морское судно в романтизме: корабль как внутренний мир героя и корабль как человеческая судьба».

Теоретической базой научной работы послужили труды таких российских и зарубежных исследователей, как Т. Струкова, Н. Берковский, В. Топоров, Н. Дьяконова и Г. Яковлева, А. Елистратова, К. Чекалов, К. Хорват, D. Reiman, Ch. Brawley, J. Jones, S. McEathron и др. Библиография составляет 17 источников, соответствует специфике изучаемого предмета, содержательным требованиям и находит отражение на страницах статьи. Однако автор(ы) совсем не апеллируют к научным трудам, изданным в последние 3 года, что не позволяет судить о реальной степени изученности данной проблемы в современном научном сообществе.

Методология исследования определена поставленной целью («изучить своеобразный символизм произведений Кольриджа и Шелли, определить в них роль образа корабля») и носит комплексный характер: применяются общенаучные методы анализа и синтеза, описательный метод, интерпретативный анализ материала, методы лингвокультурологического анализа и сравнительно-сопоставительного анализа, а также метод дискурсивного анализа, который представляет собой совокупность взаимосвязанных подходов к изучению дискурса и функционирующих в нем языковых единиц, как и различных экстралингвистических аспектов.

Анализ теоретического материала и его практическое обоснование позволили автору(ам) прийти к выводу о том, что «если в поэме Шелли «Видение на море» корабль изображен как символ человека, свободного от ограничений земного существования, храброго, бросающего вызов его законам, стремящегося преодолеть предрассудки, то в поэме «Сказание о старом мореходе» Кольриджа корабль ... символизирует одиссею человеческой души в море судьбы».

Теоретическая значимость и практическая ценность исследования заключаются в его вкладе в изучение и интерпретацию символических образов в поэзии английского

романтизма, а также в возможности использования его результатов в последующих научных изысканиях по заявленной проблематике и в вузовских курсах по теории литературы, лингвопоэтике, стилистике художественной речи, стиховедению и др.

Представленный в работе материал имеет логически выстроенную структуру. Стиль изложения соответствует требованиям научного описания.

Статья имеет завершенный вид; она вполне самостоятельна, оригинальна, будет полезна широкому кругу лиц и может быть рекомендована к публикации в научном журнале «Litera».