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Nargiza Arifovna Kadirova
Bukhara State University
researcher

ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATION MOTIFS IN "THE MAGIC HAT" BOOK BY KHUDOYBERDI TUKHTABOYEV, THROUGH THE PRISM OF MIKHAIL BAKHTIN'S THEORIES

Abstract: The article is devoted to the analysis of the "The Magic Hat" book, written by popular Uzbek writer Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, from the position of classification elements introduced by famous Russian philosopher, literary critic and scholar Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin. The analyzed points relate to transformation motifs, a category which was examined in detail by Bakhtin. The comparison of transformation motifs of "The Magic Hat" with the ones present in "The Golden Ass" by Apuleius, "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka, "The Invisible Man" by Herbert Wells and "The Wild Ass's Skin" by Honore de Balzac, reveals the common concepts related to Metamorphoses. The comparison is performed in relation to the views of Mikhail Bakhtin.

Key words: Metamorphosis, transformation motifs, Mikhail Bakhtin, Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev, mythology, analysis, analogies, comparison, literature, Apuleius, Franz Kafka, Herbert Wells, Honore de Balzac.

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Introduction

Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev is one of the most famous modern Uzbek authors. His book "The Magic Hat" is very popular among younger generation. It is about a boy who found a magic hat that allowed him to be invisible. The storyline leads the reader through all his adventures with a single idea connecting all the events: Nothing in this world can be achieved without effort, even if you own a magic hat. Although the story might sometimes sound strange to people not familiar with the reality that was present in the country about 50 years ago, the overall message of author is quite vivid. The objective of the book seems to be the development of sense of responsibility and understanding the importance of hard work.

Skipping the plot and the chronotope of the book, discriminating reader can notice a link between the structure of the storyline and the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin relating to the concept of Metamorphosis in literature. The classifications introduced by Bakhtin almost a century ago prove to be right in relation to stories written by authors many decades later. Bakhtin named Metamorphosis (transformation) in oral and

written literature as treasury of world pre-class folklore, stating that transformation and identity were deeply combined in the folklore image of a person, and from the folklore this interconnection passed to the literature of different times. In a particularly clear form, this combination is preserved in a folk tale. In case of Tukhtaboyev's story, the main hero – Khashimjan, after becoming invisible, still retains the character of an ordinary schoolboy. His identity did not undergo metamorphosis, and thoughts remain usual. However, within the process of the plot development, a much deeper transformation takes place in internal world of the main hero, and the surroundings. This point was also noted by Bakhtin, who stated that from man, the transformation motifs pass over to the whole human world - to nature and to things created by man himself. He explained his point of view through the works of Rabelais, but the proposed general standards perfectly fit Khashimjan's case as well. By trying to help people and himself to reach the goals that he personally considered as important, the main hero fails many times and ruins the plans of people surrounding him. Step-by-step the

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understanding of the right way is shaped in his head. Thus a new, and a more significant metamorphosis occurs. Much more significant than the invisibility. To differentiate this two cases of transformation, and to review historical precedents relating to the use of transformation motifs in literature, a glance on the Bakhtin's works might come handy again.

Materials and methods/theoretical basis

Bakhtin figure out that the idea of metamorphosis has done a very complex and ramified development path. One of the ramifications of this path is Greek philosophy, where the idea of transformation, along with the idea of identity, plays a huge role, and the significant mythological sheath of these ideas were preserved until Democritus and Aristophanes. Another branch is the cultic development of the idea of metamorphosis (transformation) in the ancient mysteries, and especially in the Eleusinian mysteries. Ancient mysteries in their further development were more and more influenced by eastern cults, with their specific forms of metamorphosis. A third branch would be the continuing presence of transformation motifs in purely popular folklore. This folklore has not, of course, come down to us in its pure form, but we know of its existence through the influence it exercised: its reflection in literature (for example, in Apuleius' novella about Cupid and Psyche). And finally, a fourth branch is the development of the idea of metamorphosis in literature proper.(1)

This fourth branch found its reflection in "The Magic Hat". Bakhtin states that transformation in literature could be of a single nature, or a chain of interconnected metamorphoses. Tukhtaboyev's story contains one element of so called "obvious" transformation and a series of "hidden", but quite more important transformations of the main hero and people surrounding him. Khashimjan thought that he can easily handle any profession he selects, because he was confident that the main thing in succeeding any work is the desire, but not the experience and knowledge. The main message of the storyline is to demonstrate the importance of education and hard work. So, in fact, the chronotope of the book plays almost no role in reaching its objective, the key point is the transformation motif.

Bakhtin claims that the concept of metamorphosis has undergone a significant change throughout the history before reaching modern literature as it is. On various stages of its formation the purposes and the scope of the term altered, becoming wider and narrower depending on period and author. For instance, the conception of metamorphosis in Hesiod, as in other early philosophical systems and classical mysteries, has far-reaching implications: the word "metamorphosis" itself, in Hesiod, is not used in the specific sense of a miraculous, instantaneous transformation of one being into another (a definition

bordering on the magical); this definition the word acquired only in the Roman and Hellenistic era. The word appeared with this meaning only at a later stage in the development of the metamorphosis theme. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is typical of this later stage. Here the general idea of metamorphosis has already become the private metamorphosis of individual, isolated beings and is already acquiring the characteristics of an external, miraculous...(1)

Analyzing the work of Tukhtaboyev, and comparing its structure with the historical masterpieces, we can see a significant analogy with the Lucius from Apuleius' "The Golden Ass". The main hero in both works has undergone a shapeshifting, although in one case it happened unwillingly and in another the main hero was willing to transform. After the transformation both Lucius and Khashimjan became able to evidence private lives of various people, and both enjoyed their ability very much, trying to benefit from such an opportunity. However, their lives not only didn't improve by virtue of their new abilities, but got worse. Many times their transformations caused them troubles and thus taught them new lessons. And finally, at the end of both stories, the main heroes become better, "cleaner" in thoughts, and obtain unique experience in separating right from wrong. And in this point they can be said to undergo the most significant metamorphosis, because the change of physical appearance, and subsequent events led to changes in their inner worlds. Magic-based metamorphosis gives rise to soul transformation processes.

Discussion

In fact, there are a lot of works where the structure is divided similarly into three stages: 1) before transformation, 2) in the state of transformation, and 3) "spiritual self-perfection" following the transformation. This is some sort of classical model for majority of stories aimed at teaching a lesson through the transformation motif. Similar situation can be observed in Kafka's "Metamorphosis", where Gregor Samsa has an ordinary life, then transforms into an insect and finally discovers a grim truth about the attitude of his family. Thus he transforms twice within a single story line. First physically, then psychologically. In this matter Bakhtin states: "Metamorphosis or transformation is a mythological sheath for the idea of development - but one that unfolds not so much in a straight line spasmodically, a line with 'knots' in it, one that therefore constitutes a distinctive type of temporal sequence".

Similarly, the image of Khashimjan, a boy trying to reach prosperity through his ability to be invisible, is a reflection of a complex hero moving along the line of time in search of a better world. However, his search teaches his many lessons, and finally he decides to give up invisibility and understands that the

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real cause of his problems is the desire to find a simple solution to difficult questions, questions requiring efforts and time. Physical metamorphosis led to transformation of internal world of the schoolboy and as a result he felt "reborn" while giving up the Magic hat. A parallel line can be drawn between this event and Mikhail Bakhtin's views: "Metamorphosis serves as the basis for a method of portraying the whole of an individual's life in its more important moments of crisis: for showing how an individual becomes other than what he was. We are offered various sharply differing images of one and the same individual, images that are united in him as various epochs and stages in the course of his life. There is no evolution in the strict sense of the word; what we get, rather, is crisis and rebirth".

In some cases, this so called "rebirth" is followed by the death of main hero. Usually, not in fairy tales but in science-fiction. For example in "The Invisible Man" by Herbert Wells, Griffin finds a way to make himself invisible, and tries to benefit from this ability. However, just like in case with Khashimjan, the reality opposes his wishes and creates unsurmountable obstacles on his way. Finally, Griffin's inner world transforms but unfortunately this happens too late and he dies without being able to revert to his original form. Kafka's Gregor Samsa is one more hero that died without transforming back to his original shape. And in "The Wild Ass's Skin" by Honore de Balzac, the main hero Raphael de Valentin also died at the end of the story, after passing all the stages mentioned by Bakhtin. First he was living unhappy life, then the transformation occurred by the help of magic, and finally the "rebirth" took place when he understood his mistakes and tried to fix them, however, did not succeed and died. In general, it could be noted that although in books written not for children the ending is usually not that happy, their message is the same, so the structure similarities are obvious as well.

After attentive reading the above, a logical question might arise about why the ending of "The Magic Hat" is considered to have elements of "rebirth" or metamorphosis of the internal world of Khashimjan. The answer lies with the final part of the story, where the boy decides not to wear the Hat and become invisible anymore. In this part, Khashimjan understands that reaching the goals without any effort is not possible, even with the help of the Magic Hat. Still he did not give up his desire to become a professional, and chose to work hard to make the dream come true. This way, the main hero demonstrates that he has undergone significant changes in his views and attitude.

One more point deserving notion is that in majority of such cases as described above the main hero after the transformations becomes able to see, to spy the lives of others. Becomes familiar with their

secrets and hidden lives. And usually such information is of a great interest for him. For instance, in Apuleius' "The Golden Ass" Lucius wishes to know others' secrets, so by transforming into ass he reaches his goal. The plans of Griffin in "The Invisible Man" by Wells are also related to the use of invisibility for gaining domination while staying unnoticed. Kafka's Gregor Samsa unwillingly heard a lot of information that would have remained unknown to him if he did not transform into an insect. Even Raphael de Valentin in "The Wild Ass's Skin" by Honore de Balzac, spied in the bedroom of Foedorato learn her secret. Khashimjan in "The Magic Hat" also obviously enjoyed listening and seeing others' secrets. On this topic Bakhtin states as follows: "The significance of legal-criminal categories in the novel, and the various ways they are used - as specific forms for uncovering and making private life public - is an interesting and important problem in the history of the novel... For the spying and eavesdropping on private life, the position of Lucius the Ass is most advantageous". Also he noted that: "They pass through the everyday sphere of private life but do not participate internally in it. These rogues are spies, charlatans and parasites, spying and eavesdropping on all the cynical aspects of private life".

Conclusion

As conclusion it must be noted that the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin about the transformation motifs, depicted through the analysis of ancient literature, can be applied to modern works, as it was shown on the example of Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev's "The Magic Hat" book. The concept introduced by Bakhtin allowed to compare the seemingly unrelated works - the masterpiece of Apuleius with the story of Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev - and find strong correlation. From all mentioned above it becomes clear that the concept of Mikhail Bakhtin about the steps in transformation motif are quite universal and can be used to separate parts of many works created in genre of science fiction or fairy tale. Although in his research Bakhtin mostly focused on ancient literature, the overall ideas, as it can be seen by reference to Kafka and Wells, are of a common nature for many other works of different periods.

So as it can be seen on the basis of above, Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas relating to the transformation motifs are can be easily used to classify the events of the Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboyev's popular book "The Magic Hat". Such classification allows to deeper understand the structure of the work and to analyze the main hero's life from the position of applied transformation motifs. Although, basically "The Magic Hat" is a novel for children, but the message it carries has much deeper roots if examined from the position of Mikhail Bakhtin's views.

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