

The Genre of Gazelle in Russian and Tatar Poetry of the XX Century: Comparative Aspect¹

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the consideration of the gazelle as a canonical solid form, its features and functioning in Russian and Tatar literature of the XXth century. The focus of the research is on the gazelles of Russian poets of the 20th century (M. Kuzmin, E. Bagritsky) and the Tatar poet Radif Gatash, whose works are the example of love lyrics. The authors of the article argue that in Russian literature the gazelle genre did not become the part of the poetic tradition, while in Tatar poetry it took its rightful place. So, the modern poet Radif Gatash was able to accommodate new techniques in the traditional genre, to reveal the problems faced by modern society. The language of his works is metaphorical, different layers of vocabulary are skillfully combined in them: a sublime pompous style coexists with a “simple” word. The Tatar gazelle as a whole deepens the content of the traditional form, with poetic methods typical for it: the language metaphorization, an appeal to the motive of love madness, and the preservation of tachallus. The conclusion is made that the gazelle in a dialogue of different cultures and languages is changing, enriched with "new" meanings. The dialogue is based on those universal values and performances of the gazelle that, in different versions, exist in the space of national literature.

Keywords: Genre; Gazelle; Russian Literature; Tatar Literature; Radif Gatash; Dialogue.

1. Introduction

In modern comparative studies, little attention is paid to the problem of canonical genre operation in the national literary process, although many researchers emphasize that many poets of the Volga Region are mastering traditional forms (Atnabaeva, 2015; Sofronova, 2011). In an introductory article to the monograph

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“The National Literature of the Volga Republics (1980-2010)”, speaking about the peculiar lyrics of contemporary poets of the Volga region, V.R. Amineva notes: “Poets reproduce the compositional structure and artistic and stylistic techniques of the widespread forms of Arabic-speaking, Turkic-speaking lyrics (gazelle, rubais), Japanese (hokku, tanka), Russian and European (sonnet, ballad) literature” (Amineva, 2012).

The canonical genres in the modern national historical and literary process function differently. They can retain all the features characteristic of the genre form, can be transformed under the influence of the host literature traditions.

The purpose of the article is to show the functioning of the gazelle genre in Russian and Tatar poetry of the twentieth century, to identify key changes in the gazelle as a solid form in literature, in inter-literary communication and dialogue.

2. Methods

The methodological basis of the study is the concept of domestic (Tamarchenko, 2011; Tamarchenko, 2008; Bakhtin & Bakhtin, 1975) and foreign (Martin, 2000; Rodgers, 2015; Swales, 1999) scholars who consider the genre as a type of stable structure of a work that organizes all its elements in a holistic image of the world, which is the carrier of a certain aesthetic concept of reality.

The genre and the phenomenon of dialogue of literatures are interconnected. On the one hand, the genre is a theoretical construct, “forms a certain “stabilization field” for the individual works belonging to it” (V.I. Tyupa). On the other hand, being in the pole of the dialogue of literatures, the familiar genre becomes “different”, it “transforms”, “comes to life” in the interaction of different national logics and “pictures of the world”. According to Gachev (1968), “when a meeting of very different national cultures takes place, it appears that the main difficulty is to understand how other people think and, having just mastered the genre, the structure of thought, we can understand its subject”. This position of Gachev's work was developed in the article by the modern researcher K. Sultanov (Sultanov, 2015).

Also the studies on the specificity of the comparative method are significant in comparative studies, as well as the work on the dialogue of literatures (Bekmetov, 2015; Amineva & Yuzmukhametova, 2017; Amineva, 2015; Kamaliev et al., 2017). The comparison of literatures, in contrast to the comparative method, which has a rich history in the science of literature, seeks to preserve the unique, including the national identity of various phenomena and forms in literature: genre, style, poetry, versification, tropes, etc. Comparison involves the identity preservation of each literature included in the study.

The concept of the proposed study was also influenced by the works on receptive aesthetics (Iser, 1993; Jauss, 1995). In particular, H. Jauss and V. Iser argued that the violation of the usual “expectation horizon” of a classical text and its

endowing with new meanings is possible if a literary work is perceived among foreign readers.

During the article concept creation, the historical-genetic method was also taken into account, aimed at finding the origins of the genre being compared, its formation, and the continuity of forms. The genetic method goes deeper from the surface of phenomena, exposes layer by layer, “until it comes to the invariable and calm relationship between the factor and this phenomenon” (Freidenberg, 1995; Fathi, & Dastoori, 2014). The genesis of genres and their elements plays a leading role in the concept of comparative genre studies of Russian and Tatar literature as one of the branches of comparative studies.

3. Results and Discussion

The gazelle genre is known to the modern reader according to Arab-Persian patterns. This is a traditional, stable poetic form: two hemistichs of the first *beit* (aa) are rhymed, then the same rhyme is repeated in all second hemistichs of each subsequent *beit* (aa, ba, ca, da, etc.).

According to one of the fundamental (encyclopedic) works in literary criticism, there is a point of view according to which “a gazelle arose as a result of the lyrical conception of *kasydy* isolation, the so-called *tagazzul*” (Literary Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1987). So, the gazelle could begin to take shape during the 9th – 10th centuries, and it reached its final form in the works by Hafiz. I. Gafiyatullina writes the following: “It determined certain canons of the gazelle in society. The hero of the gazelle seeks to merge with the object of his desire, to overcome the pit between them, but this contradiction is never resolved. This feature that gives the gazelle the features of a compressed spring, and this is the secret of its highest emotional, psychological, and philosophical tension” (Gafiyatullina et al.).

Typically, a gazelle consists of 5-12 *beits* (couplets), and the author’s name is mentioned in the last *beit*. Its language is specific. In particular, such characteristic features as smoothness, elegance, pleasantness is named in the works of researchers (E. Bertels, I. Fishmansky, A. Tamimdari).

This genre was very attractive for Sufi poets, therefore the composition of many gazelles is based on the Muslim attitude, which requires a thorough analysis of the hidden essence. At the same time, this poetic form is reflected in the West - in the works of many European authors, including Russian ones. So, A. Fet, Vyach. Ivanov, I. Severyanin, M. Kuzmin, E. Bagritsky turned to the gazelle with the orientation on the eastern tradition.

It should be said that in all "imitations of the east" there is the change in the very image of the lyrical hero, since the latter's experiences are conditional. If we talk about Russian literature, the orientation toward oriental flavor determines the establishment of a distance between the author and the lyrical hero, and, one way or

another, traditional aesthetization is preserved. This is probably why the gazelle genre has remained the accessory of oriental poetry only.

Let us illustrate this with the example of the poems by E. Bagritsky (1895-1934) and M. Kuzmin (1872-1936), the Russian poets of the Silver Age, who created imitations of the eastern genre. Bagritsky's poem is called "Gazella", and Kuzmin called it "Gazela".

M. Kuzmin:

Mne noch'yu shepchet mesyac dvurogij vse o tebe.

Mechtayu, idya dolgoj dorogoj, vse o tebe!

Kogda na nebe vecher rastopit zoloto zor',

Trepeshchet serdce strannoj trevogoj vse o tebe.

Kogda polsutok glaz moj ne vidit seryh ochej,

Gotov ya plakat', nishchij ubogij, vse o tebe!

Za pennoj chashej, radostnym utrom dumayu ya

V lukavoj shutke, v dume li strogoj vse o tebe,

V pustyne mertvoj, v gorode shumnom vse govorit

I chas medlitel', mig bystronogij vse o tebe!

As can be seen from the above poem by Kuzmin, the formal features inherent in the gazelles are the following ones: the division by 5 bets, the principle of rhyme are preserved by the Russian poet. Before us is a poem about love, in which each couplet is autonomous, but it does not have the imagery and depth of thought that is characteristic of the eastern gazelle. The preservation of the external attributes of the genre does not make Kuzmin's poem a true gazelle.

E. Bagritsky's poem "The Gazelle (Dreams and Evening Sleep in Your Alcove)" most likely recalls a parody of a traditional gazelle, although the poet also retains the principle of rhyming, and repetition of words.

V tvoem al'kove spyat mechty, i vecher stranno dolog,

Ne znayu ya, pridesh' li ty, kak vecher stranno dolog...

V tvoem sadu zelenyj grot u sinego fontana

I niknut alye cvety, i vecher stranno dolog...

Tam spit glinyanyj pastushok s nadtresnutoj svirel'yu,

I nad prudom shurshat kusty, i vecher stranno dolog...

K tebe ya pyl iz smutnyh stran na zybkoj karavelle,

YA videl tusklye porty, gde vecher stranno dolog.

YA byl v tumannyh gorodah, gde na zhemchuzhnom nebe

Raspyaty alye kresty, i vecher stranno dolog...

Tebe privez ya tonkij yad v kol'ce pod ametistom,
Ego, ya znayu, vyp'esh' ty... i budet vecher dolog...

Bagritsky does not develop the theme of love languor. At the end of the poem he introduces the image of death quite unexpectedly, also there are figurative expressions in the work that discord with the form and the content of the genre ("crimson crosses are crucified").

This is due to the fact that the Russian poet has a different aesthetic attitude than the representatives of Arab-Muslim poetry. The main content of the gazelle for Hafiz, Rudaki is the praise of the beloved beauty, unrequited love, the reflection on one's own fate. E. Bagritsky easily recreates the poetic size, unusual forms and all this remains only an imitation, a game imitating East.

The gazelle genre was most often addressed and is addressed by the representatives of Turkic-speaking poetry. They continue to develop the genre forms of oriental culture close to their national tradition. For example, gazelles were composed in the medieval period by Saif Sarai and Umami Kamal. At the beginning of the twentieth century this genre is represented in the works of Gabdulla Tukai and Shaikhzada Babich. As for the modern Tatar lyricism, the main features of the gazelle are most fully reflected in the poetry by Radif Gatash.¹ The gazelles by Gatash resemble the gazelles by Hafiz and Nasimi, a number of poems of which he translated into Tatar. Through the gazelles by Hafiz the motives of love-joy, love-grief/death entered the works by Gatash.

It should be said that the work by Gatash has repeatedly become the subject of study by literary scholars. In particular, Yu.G. Nigmatullina emphasized the following: "In his poetic work, he starts from a subjective, spiritual beginning, reveals it in all its fullness of feelings and hidden contradictions." According to the scholar, the ornate images of love poems, written by Gatash in the form of a gazelle, coexist with the traditional images of folk songs (Nigmatullina, 2002).

In general, the gazelles by Gatash correspond exactly to the requirements of the genre: they consist of 5-8 beits, almost all are written by 11-complex syllabic size, which is close to Turkic aruz. Redif is often used in the gazelles of the poet, and in the gazelles by Gatash we find the mention of the author's poetic name (tahallus).

There is no plot and figurative dynamics characteristic of works of European poetry in the canonical solid form, as a rule (meaning the plot horizontal of the ballad, the development of an idea (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) in a sonnet, etc.), the image

¹ Radif Kashfullovich Gataullin was born on March 30, 1941 in the village of Mars (Republic of Bashkortostan). For more than half a century of creative activity in different languages (Tatar, Russian, Turkish, etc.), more than a dozen poetic collections have been released: «Göllər su soryj» («Flowers Crave», 1966), «İrlər bulıjk» («Let's Be Men», 1978), «Bu – siña kylgan dogam» («My prayer is to you», 1997), «Gazəllər» («Gazelles», 2001), etc.

and thought are developed inside a single *beit* (completed syntactically), which looks like autonomous, independent.

As befits the structure of the gazelle, the poems by R. Gatash also include the *matla* - the heading (the initial *beit*), which defines the theme of the lyrical work, defines the general mood, and *maktu* - the final *beit*, in which we find the answer to the question that sounded in the first couplet. For example, in the gazelle “The tears of a lover will spice up a clearing with flowers!” («ashyklar yashe ashlagan gəl kyry!») the initial *beit* poses the question sounds, the final provides the answer: «Gashyklar yashe ashlagan gəl kyry! – / Məjdanyñ gyjbrət öchenme chakyrdy? // <...> // Gəlneñ yash'sez kerfegen yptem, didem: / – Kyklər də ishetsen, Gatash, antyñny!» (Gatash, 2001). Literally: “The tears of lovers flavored the field of flowers! - / Did the square call me as a sign of edification? // <...> // He kissed the eyelashes of a rose without tears, and said: / “Let the heavens hear, Gatash, your oath.”¹

For Gatash, love is a heavenly gift. Whatever torment it is associated with, this is the only happiness. Love helps the poet to merge into the universe, to feel the connection with the natural elements, and this feeling is always sublime, it gives rise to inspiration from the lyrical hero. Gatash conveys love through traditional oriental symbols: rose, tears, fire. The lyrical subject is identified with nature, its natural state, and the images from the natural world act as direct participants of happening.

Gatash: «Iyul' kyzuy, chəchəktəj, ǰan balkyj, / Nindi dərtle, iske bu fontan ǰyry!» (“July heat, soul quivers, like a flower / How sensual is the song of the old fountain”) (Gatash, 2001). The phrase “the song of the old fountain” («iske fontan ǰyry») in the original, resembles a poem by a Russian poet of the XIXth century A.S. Pushkin “The Fountain of the Bakhchisarai Palace”, written in 1824, or rather, the line “Fountain of Love, a sad fountain!”.

In the figurative system of Gatash lyrics, the traditional oriental symbols of love are repeated in different versions: a delicate rose; a moth flying on a candle flame; tears. At the same time, the sublime syllable characteristic of oriental poetry is combined by the romantic poet with the traditional images of folk songs (swan, white dove, spring, etc.) in his gazelles. Thus, he removes the boundaries between the ancient world and modernity, enters into the dialogue with both Arab-Persian and classical Tatar and Russian poetry.

Gatash love lyrics, focused on a feeling of love for a woman, seemingly deeply personal, ultimately develops into a complex emotional and social complex that also contains the reflections on morality and love for a small homeland.

Let's illustrate the mentioned above, referring to the poem “The stormy flood of spring days ...” (“Uzdy bu yaz ...”) (Gatash, 2001), where the substantial unity of man and nature, the syncretic integrity of two spheres are self-evident, and where the noise of the outside world intrudes. The Tatar poet introduces motives not

¹ Hereinafter, the word-for-word translation of the authors of the article.

characteristic of this genre into the gazelle. Gatash is ironic over those who, in pursuit of material wealth, consider a madman a poet who praises love. Thus, the content of the gazelle is modernized by enhancing the social sounding of the text, which is fully consistent with the formal settings of the gazelle: it consists of 5 beits, the rhyming is the following: aa, ba, ca, da, ga, and tallahus in the latter.

Here are just the last two beits: “Möhitme? Kyr: kypme kënche, gajbätche, / Hөsetlektөн “ilham”, yam 'tabuchylar ... // Ә Gatashың көтө көн-төн yazgаның: / Yülärder ul: “УАңа kitap! - di, - shular ... ”” (“Look: both the envious and the liar - / They seek to find "inspiration". // Well, Gatash writes day and night the following... // “Crazy! - they say, - he wants to publish a new book ... ””).

4. Conclusions

The study showed that the gazelle genre was included in different ways in Russian and Tatar poetry. Russian poets paid tribute to the traditional eastern form. The gazelle attracted poets with an exquisite rhyme, numerous repetitions, a beautiful form, and demonstrative poetry. However, in Russian poetry, the gazelle genre was created with the orientation toward the eastern tradition; it retained imitative features. Tatar poets (in particular, Gatash), on the contrary, created poem patterns corresponding to the genre canon, which could be explained by their creative attitudes and the connection of their native poetry with the traditions of Arab-Muslim poetry.

5. Summary

The genre canon as such is fully perceived by its bearers only within the tradition. Russian poets were able to grasp the canonical form of the gazelle, but the canonical principle of the world image creation, corresponding to the peculiarities of the worldview of an Eastern person, due to culture, psychology, religion, can only be transmitted by the poets close to the world of the East.

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