



THE PROBLEM OF ARTISTIC IMAGES IN PHILOSOPHICAL LYRIC POETRY: THE CASE OF P.B. SHELLEY'S ODE

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the poetic characteristics of philosophical lyric poetry in 19th-century English Romanticism and 20th-century Karakalpak literature from a comparative-typological perspective. Through P.B. Shelley's philosophical ode "Ode to the West Wind," the philosophical-dialectical nature of artistic images is revealed. The study provides a scholarly grounding for the archetypal and symbolic layers of the images, their mythological and historical parallels, and the dialectics of contradiction inherent in human existence.

The most complex and deeply meaningful types of artistic image are most often employed in philosophical odes. The most renowned philosophical ode in 19th-century European literature was the English poet P.B. Shelley's work "Ode to the West Wind," written in 1819. It stands as one of the highest peaks of the ode genre in world literature. Through the problem and idea it raises, the work conveys, in sharp language, problems of world-wide scale and afflictions common to all humanity. The ode's enduring significance lies in this: it skillfully depicted the problems of human society in an era of change through the image of the West Wind. The question of humanity and its existence is a theme common to the literatures of all peoples; every talented poet has paid special attention to this question and regarded the reflection of their views on it as a creative principle.

The ode is one of the oldest and most solemn genres in European literature. "Ode" comes from the Greek word meaning "song," and is written in an aesthetically elevated spirit [1.251]. With its elevated aesthetic pathos, P.B. Shelley's ode is a magnificent example of the solemn ode. In it, one can see the use of a number of images connected to the history, culture, and art of Europe. The work stands out for its energy, its political and philosophical undertones, and its masterful poetics.

The ode consists of five parts (cantos). Each part shows the wind's effect on different elements (earth, sky, water), and finally its connection with the poet's own soul. In the first part, the West Wind drives the dead leaves across the face of the earth and scatters the seeds, which then go into their winter sleep. Here, the wind is nature's sanitizer, its cleanser. It destroys the old and opens the way for new life. The leaves are the image of old ideas, of frozen, ossified views. Here, the poet appears in the image of a prophet. He strives to be the bearer of a message of renewal and freedom for all humanity. For example:

"O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,

Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!" [2: 36].

The poet begins the ode with an address to the wind. It depicts the wind's quality of blowing away dead things while sowing new seeds. The stanza contains the images of "autumn's breath," "seeds," and "spring." They are depicted in relation to the wind's movement. Regarding these images, the literary scholar A.D. Zhuk expresses the following view:

"Bul jerde logikalıq emes, bálki associativlik jaqtan bir-biri menen baylanısqa bir qatar obrazlar berilgen. Dáslepki tórt qatarda qanatlı tuqımlardı óziniń qısqa tósege qaray quwıp baratırǵan Batıs Samalıń obrazı payda boladı, al keyingi qatarlarda bul obraz dúnyaǵa jańa ómir alıp keliwshi Báhar obrazı menen almasadı. Bul obrazlar shayırdıń ózi jaratqa kosmosınıń eki tiykarǵı kúshiniń belgisi retinde metaforalıq dárejede óz-ara baylanısqa. Samaldıń "Gúzdıń demi" ("breath of Autumn") degen dáslepki obrazı arqalı shayır samaldıń tábiyǵı kúshin mifologiyalıq hám ilahiy kúshke teńlestiredi" [3: 214]

("Here, a series of images is given, connected to one another not logically but associatively. In the first four lines, the image of the West Wind arises, driving the winged seeds toward their winter bed; in the following lines, this image gives way to the image of Spring, which brings new life into the world. These images are interconnected at a metaphorical level, as signs of the two fundamental forces of the cosmos the poet himself has created. Through the wind's initial image, the 'breath of Autumn,' the poet equates the wind's natural power with a mythological and divine power.") [3: 214]

As the scholar notes, the West Wind acts in close connection with Spring. The phrase "their dark wintry bed" in the stanza is aimed at depicting the seeds that go into winter sleep but will sprout in Spring. At the end of the poem, "Destroyer and preserver" — this characterization as both destroyer and preserver — clearly reveals the wind's quality. This line serves as the philosophical foundation of the entire section. Here one can see a dialectical characterization.

"Dialektika – (grek. dialektike) ózi talqılaytuǵın mazmundaǵı qarama-qarsılıqlardı óz predmeti dep biletuǵın, refleksli teoriyalıq oylawdıń logikalıq forması hám usılı" [4.645]

("Dialectics — [Greek: dialektike] — the logical form and method of reflective theoretical thought that takes as its subject the contradictions contained within the content it examines.")

That is, the wind's creative quality (sowing the seeds — future hopes) and its destructive quality (blowing away the leaves, affecting natural phenomena) correspond to the laws of dialectics.

The second and third parts of the ode depict the wind's active movements. The wind gathers the clouds in the sky, preparing a great storm; it wakes the Mediterranean from its slumber and stirs even the depths of the Atlantic Ocean:

"Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed.
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the ozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves; O hear!" [2: 37].

In the poem, the sky, the clouds, the Mediterranean, the Atlantic Ocean, the plants beneath the ocean — all of these together form an artistic model of Western society. As the central image, the wind is the force bringing revolution to society; the sea and the ocean are the generations of society; and the plants, frightened by the wind's force, are the artistic reflection of deep-rooted afflictions. The poet depicts the wind's (revolution's) ability to threaten even the deepest afflictions through the fear of the plants at the bottom of the sea.

The fourth and fifth stanzas offer the concluding thoughts. The poet, worn out by the hardship of life, by its "thorns" — the line "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" — is an artistic reflection of the poet's own discontent with the society and era he lived in. This is connected with the opposition that religious and classicist circles directed at P.B. Shelley and J.G. Byron during the era of 19th-century English Romanticism; for these views, they were declared "members of the Satanic School." In the final lines, the poet asks the wind to turn him into a lyre. The poet's concluding lines have become a literary aphorism:

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? [2: 39].

These lines ("If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?") explain human existence and the development of society through the cyclical laws of nature. Winter is the symbol of spiritual anguish, harsh trials, social oppression, and spiritual darkness, while Spring is the symbol of spiritual rebirth, freedom, and hope.

In the course of examining this ode by P.B. Shelley, we arrived at the following conclusions:

1.The ode extends beyond the bounds of national poetry, oriented toward reflecting universal, humanity-wide philosophical-dialectical problems through a system of artistic images;

2.Syntagmatics of images: in his ode, Shelley shows revolutionary rebirth and the dialectics of nature through the archetypes of the West Wind, Spring, and Winter. By depicting them in mutual opposition, he artistically conveys socio-political and epochal problems;

3.Aesthetic revolution: prior to 19th-century European Romanticism, depicting social change and problems through the elements of nature had not yet formed into a tradition; with the era of Romanticism, in the work of J.G. Byron and P.B. Shelley, it took shape and became a philosophical concept serving to reflect global humanitarian crises.

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