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## Myth Creation in the Poetic Evolution of P. A. Oiyunsky

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### Abstract

The article discusses the features of myth creation in the poet art of the founder of Yakut Soviet literature, Platon Alekseyevich Oiyunsky. Based on the theoretical and methodological developments of profound researchers of mythology, such as E.M. Meletinsky, U.M. Lotman, V.N. Toporov and others as well as the modern-day researchers of the Formation Period of Soviet literature, such as A. Gennep, J.C. Günther, E. Dobrenko, K. Clark and others, we have overviewed the main aspects of the main mythological plots, motifs, and images functioning in the civil and philosophical lyrical poetry of the Yakut poet. We also justify the fact that while Oiyunsky turned to mythology in different periods of his creative life, his mythology-creating technique evolved together with his personal ideological principles and with the ideological trends of that time. In the early period of his creative life, the transforming mythological ideology holds strong positions in his civil lyrical poetry; this kind of poetry implies moving from chaos to creation. In this aspect, the perception of myths in the creative works by Oiyunsky is studied consecutively in accordance with the rituals of transitioning (according to the classification given by Gennep): from the renunciation (destruction) of the old world to a preliminary stage of creation, and finally – the creation of the new world. It has been clearly defined that the permanent motifs of chaos cosmic nature and the transition from darkness to light, sacrifices made in the name of the good as well as deaths and resurrections hold a special place in the mythological model of world creation (the victory of the Soviet power and the triumph of the socialism ideas). The creation of a new type of main character, similar in terms of structure to the mythological character represented in the culture, also speaks in favor of Oiyunsky's creative tendency towards mythology in his poetry.

The author of the present article makes the following hypothesis: apart from using myths in the organization of heroic, patriotic and pathetic text structures, Oiyunsky creates an exceptionally novel type of mythological perception, which establishes a new level of creative thinking encompassing the most fundamental features of human existence.

Mythology in creative works of Oiyunsky plays an important role in creating the lyrical motifs in his poetry. Myths attain a new language form in his poetry, thus, expressing his world perception.

**Keywords:** Mythology, Mythological motifs, Poetry, New world creation, New character type.

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## Introduction

The problem of myths creation in the literary tradition is a contemporary one. Being a universal cultural phenomenon, myths allow understanding the mechanism of numerous social processes and the how the creative worldview establishes itself in international literature, in particular. Special attention is given to various forms of perception myths in literature – from the simple reproduction of the mythological plot and motif to the creative reinterpretation and symbolic content fulfilment of literary texts.

The problem of studying mythology is an intrinsic one in the so-called young and new written forms of national literatures, which are characterized by a fast-paced transition from the oral tradition to the written one in the significantly later time-period with the establishment of writing and its further involvement in the world literature development process. The acceleration of this transition process predetermined the fact that the literary tradition is close to the mythological archaic type of cognition and the mythological elements incorporation into the written text type through the prism of folklore.

Yakut literature in general and especially in the formation period is characterized by a high-level of incorporating myths as a creative tool and likewise expressing the worldview. Mythological restructuring in Yakut literature (just as in many other young and new forms of literature) takes place in a particularly new form, when the living folklore tradition with its mythical and ritual foundation, “meets” with the international literary tradition, the mythology of which underwent a long and complex process from demythologization to remythologization.

National literature was created as a synthesis of the native and international tradition being under the strong influence of the leading Russian and international literary traditions and implementing its own creative aesthetic experience from the preceding archaic folklore structures and mythology.

In his fundamental research *The Poetics of Myths*, E.M. Meletinsky noted that mythology in literature was predominantly typical for modernism but not entirely being its equivalent; in addition to this, it “combines” not only with the intuitive, but also with the rational approach and can manifest itself on both, the left and the right wing tendencies (Meletinsky, 2000, p.9). In fact, at the prime of establishment of a new type of literature in the 1920-1930s, neomythologism became one of the main characteristic features of two main trends – the modern literary ones (symbolism, acmeism, futurism, and new peasant poetry) and the establishing Soviet literature (Proletarian literature of the Russian Proletarian Writer’s Association (RPWA), later the era of social realism literature). In the literary texts of the 1920-1930s, there is a considerable number of evidences which retained a mythological type of mentality – motifs, plots, mythologemes, typical for the cultural consciousness of the long-past archaic era; all these features play a significant role in organizing and structuring the literary work of art.

The tendency of the Soviet literature in 1920-1930s towards mythology having an archaic basis and functioning with the help of a scope of religious and mythological elements had been studied by other scholars, such as K. Clark (2002), E.M. Meletinsky (2000, 2001), V. Rudnev (1997) and others. According to their interpretation of the Soviet literature establishment, it is a process of implementing specific archetypes which predominantly originate from the heroic epic.

Clearly, there were also processes of remythologization taking place at the initial stage of Yakut literature establishment at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Initially, the history of Yakut literature was characterized by a conscious turn of the first Yakut writers, the founders of national literature (A.E. Kulakovky, A.I. Sofronov, N.D. Neustroeva) to mythology as a means of organizing the creative material and expressing “eternal” humanistic values as well as to the most optimal form of preserving fundamental national cultural models. This tradition is supported and continued by the Soviet period writers, followers of the traditions established by the first generation of Yakut writers. In this respect, a prominent and

justified art was created by Platon Alekseyevich Oiyunsky, who was recognized as the founder of Yakut Soviet literature, i.e., a type of literature, significantly different from the preceding literary tradition.

The genetic tendency towards mythology on the part of P.A. Oiyunsky was noted at the initial stage of his creative path by his contemporaries, such as N. Zabolotsky, A. Kunde, and Ellyay. The scientific research of mythological and folklore origins of his literary art was carried out by G.K. Boeskorov (1961), G.M. Vasilyev (1973), V.T. Petrov (1980, 1987), I.V. Pukhov (1980), V.A. Semyonov (1966, 1980), I.G. Spiridonov (1998) and others, who singled out the most significant folklore and mythological elements in his literary art.

In its new perspective, the mythological character of literary works by Oiyunsky being a complete, consciously organized literary form, is described in the scientific researches by A.A. Burtsev (2012, 2013, 2013b), M.N. Dyachkovskaya (2004), P.V. Maksimova (2004), O.G. Sidorov (2016, 2017) and others.

Taking this into account, modern scholars note the universal character of the mythology created by P.A. Oiyunsky; these scholars claim that *“the use of not only national mythological poetics, folklore material but also the international cultural mythology allowed P.A. Oiyunsky to reach out towards general human problems and come to a complete epic and global world perception and, finally, to connect the three timelines of the present, past, future”* (Dyachkovskaya, 2004, p.53).

### **Methods and methodology**

In relation to the literary art of P.A. Oiyunsky, practically all the scholars note the mythological character of his creative thinking. However, the features of his poetic mythology have not regarded systematically.

It is practically impossible to give an overview of the entire poetic system of P.A. Oiyunsky in the context of his creative works in one article. However, as a methodological development of research approaches to the solution of this problem, it is possible to single out the key elements justifying his deep mythological modelling structures of the poetic worldview.

The theoretical and methodological base of the given research comprises of the researches conducted by the Russian and international scholars specializing in the mythological poetics and semiotics, which help to formulate and develop the modern concept of myths and prove that culture is expressed using signs. These scholars are: U.M. Lotman, V.N. Toporov, B.M. Gasparov, Z.G. Mints, E.M. Meletinsky, V.P. Rudnev, R. Bart, K. Levi-Stros, M. Eliade and others.

In the study of mythology in the context of literary traditions, we base our research on the theoretical dogma introduced by E.M. Meletinsky, who stated that *“the distinctive feature of mythology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century”* is expressed in the *“distinction of certain constant and eternal forces, both – positive and negative, transparently running through the flow of empirical existence and historical changes”* (Meletinsky, 2000, p.296).

In the study of the functional features of myths in literature and poetry by P.A. Oiyunsky, in particular, it is important to implement the historical and cultural approach, which implies regarding myths as an element of expressing the worldview, and ideas and forming the structure of the author’s text.

The analysis of poetry by Oiyunsky in its organic correlation with the archaic, mythological and ritual culture allowed justifying the necessity to turn to the methods of historical poetics and to mythological poetics in particular.

Mythology of the Yakut poet’s creative works is analysed on the level of the plot-and-motif complex of the civil and philosophical lyrical poetry. Also, we singled out the problem of a new character in the mythological context, which predetermined the main ideological and creative tendencies of the time. This issue is

connected with the solution of the problem of the aesthetic ideal image, which is regarded as an existing and perfect one in the literary process of the 1920-1930s.

Thus, the goal of this article is to single out the significant features of mythological motifs, plots and images and their functioning; another goal is to define the role of these aspects in the formation of the poetic system of Platon Oiyunsky. It must be specified, however, that the present article will discuss some of the universal mythological motifs, images and plots, which shaped the poetic worldview of P.A. Oiyunsky. This article will not stress attention to impact of the specific national (Yakut) myths on the creative works of the writer; certainly, this is a separate large issue for an in-depth scientific study. Here we can observe Oiyunsky's creative writing from a different angle. It is a form of art which excelled outside the scope of strictly national literature and combined in its creative micromodel two cultures – national and global. Oiyunsky uses the traditional mythological elements of heroic epic *olonkho* and the folklore narrative in combination with components typical for the world mythological tradition.

### **Literary reflection of myths in the Oiyunsky's creative writing. Poetic system evolution.**

Mythological creative art established by P.A. Oiyunsky was created on the basis of a deep-set scientific foundation. Being a researcher and an expert in the oral traditional art, he clearly understood that the mythological tradition enters the literary process precisely through the heroic epic with "a form of preservation and a form of extending itself outside the limits of mythology" (Meletinsky, 2000, p.277).

The writer scrupulously worked on giving the scientific interpretation to the genre of *olonkho*. One of the first such implications was his article titled *Yakut fairytale (olonkho), its plot and content* (Oiyunsky, 1927). At the end of the 1920s, other scientific articles by P.A. Oiyunsky were published; they were devoted to the history and ethnography of the Yakut people (Oiyunsky, 1928, 1929). The author devotes a considerable amount of attention to the mythological motifs in the heroic epic *olonkho* and to the narrative folklore heritage.

The mythological foundation incorporated through the traditional epic *olonkho* and other folklore genres are visible in the creative onset of many creative writings by Oiyunsky, starting from separate plots, motifs and images (motifs of fighting against evil demons, cosmological modelling of the world, the representation of the revolution and civil war heroes through the images of bogatyr in the epic tales, etc.), lexical components of the epic (fixed epithets, formula constructions, numerical constructions, etc.) to text structuring in the storytelling manner of *olonkho* and other narratives (*olonkho-toyuk* titled *The Red Shaman*, *olonkho The Bright-Eyed Tuyaryma Kuo*), prose-style story titled *The Great Kudangsa, Kereken, The Young and Brave Nikolai Dorogunov*. In all his creative writings, it is essential for Oiyunsky to present a fixed traditional model in its pure form and at the same time to functionally transform it in order to show the existing reality of his time-period and, most importantly, to present his own view of the changing world. At the same time, the writer was very knowledgeable in the universal mythological traditions of the peoples of the world. His scientific articles, including the article mentioned earlier and devoted to the Yakut fairytales and his philosophical prose (*Alexander the Great, Solomon, the Wise*).

A natural combination of a genuinely traditional and universal mythological material in Oiyunsky's creative interpretation became one of the key style-forming factors and his personal method of expressing his ideas and worldview in his creative path.

Researches devoted the study of Oiyunsky's creative writing speaks in favour of the dual nature of mythology. In his early creative writing, Platon Oiyunsky realizes that there is a wide range of possibilities to encompass his historical timeline, which had just begun entering into a new cultural and historical environment people have yet to experience; and in this timeline it is possible to live a fair life, which is much

closer to being a perfect one. All these features are reflected in his civil lyrics, which retained the trends towards depicting the revolutionary upheaval, and the romantic outlook on the revolutionary events and the civil war as well as the enthusiasm of establishing a new social order, a sincere belief in the possibility to make the dream about a bright future come alive. In this respect, his poetry is predominantly devoted to the mythology of the era – to the era of new world creation, which presupposes the destruction of the old order seen as the process of creating cosmos out of the pre-revolutionary chaos according to the mythological structure.

The creation of myths in the early period of his creative writing is a phenomenon referring to the sphere of ideological practices. The poet declares a social ideological and cultural impact, which takes its roots from a cultural perception (of literature, and art in general) as “a fighting tool”. At the initial stage of its development, Soviet literature basically goes back to the cultural roots and creates a new kind of literature in accordance with the laws of archaic mindset. Despite the tendency towards historically true depictions, in Oiyunsky’s creative representations of the world, there are vividly prevailing elements of irrationality.

Together in with ode and declamatory poetry of his early period of creative writing, at the turn of the 1920-1930s, Oiyunsky presents a completely new outlook on mythology, which is directly connected with his work on the reproduction and literary interpretation of the olonkho devoted to *Nyurgun Bootur, the Swift* as well as his writing of the olonkho-toyuk (epic song) titled *The Red Shaman*. O.G. Sidorov notes that this period in Oiyunsky’s creative path was “the time of olonkho” (Sidorov, 2017, p.91). At the same time, in the 1930s Oiyunsky changes his outlook. Being one of a kind, wise and witty person, he could not ignore the tragedy and contradiction of the historical situation in the times of totalitarianism. In this time period he devotes his creative writing to pondering about the justified nature of creating a new world through destruction (apocalyptic ideas of creating good through evil), and the propriety of making human sacrifices for the sake of ideas, etc.

A completely new perspective on the archaic mythological structure as a structure-forming foundation in all of these creative writings (especially in the philosophical prose texts) is connected with an insight into the mythological and syncretic nature of thought, expressed in the destruction of the cause-and-effect interdependencies as well as in the combination of different space and timelines, dual nature of the characters, etc. This phenomenon is typical for Oiyunsky’s most distinguished creative writings; in which he moves onto the philosophical level of understanding the nature of human existence as a whole.

An in-depth study of writer’s poetic texts leads us to such conclusions; in his poetic texts there is specifically structured logical line of the mythological text modelling. A significant role in these texts is played by the isotopic mythological motifs, plots and images, which signify the mythical and poetic reflection in Oiyunsky’s poetry. At the same time, the poetic material allows seeing various creative approaches used by the author in representing the basic mythological notions, justified by the evolution of the author’s world perception.

#### **New world creation in Oiyunsky’s civil lyrical poetry: creating cosmos out of chaos.**

E.M. Meletinsky states that “*Chaos turning into cosmos is the main goal of mythology, moreover, from the very beginning, cosmos includes the value and aesthetic aspect*” (Meletinsky, 2000, p.169). Also, in his other work, E.M. Meletinsky noted the following feature of the mythological model in Russian Soviet ideology: “*The early period or the time of preparing for and carrying out the October revolution is represented as the turning the pre-revolutionary chaos into cosmos in a separate country; in other countries capitalistic chaos retains itself*” (Meletinsky, 2001, p.6).

New world creation through the Oiyunsky perspective has a mythological structure, similar to the archaic model of *rites de passage*, in which there are three stages of transition: apostasy from the old world – an intermittent stage – and the restoration of the world order in its new form (Gennep, 1990).

Recantation from the past is especially apparent in his declarative poems, such as “*Down with the tsars*”, “*Does it even matter?*”, “*A song of freedom*”, “*Long live the glory*”, “*All power to the Soviets!*”, “*A song of the Yakut soldier*”, “*Rise up, rise up, and hail to the ruling power!*”, “*Sir General*”, “*A great gratitude*”; in all these poems the rhythm-forming role is played by the repetitions of slogans, which send the readers back to the incantations (spells) forms of ritual and magical texts, such as: “*Saardary saiylaa*”, “*Uruydaang! Uruydaang! Bylaaghy - Sebiekke*”, “*Sin bir buolbaat?!*”, “*Uruydaan, aykhallaan, / Uhunnuk chuyomchuleeng*”, “*Turung, turung, tuoyung*” etc. The rhythmic form of the declamatory poem coincides with the features and rhythm of the new era, when words had an active and organizing power in the era of revolutionary and war events.

In the ritual aspect, according to the theory suggested by V.N. Toporov (1983), the destruction and demolishment of the world in order to create a new one in its place is characterized as preliminary situation in the process of modelling the world; it is typical for this kind of situation to have motifs of shifting from the dark side to the good side, making sacrifices, causing deaths in the name of an idea, seasonal changes, crop planting and crop growing, etc.

Rejection of the old world structure in Oiyunsky’s creative writing is similar to the mythological tradition of a conflict between and then a further transition between light and dark sides. In accordance with the archaic storyline, the demolishment of the old, victory over darkness, the triumph of the good forces are all compulsory conditions of the ritual of transitioning to a new stage of the mythological plot development. Oiyunsky uses this plotline in many of his works, metaphorically depicting the revolutionary struggle, the battle between the new and the old traditions, the past and the present. Examples containing such motifs include the following poems: “*The song of a worker*”, “*A song of freedom*”, “*All power to the Soviets!*”, “*A song of the future*”, etc.

The transition from the dark to light, from chaos to cosmos in Oiyunsky’s imaginary world is often built on the principle of agrarian or vegetative cycle, which is a typical feature of mythology. Mythologemes of planting crops (giving way for new life), its growing and the flower bud breaking through the earth are symbols connected with the coming of spring and summer and serve as symbols of cosmic harmony. “Vegetative” mythologemes are constantly accompanied by solar symbols. The rising sun, the sun in its zenith are all perceived as a result of the light’s triumph over the dark forces (examples of such poems: “*The joy from the sun*”, “*To my vast native land*”, etc.).

Another characteristic feature of this “transition” stage is that the creation of a new world in the creative paradigm of post-revolutionary literature, likewise in mythology, undermines the necessity to make a sacrifice as a form of a ritual transition from one state of the society to another. Popular mythological plots devoted to the death of hero in the name of the future, grieving and making a sacred oath at his grave as well as having a feast in memory of the deceased, having a living memory of him, and post-mortal implementation of his ideas (the mythologeme of *death/resurrection of the demi-god*) are typical motifs in the lyrical creative writing by Oiyunsky. Examples of such poems include: “*Does it even matter?!*”, “*Legacy of an eagle*”, “*In memory of the deceased*”, “*Oath*”, etc. An active role in his lyrical poetry is played by the motif of preparedness for self-sacrifice for the sake of an idea. This idea is especially prominent in the genuine poem “*Does it even matter?!*” which P.A. Oiyunsky devoted to his friend and ideological supporter, Maksim Ammosov.

U.M. Lotman and Z.G. Mints suggest that in myths “the plot chain *death-feast-burial* (tearing the body apart, eating it and burying it into the ground as well as any kind of entering of the entire dead body or any of its

part into the closed and dark space is equal to planting crops into the soil or the male semen entering the female body, that is the act of conceiving, birth (or resurrection) and the growth-weakening-death-new birth (resurrection, renewal) can be interpreted from any point of view and any episode can equally assume the activation of any processes within the link)" (Lotman & Mints, 1981, p.38). According to some researchers, this is not a typical feature for literary texts. However, in the lyrical text tradition, which is characterized by a non-linear storytelling structure, the chain link *death-burial-resurrection* can also be forced into action from any starting point; nevertheless, it frequently takes place from the moment of death serving as an apotheosis of self-sacrifice, which is a feature that can be observed in such poems as *"To the death of an ideological leader"*, *"Legacy of an eagle"*, etc.

The process of transitioning from chaos to cosmos in the poetic works of art of the Yakut writer is reflected using a universal constructive principle of text organization, i.e., the principle of duality and linearity. Thus, there is an opposition between the concepts of *dark* and *light* (*black* and *white*, *good* and *evil*), *past/present/future*, *death/resurrection*. U.M. Lotman notes that "the binary structure does not recognize even relative equality of the opposing sides, <...> the psychological essence of linearity only recognizes a non-compromised victory" (Lotman, 2002, p.35). Meanwhile, the transition to a new stage undermines "the apocalyptical idea of shifting from the good through the evil" (Lotman, 2002, p.37). From here, the permanent motif in the civil lyrical poetry by P.A. Oiyunsky devoted to the creation of a new world through revolution, the defeat of the enemy forces (rich landowners, white army soldiers), battle, the defeat of the enemy, and a complete demolishment of the old social structure. Given this, the triumph of good over evil, light over dark causes the evil forces to enhance and to react to the counter-attack. For instance, the fascist invasion in the poem titled *"Soldier of capitalism"*.

The triumph of the new world order representing the last stage of the transition ritual in Oiyunsky's creative writing is connected with the labour aimed at creation. The creation of new life, finding joy in labour – all these aspects are a part of the final transition stage. Examples of such poems are: *March of the workers*, *March of the Stakhanovs*, *"Hello, pretty girl Arisha!"*, etc.

Thus, the representation of the idea of new world creation, depicted as a process of organization and harmonization of the world order, turning chaos into cosmos is seen by Oiyunsky through the mythical and ritual model of transitioning from the process of destruction to the process of creation. In many aspects, myth serves as the basis for the writer's creative reflection of the historical facts. Universal mythological plots and motifs functioning in the texts serve as the proof of the basic role played by myths in the civil lyrical poetry; the text is also characterized by linearity of *light* and *dark* (*good* and *evil*), self-sacrifice in the name of an idea and the mythological model *death-burial ceremony-resurrection* connected with it, as well as the apocalyptical idea of triumph of the good over evil, etc.

### **A new type of main character in Oiyunsky's creative writing.**

The Russian Soviet literature of this time-period felt the strong necessity in the search for a new type of character, which according to Hans Gunter became *"the first and foremost goal in the process of building social realism"* (Gunter, 2010). "The technique of creating characters" close to the mythological cultural characters in their ideology was developed by one of the founders of social realism, Maksim Gorky. For this reason, it is seen as absolutely logical that in his early works Oiyunsky (just as many other national literature writers of that time) turned to the topics started by Gorky through the Yakut translations of his famous poems, mainly: *"Song of a falcon"*, *"Thunderbird"*, *"The song of Loiko"* and the short story titled *"Heart"*, created on based on the short stories of the founder of social realism. The concepts of *outrage of the brave ones* and *heroism through the impossible* manifested in Gorky's creative writing bring forth the motifs of

sacrifice and martyrdom in the entire scope of Soviet literature of the 1920-1930s. This motif is widely spread in the literatures of the multi-national Soviet Russia.

Oiyunsky develops a new type of character, similar to the cultural mythological character, who is a great creator and explorer, often of deity origin and further worshiped like a god. However, Oiyunsky's character goes through a complex and reversible process of *demythologization* and *remythologization* in the new social and historical circumstances. The new type of character in the renewed mythological area is represented as *the creator of history*. The Soviet literature mythological structure is seen as unusual and original in terms of the new type of character capable of changing the world and making history.

Initially, a new type of character created by Oiyunsky correlates with his personal point of view, which is opposed to the old world order. His poem written in the early period of his creative writing titled "*The child of Taata Dzharalyktyia Bylatyan*" (1917) represents nothing but an initiation, self-identification of "the new character". Dedication, i.e. *initiation* can be interpreted as "*the individuals reaching down into their own soul in the search of new values*" (Meletinsky, 2001, p.18). The initiation first takes place under the leadership of the preceding generation; this initiation then turns into rejection and denial of the previous generation experience. This motif is typical for the universal myth.

The visible opposition of oneself to the past represented by the intellectual and creative works of A.E. Kulakovsky, the predecessor of P.A. Oiyunsky, amounts to the existing mythological topic of changes and the succession of generations. At the same time, the initiation of a new main character in the creative writing under discussion symbolizes both – the worldview (ideological) and creative diversity.

Heroic images created by P.A. Oiyunsky are bipolar: first of all, they depict an abstract character most commonly represented by the collective and lyrical use of the personal pronoun WE, which battles for the Soviet power; or a specific social group – *revolutionaries* ("Heroes of the October revolution"), *working class* ("Soldiers of the working force"), *the youth*, *comsomolians* ("We are the young guards"), *Yakut soldier* ("Yakut soldier"), *communists*, *communars*, *overachievers*, *Stakhanovites* etc. This type of character represents a generalized portrait of a hero with an active life position, who makes history. The second type of hero is hagiographic and his image is based on the mythologization of real historical figures: Lenin, Stalin, Maksim Ammosov, civil war heroes, etc. Their images comply with the long-standing mythological traditions and they are idealized attaining a mythical and sacred nimbus. They become a special kind of cultural heroes of the new mythology.

The new character acts a force that helps to bring life to order and to battle against the destructive forces of chaos (portrayed as chthonic monsters in mythology and as the representatives of the old world order, external invaders, white army soldiers and rich tyrants, etc., in literature).

In most plots, the fate of the main character is a tragic one and full of sacrifices; the character fulfills a mission which he was chosen from above or destined to complete (in myths – by the gods, in Soviet literature – by the native land and the ruling party) – to defend his people from assault, to sacrifice oneself for the sake of an idea; what the character has begun will be continued by the successors (motif of *death/resurrection*, *the continuation of his feats by the forthcoming generations*). The tragic death of the main character in the name of the people and the truth is a traditional feature of a mythological tale. The character is a historically prominent one, possessing exceptional personal and individual qualities, while the image of the enemy is deprived of personal features and is alien to the tribe of the main character. In the archaic logical structure, anything that is alien is seen as an equivalent of antagonistic forces. Enemy forces are represented as the creation of pure evil, a destructive force of chaos, while the cultural characters are seen as their creators.



The death of the main character, which is either predetermined or took place, is a traditional motif of the civil lyrical poetry by P.A. Oiyunsky. The decease of a main character often serves as an apotheosis of eternal life and immortality. In some cases, this idea corresponds to the fundamental idea introduced by V. Propp (1928) about the temporary death of the destined or chosen one. Oiyunsky's series of poems devoted to Lenin illustrates this fact. The canonization of Lenin's image in many national literatures of Russia followed the same pattern. However, the peak of his image canonization was reached after his death, in the oxymoron mythological model *"dead, but more alive than ever before"*. A post-mortal canonization and sacralization of the image of leader of international proletariat in literature is seen by many contemporary experts as an equivalent of hagiographic (life) traditions (Glotov, 2015, Podlubnova, 2005; Tumarkin, 1997) and was even coined as *communist hagiography*.

In Oiyunsky's poems such as *"In memory of the social leader"*, *"Party ticket No. 224332"*, *"Oath"*, *"Duma (Last will)"*, *"The lights of a cliff"* written in the encomiastic genre and the pathetic tone in combination with lamentation formulas intensify the image of Lenin in terms of its mythological genesis, which loses its real image characteristics in the process of sacralization and attains archaic features of a cultural hero or demi-god in the literary works. In such cases, a phenomenon takes place, which E.M. Meletinsky defines as *"a special interchange of literary and mythological characters"* (Meletinsky, 2000, p.8).

Similar to the heroes of archaic myths, the new characters in Oiyunsky's lyrical poetry are mortal; however, this death is comparable to immortality (eternal remembrance, the continuation of the hero's feats). The binary position of *death/immortality* (or *resurrection*) determines the general concept feature of the characters introduced by the Yakut poet.

In his civil and philosophical lyrical poetry, Oiyunsky created an aesthetic ideal of Yakut Soviet literature, which, on the one hand, established itself as a result of creative understanding of the historical reality; and on the other hand, it was created on the principle of the mythological cultural characters' imagery.

### **New level of myth creation in Oiyunsky's creative writing.**

Archetypes in heroic and romantic creative writing fulfil the goal of establishing a new myth about the creation of the world in accordance with the ideological principles of a certain time-period, while in his most prominent creative writings Oiyunsky reaches a higher level of representing the mythological and folklore tradition. Such written works of art include: olonkho-toyuk *"The Red Shaman"*, novelette and legend *"The Great Kudangsa"*, myth *"Alexander, the Great"*, a novelette *"The Young and Brave Nikolai Dorogunov"*. These complex works of art in terms of their ideological concept, genre structure, system of images becomes the main text organizing factor. The folklore narrative material (legends about the rivalry of Dobun-Oiyun and the rich landowner Oruos, the Great Kudangsa, and the tale of Machayar Vasiliy) predetermines the relatively romanticized mythological style of the texts. In these fictional works, myth becomes a universal means of expressing the eternal, the everlasting; it also erases all boundaries between reality and non-reality, fiction and non-fiction, immanent and transcendent notions.

Created in the course of a long time-period, the olonkho-toyuk *"The Red Shaman"* depicts complex, contradictory thoughts of the poet about time and the new world being created, the future of this world, the individual who had taken the responsibility to determine the fate of the people. The author's own definition of the poem's genre as an epic song (or *olonkho-toyuk*) plays a significant role in understanding the content structure of the plot since epic songs as a genre presupposes depicting image "in their monumental and idealized form of behaviour and actions of the people living in the heroic timeline" (Literary..., 1987, p.513).

The image of the main character, the Red Shaman, became one of the most difficult and controversial images created by Oiyunsky. The complexity of this image is in the conflict of the *light* and *dark* forces, which manifests itself not only in the external world of events, but also in the inner world of the character. Being a fighter for justice and freedom of the people under pressure and pursuing positive goals, the main character chooses to follow the bloody path of cruelty, violence, all of which lead to a tragic ending and to an understanding of one's feebleness.

In the contradiction of two forces – the Red Shaman and Oruos, the landowner, Oiyunsky takes the reader to the contrasting dual images, typical for archaic myths. The author uses a mirror reflection of the events in the life of the main characters, which motivate their actions undertaken for the sake of achieving their goals. In this respect, a great role is played by similar mythological motifs which unravel the plot. These examples include the characters' dreams. Dreams represented in myths symbolize the intermediary state between life and death. For the Red Shaman his dream means the transition from a typical human being to a shaman, to the chosen one (motif of heavenly choice), i.e., he experiences a ritual death and is reborn as a shaman capable of changing the world. Oruos, the landowner's dream symbolizes the death of his daughter, who was chosen as a sacrifice and does not undergo the process of being reborn, due to the fact that Oruos, the landowner goes against the laws of nature and ethic norms of the human society.

Special mission in the dreams of the characters is played by the totem animals, mainly: the eagle and the serpent. The latter is a very complex and multi-semantic symbol in the world symbol and emblem system. It symbolizes the virgin instinct-based nature, a flow of vital strength, potential energy which raises the spirits. This mythological image becomes a personal symbol of his initiation for the main character. For this reason, the introduction of the image of a serpent in the main character's dream is not accidental; it is precisely the moment of initiation in the dream when the main character becomes a shaman.

The inner connection of the contradicting forces in the characters' dreams are represented by the image of an eagle, which is strong mythological image in terms of its function. The eagle for the main character is a spirit of protection; for its rival it is a symbol of the punishing force, and the loss of all hopes. The destruction of the totem idols by the shaman in the ending to the plotline, including the image of an eagle, indicated in one of the reprises, becomes a symbol of rejecting the evil forces, which took over the main character in order to achieve positive goals. The apocalyptic idea of triumph of the good over evil does not confirm itself in the deeds of the character and destructs his worldview standards.

The dual nature of the characters predetermines the epilogue of the storyline; each of them faces a defeat. P.V. Maksimova (2004, p.40) states that the conflict of the main characters "turns into a romantic tragedy about time". The tragic turn of events is predefined by the centre event – the death of Aiyy Kuo, which was sacrificed by both sides of the conflict. The death of the symbol of Beauty, purity, and the ideals of life also become the reason for the Red Shaman's defeat; losing his battle, he opened even larger threats to the Middle World.

The literary work is full of mythological images and motifs. The images of earth spirits, Ebe Khotun, Khatan Temieriye, and Kuturghan Kuo are the symbols of world harmony. These symbols perform an organizing and structuring function in the plotline. Their natural harmony is precisely the power turning chaos into order, and preventing apocalypse.

In this prominent work of literary art, Oiyunsky seriously reconsiders the perception of myths. The idea of creating a new world order through the forces of evil and the destruction of the old world order, as well as making sacrifices in the name of the belief – all this attains a new meaning. Good cannot come from evil; something new is not always constructed on the ruins of something old, thus, sacrifices turn out to be pointless and lethal.

The reaction of the poet and the transformations in his worldview are directly connected to the historical events. The writer gives an objective assessment of the tragic nature of the times he lived in; using the mythological context, the writer attempted to return to the true spiritual values and to explain time in its natural mythological structure.

## **Conclusion**

An in-depth analysis of the Platon Oiyunsky's poetry allows making the conclusion about the specific character of his mythology, which combines in itself a national fixed model of mythological modelling and a universal, humanistic mythological tragedy. In this article, the turn to the universal mythological models, which manifests itself in the poetic structure of his texts (a complex of motifs, plot structure, image structure), clearly illustrate the nature of myths created by the Yakut Soviet poet. The article outlines only the key moments, which reflect the formation of the writer's poetic worldview determined by the ideological practices of his time (turning chaos into cosmos, transition rituals, a new type of character) and by the change and evolution of the writer's world perspective (new level of mythology in philosophical lyrical poetry).

Clearly, it would not be appropriate to narrow down all the creative writings created by P.A. Oiyunsky to pure mythology; it is much deeper, more complex and broader than simple threading of mythological images, motifs into the poetic canvas. However, myths are one of the main components of the creative world perspective of the poet. In this respect, Oiyunsky's creative writing is an individual writer's interpretation of popular mythological plots and motifs, which are brought forth into the centre of the poetic worldview. For Oiyunsky, a poet and creative innovator, myths serve as an instrument of modelling the reality in accordance with the laws of mythological mindset, which gives his creative writings special metaphorical features and symbolic importance.

Mythology in Oiyunsky's creative writing was dual in its nature. On the one hand, turning to myths is justified by the civil position of the writer as the promoter of Soviet ideology. In this case, myth becomes a tool of influencing the minds of the readers. On the other hand, mythology in the creative writing of the founder of Yakut literature allows him to excel to a level of philosophical judgements on the aspects of human life.

Mythological poetics in Platon Oiyunsky's creative writing serves as a natural means of reflecting human history and allows shaping the creative representation in terms of the intellectual and philosophical content. The world modelling features in his writings are based on the traditional mythological mindset and universal cultural myths.

Myths allow the author to ponder about the complexity of human destiny in the historical process, the level and accessibility of the human impact in the changing the world and the choice of a path in reaching good purposes. All this is achieved by the author in a relatively romanticized form.

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