



GENRE CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMONOLOGICAL STORIES

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ABSTRACT

This article considers the genre signs of demonological stories. The plots and characters of traditional demonological stories in Russian folklore are described.

Modern folkloristics is showing increasing interest in the study of genres of oral folk mythologized prose. Issues of genre features, poetics, existence and development of works other than fairy tales become relevant. No less urgent is the problem of studying the picture of the world presented in modern texts of demonological stories. The genres of non-fairy tale prose include legends, traditions, tales and byvalshchina. Bylichka and byvalshchina are genres of non-fairy tale prose folklore, stories about encounters with fantastic creatures of folk demonology. In traditional stories about a meeting with evil spirits, the plot was based on the situation of a person meeting with a demonic creature that poses a danger. The forces of light (God, saints, angels) were the heroes of another folklore genre - a legend associated with Christian ideas, but retaining a pagan basis. In legends, man, with the help of light forces, always defeats representatives of the dark world. Nowadays, there are stories whose themes have a religious connotation and can be defined as "faith - unbelief." Various evil spirits act as mythological characters in such events. They are opposed by heavenly forces, spirits of deceased relatives, mentors of the holy church, and simply believers. In the finale, the hero (the narrator, if the narration is in the first person) miraculously gets rid of the "persecution" of evil spirits, having believed in God and the power of the human soul. This kind of stories is close to legends, the themes of which are built from the solution of issues of the relationship between man and higher powers, the physical and ethical structure of the world, sin and righteousness, punishment for moral transgressions and rewards for good. Based on this, we can distinguish into a separate group within the genre of byvalshchina and consider as a genre variety of byvalshchina legends that tell about a person's meeting with representatives of "lower demonology", about the help of holy power or believers. For example: "It happened on Easter. Back then they didn't believe in God, they didn't go to church, and they punished those who broke the rules. That year Easter fell on a weekend. The woman was very happy, she thought

she would clean the house and bake pies for the children, but suddenly she was forced to go on duty on her day off.

Folk demonological stories are superstitious tales associated with characters from lower mythology. The pagan worldview of peasants in the mid-19th century. captured by I. A. Goncharov. He wrote: "In Oblomovka they believed everything: werewolves and the dead. If they were told that a haystack was walking across the field, they would not think twice and believe it; would anyone miss the rumor that it was not a ram, but something something else, or that such and such Marfa or Stepanida is a witch, they will be afraid of both the ram and Martha: it will not even occur to them to ask why the ram became not a ram, and why Marfa became a witch, and they will even attack whoever thought of it to doubt this - so strong is the faith in the miraculous in Oblomovka!"

In science, demonological stories were first called epics - a word directly borrowed from the speech of the peasants of the Belozersky region of the Novgorod province. It was proposed as a term by the brothers B. M. and Yu. M. Sokolov. They wrote that among the people this word is usually applied "to short stories about goblins, brownies, devils and devils, half-believers, sorcerers - in a word, about representatives of dark, evil spirits. Subsequently, E. V. Pomerantseva, clarifying the term "Bylichka" divided demonological stories into two groups: bylychka and bylytsina. Bylychka is a memorat (memory), bybylytsa is a fabulat (a narrative that has lost the features of the recollection of an eyewitness character).

Byvalshchina contains more generalizations and is conveyed from the third person. This gives it the opportunity to relatively easily acquire fantastic details and turn into a fairy tale (for example, stories about the dead). According to our observations, in byvalshchina the tragic outcome predominates, while in bylichka the person is saved. Salvation comes unexpectedly, as a result of a gesture (the sign of the cross) or a word (mention of God, for example: "Oh Lord!"). At the same time, bylichka and byvalschina have much in common. They preserve with great completeness and integrity the ancient pagan ideas of the Eastern Slavs.

Demonological stories are addressed to the present, what happened in them is incredible, the narrator experiences a feeling of fear. The main goal pursued by a story or story is to convince listeners of the truth of what is being communicated, to influence them emotionally, and to instill fear of a demonic creature. The plots of tales and tales are usually small in size and single-motive. The characters are a human and a demonic creature. The devil (the devil) was very popular - a universal image denoting any "evil spirit." Various characters in fairy tales could be called devils.

The time, place of the event, and the image of the demonic creature (its portrait and behavior) are characteristic. Demons appear at the "unclean", borderline times of the year and day: at Christmas time, on Kupala night, at noon, at midnight, before dawn, after sunset. Everything happens at dusk, in the dark night, in the fog, in the light of the moon... A person meets them where they are: as a rule, in deserted and dangerous places. These are wastelands, forest wilds, swamps; crossroads and points of deserted roads; caves, pits, reservoirs, especially whirlpools (for example, near mills), whirlpools; wells, even vessels with water. Demons live in trees (birches and willows, in hazel); in undergrounds and attics, in abandoned houses, in bathhouses, barns, barns; and even in the hut - under the stove or behind it.

A meeting with a demon is always unexpected. And just as suddenly, he disappears from sight. As a rule, the plot is based on the desire of a demonic creature to cause harm to a person: a

goblin leads astray, a brownie scares with a knock or touch, a merman drowns, a mermaid tickles to death. At the same time, some demons can be neutral towards a person and even help him: for example, a brownie takes care of cattle; The goblin rocks the cradle of a child forgotten in the field. An intermediate position between the world of demons and the world of people is occupied by sorcerers, witches, healers - people who can, of their own free will, come into contact with evil spirits (often these properties were also attributed to the miller).

The very appearance of the fantastic character is striking. This is a werewolf, capable of taking different shapes and any size (either higher than the forest, then lower than the grass). A demonic creature can appear in the guise of a person, but usually it is a person with some kind of anomalous features: with horns, a tail, fur; instead of legs - with the limbs of an animal; or in appearance he is exactly similar to someone who has already died from people. The goblin is often an old man with tousled hair and a long gray beard; it may also have horns and goat legs. The merman is a huge naked old man with a big belly, green hair and a beard made of seaweed. A demon can have or take on a zoomorphic appearance: a weasel, a cat, a pig, a ram. Finally, this creature can take the form of inanimate objects and natural phenomena: a column of fire (water, dust), a whirlwind, a haystack, a ball, a wheel. The otherworldly nature of a mythological image is revealed by its behavior: a hoarse and loud voice, a chilling laugh, as well as noise, roar, crackling, hum, howl, rapid rotation, falling or movement, etc. Individual characters were associated with an allegedly inherent "image" life." For example, a brownie takes care of horses at night, combing their tails and manes; according to other ideas, the brownie is a little old man, peacefully picking his best shoe behind the stove. Devils feast around fires, play cards, and arrange weddings. Mermaids dance and sing, swing on a birch tree, bask in the pale rays of the moon, comb their long hair.

Mythological characters in fairy tales and byvalshchina are presented by storytellers in a traditionally vague manner; in most cases, only some sign or characteristic feature of a supernatural creature is indicated: brownie - "shaggy man", "grandfather with a beard", "little man all so shaggy"; goblin - "tall man", "gray-haired and gloomy old man"; aquatic - "the whole muzzle is overgrown, covered in mud," etc. Their actions and actions are limited: to scare, harm or, conversely, to warn, to help a person, in some tales about brownies - to console, caress. In contrast to the abstract image of a supernatural being, the narrator's image is realistic and clearly defined. The narrator "attributes" what is being reported "to himself, to his own self." learns about the fact of meeting with a representative of folk demonology, about impressions and experiences. If the narrator himself is not a witness to the incident, then he refers to facts that are convincing to the listener, details of the "contact," and clarifies how the main character felt. All this strengthens the listener's faith in the credibility of what is being communicated. The "meeting" situation is a typological feature of mythological stories; an external plot situation, within which lies the actual event, the essence of which is experienced experiences, new emotions and experience gained. Mandatory attributes of this situation are the immediacy, stress and apparent randomness of the event. The fact of the "meeting" is a key, plot-forming element of the genre being studied; the semantic center of both archaic and modern mythological narratives and messages. This is a kind of "archetype", filled with different content, but structurally constant. The "meeting" situation has a triune structure: an unexpected manifestation of demonological power; a person under the influence of demonological force; outcome of the meeting. Meetings with otherworldly creatures are

regarded by storytellers as curious facts. The events that the tales narrate are presented briefly. As a rule, such stories are one-episode. Based on the “triune structure” system, the situation of “contact” between a person and a demonic creature can be represented as follows:

1) entry into the situation - an unexpected manifestation of a “guest” from a parallel world, which is marked with the word’s “look”, “suddenly”, “sees”, “here unexpectedly”. They all mark the boundary between the ordinary and the supernatural;

2) being in a situation – describing what you saw. The meeting with the otherworldly occurs either “explicitly” (in person), or with its tangible or audible manifestation. In any case, the “contacted” experiences a strong psychological shock. A demonic manifestation always causes fear, anxiety, surprise in a character, and puts him into a state of stupor and confusion;

3) the way out of the situation - the outcome of the meeting - is associated with the disappearance of the demonic creature. Often storytellers provide information about the further fate of the person who became an involuntary eyewitness to the incident.

In the compositional structure of the epic genre, the situation of a “meeting” is framed by everyday sketches from a person’s life, against the background of which a person instantly and unexpectedly comes into contact with an otherworldly representative or its manifestation. The storyline ends with the narrator’s assessment of the event or an indication of the consequences of the meeting. Thus, works of non-fairy tale prose are important as a source of information, and in some cases also as a warning and edification. Works of non-fairy tale prose are confined to real time, real terrain, real persons.

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