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МИФОПОЭТИКА «ЛЕСНОЙ ПЕСНИ» ЛЕСИ УКРАИНКИ В АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ РЕЦЕПЦИИ И ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ

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Аннотация: Статья посвящена англоязычной рецепции и интерпретации мифопоэтики «Лесной песни» Леси Украинки. Указывается на сложность произведения для иноязычной рецепции и интерпретации из-за большого количества мифических и фольклорных элементов, которые являются важными этническими составляющими поэтики. Статья базируется на использовании сравнительно-типологического, структурального, описательного, интерпретативного методов и целостно-системного анализа. Отмечается, что значительная часть мифологии в «Лесной песни» приходится на демонологию, где каждый из демонов наделен теми чертами, которые ему приписывали народные поверья. Доказано, что переводчикам удалось сохранить колорит этих персонажей благодаря различным способам интерпретации, хотя не обошлось и без определенных неточностей. Отмечается, что важным компонентом этнической поэтики произведения Леси Украинки являются заговоры, удачный перевод которых демонстрирует настоящие интерпретаторские находки. Переводы украинской мифологии «Лесной песни» Леси Украинки, совершенные Г. Эванс и П. Канди, можно считать удачными, поскольку они отличаются максимальным сходством с содержанием, духом и стилем оригинала.

Ключевые слова: мифопоэтика, мифология, фольклор, «Лесная песня», Леся Украинка, перевод, рецепция, интерпретация.

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MYTHOPOETICS OF LESIA UKRAINKA'S *FOREST SONG* IN ENGLISH RECEPTION AND INTERPRETATION

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Abstract: The article deals with English reception and interpretation of mythopoetics in Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song*. The great difficulty of this work for foreign reception and interpretation due to the large number of mythical and folklore elements, which are important ethnic components of its poetics, is pointed out. The article is based on comparative and typological, structural, descriptive, interpretative methods and the holistic system analysis. It is noted that a significant part of the *Forest Song* mythology falls on demonology, where each of the demons has features attributed to him by folk beliefs. It is investigated that both translators managed to preserve ethnic specificity of these characters due to different ways of interpretation, although not without certain inaccuracies. It is also noted that an important component of the ethnic poetics of Lesia Ukrainka's work is magic charm, the successful translation of which demonstrates the true interpretative findings of both translators. Translations of Ukrainian mythology of Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song* by G. Evans and P. Cundy can be considered successful, as they are marked by the maximum approximation to the original content, spirit and style.

Keywords: mythopoetics, mythology, folklore, *Forest Song*, Lesia Ukrainka, translation, reception, interpretation.

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Folklore and mythological tradition in Ukrainian literature dates back to I. Kotliarevsky and is continued by I. Franko, P. Kulish, Olena Pchilka, M. Gogol, T. Shevchenko, B. Grinchenko and others. Significant factual, though literary comprehended, material on Ukrainian mythology and folklore can be found in many works of national literature, the most striking of which are M. Kotsiubynsky's novel *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* and, of course, Lesia Ukrainka's drama extravaganza *Forest Song*.

Mythology and folklore are important components of structure and poetics of Lesia's work and are of great interest for researchers. Thus, even Soviet literary critics, comparing *Forest Song* with outstanding works of Western European and Russian literature, pointed, first of all, to the typology in using folklore and mythological sources: "*Forest Song*, — said V. Petrov, — in all its style, all themes, all its content belongs to the romantic trend in art. Folklore, myth, nature, fairy tale, the opposition of natural and human, poetry as magic, the theme of the magic of art, the attempt to create a new mythology, all that Nietzsche, Maeterlinck, Hauptmann preached in Western European literature, and what was repeated in Russian literature by Viach. Ivanov, Andrei Bely, K. Balmont — all this was not strange for Lesia Ukrainka too" [7, p. 158]; "Lesia Ukrainka, — P. Ponomarev remarked, — at a new historical stage continues and develops the traditions of such works as *Mermaid* by Pushkin, *Snow Maiden* by Ostrovsky, *Balladina* by Yu. Slovatsky. Folk, humanism, poeticism are the characteristics of these works. By reproducing the images of folk art, classic writers enhance their poeticism, put deep thoughts and exciting emotions in them, without violating the folklore nature of these images" [8, p. 173].

For obvious reasons, the researchers did not focus on the ethnic identity of Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song*. It was only noted that "the originality and diversity of each of these works is obvious. But this does not exclude their affinity" [8, p. 174].

Modern literary critics also point to the convergence of the *Forest Song* Ukrainian mythological imagery with many "world plots" [1]. However, researcher V. Ageeva considers Lesia's drama extravaganza in a postmodern interpretation, taking into account the peculiarities of its mythological structures and thus emphasizing the ethnic specificity of the work: "Some folklore motives, situations related to the relationship between man and nature, Lesia Ukrainka evaluates, changing the perspective of the vision. Changing perspectives and points of view is one of the important means of creating fantastic effects, destroying the usual hierarchy of concepts, and this applies to different levels of social organization, ideas of freedom and subordination, duty and law, revenge and forgiveness, and finally, life and death" [1, p. 7]. Also it is worth considering L. Skupeiko's monograph *Mythopoeitics of Lesia Ukrainka's "Forest Song"* [11], where the drama is examined in the context of folk calendar-ritual symbolism through the prism of literary and figurative system, composition, chronotope. The author rightly notes that «Forest Song» is a neo-romantic work according to conception, genre and content, and its calendar-ritual mystery is subject to identification of human personality existential and spiritual dimensions in relations with people and nature. Investigations of Lesia's drama folklore and mythology by Tamara Skrypka are interesting too [9; 10], where the researcher studies the problem of Lesia Ukrainka's means of literary thinking and folk poetic sources synthesis.

Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song* is of undoubted interest, relevance and, at the same time, a great difficulty for translators. The semantic structures of mythical and folklore elements of the work, which, to some extent, can be attributed to realias (ethnolexics), contain special information – cultural, ethnounique. Hence the difficulties that arise in translation: "this is, firstly, the absence of the equivalent in the target language – full or partial – due to the lack of the referent in this language marked by realia, and, secondly, the need, at the same time with the denotative meaning of realia, to transfer the specificity and connotations of its national and historical colouring" [5, p. 39]. Nevertheless, we have five English

translations of *Forest Song* by Percival Cundy, Vira Rich, Florence Livesay, Gladys Evans, Virlana Tkacz and Wanda Phipps.

The purpose of this investigation is to examine the reception and interpretation of Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song* Ukrainian mythopoetics on the basis of its English translations made by the British G. Evans and P. Cundy. The choice of these interpretations is due to the fact that they have the greatest interest of critics and readers, and this indicates the interest in Lesya Ukrainka among a wide range of English-speaking recipients.

Thus, Roksolana Zorivchak, famous Ukrainian researcher, rightly remarks that G. Evans's translations are characterized by "a subtle perception of the author's style, close attention to the literary originality of Lesia Ukrainka's figurative thinking" [6]. An attempt to "understand how wonderful (excellent) is the translation of P. Kandy" was made by another Ukrainian researcher M. Zharkykh [4]. The author, however sometimes resorting to journalism, analyzes in detail this translation according to semantics of form, rhyme, rhythmic poetics. M. Zharkykh notes that despite the highest certification (excellent translation) of this translation by critics, he considers it "thorough and diligent," as well as one where "the translator has made considerable efforts to properly transfer the original" [4].

The purpose of the article led to a comprehensive applying such research methods as comparative and typological, structural, descriptive, interpretive methods and the method of holistic system analysis. The research is based on the conceptual principles of literary criticism, comparative studies, and interpretive translation theory.

A significant part of the *Forest Song* mythology falls on demonology. It should be noted that each of the demons in the work of Lesia Ukrainka is endowed with the features attributed to him by folk beliefs, and at the same time is quite specific. Preserving this specificity is the main task of the translator. To some extent, G. Evans and P. Cundy succeed in this, as evidenced by their translation of the characters' names:

Lesia Ukrainka	G. Evans	P. Cundy
<i>Той, що зрєблі рєє</i>	<i>Dam Breaker – He who breaks dams</i>	<i>He Who Rends the Dikes, a destructive sprite dwelling in the freshets of spring Lost Babes, water nixes</i>
<i>Потєрчата</i>	<i>Lost Children –</i>	
<i>Русалка</i>	<i>Poterchata</i>	<i>Rusalka, a water nymph</i>
<i>Водяник</i>	<i>Water Sprite – Rusalka</i>	
	<i>Forest-pool King –</i>	<i>Water Goblin, guardian spirit of the lake</i>
<i>Лісовик</i>	<i>Vodyanik</i>	
	<i>Wood Goblin</i>	<i>Forest Elf, a woodland sprite</i>
<i>Мавка</i>	<i>Mavka</i>	<i>Mavka, a forest nymph Will-o'-the-Wisp, a fire sprite (ignis fatuus)</i>
<i>Перелєсник</i>	<i>Red (Forest) Demon</i>	<i>not translated Kutz, a malicious imp</i>
<i>Пропасниця</i>	<i>Ghost-Spirit of the Mire</i>	<i>Field Sprite, a nymph dwelling among the grain</i>
<i>Куць</i>	<i>Koots</i>	
<i>Русалка польова</i>	<i>Meadow Fairy</i>	<i>He Who Dwells in Rock, a phantom signifying Death and Oblivion Starvelings, imps personifying</i>
<i>Той, що в скалі сидить</i>	<i>Lone Crag-Sitter (Death)</i>	<i>Famine and Want Fate, a phantom [14, p. 169].</i>
<i>Злидні</i>	<i>Hunger Imps – Zlidni</i>	
Доля [12, p. 13].	<i>Fate – in the Form of a Vision</i> [12, p. 14].	

As we can see, both translators use two ways of interpretation: 1) periphrasis (*потєрчата* – *Lost Children / Lost Babes*; *водяник* – *Forest-pool King / Water Goblin*; *пропасниця* – *Ghost-spirit of the Mire* (P. Cundy has no translation of this name); *перелєсник* – *Red Demon / Will-o'-the-Wisp*; *лісовик* – *Wood Goblin / Forest Elf*; *русалка* – *water sprite / Rusalka*; *злидні* – *Hunger imps / Starvelings*); 2) transcription (*Mavka*, *Koots / Kutz*). In several cases, G. Evans uses the most appropriate – combined method: when together with the periphrasis – the interpretation of the realia semantics, there is a transcription of the word – the preservation of its “foreignness,” national identity (*lost children – poterchata, water sprite – rusalka, forest-pool king – vodyanik, hunger imps – zlidni*). At the same time, in P. Cundy we observe little transcription (only *Mavka, Rusalka, Kutz*),

however, broad explanations are given for all the names of the characters, as for *Мавка* and *Потерчата*, here the translator considered it necessary to make even a separate footnote with a commentary and description of these mythological characters for a better reception and understanding Ukrainian realities by English-speaking reader. G. Evans transcribes names *Мавка* (*Mavka*) and *Куць* (*Koots*) without any explanation, therefore we have unfilled gaps (*lacunae*) — incomprehensible fragments of the original text for English-speaking recipient.

Unfortunately, the translators could not avoid certain inaccuracies. Thus, Lesia Ukrainka's *лісовик* is probably not taken from mythology, where he is an "evil spirit" who "leads a man through the forest at night so that the man will not find a way and get out of the forest until the third roosters sing" [2, p. 111], but from folklore, where *лісуни* are friends of the people, love the truth and punish for unjust acts. In G. Evans' translation *лісовик* — *wood goblin*, which is a serious distortion of the original content, because Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English by A.S. Hornby registers the meaning *goblin* as "a small ugly creature that likes to trick people or cause trouble" [13, p. 509]. P. Cundy's interpretation — *Forest Elf*, is closer to the Ukrainian version, as in Old Germanic mythology *forest elfs* and *sprites* nor were always hostile to people.

Some inaccuracy is observed when translating names *Той, що в скалі сидить* and *Перелесник*. Thus, G. Evans to her translation *Lone Crag-Sitter* added the word *death*, and P. Cundy's character *He Who Dwells in Rock* is explained as *a phantom signifying Death and Oblivion*. However, *маршуче* (*maryshche, mara*) (so called in the text *Той, що в скалі сидить*) has nothing to do with death. According to folk belief, this is an evil demon, who "covers the eyes of a man with an invisible net, dizzying his mind to lead him into a dangerous place" [3, p. 205]. As for *Перелесник* in mythology he is "an evil spirit that appears to anyone, but usually to young lovers, in the form of a beloved dead person" [2, p. 135]. It is such a tempting spirit that we see *Перелесник* in *Forest Song*, but G. Evans' translation *Red Demon* somewhat changes this image content, demonizing it too much. P. Cundy's interpretation *Will-o'-the-Wisp* ("a thing that is impossible to obtain; a person that you cannot depend on") [13, p. 1366] is more successful and adequate to the original.

To bring other national work closer to English-speaking reader, both translators interpret *Русалка* as *sprite, fairy, nymph*, which belong to the Old Germanic folklore. However, P. Cundy left the transcribed version *Rusalka* in order to preserve the ethnospecificity of the Ukrainian mythical character.

Besides actually demons in Lesia Ukrainka's drama extravaganza there are characters personifying disease: *пропасниця* (G. Evans' interpretation – *ghost-spirit of the mire*); abstract concepts: *доля* (*fate*) and *злидні* (*hunger imps / Starvelings*). We consider this translation to be self-sufficient and quite successful.

An important component of Lesia Ukrainka's work ethnic poetics is magic charm that is able to turn away from a person the forces that can harm him, and the curses as a result of which a person is punished for his sins. Successful interpretations of poetic examples of folk beliefs demonstrate the true interpretive findings of both translators.

Lesia Ukrainka	G. Evans	P. Cundy
1. Бодай би всох! 2. А щоб ти зслиз! 3. Шпіле-дівице, <i>Пропаснице-Трясовице!</i> <i>Іди ти собі на куп'я, на болота,</i> <i>Де люди не ходять, де кури не п'ють, де мій глас не заходить.</i> <i>Тут тобі не ходити,</i> <i>білого тіла не в'ялити,</i> <i>жовтої кості не млоїти,</i> <i>чорної крові не спивати,</i> <i>віку не вкорочати.</i> <i>Ось тобі полинь –</i> <i>Згинь, маро, згинь!</i>	1. <i>I hope he's beached!</i> 2. <i>May he drop dead!</i> 3. <i>Pincher-and-trickster!</i> <i>Fever-giver, demon-siven.</i> <i>Get back into your hillocks</i> <i>Green, in the swampland,</i> <i>Where people never go,</i> <i>where</i> <i>Cocks will never crow,</i> <i>Nor my voice raise and echo.</i> <i>To come here you're forbidden:</i> <i>No soul nor body weaken,</i> <i>no yellow bones to sicken,</i> <i>no blackened blood be drunken,</i> <i>no life here will you shorten.</i> <i>Wormwood – that's for you:</i> <i>Shoo, ghoul, shoo!</i>	1. <i>May he dry up!</i> 2. <i>The dirty scamp!</i> 3. <i>Evil spirit, Fever Wraith,</i> <i>Burning fever, shivering</i> <i>ague! Back into the scum</i> <i>you go, back into the slime;</i> <i>Where good people do not</i> <i>walk, where the fowls don't</i> <i>drink, Where my voice you</i> <i>hear no more! Here no power</i> <i>you dare employ My white</i> <i>body to destroy, My bones'</i> <i>marrow to enjoy, My red</i> <i>blood with which to toy, No</i> <i>one's health may you annoy.</i> <i>Fly, you phantom, fly!</i> <i>Perish, specter, die!</i>
4. Бодай навек заснула... <i>бодай ти вже не встала!</i>	4. <i>Lord, she could sleep</i> <i>forever...You wish you never</i> <i>need get up!</i>	4. <i>Would that she slept for</i> <i>good!.. Would that she never</i> <i>rose!</i>
5. А щоб ти стояла у чуді <i>та диві!</i> [12]	5. <i>Grant that you stand for</i> <i>good, by magic- wonders!</i> [12]	5. <i>I wish you stood amidst</i> <i>your charms and spells!</i> [14]

In *Forest Song* Lesia Ukrainka describes the peculiarities of the dance performed by mythical characters: *Русалка* and *Той, що греблі рве*. According to folk belief, the representatives of the world of dead play with dances: a whirlwind in

the steppe – a dance of mermaids of field and steppe, a whirlpool in reservoirs – a dance of mermaids of water and sea, a walk of wind in woods – dances of mavka [2].

Lesia Ukrainka	G. Evans	P. Cundy
<p>Той, що греблі рве (поривчасто простягає їй обидві руки) Ну, мир-миром! Поплинем понад виром!</p> <p>Русалка (береться з ним за руки і прудко кружляє) На виру-вирочку, На жовтому пісочку, в перловому віночку Зав'юся у таночку! Ух! Ух! [12]</p>	<p>Dam Breaker (<i>ferently reaching out his hands to her</i>) Peace flag unfurled! Merry-go-round the Whirlpool world!</p> <p>Water Sprite (<i>joins hands with his and quickly circles the pool with him</i>) O I'm in whirlpool land-o Upon the yellow sands-o, I wear a pearly crown-o, Dance with my love around-o! Ho! Ho! [12]</p>	<p>“He Who Rends the Dikes” (<i>With a convulsive movement, he stretches out his hand to Rusalka.</i>) Anyway, 'tis spring! O'er the lake let's take a fling!</p> <p>Rusalka (<i>Seizing his hand, she circles around swiftly.</i>) By the little lakelet, O'er its yellow sands, With my pearly chaplet I fly in the dance! [14]</p>

The translations show an almost adequate reproduction of Lesia Ukrainka's work rhythmic melody: the white verse is preserved where it is in original, and the rhyming lines mostly also correspond to original rhyming ones.

Thus, as we see, mythological and folklore elements are essential factors that create ethnospecificity of the work. To reproduce these realities in translation is a difficult and at the same time an interesting task. Interpretations of Lesia Ukrainka's *Forest Song* Ukrainian mythology, made by G. Evans and P. Cundy, can be considered successful, as they are marked by the maximum approximation to the content, spirit and style of the original. There is no doubt that over time, even more perfect English translations of this work will appear, because the search in literary translation never stops.

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