



## **MYTHMODELING IN THE NOVEL BY GUZEL YAKHINA "ZULEIKHA OPENS HER EYES"**

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### **Abstract**

The article is devoted to the analysis of myth modeling in the novel by the modern Russian writer Guzel Yakhina "Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes". This study showed the originality of the inclusion of myths in the structure of the work and the significance of myth modeling in the writing strategy of G. Yakhina.

**Keywords:** Myth modeling, novel, legend, biblical plot, oriental plot.

### **Introduction**

The appearance of the works of the Russian writer Guzel Yakhina on the literary arena became a real literary action. The attention of literary scholars, journalists, and literary critics was riveted to the artistic world of the writer's works. They were interested in literally everything: from the specifics of the genre to the individual style of the author.

Guzel Yakhina's first novel, *Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes*, published in 2015, is dedicated to the fate of women during the socio-political events of 1930 – dispossession and exile to Siberia. The themes of Guzel Yakhina's novel, *Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes*, are broad: the fate of a person in the whirlwind of historical events, motherhood, gender inequality, spiritual insight and awakening, transformation of moral values, love, man and religion. The plot of Guzel Yakhina's work "Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes" is based on the heroes' journey from Kazan to Siberia in a freight car, as well as life in a special settlement for convicts and the love story of Zuleikha Valieva and the Red Army officer Ivan Ignatov, the murderer of the heroine's husband. The main compositional technique is contamination, synthesizing the techniques of opposition, comparison, and amplification: the main

heroine at the beginning of the novel is an unenlightened, religious, submissive, oriental woman, but in the finale she turns into an independent, strong personality. The specificity of the novel "Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes" lies in myth modeling. Myth model is understood as "the mythological basis on which the axiological system of views of the novel's heroes is based" [1, p. 15]. In this regard, the text assigns a special role to the story of Yusuf and Zuleikha and the legend of the Simurg bird.

The legend of the Simurgh bird occupies a special place in the artistic fabric of the novel. Zuleikha retells the legend to her son every time. The plot of the myth consists of the search for a magical leader bird. The birds go a long way through the Valley of Searches, the Valley of Love, the Valley of Knowledge, the Valley of Indifference, the Valley of Unity, the Valley of Confusion, the Valley of Renunciation and end up in the Land of Eternity. Only thirty birds reach the end and learn the secret of the world. The prophetic bird of justice and happiness, the Simurgh, revealed the secret: "At that moment they comprehended the essence: they all are the Simurgh. Each one separately, and all together" [2, p.402].

The author's legend about Simurg echoes the plot of Faridaddin Attar's poem "Conversation of the Birds". While preserving the plot and the main ideological concept, the author draws a parallel between the events in the myth about the bird and the history of the dispossessed, their survival on the uninhabited shores of Siberia. It should be noted that in translation from Farsi, the word "Simurg" means "thirty" and refers to the number of dispossessed people who survived, and the word "Semruk" means seven hands, thanks to which the village was built. Thirty dispossessed people, abandoned to the mercy of fate, without shelter, warm clothing, food, survived thanks to their unity. Like the birds in the myth, they realized that the strength is in themselves and their unity, thanks to which they survive in the conditions of Siberia.

The legend of Yusuf and Zuleikha refers to the famous ancient story of Yusuf and Zuleikha. In the biblical story, Potiphar's wife falls in love with Joseph's servant, unsuccessfully tries to seduce him, the young man, having rejected the woman, angered the ruler's wife. Joseph is sent to prison, nothing is known about Potiphar's wife. In Islamic scripture, Zuleikha's love for Yusuf is more sublime. It is a pure, high and eternal feeling, true selfless love. In the Koranic story, Zuleikha, having passed a series of tests, wins Joseph's heart, her love for him is equal to her love

for God. The story of Yusuf and Zuleikha was written about by the Persian poet Jami, who also recreated the image of a beautiful, all-consuming love of a woman for a man.

Thus, relying on the eastern plot of Yusuf and Zuleikha, Guzel Yakhina rethinks the love story, filling it with new meanings. The author preserves the main idea - she glorifies all-encompassing love, but changes the images of the heroes: Yakhina describes the love between her son Yusuf and mother Zuleikha, also depicts the story of strong, sacrificial love, but parental.

Zuleikha gave birth to a son in Siberia and perceives him as a gift from God, so she calls him by one of the prophet's names, also emphasizing the deep spiritual connection with her son, as in the love story of famous heroes. Professor Leibe admiringly notes the choice of name: "Yuzuf! Just think about it: here, in this damn wilderness - Yuzuf and Zuleikha. What's it like?" [2, p. 272]. Zuleikha knew about the eastern plot of the story of lovers, Professor Leibe - about the biblical one.

The birth of Yusuf marks the beginning of a new life, gives hope for the continuation of life, a kind of resurrection not only for the mother, but also for all the dispossessed settlers. The birth of Yusuf is connected with the idea of the hero's holiness: the little hero Yusuf has the same difficult life in infancy as the prophet Yusuf: hunger, illness.

A very strong bond is formed between mother and child, which grows stronger over the years: "I was painfully attached to Zuleikha, to the point of impossibility" [2, p.334]. Zuleikha, in her opinion, was punished by heaven for betraying her deceased husband, which is why she almost lost her son. As a real mother, she renounces her feelings for Ignatov in favor of her son, afraid of losing her only child, and sacrifices herself for the life and happiness of her child.

Yusuf, who grew up among the intelligent "former Leningraders", absorbed everything worthy from Ilya Petrovich Ikonnikov, an artist from Leningrad who drew Lenin for posters, Konstantin Arnoldovich Sumlinsky, an agronomist, Isabella Leopoldovna Brzhostovskaya-Sumlinskaya, Sumlinsky's wife, an intelligent lady who spoke French, and Leibe Wolf Karlovich, a doctor of medical sciences. The "former Leningraders" die one after another. All that a mother could give her child was "... to listen, stroke his head and be silent, while Yusuf wanted "to get answers, argue, discuss, interrupt, attack, defend himself, swear" [2, p. 485]. The hero has a desire to leave for the mainland, for his mother his desire is

tantamount to death: "I will not survive. I will die without you, Yusuf. "I'll die as soon as you take the first step" [2, p.491]. But the heroine finds the strength to understand her son and let him go.

In the name of eternal, sacrificial, maternal love, Zuleikha sets her son free, where he can realize his potential. The ending of the novel is a tragedy of separation and the mother's suffering: "Zuleikha could not hold the pain inside, and the pain spilled out, flooded everything around... Yusuf's oars rip up the river, carrying him beyond the horizon, to the Yenisei - it hurts. It hurts to look at it. Even breathing hurts. I would close my eyes, not see anything, not feel anything, but..." [2, p. 503].

Thus, the myth model of the novel "Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes", embodied through the legend of the bird and the plot of Yusuf and Zuleikha, expresses the author's idea of the power of maternal love, the sacred bonds of mother and child, the power of spiritual unity of people.

## REFERENCES

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