

Metaphorical Elements in Dante's "Divine Comedy"

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the metaphorical elements in Dante's "Divine Comedy". The article characterizes certain features of the poetics of Dante's comedy. The originality of the landscape, portrait, numerical symbolism and metaphorical language of the poem are considered.

KEYWORDS: "Divine Comedy", symbol, trinity, mystical principle, model of the universe, medieval literature, metaphor.

Dante's "Divine Comedy" is a true encyclopedia of medieval perception of the world. Everything in this poetic work is imbued with secret meaning, hidden context, symbol. Literally from its first pages, we see images that are so typical of the Middle Ages, but not always obvious to us today.

The plot basis of the vision poem was the afterlife journey - a favorite motif of medieval literature, which received its artistic transformation under the pen of Dante. Once upon a time, the ancient Roman poet Virgil depicted the descent of the mythological Aeneas into the underworld, and now Dante takes the author of the famous "Aeneid" as his guide through hell and purgatory. The poem is called a "comedy", and unlike the tragedy, it begins anxiously and gloomily, but ends with a happy ending. In one of the songs of "Paradise," Dante called his creation a "sacred poem," and after the death of its author, descendants gave it the name "Divine Comedy."

It is written in terzas, that is, three-line stanzas in which the first verse rhymes with the third, and the second with the first and third lines of the next terza. The poet relies on Christian eschatology and the doctrine of hell and heaven, but with his creation he significantly enriches these ideas.

"The Divine Comedy" by Dante Alighieri has long become a classic of not only Italian, but also world literature. Its influence on pan-European culture cannot be overestimated. Many literary scholars rightly believe that The Divine Comedy became a harbinger of the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Alighieri's great work was created immediately after the poet was expelled from his hometown, Florence, in 1306. It took Dante about fifteen years to write the work, which he spent wandering around the country. First, the poet began work on the "Hell" part. It was completed within three years. After this, Dante created "Purgatory," where a special role is given to the poet's real lover, Beatrice Portinari (the entire poem is dedicated to her). The final part, "Paradise," was created in the last years of Alighieri's life, which he spent in Ravenna. The basis of the plot of the entire work was a technique quite often used in the literature of the Middle Ages - a journey through the kingdom of the dead, which, by the way, Dante depicted in his own way. The guide of the lyrical hero of the poem

through hell and purgatory was Virgil, the ancient Roman poet, author of the famous "Aeneid."

Let's consider the features of the author's style and the main techniques of Dante Alighieri used when writing the Divine Comedy (Table 1). First of all, it should be noted that the entire work is written in three-line stanzas, the so-called terzas. In each terza, the first stanza rhymes with the third, and the second rhymes with the first and third stanzas of the next terza.

"that cruel sea" (Metaphor)

Even the very first lines of the Purgatorio are, in fact, metaphoric. Dante begins the poem by representing his "wit" as a ship that has just left Hell, which, perhaps surprisingly, he represents as a "cruel sea." This metaphor connects to Dante's more wide-ranging motif of navigation and also establishes that this place, the mountain of Purgatory, will be "smoother water."

"we are born as worms" (Metaphor)

As Dante sees the penitent prideful in Canto X, he asks if humans cannot "see that we are born as worms, / though able to transform into angelic butterflies..." Although the use of "as" may make you think this is a simile, it here means something closer to "born being worms" rather than "born like worms." As such, Dante is metaphorically suggesting humans are worms, which is to say earthbound, while containing the potential for spiritual ascent and transcendence.

"the sponge" (Metaphor)

As Dante ends his discussion with Pope Adrian V, his curiosity is not fully sated; as such, when he leaves Adrian to his penitence, Dante writes that he "drew the sponge, not full yet, from the water." Here the sponge is being used as a metaphor for Dante's mind. The metaphor emphasizes his desire to soak up all the information he can and helps paint a clearer picture of Dante's almost natural tendency to absorb the stories of others.

Typically, Dante places the main emphasis on Christian religious doctrine and its ideas about life, the afterlife, the transition of the soul to a qualitatively new state and the Universe. Nevertheless, we can say with confidence that the poet significantly transformed with his work not only the idea of his contemporaries about the world order, but also influenced global culture. It is noteworthy how Dante recreates artistic space in his work. Before him, in the literature of Europe there were virtually no works where the landscape was described in poetic form. The main features used by the poet to describe nature are vivid imagery, lyrical coloring of linguistic means of expression and natural variability. In addition, in his descriptions of the landscape, Dante often introduces images of people (often real,

contemporary to the poet), animals, insects and even shadows.

In the poem, Dante widely uses such an artistic means of medieval poetry as allegory, which allows one to convey complex ideas in understandable images. For example, the animals that the narrator meets in the first song represent:

- craving for bodily pleasures - panther (in Russian translation lynx);
- lust for power and pride - lion;
- self-interest and greed are the she-wolf.

The author also uses the symbolism of numbers. The 100 songs of the poem are the number 10 multiplied by itself, symbolizing perfection. The poem has three parts with 33 songs each. One extra song for "Hell" is a symbol of its imperfection. At the same time, without her there would be only 99 songs.

The structure of the afterlife has a clear structure. There are 9 circles in hell:

- 1st circle for unbaptized infants and pagans who are not given the opportunity to know the divine light;
- 2nd circle for those who have indulged in forbidden love: here Dante meets Cleopatra, Helen the Beautiful and their lovers;
- 3rd circle for those who were addicted to gluttony, that is, gluttony;
- 4th circle for misers and spendthrifts;
- 5th circle for angry people and lazy people;
- 6th circle for heretics;
- 7th circle for blasphemers and sodomites who committed violence against others, gamblers and suicides;
- 8th circle for seducers, flatterers, corrupt officials, sorcerers and astrologers, bribe-takers, hypocrites;
- 9th circle for traitors.

At the very bottom of hell, Lucifer, frozen in an icy lake, eternally devours the greatest traitors of all time: Judas, Brutus and Cassius.

There are 7 circles in purgatory according to the number of mortal sins. There are 9 celestial spheres in heaven, ascending to the divine center in the form of a rose.

Dante strives to paint the image of Beatrice as majestic as possible, for this he uses a comparison with the Mother of God:

Another feature of the poetic style of The Divine Comedy is the frequent use of numbers and endowing them with a special, mystical meaning. As a rule, by the concept of "symbol" in literature we mean a sign, an object or a sign that replaces a specific object and reflects the hidden essence. Just like such tropes as allegory and metaphor, a symbol forms a transference of meaning, but it has a great variety of meanings. Many literary scholars (M.N. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, N.G. Elina, S.S. Mokulsky, O.I. Fetodov, etc.) noted the role of number as a measure of things in Dante's immortal work. In particular, the numbers three, nine and all kinds of derivatives from them. The entire system of images of the work, its narrative, storyline and other details are

subordinated to mystical symbolism, or more precisely, the trinity.

However, when considering the numbers 3 and 9, scientists talk about their meaning only in the structure of the poem and its stanza (in each of the three parts of the poem there are 33 songs, 3 cantos, 3-line stanzas, etc.). In addition, we can observe the trinity in the passage where the lyrical hero ascends the hill of salvation. There he encounters three wild animals: a lynx (a symbol of voluptuousness), a lion (the embodiment of pride and power) and a she-wolf (the personification of greed and self-interest). In the episode in which we are presented with the limbo of hell, Dante placed three types of souls - the souls of the righteous from the Old Testament, the souls of unbaptized infants and the souls of virtuous pagans. We observe a similar triplicity in the parts "Purgatory" (three holy virtues - faith, hope and love, three radiances of angels, three artists - Franco, Cimabue and Giotto) and "Paradise" (three virgins sitting in the amphitheater and forming a triangle with their position, three blessed wives, three eternal creatures - heaven, earth and angels). This trinity of all images of the poem can be explained by the ideas of the Catholic Church about three forms of existence (hell, purgatory and heaven). In addition, an important part of Christian teaching is the symbol of the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit), which also influenced the presentation of the Trinity in the Divine Comedy. In his work "The Pillar and Ground of Truth," philosopher and mathematician, professor P.A. Florensky argued that "... the number three, in our minds characterizing the unconditionality of the Divine, is characteristic of everything that has relative self-conclusion - is characteristic of self-contained types of being. Positively, the number three manifests itself everywhere, as some basic category of life and thinking."

For example, there are three categories of time (past, present and future), three components of the human psyche (mind, will and feelings), a philosophical manifestation of the "negation of the negation" (thesis, antithesis and synthesis). All this and many other features, willingly or unwillingly, were reflected in Dante's work. As a result, the poet's use of the symbolism of the number 3 allows him to give a better idea of the structure of the other world, helps to create poetic harmony and discipline, clearly shows the mathematical structure of the world in the minds of people of the Middle Ages, saturates the poem with vivid images, deep philosophical meaning and ethical richness. However, it is not only numerical symbolism that gives so much meaning to the Divine Comedy. Dante actively uses metaphors in the poem, which demonstrates his view of the structure of the world and the artistic way of thinking. Alighieri incredibly vividly and clearly creates worlds full of sharp contradictions and contrasts.

Focusing on the idea of the Universe (described by Ptolemy), on the structure of the afterlife (hell-purgatory-paradise), the poet compares impenetrable darkness and bright light. For this purpose, the poetics of the work organically uses transfers of meaning and movement of compared phenomena and objects. In addition, metaphor, as a literary device, combines both a real reflection of the world and poetic fantasy (in this case, specifically Dante Alighieri). That is, the physical is connected with the spiritual, and space, nature and the objective world are connected with something divine and abstract. Therefore, the author often resorts to metaphorization. It is also necessary to note the

variability of metaphors in the text of 3 edges. Since a metaphor is a trope, it often conveys a special philosophical meaning (examples: "souls rise", "the morning is on fire", "joy is ringing", "enmity is angry". Despite the fact that each of these metaphors contains different semantic plans, all of them are harmonious and uniform. In addition to the ubiquitous linguistic metaphors, such as "fixed his eyes", "the thirst to speak", "the heart is warmed", "the day has passed", which the poet used in order to better reveal the favorite literature of the era.

The Middle Ages motif of a journey to the afterlife, Dante resorts to the use of poetic metaphors, which are characterized by novelty and strong expressiveness. These metaphors show the variation of the author's impressions in order to awaken the readers' imagination, for example, the expressions: "a roar burst in," "the labor of nature," "I want to ask for light," "the depth howls." It should be especially noted that all the metaphors used by Dante in The Divine Comedy can be conditionally divided into 3 main groups, guided by the way in which living beings interact with cosmic and natural phenomena and objects.

The first group includes those metaphors where natural and cosmic phenomena and objects have the characteristics of animate beings.

For example: "the sun will show" / "the sun is lighting up", "a friendly spring ran", "vanity will turn away" and others. The second group includes metaphors, where the properties of living beings are attributed to natural phenomena and objects. Example: "Virgil is a bottomless spring", "mountain shoulders", "build towers" and so on. The third group includes those in which multidirectional oppositions are combined together. For example: "the light came through", "the distances lit up", "a wave of hair", "the thought will disappear" and the like. It is noteworthy that in all three groups the author, which helps to find out Dante's opinion regarding the phenomena he describes, assesses the expressions. Thus, everything that relates to truth, freedom, light and honor is presented in a positive way ("honor will taste", "the shine has grown wonderfully", "the light of truth").

Dante also used this means of linguistic expressiveness to display all sorts of signs of the objects he described, such as shape ("the circle lies at the top"), color ("the black air torments"), sound ("the rays are silent"), location ("into the depths of my slumber"), illumination ("light calms the

firmament"), actions performed by an object ("the mind soars").

Let us also note that the Divine Comedy uses metaphors that differ in composition and structure. Thus, Dante introduces simple metaphors that consist of one word ("petrified"); phrases like ("the one who moves the universe"); and, finally, expanded metaphors (in the first song of the "Hell" part, the author gives a metaphor of the forest). In addition to all this, Algieri resorts to using different parts of speech to compose metaphors. He uses nouns ("the planet lit the east"); verbs ("the chest was embarrassed"), adjectives ("a blind waterfall"), participles ("the light was striving") and gerunds ("the wind, not knowing rest, rushes").

Thus, the rare poetic gift of Dante Alighieri is reflected in the language of the Divine Comedy, a unique work in terms of depth of thinking and richness of ideas. In order to convey his vision of the world, religion and philosophy, the author used special means of expression when describing the landscape and introduced the symbolism of numbers to give special meaning where it was necessary.

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