

Diana Hayroyan

YSU

THE INTERPRETATION OF METAMORPHOSIS AS
A STYLISTIC DEVICE IN GEORGE MACDONALD'S
“AT THE BACK OF THE NORTH WIND” AND ITS
TRANSLATION INTO ARMENIAN

The present article deals with the study and interpretation of metamorphosis as a stylistic device in fairy tale “At the Back of the North Wind” by Scottish fairy tale writer George MacDonald suggesting and revealing some of its translation peculiarities. Some examples of metamorphosis are sorted out, analyzed and the possible translations with their analyses are introduced. The translation of the stylistic device of metamorphosis is compared with the original to find differences and similarities as well as to reveal peculiarities between the original and the translation.

Key words: *fairy tale, interpretation, metamorphosis, stylistic device, translation.*

Mystical transmutations and metamorphic transformations are universal themes that have been the subjects of human expressions created through art, music and literature. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

metamorphosis is a marked change in appearance, character, condition or function as well as transformation by magic or sorcery. As a tropological problem metamorphosis is another subject addressed in many recent studies. Interestingly, metamorphosis together with hyperbole and metaphor is one of the ancient stylistic devices widely used in different folklore and literature genres. In modern linguistics this stylistic device is not thoroughly investigated. Moreover the tropological status of metamorphosis is rather complicated and has been an object of scholarly scrutiny. Many scholars among them Tzvetan Todorov, do not accept metamorphosis can have an autonomous rhetorical status. He considers metamorphosis to be propensity of the text to get rid of tropes, a tendency to literalize tropes at the expense of intentional enlivening of their worn, hackneyed semantics (Todorov 1975:77;79)

Pierre Brunel argues metamorphosis is after all, only a metaphor feigning to describe something else while also describing the sameness of the changed self- a kind of comparison between various states of being-metamorphosis thus suggests an event that leads to something not wholly different from that which was before. (Mikkonen 1996:3)

According to Russian linguist D.E Rosenthal metamorphosis is much more colourful and dynamic than metaphor. It is more categorical than simile and reflects the transition of one state of being into another while metaphor and simile reflect the result. (Rosenthal,2013:329)

According to Arutyunova it is necessary to clearly distinguish metamorphosis and metaphor. Metamorphosis eliminates the role of the subject preserving only his “werewolf”. It demonstrates the transformed world. It is an episode, a phenomenon, scene which permeates all the plot development. (Arutyunova,1990:296-298)

Figuring in fairy tales metamorphosis stands apart and awakens special interest. The tropic status here is of singular nature. A. Jivanyan claims that metamorphosis in fairy tales is a unique trope belonging more to the story than to the rhetoric of the fairy tale. In a certain sense metamorphosis can be seen as a genre-defining device. No wonder one of the oldest and most famous collections of fairy tales written by the Roman fairy tale writer Lucius Apuleius is called “Metamorphosis” or “The Golden Ass”. (Jivanyan, 2007:50) A unique place in this respect belongs to George MacDonald’s fairy tales. Metamorphosis in this fairy tales is both beautiful and bizarre.

“At the Back of the North Wind” is a Victorian fairy tale that has enchanted readers for more than a hundred years. The fairy tale was first published in 1871. It’s a fantasy centered on a boy named Diamond, the son of a poor coachman, who is swept away by the North Wind, a radiant, maternal spirit with long, flowing hair, and whose life is transformed by a brief glimpse of the beautiful country-at the back of the north wind.

Macdonald’s style is elusive and intangible. The fairy tale “At the Back of the North Wind” manifests MacDonald’s

rhetorical and creative skills. The specific use of metaphors, similes, metonymies and other stylistic devices has its great contribution to the fairy tale poetics. Among those stylistic features the fairy tale gains new shades of meaning and rhetoric due to the unique stylistic device of metamorphosis which turns out to be a very powerful stylistic and narrative device which favours the formation and development of the writer's individual style and provides deep and profound understanding of fairy tale. It is interesting to observe how the writer creates a series of images. The close examination of fantastic transformations of the North Wind, the guises she takes, illuminates metamorphosis not only as a stylistic and symbolic device but also as a vehicle for narrative tension.

Just at the start of the tale MacDonald presents a very unique creature: North Wind: a woman of special beauty with black hair streaming in every direction and her face like a moon out of invisible air:

The instant he said the word a tremendous blast of wind crashed in a board of the wall and swept the clothes off Diamond. Leaning over him was the large, beautiful, pale face of a woman. From her head streamed out her black hair in every direction so that the darkness in the hay-loft looked as if it was made of her. Her hair began to gather itself out of darkness and fell down all about her again, till her face looked out

of the midst of it like a moon out of a cloud. (p.19)

Բառն արտաբերելուն պես քամու մի վիթխարի հոսանք բախվեց պատի տախտակին և քշեց տարավ Դայմոնդի հագուստը: Նրան էր հենվել կնոջ խոշոր, գեղեցիկ, գունատ մի դեմք: Նրա գլխից տարբեր ուղղություններով տարածվում էին իր սև մազերը այնպես որ խոտանոցի մթությունը կարծես հենց ինքն էր: Նրա մազերը սկսեցին հավաքվել մթության միջից և կրկին թափվեցին իր շուրջը մինչև որ իր դեմքը նշմարեց դրանց միջից, ինչպես լուսինը ամպից:

In this passage the heroine experiences intentional metamorphosis, in order to be close to the child's belief in supernatural creature; North Wind changes into a woman. On the one hand, it realizes through personification: an inanimate object, the north wind, is personified into a woman an animate object. On the other hand, the text suggests an implicit comparison, a simile: the blowing of the North wind is associated with the woman's streaming hair which symbolizes freedom and power at the same time.

Before analyzing the above suggested translation it is worth mentioning that translation is a communicative act, which takes place between the author, translator and reader, but in case of literary translation it is an artistic communication. It means that the target text must perform an aesthetic function as close to the source text as possible.

The translation of metamorphosis is rather challenging and richly suggestive in significance. Figures of speech are some of the most challenging translation difficulties. One of them is to create the original stylistic device in a translation that would have similar emotional artistic effect. So while translating this scene the first problem encountered was to transmit the sudden appearance of the North Wind as natural and animated as it is in the original preserving the stylistic device of personification through which metamorphosis takes place. In the underlined phrases of this passage the words “wind” and “woman” which are accompanied by epithets “tremendous” and “beautiful” are key for the process of metamorphosis. In the Armenian version we have the direct equivalents for the above mentioned stylistic device. In the second part of the passage while transferring the author’s intended meaning into the TL in the underlined phrases we have a trope change: simile-metaphor transformation: *darkness in the hay-loft looked as if it was made of her* is translated into Armenian as *խոտանոցի վթռաթռուկը կարծես հեղեղի նման էր*: The figurativeness is retained but the type of trope changed. The verb “looked out” in the last sentence can appear as a so-called marker for metamorphosis; by this word the transformation can be considered over. In the Armenian version it is translated as *“նշմարեց”* to add a different nuance of meaning and intensify the impact of the utterance.

Further we’ll observe how MacDonald manages to create

a series of images of the North Wind through her metamorphosis.

At the foot of the stair North wind stood still and Diamond hearing a great growl, started in terror and there instead of North wind was a huge wolf by his side. (43)

Աստիճանի ծայրին անշարժ կանգնել էր Հյուսիսային քամին, և Դայմոնդը, ուժգին մոնչյուն լսելով, սարսափից քար կտրեց և ահռելի գայլը հայտնվեց նրա կողքին Հյուսիսային քամու փոխարեն:

In many cases MacDonald does not describe the process of metamorphosis and shows the personage already transformed as can be seen in the passage above. In the first part of the passage we have personification, North Wind is again personified. As we proceed North Wind appears as a wolf. At first sight the reader gets an impression that she is a harmful malicious beast, but the wolf here is the symbol of an affectionate parent. Her metamorphosis here appears as a powerful interplay of metaphor and simile. In fact, in each stage of North Wind's metamorphosis there is a hint of wisdom. She does not eat small children as little Diamond fears, but needs the form of a giant female wolf to scare a drunken nursemaid, to punish her as she was calling the little child bad names. The transformation also shows the implicit identity of

human and beast.

In the Armenian translation the stylistic device of personification is preserved. The epithet “great” for the growl of the wolf comes to introduce North Wind’s metamorphosis. In the Armenian version the word “նւժգին” describes the wolf’s growl more naturally and makes the translation more emphatic. In this case the semantic strategy of synonymy, that is when the translator selects a synonym or a near synonym which is not the obvious first literal synonym of the source language word or phrase. In other words a synonymous word was used for the purpose of emphasis.

Each of the stylistic devices in the passage above has its great contribution to metamorphosis, thus it is important to analyze each of them. The underlined phrase “*started in terror*” is translated as an idiom “սարսափից քար կտրեց” so here we have total syntagmatic change. In the translation the SL and TL tropes are semantically identical.

Her head went up and up towards the stars, and as she grew still trembling through all her body, her hair also grew longer and longer and lifted itself from the head and went out in black waves. (p.46)

Նրա գլուխը վեր խոյացավ դեպի աստղերը և քանի որ նա աճում էր իր ամբողջ մարմնով ցնցվելով, նրա մազերը նույնպես ավելի ու ավելի երկարեցին և թափվեցին նրա գլխից սև ալիքների պես:

In the passage above by the gradual increase of North Wind's appearance we gain the top of Macdonald's imagery which makes the reader experience this scene. She grows, and her gradual growth shows that she is not just the result of Diamond's imagination. She is sent from above to nurse, to take care and to bring with her joy, happiness and, why not, anger. The topic for metamorphosis here is the North Wind and her hair. Her metamorphosis occurs with the shape of her body. The stylistic device of gradation secures a gradual increase in significance and emotional tension in the utterance.

In the source language we have metaphor rephrased as simile in the target language; "*her hair also grew longer and longer and lifted itself from the head and went out in black waves*" is translated as "*նրա մազերը նույնպես ավելի ու ավելի երկարեցին և թափվեցին նրա գլխից սև ալիքների պես*". So we have a trope change but the meaning of the message is preserved.

In her next metamorphosis North Wind appears as a tiniest creature speaking to Diamond in a gentle, merry childish voice. She is taking care of a bumble-bee, who flies out of one of the tulips:

And there was the tiniest creature sliding down the stem of the tulip...

And as she spoke, a moan of wind bent the tulip almost to the ground and the creature laid her hand

on Diamond's shoulder. In a moment he knew it was North Wind. (p.65)

Եվ այնտեղ էր փոքրագույն մի էակ՝ սահելով կակաչի արմատից: Եվ երբ նա խոսեց քամու հառաչանքը կակաչը համարյա գետնին հավասարեցրեց, և այդ էակը ձեռքը դրեց Ռայմոնդի ուսին: Մի ակնթարթում նա գլխի ընկավ, որ Հյուսիսային քամին էր դա:

In the passage above she changes into an insect metaphorically, metamorphosis is again in process combined with metaphor and personification. It seems that Macdonald all the time shows the north Wind in gradual growth. As for the Armenian translation it can be taken as an absolute equivalent to the original.

All her metamorphoses are really a certain type of discovery which reveal the fairy tale rhetoric, making the fairy tale expressive and beautiful, disclosing facets of psychological and philosophical nature. Metamorphoses with the North Wind are inconceivable and extremely unique. MacDonald gives perfect image of how North Wind dissolves:

Diamond started at her in terror, for he saw that her form and face were growing not small but transparent like something dissolving not in water, but in light. He could see the side of the blue cave through her

heart. And as she melted away till all that was left was a pale face, like the moon in the morning, with two lucid eyes in it. This is how she was disappearing.
(p.115)

Դայմոնդն ահուսարսափով հառեց նրան, քանի որ տեսավ, որ նրա կերպ արանքն ու դեմքը ոչ թե փոքրանում, այլ թափանցիկ էին դառնում, ասես տարալուծվում էին ոչ թե ջրի, այլ լույսի մեջ: Հյուսիսային քամու սրտի միջով անգամ նա կարող էր տեսնել կապույտ քարայրը: Երբ նա իսպառ հավելեց, միակ բանը որ մնաց նրա դալուկ դեմքն էր, ինչպես լուսինը լուսադեմին երկու ջինջ աչքերով: Ահա թե ինչպես էր նա անհետանում:

The author reveals North Wind's deepest entity: dissolving does not mean that she is just a simple object dissolved in water, she is dissolving in light and her face is compared with the moon. In the scene above we have a complex interplay of personification, simile and metaphor. Firstly the North Wind is again personified, it starts to melt. The underlined phrases of the passage *her form and face were growing not small but transparent like something dissolving not in water, but in light* represent stylistic device of simile. In the second part the transformation is still in process. In the Armenian version the simile is translated literally. The markers of metamorphosis in the passage above are the verbs “grow,

small, melt away, disappear”. In the Armenian translation they have their appropriate equivalents. The figures of speech of simile, metaphor and personification of the original text are fully retainable and adequate in the translation.

... there the form sat, like one of the great figure at the door of an Egyptian temple motionless with drooping arms and head. He was sure it was North Wind, but he thought she must be dead at last. Her face was white as snow, her eyes were blue as the air in the ice-cave and her hair hung down straight like icicles. (p.117)

... կերպարը անշարժ խոյացել էր այնպես, ասես եգիպտական տաճարի դռան շեմին մի վիթխարի արձան լիներ՝ գլուխն ու ձեռքերը կախ ընկած: Նա վստահ էր, որ Հյուսիսային քամին էր դա, բայց կարծում էր, որ նա պետք է որ վերջապես մեռած լիներ: Նրա դեմքը ձյան պես ճերմակ էր, աչքերը՝ կապույտ ինչպես օդը սառցե քարանձավում, իսկ մազերը ուղիղ թափվել էին սառցաքուլաների պես:

In this scene North Wind transforms into a motionless figure. Right at the start her metamorphosis is paralleled by a powerful interplay of metaphor and simile. On the one hand, the similarity of the North Wind to one of the figures at the door of the Egyptian temple reminds the reader of her power, on the other hand, the two similes “her face was white as the

snow, her eyes were blue as the air in the ice-cave” episode her cold appearance. Her blue eyes are associated with the coldness of an iceberg.

Right at the start the marker of metamorphosis “sat” is translated as “խոյաւնալ”, an addition strategy is observed, by using this strategy the new information-word or phrase is added, in order to make the text serve its purpose better. So in this example the word “խոյաւնալ” instead of the direct equivalent “ստուել” intensifies the impact of the utterance. As for the series of similes, the SL tropes are retained in the TL, and they are semantically identical in the source language text and preserve the expressiveness of the original.

Through different stages of metamorphosis the reader has to deal with different semantics. North Wind’s power is unlimited, and her transformations call up strong contradictory emotions and associations. Let us observe the following passage which is of greatest interest:

She jumped from his shoulder, but when Diamond looked for her upon the ground, he could see nothing but a little spider, with long legs that made its way over the ice toward the south. It was up with him sooner than he had expected, however, and it had grown a good deal. And the spider grew and went faster and faster, till at once Diamond discovered that it was not a spider but a weasel and the weasel grew and

grew, till at once Diamond saw that weasel was not a weasel but a cat. And away went the cat, and Diamond after it. And when he had run half a mile, he found the cat waiting for him, sitting up and washing her face not to lose time. But the next time he came up with the cat, the cat was not a cat but a hunting leopard. And the hunting-leopard grew to a jaguar, all covered with spots like eyes. And the jaguar grew to a Bengal tiger and tiger flew over the snow in a straight line for the South, growing less and less to Diamond's eyes till it was only a black speck upon the whiteness, and then it vanished altogether. (p.130-131)

Նա թռավ Դայմոնդի ուսից, բայց երբ Դայմոնդը փնտրեց նրան գետնի վրա, տեսավ ոչ այն ինչ քան փոքրիկ սարդ երկար ոտքերով, որը սառույցի միջով ճամփա ընկավ դեպի հարավ: Այնուամենայնիվ, այն հայտնվեց իր վերելուս ավելի շուտ, քան ինքն ակնկալում էր, այն բավականին մեծացել էր: Եվ սարդը մեծացավ, ավելի ու ավելի արագ սլացավ մինչև որ Դայմոնդը հայտնաբերեց, որ այն ոչ թե սարդ էր, այլ արփս, եւ արփսը մեծացավ ու մեծացավ, մինչև որ Դայմոնդը անմիջապես տեսավ, որ դա ոչ թե արփս էր, այլ կատու: Եվ կատուն գնաց, Դայմոնդն էլ նրա հետեւից: Եվ երբ նա արդեն կես մղոն վազել էր, գտավ կատվին, որը նստած իրեն էր սպասում³ դեմքը լվանալով, որպեսզի ժա-

*մանակ չկորցնի: Բայց հաջորդ անգամ, երբ նա
բախվեց կատվին, կատուն այլևս կատու չէր, այլ
որսի դուրս էլած ընծառչուծ: Ե՛վ որսի դուրս էլած
ընծառչուծը վերածեց ամերիկյան հովազի՝ ամբող-
ջովին ծածկված բծերով: Ե՛վ հովազը վերածեց բեն-
գալյան վագրի, եւ վագրն էլ թռավ ձյան վրայով
ուղիղ գծով դեպի հարավ Դայմոնդի աչքին ավելի
ու ավելի փոքրանալով մինչեւ որ դարձավ սեւ բիծ
ձերմակուրթյան մեջ, հետո էլ ամբողջովին հողս ցն-
դեց:*

The quoted series of metamorphoses builds a distinctive narrative and poetic structure, thus contributing to the unique aesthetics of the tale. The passage is packed densely with metamorphoses. It is the summit of North Wind's transformations throughout the tale. From an *insect*, a harmless creature, she changes into animals of different sizes. With every new animal shape she becomes more and more powerful. Undoubtedly North Wind's disguises are often hierarchic. The choice of the animals reveals some logical sequence and gradation, a movement from a smallest insect to a powerful animal, the Bengal tiger. Of interest, most of the chosen animals: cat, leopard, jaguar and tiger are from the cat family. MacDonald seems to be relating cats to femininity, at the same time cats are associated with aloofness, pride, independence and beauty.

The process of metamorphosis starts with the phrase “jumped up from his shoulder” and continues with the following markers; “grow, went, grow less and vanish”. With

the last marker it can be concluded that the process of metamorphosis is over. The key stylistic device here is gradation through which metamorphosis is realized. It includes similar metaphorical images which emphasize the emotional significance of the passage. The indispensable constituent of gradation here appears to be repetition. The last part or phrase of the utterance is repeated in the next part, thus hooking the two parts together. In the Armenian the structure of gradation as well as repetition is preserved and the imaginative charge of the pattern is preserved. The word “jaguar” is translated as “*ւտերիկյան հնվազ*” thus here we have explicitation, this strategy makes the target text more explicit by adding information that could be deduced from the SLT. If the native reader doesn’t need to be reminded that jaguar is an American panther the target reader needs for that particular reason the word “*ստերիկյան*” is added.

Due to a closer study of the theoretical background of metamorphosis and the analysis of both original and the translated examples, it becomes possible to describe metamorphosis as a stylistic device fused with personification, metaphor and simile. As has been observed metamorphosis figures as an individual feature of style closely linked with the story line and rhetoric, and should be estimated as the product of the author’s unique style and unparalleled imagination. The close comprehension of metamorphosis provides the reader with cues to interrogate meanings that the fairy tale may offer beneath the surface. The suggested translations and their analyses reveal that some of the peculiarities (difficulties) of the

translation of metamorphosis as a stylistic device are to identify stylistic devices through which metamorphosis is realized and to create original stylistic devices in the translated version, use them naturally to make the translation lively and preserve the style of the source language, so that it would have similar emotional impact. In certain cases we come across rhetorical transformations in the translated version; a trope type change (simile-metaphor) for the sake of providing the same response to the reader. In the process of translation the investigation has shown that in every translation equivalence is based not only on form, but also on the function various linguistic elements are meant to carry out in the context.

References

1. Chesterman, A. (1997) *Memes of Translation: The Spread of Ideas in Translation Theory*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia, Benjamins.
2. Gabrielyan, S. (2007) *The Translation Studies Reader*, Yerevan.
3. Humphery, C. and Prichard, M. (1995) *The Oxford Companion of Children's Literature*, New York:OUP.
4. Jivanyan, A. (2007) *The Fairy Tale as an Archetext*. Yerevan, Zangak-97.
5. Mikkenon, K. (1996) *Theories of Metamorphosis:From Metatrobe to Textual Revision*. Style, Academic Journal, Vol.30(2).

6. Todorov, T. (1975) *The Fantastic: A structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. New York: Cornell University Press.
7. Verdnok, P. (2011) *Stylistics*. Oxford University Press.
8. MacDonald, G. (1994) *At The back Of the North Wind*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics.
9. Арутюнова , Н.Д. (1990) *Теория Метафоры*. Москва.
10. Розенталь, Д. Э. (2013) *Справочник по Стилистике Русского Языка*. Москва.

ԴԻԱՆԱ ՀԱՅԸՈՅԱՆ - Կերպարվորության մեկնությունը որպես ոճական հնար Ջորջ Մակդոնալդի «Հյուսիսային քամու հետևում» հեքիաթում և դրա հայերեն թարգմանությունը - Սույն հոդվածի շրջանակներում փորձ է արվում ուսումնասիրել կերպարվորությունը որպես ոճական հնար շոտլանդացի մանկագիր Ջորջ Մակդոնալդի «Հյուսիսային քամու հետևում» հեքիաթում: Տեսական նյութի ուսումնասիրության և օրինակների վերլուծության շնորհիվ հնարավոր է դառնում կերպարվորությունը բնութագրել որպես ոճական հնար և դիտարկել այն թարգմանության մեջ: Ուսումնասիրության նպատակով առանձնացվել են կերպարվորությունն ոճական հնարի որոշ օրինակներ, ներկայացվել են վերջիններիս թարգմանական տարբերակները իրենց վերլուծություններով: Կերպարվորությունն ոճական հնարի թարգմանական տարբերակները համեմատվել են բնագրի հետ՝ վեր հանելու նմանություններն ու տարբերությունները, ինչպես նաև բացահայտելու բնագրի

և թարգմանությունն սխռն եղած առանձնահատկությունները:

Հիմնարարներ. հեքիաթ, սեկնություն, կերպարանկարություն, ռճական հնար, թարգմանություն:

ДИАНА АЙРОЯН - Интерпретация метаморфозы как стилистического приема в сказке Джорджа Макдональда «Страна Северного Ветра» и ее перевод на армянский язык - Настоящая статья посвящена исследованию и интерпретации метаморфозы как стилистического приема в сказке детского шотландского писателя Джорджа Макдональда «Страна Северного Ветра», а также выявлению некоторых особенностей его перевода. В результате исследования теоретического материала и анализа примеров становится возможным описать метаморфозу как стилистический прием и рассмотреть его в переводе. Некоторые примеры стилистического приема метаморфозы были выделены и представлены их переведенные версии с их анализами. Переведенные версии стилистического приема метаморфозы сравниваются с оригиналом, чтобы найти различия и сходства, а также чтобы выявить особенности между оригиналом и переводом.

Ключевые слова: сказка, интерпретация, метаморфоза, стилистический прием, перевод.