

## **The Analysis of the Microimage “Moon” in Outer Space in the Lyrics by N. Gumilyov Communicative and Stylistic Aspect**

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**Abstract:** In the movement from symbolism to his own individual style N.S. Gumilyov fills micro-image of the moon with new micro-meanings, transforms it. The image of the moon is implicitly represented in the image of a virgin and as a siren, wound, flower, bracelet, shield. The moon glow, its movement across the sky are more traditional characteristics. However, basically, the moon is personified or embodied. The “moon” concept is associated with such micro-meanings as delusion, loneliness, magic, deception, mystery, madness, sorcery, poetry, creativity. Gumilyov being in the framework of an acmeism, refers to visible objects of reality brings together micro-images of space with images of the real world. In the last quarter of the past century, the veil which long time concealed from contemporaries wonderful lyrics of the remarkable Poet Nikolai Stepanovich Gumilyov was lifted, his creations have been actively studied, significant studies of his biography have appeared but only in several works his poetic model of the world, the uniqueness of his style has been reviewed. While the early Gumilyov’s verses are mainly symbolic in nature, mature Gumilyov’s poetry contains desire to regain the freshness and originality of the world, its vivid colors, visible and sustainable forms and to revive a taste for life. Especially, rich in Gumilyov’s creativity is a micro-image of the moon. This study presents an analysis of the “moon” micro-image in the context of communicative and stylistic aspects. Micro-image of the moon is one of the most suffused in the history of Russian and Foreign poetry. The moon is also the most frequently recurring micro-theme in the Gumilyov’s lyrics. The semantics of the moon image includes color, light, movement across the sky. This image as shown in the study, consumed in two hundred and twenty-eight texts about sixty three times. However, Gumilyov in this image creating is moving from the conventional symbolist stamps to his individual poetry. For example, the image of the moon he transformed from the image of the virgin into the image of the “moon-siren” which gives additional pragmatic effect. In this comparison, another artistic sign of the moon based on unique associative cultural links has been actualized because the sirens have a beautiful voice. Two of the most natural colors for the Gumilyov’s moon image consistent with the literature traditions gold and silver. To represent this micro-image such techniques as objective comparisons (5), metaphors (28), poetic transform inclusion (2). The research object of this research is the outer space. The basic method is the modeling of intertextual associative-semantic fields of the key words and concepts. Materials for our research are lyrical works by N.S. Gumilyov taken from books and collections of 1905-1921 as *The Way of Conquistadors*, *Romantic flowers*, *The Pearls*, *The Alien Sky*, *The Quiver*, *The Tent*, *Porcelain pavilion*, *Bonfire*, *The Pillar of Fire*; his collections *The Poems* and *To a Blue Star* and some selected poems that were not included in any collection. The result of this research is the relation between micro-meanings of the concept “moon”.

**Key words:** Micro-meaning, concept, associative semantic field, poetry, pearls

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Only in the last quarter of the century gone a veil which had been hiding for a long time the lyrics of the remarkable poet Nikolay Stepanovich Gumilyov from contemporaries was slightly opened.

At the end of XXth century, his researches began to be studied especially actively, there were some considerable researches of the poet’s biography; the model of his poetic world and originality of his individual style were considered only in a few works. Certain attention should be paid to the communicative style

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which is the latest approach to text analysis. The text in the communicative stylistics being a part of functional stylistics is considered as a form of communication and manifestation of stylistic usage and individual style.

The main method is intertextual associative semantic fields modeling of keywords and concepts (Bolotnova, 2003; Karpenko, 2000). Poems by N. Gumilyov are materials for our research. When analyzing a generated text it is necessary to consider that a man stays unreconciled to the world around being forced to create his internal life his own vision of the world. In archaic consciousness space existed as an extension spreading out in all directions. Owing to various metaphoric transfers it began to be represented more abstract (Kubryakova, 1997).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Main part:

**The microimage “moon” and its associative semantic fields in the lyrics by N. Gumilyov:** Each author creates his own new space by means of various tools and techniques. Chernukhina (1987) says also that for aesthetic expression of various space aspects there are certain “word markers” which she divides into five groups. Such word markers as “sky”, “sun”, “moon”, “stars”, “clouds”, “thunderclouds”, “dawn” belong to the “space” group.

While perceiving a text the reader can understand an author's world view. Secondary communicative activity (addressee's activity) results logically from the primary activity associated with text formation. An understanding of the author's world view implies comprehension of conceptual text content. The text, in its turn, reflects not only the author's world view but also his intensions, his information thesaurus, his world of associations. The addressee and the sender should have common verbal and textual associations.

The first lyrical collections by Gumilyov “The Way of Conquistadors”, “Romantic flowers” and “Pearls” appeared under the sign of symbolism. But in 1911, the “distance” from present time allowed to create a special world in poetry and to live, suffer and act in a new way there.

In mature poems by Gumilyov his desire to reconnect with freshness and originality of the world, its live paints, visible and steady forms and to revive his taste for life is notable. Thus, the world's study through microimages represents a way of understanding of the surrounding reality by the researcher.

The “moon” microimage is one of the most fulfilled in the history of Russian and Foreign poetry. The moon is the most often repeated microsubject in Nicolai Gumilyov's lyrics (Table 1).

Table 1: Usage frequency of “moon” microimage in poems by N. Gumilyov

Description	Texts number	Usage of “moon” microimage
The way of conquistadores	15	1
Romantic flowers	13	8
The pearls	23	10
The alien sky	17	11
The quiver	18	2
Bonfire	11	4
Porcelain pavilion	6	10
The tent	12	2
The pillar of fire	9	3
The poems collection	16	4
To a blue star collection	6	2
Poems not included in any collection	17	6
Total	228	63

The semantics of the “moon” image includes colour, light radiation, movement in the sky. The Gumilyov's “moon” image is unusual and diverse passing through all his works. However, it is more common in Romantic Flowers and The Pearls. Possibly, it is caused by strong influence of symbolism in his work of that period. However, when creating this image, N. Gumilyov moves from conventional stamps of symbolism to his individual poetic manners. For example, the “moon” image he implicitly transformed to the image of a virgin:

Having muffled in a cloud, the moon; Being young,  
light and in love; Descends to you with light steps  
(Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The adjective “young” is used in figurative sense meaning “arising”. “Young” is a Lexico-Semantic Variant (LSV) that means “having started to grow or to exist recently” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964).

“Light” is the characteristic of the moon as a celestial body. The moon radiates strong light covering the whole space around us (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964).

When considering further context, the image is finally determined as “having muffled in a cloud”. “To muffle” is “to wrap tightly to dress in something” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). That is the cloud covers the moon, thus, its light can't be too bright.

In Dahl's dictionary “to muffle up” has the meaning “to close, dress and wrap with or in something” (Dal) actualized in this statement as if the moon “is dressed” in a cloud.

“Descends to you with light steps” stays for the moon going down across the sky from its height (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). A verb “to be in love” actualizes direct meanings of words relating to the associative image of a virgin. That is the moon is ascribed some properties, actions, feelings which are more suitable for the characteristics of a young girl (personification):

The Mab Fairy will fly away; To a far palace on a  
lunar petal (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

“A lunar petal” is “the sickle of month”. This association occurs due to shape similarity of a flower petal and outlines of the newly emerging moon:

Lead heavy clouds were wandering through the sky;  
The moon was purpling between them as a deadly wound (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

Purple colour is red with a deep rich shade (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). It is a colour of blood and therefore, death. Hence there is the phrase “a deadly wound”. The moon is half-hidden behind the clouds. It is seen as a narrow strip or a spot with uncertain outlines through them:

The shade of night bears its deception;  
The moon is rising as a guilty siren (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

In Greek mythology, the Sirens are sea creatures represented as birds with large women’s heads. They enticed seamen in disastrous places with beautiful songs (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). Hence, the moon is beautiful and deceptive. It seems to be so close though it is far away. Its wrong light gives a false impression of things, distorts reality. This is also referred to in the previous verse, “the shade bears its deception”. Thus, “deception” is a keyword and by the description of the shade of night there is an associative parallel “moon siren” triggering an additional pragmatic effect. In this comparison, another art sign of the moon based on unique associative cultural links is actualized: sirens had fine voices. Therefore, the moon-siren has also its voice. Comparing these lines with the lines of another poem in the same collection, we can observe development of the “sounding” moon theme:

Yes from moon songs at summer night;  
The silence is unearthly in this world;  
But, even more terrible and forbidden;  
The words are that you say her in response. (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

In this verse, there is a certain dialogue between the lyrical hero and the celestial body. But “moon songs” are “silence”; silence is the absence of any sound familiar to the ear. Or, maybe, it is some other sound before which everything in this world calms down and stands still:

The moon is burning as a big tulip;  
In a greenhouse in the sky;  
The equator is sleeping crossed.  
By 12th meridian;  
And the dream don’t seem to be the dream any more;  
Under the burning tulip (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The author association is probably related to the similarity in shape: the waning moon is similar to an unopened bud of a tulip. But, the associative parallel based on colour similarity is more obvious. “The

moon is burning” is comparable with “the burning tulip” that is “is shining, blazing, flaring brightly” with bright colour (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). Not only colour but also light intensity is to be in common.

The moon is referred to as “a big tulip” because, the moon is the closest celestial body to the Earth and therefore it seems great. In the context of this poem the image of the moon-tulip becomes a symbol of madness:

It is “already not a dream but unconsciousness and there isn’t even unconsciousness enough in it;  
That stone life; The consciousness of dark metal;  
And in this place from long ago;  
The flying dutchman is travelling around;  
A dead man but the heart of a dead man;  
Is full of both lightings and fogs;  
He was seized until the end;  
Of dark madness of tulips;  
Neither of red nor of gold tulips;  
Which were grown here in the close depth;  
But of tulips that are much more flamy than they are;  
Of the heaven tulip shaking (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

“Shaking” is used in the meaning to “moving from side to side or rising and falling” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). Within one night the moon is unable to pass its way across the sky even twice. Apparently, the verb reflects the author’s impression from the moon on a background of moving objects, realities such as clouds. Or visibility of moon shaking was created:

The sun “of wolves, the strict month;  
Was shedding shine on oats (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

An unexpected association, “the month” as “the sun of wolves” is motivated by the knowledge that wolves “howl at the moon”. For a wolf the moon is its sun as a source of life; the night is time of its active movement, hunting, etc.

The “strict” month means “of a regular shape with sharp edges” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964). That is month “is clearly outlined” in the dark sky.

The word combination “was shedding shine” occurred by means of contamination of two expressions: “to shed light” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964) “to releasing liquid from a vessel” (Dal) and “the sun shine”. In the context of the whole poem we get a picture of an unusually bright night which has its own secrets and nightmares:

The moon has dropped from its little hands;  
it is still so scattered;  
A fan of the pinkest cloudlets;  
On a sea blue carpet;  
It has bent dreaming to get with its thin silvery hand (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The author anthropomorphize this celestial phenomenon: with such qualities as “scattered”, actions

as “dreaming”, “has dropped”, “has bent”. The “little hands” are short moon beams which are perhaps hidden behind “pink cloudlets”. But, here the wind disperses these cloudlets as we see it in the expression “has dropped a fan of cloudlets” in the poem and a longer beam breaks through them as “its thin silvery hand”. The verb “has bent” means that the moon passed into a new phase of its movement across the sky:

The silence flies from stars; The moon shines as  
your wrist (of night) (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

A “wrist” is “sleeve lining, embroidered oversleeves, a bracelet, embroidered sleeve ends (opyastye)” (Dal), “a bracelet, obsolete meaning” (The illustrated dictionary of forgotten and difficult words from works of Russian literature of XVIII-XIX century 1988). Thus, the moon is associated with women’s jewellery. Night is personified and associated with a woman and the moon is associated with an item of its attire.

But at evening Oh how dreadful it is; Night  
shadows behind cupboard and icon-case; And the  
pendulum, frozen, like the moon; Shining above the  
gleaming fen (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

This is a unique example: the moon is an object of comparison; its properties are transferred to objective reality. In the space-time continuum, there was a certain failure, the stop of movement. The time expressed through motionlessness of “the pendulum has stopped. The motion in space has stopped the moon stands still in the sky. Thus, counting time, the pendulum is gradually moving through the space and the moon moving across the sky is a guideline for determining the time. Thus, the moon is a kind of celestial pendulum.

The moon has stopped above the fen reflecting its light which is expressed with the verb “to shine” “to twinkle poorly with fluctuating light to play sparkles” (Ozhegov and Shvedov, 1964) “to sparkle poorly to shine with pale or shivering light to play sparkles” (Dal). In this part of the poem feeling of fear, the end of life and its uselessness is being whipped up:

But at every midnight; the moon face leans so  
scary and low; And in gloomy horror from the  
lunar sight; from tenacious lunar networks; I want  
to rush from this garde (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

There is an associative parallel built: a round shape of the complete moon is “a round face”. The moon seems to the heroine close and big. The personified moon turns into a monster terrifying the lyrical hero, an all-seeing monster (“the lunar sight”). The moon beams are “tenacious lunar networks” that get into each corner of garden; they are intermittent and scattered at the same time. A hyperbolic picture is being created. In this part,

Table 2: Intertextual subject associates of the microimage “moon/month”.

Micro image	Associates
Moon/month	A sign, A face, A petal, A round shield, The sun of wolves, A
streetlight, A flame, A big tulip, A	wrist, A two horned moon, A guilt-ridden siren, A beautiful
goddess, A deadly wound	
Characteristics of moon light	Shines above the gleaming fen, Dresses in silver (the lyrical hero), Shines, Glitters, Reflects in waves, Whirls on pendants, Fades, Bright, Sheds shine, Flames, Turns pale, Burns, Sparkles, Splits up and shakes
Associative parallels to moon beams	A hand, Little hands, Networks, Scattered braids, A bridge
Movement of the moon across the sky	Motionless, Comes up to the zenith, Swings, Floats, Looks into the window, Shakes, Rises, Bends, its face, Rises from dusky thickets, Rests on the sky, Stands in the middle, Walks to fall, Bends, High, Leaves cliffs, Descends

it is possible to see convergence of tropes hyperbole and personification. Convergence is a redundancy of stylistic means for transmitting motives, feelings or moods being important for the author as well as strengthening and concentrating the reader’s perception of a message (Kozhina, 2006).

The moon is floating like a round shield; Of a hero  
killed long ago (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

“A round shield” and the moon are associated with each other due their similarity in shape and color: shield were made of precious metals and shone brightly as the moon shines. This shield is a phantom, unnecessary item left in the sky by accident. The image of the moon is tragic.

The moon “is floating” on the horizon; it is moving slowly. The verb “is floating” is used in its usual figurative meaning “to move smoothly, slowly in the air (about celestial bodies)” (The Small Academic Dictionary) that confirms the poet’s orientation on common language associations. The analysis carried out provides a system of associative parallels of the microimage “moon” (Table 2).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**The color palette of the microimage “moon” in lyrics by N. Gumilyov:** We will consider “the colour palette of the microimage “moon”. Two of the most natural colours for the moon image, including literary traditions, are gold and silver. The author represents the picture of night, of nature as lit by the gold moon.

“The moon has already left cliffs. The sea is full of transparent gold”; The colour of the sea becomes gold because of the moon light of its colour (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian). The silence flashed with gold; so the rising moon teaches to forget”, “the moon will dress in silver”.

The fact that Gumilyov’s moon has often different shades is unexpected: “The moon was purpling as a deadly wound”, “Out of clouds the bloody red/ full moon is shining”.

At first thought “the bloody red” is a figurative-expressive epithet being used to underline the colour of the moon. However, we take into account the context of the poem:

And some visions; All are rising before me; Former dreams; My younger life; And all past desires; Full of desolate grief; I am sobbing

Therefore, “the bloody red” is a figurative- expressive epithet. For the lyrical hero the moon is painted not simply with red but with “bloody” paint in tune with his emotional experiences.

**The concept of moon in lyrics by N. Gumilyov:** The concept of “moon/month” is one of the basic concepts in the works of Gumilyov. This is evidenced by the frequent usage of the lexeme “moon”. Among 228 poems being analyzed the image of the moon appears in 60 cases.

To represent this microimage such stylistic devices as object comparisons (5), metaphors (28), inclusion of poetic transforms are used (2).

Attributive characteristics include gold (2), silver, purple, bloody, bloody red, curious, young, bright (2), painful, predatory, full, burning, waning. The moon is being personified (6) or impersonated (4). The moon is a symbol of human loneliness in this world. N. Gumilyov’s moon becomes a companion for his lyrical heroes:

Having muffled in a cloud, the moon; Being young, light and in love; Descends to you with light steps; Yes from moon songs at summer night; The silence is unearthly in this world; But even more terrible and forbidden; The words are that you say her in response (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The king is a lonely person, with his own special sense of life. He “is talking” to the moon, telling it “terrible, forbidden” words and the moon “is singing” to him. However, this conversation is the silence, “the still of night” and the lack of any sound.

**The moon “lights” human secrets:** The moon lights forgotten secrets, strange loneliness:

Alongside the reeds of the sluggish Nile; Lies the forgotten tomb’s rubble; Of a tyrannical and seductive Queen; The hazy night spreads deceptions; The moon is like a guilt-ridden siren; And a stealthy hyena slinks from its lair; Its yowling is harsh and furious; Its eyes are sinister and grim; It crouches on the pink marble tomb; “Look, moon, lover of all that is mad”(Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

“The forgotten tomb’s rubble” is a token of loneliness and abandonment. This grave is lighted “by the moon which is lover of all that is mad” the unique listener of hyena’s “yowling”. “Deceptions of hazy night” show mystery, unreality of the depicted. The comparison of the moon with a siren maintains semantics of event’s falsity.

**The moon is a magic attribute:** The concept of “moon” corresponds with the micromeaning “magic”. It is the only image found in the ballad-like poems:

A rider was going along the road; It was late and dogs were howling; The sun of wolves, the strict month; Was shedding shine on oats; But suddenly behind the village; A white stone near a stub; Frightened with an ancient smile; The horse taken by trembling; It’s morning. The stone on the road; Timidly hid its grin; The sun of wolves, the strict month; Got tired to light it (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The author transmits immediately a premonition of trouble pointing at night time (“it was late”) at “howling dogs”, calling the moon as “the sun of wolves”. Further, there is a description of the horse being frightened by the “grin” of a stone. It becomes clear from the context that something terrible unknown had happened to the rider. In the last quatrain the author explains why it occurred: “in the morning” “the stone hid its grin” as the moon “got tired to light it”. Therefore, the moon “gives” a special magic ability to the stone which is to inspire fear, acting magically on the surrounding space.

**The moon is a symbol of madness:**

And the dream don’t seem to be the dream any more; Under the burning tulip; It is already not a dream but unconsciousness; And there isn’t even unconsciousness enough in it; The Flying Dutchman is travelling around; A dead man, but the heart of a dead man; Is full of both lightings

and fogs; He was seized until the end; Of dark madness of tulips (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

In the poetic text nothing is casual. The author's substitution of the lexeme "moon" with a lexeme "tulip" as well as denomination of the sky as a "greenhouse" doesn't seem to be casual. Celestial realities are substituted by terrestrial. The dream turns into strange unconsciousness in the following lines "the Flying Dutchman" even comes to life, becomes personified and "mad" about the moon. The moon as a source of madness is represented in Semiramis, Caracalla (madness of kings), in The Poet, The Spell (madness of a poet).

**The moon corresponds with false calm, self-deception and obsession:** The moon is an attribute of the night giving the sleep, rest but it's false self-deceptive, unsteady:

The silence flies from stars; The moon shines as your wrist (of night); And in my dreams I was given again; The promised land; Long mourned happiness (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The lyrical hero can be happy only "in his dreams" as there he gets to "the promised land" which "has already been mourned in reality" that is having been lost, impossible.

**The moon is a sign of the world of poetry, dreams:**

But there are some other areas in the world; Tormented by the cruel moon; For the highest force, the highest valour; They are forever unattainable; There are waves with glosses and splashes; Of a dance not being uninterrupted; And there the ship of the Flying Dutchman; Flies with sharp jumps (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

"Other areas" are the world of poetry where everything is possible. The waves there perform "a dance" and "the Flying Dutchman" lives and "flies". This world is lighted with "the cruel moon" which is an attribute of creativity. The moon, lighting the night world, sees all men's secrets.

Out of clouds the bloody red; Full moon is shining; And it is reflected; In the waves of the muddy stream; Everything that I have sold being seduced; By wealth and honour; Everything appears before my eyes; As horrible visions now (Gumilyov, 1988, Russian)

The "bloody red" moon is lighting before the lyrical hero something he would not like to see his "corruption".

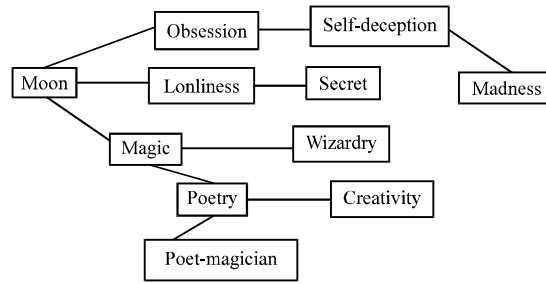


Fig. 1: The micromeanings' interrelationship of the "moon" concept

"Horrible visions" are his secrets that appear before his eyes in the moon light. All micromeanings being considered are interconnected (Fig. 1).

The favorite poet's time of day is night and the moon is its constant attribute. In lyrics by N. Gumilyov associative parallels are varied but all they are based on similarity of the space images with realities of the literary-artistic world. Their visibility and transparency are caused by the poet's orientation on common language associations. The parallel "the moon a virgin" should be highlighted among other unique and non-standard associations.

**Summary:** In the movement from symbolism to his own individual style N.S. Gumilyov fills micro-image of the moon with new micro-meanings, transforms it. The image of the moon is implicitly represented in the image of a virgin and as a siren, wound, flower, bracelet, shield. The moon glow, its movement across the sky is more traditional characteristics. However, basically, the moon is personified or embodied.

The "moon" concept is associated with such micro-meanings as delusion, loneliness, magic, deception, mystery, madness, sorcery, poetry, creativity. Gumilyov, being in the framework of an acmeism, refers to visible objects of reality brings together micro-images of space with images of the real world.

## CONCLUSION

The moon is a symbol of poetry, creativity, an attribute of the magical and charming world. It lights not only the space around, but also lonely people. It becomes a sound symbol of "silence". It is the only image found in the poet's ballad-like poems. The moon is an attribute of night giving the sleep (obsession, unconsciousness). The moon symbolizes the lyrical hero's exit into irreal space. Within its presence all the secrets, internal experiences of lonely people "are being opened". Further the scope of the study can be extended by attracting textual material of certain poems by N. Gumilyov.

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