



Kalandarova Dilafruz Abdujamilovna
Associate Professor of Shakhrisabz State Pedagogical Institute
E-mail: d.kalandarova2017@yandex.ru
Tel: +998911339677

Abstract

This article examines the issues of Uzbek folk oral literature and comparative folklore, its place in folklore, the role of epic genres, including the epic genre, in a deeper, broader and more complete study, allowing us to identify similarities and differences in the plot and motifs, heroes, their adventures, experiences, and the development of events in general. It is once again emphasized that the common and differential features of the work, the issues of time and space in them, the interaction of one epic with another, and the debates on existing views on folklore contribute to the development of comparative studies, which contribute to the further development of the field.

Keywords: Folklore, comparative folklore, translation, research, comparison, epic, variant, version, plot, motif, overall effect.

Introduction

Comparative folklore studies are one of the important areas of Uzbek folklore studies that are developing day by day. In its approach to the object of research, comparative folklore studies, which mainly uses comparative, historical-comparative, and comparative-typological methods, involves comparing works of art that are examples of oral creativity with examples of written literature. It aims to uncover the connection between oral texts created in the languages of different peoples. This is precisely what constitutes its main subject.

Literature Review

Comparative folklore studies as a science is considered a component of general folklore studies and general literary studies, and has general methodological importance. Comparative folklore pays particular attention to mutual literary influence, literary communication, “recreation”, “restoration”, artistic synthesis, stylization. The book “German Mythology”, written by the German brothers Grimm - Wilhelm (1786–1859) and Jacob (1785–1863), played an important role in the formation and development of comparative folklore.

Another German scholar, Theodor Benfey, also reflected important theoretical views on this field in his preface to his German translation of the ancient Indian epic Panchatantra (1859).

Research Methodology

Working in this field undoubtedly requires knowledge of foreign languages from the researcher. If the researcher cannot meet this requirement and cannot directly use translations, he will not be able to

achieve the expected results. Comparative folklore requires an understanding of the “concept sphere” of the national culture being compared.

It identifies similarities (or contrasts) between genre structures, compositional schemes, motifs and themes, images and characters. It reveals the reasons and factors for this. It defines a system of similarities and differences during the analysis, without absolutizing the identified similarities. Generally speaking, comparative folklore as a component of the science of folklore has a unique position in world folklore.

Analysis and Results

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the German scholar Karl Reichl entered this field as one of the leading and most prominent representatives of comparative folklore. The scope of his research in this field was mainly focused on the study of the folklore of the peoples of Central Asia and the Middle East.

In the epics of the world, the main character’s attempt to disguise himself and hide his true identity is a distinctive feature of their plot. In the oral literature of the English, German, Italian, Spanish, and French peoples of the 12th–15th centuries, one can also find a number of works based on this motif. Karl Reichl discusses how different epics of different peoples are built on similar motifs, the factors that cause this, and traditionalism in folklore. This determines the fact that the motif does not belong to a specific hero, but continues to form independently, regardless of location and nationality (polygenesis). However, due to the fact that a plot can be created in an individual style on the basis of a certain motive, it is justified that the motive in the individual style acts as a specific pattern in the development of events. This pattern, such as “So-and-so hero was captured”, “So-and-so hero’s wife waited for a long time before marrying another man” or “The hero was recognized by such-and-such a mark on his body” is used depending on the level of the hero’s adventures. The scientist admits that if the events of this motif in the epic “Odyssey” served as a primary source for motifs in the oral literature of other peoples created in this way, then it can be said that motifs with a Homeric content reached the Albanians through the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea on the one hand, and the Turks through the Amu Darya on the other, forming a long chain. In his opinion, there is no obstacle to denying this conclusion as an unreasonable reasoning. Indeed, the specific motif in the “Earth’s Return” part of the “Odyssey” also substantiates this idea. Although the heroes’ return home after various adventures has migrated to the oral literature of the peoples of the East and the West, it is precisely the events in the “Odyssey” that never correspond to their millennia-old way of life. Undoubtedly, in such cases, literature turns to the specific nature of the nation. For example, scenes with the “Earth’s Return” motif in Turkish, Albanian, Russian and Serbian folk epics are based on events that occurred in the life experiences of these nations.

In this way, Karl Reichl discusses which of the two works belonging to different peoples served as the basic motif for the other and the features of the formation of the motif in the specific traditions of folk epics. However, he does not express the opinion that the epic “Alpamish” is the root source of all works of this content. Because this epic cannot be the basis for the Greek epic. However, it is mentioned that it was the basis for the Korean epic “Jumong” [1].

The songs in the wedding scene in the part “The Hero’s Return Home” of the epic poem “Alpamish” show the fun and entertainment of Uzbek weddings. Such songs sung in the female language occupy a large place in the Uzbek folk epic. They are found not only in the mutual conversations between Alpamish and Barchin, but also in the dialogues with the cruel woman - a sweet-tongued old woman -

Bodom bikach, who forcibly forces someone else's wife to touch her son. As we mentioned earlier, the first interpretation of the epic poem "Alpamish" in the Turkic language can be seen in the work "Book by Dada Korkut". However, Homeric elements are not observed in "Book by Dada Korkut" recognizing the hero by his scar and thorn or by his horse, the story of the bow, loyal servants, etc. The old woman's eloquence and the hero's songs, who respond to her with humor, not only bring a lively mood to the end of the epic, but also prepare the reader for a happy ending.

Karl Reichl's final and main conclusion in this regard is that there are more than thirty variants of the epic "Alpamish" recorded from the mouths of the bakhshi (according to the latest data, there are about forty variants - D.K.). Although their plots are similar, there are also very significant differences. In particular, in the artistic expression of the motif "The husband returns home". Based on the research of Vladimir Propp [2; 265-274], there are about one hundred and sixty variants of the epic "Dobrynya and Alyosha". The motif of "The husband returns home" is much more widespread among the Balkan peoples than its examples in Serbian and Albanian heroic songs.

At this point, the scientist also draws our attention to the Russian folk tale "Dobrynya and Alyosha". He presents it as a song-tale, close to our epic. As is known, the events in this work begin with the scene where Dobrynya, leaving the house, tells his wife Nastasya that if she does not return within six years, she will marry another man. Nastasya, on the other hand, waits for her husband for twelve years. Finally, she agrees to marry Alyosha, who brings her the news that her husband died six years ago. It is noteworthy that here Alyosha reminds us of the traitor Yaltachuk from "Bamsi Beyrek". On the eve of the wedding, Dobrynya goes to Constantinople and is told that his wife Nastasya is dying. Deeply moved, Dobrynya flies home at the speed of the wind, but his mother does not recognize her son. Then Dobrynya asks him for the shiny clothes and musical instruments of his long-lost son and goes to the wedding taking place at the palace of Tsar Vladimir. Shortly before Nastasya is to marry Alyosha, Dobrynya sits down opposite his wife. He hands her a glass with his ring in it. Nastasya recognizes her husband when she sees the ring. The use of the ring in this scene as a motif of "recognition" gives the work its originality.

The story of the hero's return and his recognition by putting the ring in the bride's cup is also found in the medieval romance epic of King Horn. In an English version of the epic, Horn first disguises himself as a monk, then returns as a minister. When he first arrives home, he throws his ring into the drinking horn. The English traditional ballad of Hind Horn is radically shortened. It uses the mask story and the ring motif. Hind Horn, in the guise of a "beggar," asks the bride for a drink for Horn [2; 265-274]:

*Келин бир қадаҳ шароб билан зинадан тушиди,
У идишидаги шаробни ичди ва узукка кўзи тушиди.
“Ҳой, буни денгизданми ёки қуруқликдан олдинми?
Ёки буни ўлик кишининг қўлидан ечиб олдинми?”
“Мен буни денгиздан эмас, қуруқликдан олдим,
Мен буни, хоним, сенинг қўлингдан олдим.*

(The translation is ours – D.K.)

The Turkic romance epic "Oşık Gharib", popular from Turkey to Xinjiang, comes to his beloved in the guise of a skilled musician and singer, just like Dobrynya and Horn, and fights against rivals for the beloved's love. As can be seen from these examples, there is very little material on the comparative study of the return of Alpamish.

It is known that some motifs in “Alpamish” are directly similar to the interpretation of events in the Greek epic “Odyssey”, which interests Western and Eastern scholars alike [3]. Whether the striking similarity between these works is due to the influence of the West on the East or, conversely, the influence of the East on the West - has always been controversial. As folklorist J.Eshonkulov said: “The most important thing is the existence of this influence and its antiquity” [4].

Conclusion/Recommendations

A study of Turkish oral epic poetry prompts a comparison. After all, the descriptive analysis of Turkish oral epic poetry opens the way to study its relation to neighboring oral traditions. Because some of its features are strikingly similar to the oral epic traditions of neighboring and non-neighboring peoples. These parallels invite the reader to think about why it is consistent with other epic traditions.

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