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THE ISSUE OF THE INFLUENCE OF “ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS” ON TURKIC FOLKLORE

Abstract: This article discusses the impact of the epic plots of the complex “One Thousand and One Nights” on the folklore of the Turkic peoples, including the Kazakh, Tatar, Azerbaijani, Turkish and Uzbek folklore. It also gives detailed information about the studies on the impact of “One Thousand and One Night” on Kazakh folklore by scientists S.Qasqabasov, A.Derbisaliyev, M.Salqinbaev, N.K.Jarmagambetov, S.A.Tuleubaeva, on Tatar folklore by the scholars S.Sh.Zulkarnaev and F.F.Gilemshin, on Azerbaijani folklore by scientists Kamala Islamzadeh, Leyla Bayramova, M.Mammadov, I.Rustamzade, on Turkish, Ottoman Turkish literatur, and folklore by researchers Atiye Nazli, Ziyat Abdülmecit Akkoyunlu, Yusuf Karatash, and Eyüp Akman. Furthermore, the author focuses on the researches of oriental scientists F.Jalolov, Sh.Shomusarov on the topic of “wandering plots” adopted into the Uzbek Folklore from “One Thousand and One Nights”.

Key words: wandering plots, Totinoma, Xazar Afsana, Kalila and Dimna.

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Introduction

The influence of “One Thousand and One Nights” - a rare example of arabic folk literature - on the folklore of the Turkic peoples, particularly, upon their traditions of fairy tales has always been in the focus of folklorists. This masterpiece, later recognized as one the finest works of art by the leading orientalists, researchers, and scientists, influenced not only folklore and fairy-tale traditions of western nations, but also made a tangible impact upon the oral literature, folklore, and folk tales of Turkic peoples, including Kazakh, Tatar, Azerbaijani, Turkish, Uzbek nations. Studies of orientalists profoundly discovering this very impact, along with the commentaries of researchers further elucidating this subject matter, are the primary focus of this article.

Main part

S. Kaskabasov touched on the impact of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Kazakh folklore. As he writes: “Of the oriental plots, plots of the arabic tales

from “One Thousand and One Nights”, indian tales from “Twenty-five tales of the Vetala”, mongol tales from “Arzhi-Bordzhi”, tales from the turkish novel “Bakhtiar”, as well as separate excerpts from the works “Shahname”, “Layla and Majnun”, “Iskandar” are widespread within Kazakh works. Such are the plots of “One Thousand and One Nights”. They tell about a cunning donkey who deceived the ox, and the owner who understood the conversation between the donkey and the ox, about the insidious sorceress-wife of the king who cheated on her husband with a slave, about a girl who hated men, but then passionately wished to get married, about an old fisherman who got rich by rescuing a genie from a lamp, about a king who killed a beloved and clever hawk because of the anger and then regretted his unreasonable act, and many other plots widespread among Kazakhs” [1, p. 9-10]. Scientist’s comments on this matter vividly illustrate that particular plots, originating from the compilation “One Thousand and One Nights” are present in many kazakh folk tales,

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implying the fact that they were adopted from the compilation into kazakh folklore.

Furthermore, R. Karuts - an explorer lived among Turkman and Kazakh peoples of Mangishloq during the 20th century - also points out the wide spreading of the plots of “One Thousand and One Nights” in Kazakh folklore. He wrote about his guide and interpreter Oroz, and that “his repertoire consisted of fables with animals, short funny stories, heroic songs of Magtymguly [Turkmen poet], stories from Nasreddin [Satirist] and fairy tales that are clearly adopted from “One Thousand and One Nights” [2, p.173-174]. This fact from the history, documented by the german scientist and ethnologist Richard Karuts clearly shows that even in the 20th century tales from “One Thousand and One Nights” were widely adopted within Kazakh and Kyrgyz fairy tales.

A.Derbisaliyev, who profoundly studied the translation skills of K. Abdikadirov, the translator of Arabic folk tales, including “One Thousand and One Nights” into Kazakh language within the system of Kazakh-Arabic literary relations, highlighted the role of “One Thousand and One Nights” in the history of Oriental literature [3,p.184]. M. Salkinbaev, while commenting on the historical genesis of “One Thousand and One Nights” and the thought that its origins lead us into the Indo-Persian folklore, also noted the influence of the fairy tales in such compilations as “Totinoma” and “Hazar Afsana” on the fairy-tale traditions of the Turkic peoples [4, p.66-67].

Literary critic N.K.Jarmagambetov defended his dissertation, studying the transformation of epic plots of such works as “One Thousand and One Nights” and “Kalila and Dimna” within the Kazakh literature [5, p.26].

The influence of the fairy tales of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Kazakh folklore had been extensively studied by the orientalist S.A.Tuleubaeva. Based on a comparative and textual analysis of “One Thousand and One Nights” and Kazakh folk tales, the study identified a system of plots, motifs, characters that are common to both folk tales and revealed the use of similar literary devices. Also, the peculiarities of the poetic transformation and adaptation of epic plots, adopted into Kazakh folklore as a result of the translation of Arabic fairy tales had been clarified [6, p.199].

One of the scholars who studied the influence of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Turkic languages S.Sh.Zulkarnaev explained the influence of the lexicon of fairy tales in the Arabic language, including “One Thousand and One Nights” on the Tatar folklore on the example of the lingua-poetic analysis of literary texts of the Bayt genre [7, p.285-287]. In his dissertation, linguist F.F.Gilemshin studied the translation of “One Thousand and One Nights” by Fatih Khalidi into Tatar from a linguistic and stylistic point of view [8, p.21]. His research analyzes the

history of translation of the collection of fairy tales “One Thousand and One Nights” into Tatar, the role of this literary source in the system of Tatar literature and culture, lexical-semantic, axiological, and cognitive aspects of the language of this complex [9, p. 113].

Kamola Islamzadeh’s work on the parallel plots between “One Thousand and One Nights” and azerbaijani fairy tales and the analysis of epic plots whose origins go back to Arabic folklore found that the plots of this complex, which include fairy tales formed in several ancient fairy-tale traditions, underwent a certain change in the new folklore performance environment. It also revealed that the transformation of the plot belonging to a different ethnic culture is a process of adaptation to the national fairy-tale tradition. Depending on the closeness and relatedness of traditional motifs, character names, dialogues in the text, questions and answers, specific words and phrases, it will be possible to determine which fairy tale genesis belongs to the Arabic source. In this case, she believes that the similarities are not the result of typological commonalities, but an event that occurs as a result of the migration, adaptation, and assimilation of “wandering plots” from “One Thousand and One Nights” into azerbaijani folklore [10, p.91-104].

Azerbaijani scholar Leyla Bayramova, who tried to reveal the essence of “One Thousand and One Nights” as a literary and artistic work, noted in her research that this work is a magnificent literary collection that brings together the epic plots of the peoples of the East. It serves as a treasure trove of the most beautiful epic plots because under the influence of this literary source national variants of the plots in the compilation have emerged [11, p.26]. M.Mammadov also worked in this field and identified azerbaijani fairy tales based on the plots of “One Thousand and One Nights” [12, p.190-195]. Azerbaijani scholar I. Rustamzade, carrying out studies in the same field, believes that Azerbaijani fairy tales such as “Imam”, “Xosa Fattah”, “Shamsu Qamar”, “Seyfulmalik”, “Halallik”, “Halal umr”, “As Two Brother” were created as a direct result of the epic transformation of the plots of “One Thousand and One Nights” [13, p.190-195].

Turkish folklorist Atiye Nazli’s dissertation describes the genre, formation, and sources of the works in “One Thousand and One Nights”, the history of the study of this work in Europe, the United States, Africa, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, and other Asian countries. Also, she carried out a comparative analysis of “One Thousand and One Nights” with a collection of fairy tales such as “Totinoma”, “Bakhtiyornom” or “The Story of Ten Ministers”, “Firoqnoma”, “Sindbodnoma”, “Hayolotu dil”, “Arbainu subh” or “The Story of Forty Ministers”. The dissertation analyzes the various translations of “One Thousand and One Nights” into the Turkish language and

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reveals the peculiarities of each translation. Special attention is paid to the influence of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Turkish folklore, in particular, the source and artistic evolution of Turkish folk tales formed as a result of the reworking of the plot of epic works in this complex. The study analyzes Turkish fairy tales collected from Anatolia and compares the motives and characters of this type of fairy tales [14].

Ziyat Abdülmecit Akkoyunlu, who studied the impact of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Ottoman Turkish literature and folklore directly on the example of motives of folk tales, said that the translation of a collection of Arabic fairy tales into Turkish began the contamination of traditional plots in the repertoire of storytellers. His research reveals that new fairy tale plots have been formed due to the artistic reworking of the plot of non-fiction and magic fairy tales on the basis of Turkish fairy tale traditions [15, p.1-11].

In addition, some works of folklorists such as Yusuf Karatash, Eyüp Akman further investigate the impact of “One Thousand and One Nights” on the development of the plot system of Turkish fairy tales [16, p.73-86].

Scholars such as G. Jalolov and Sh. Shomusarov have slightly touched the study of the impact of the plots of “One Thousand and One Nights” upon Uzbek folklore.

For the first time in the history of Uzbek folklore, Gayrat Jalolov in his monograph “Inter-genre relations in Uzbek folklore” tried to study the impact of Indian literature on the folklore of the peoples of Central Asia. The folklorist discovers that translations of the popular books “Kalila and Dimna”, “Twenty-five tales of the Vetala”, and “One Thousand and One Nights” have had a great influence on the development of Uzbek folklore’s epic genres. He also comments on Uzbek folk tales and folk tales from such compilations as “Twenty-five tales of the Vetala”, “Kalila and Dimna”, “One Thousand and One Nights” with similar plots [17, p.36]. The scientist noted that the traditions of Eastern fairy tales, in particular, the fairy tales of the “One Thousand and One Nights” played an important role in the development and improvement of the plots of local folk tales. He theorized that Uzbek folk tales such as “Vafo”, “Guljamol”, “Poor Woman’s Trick”, “Punishment of Slanderers”, “Prudent Woman”, “Immortal Flower or Loyal Wife” emerged as a result of the process of adaptations and national transformation of the tales told by Cheherazade on nights 593-596 in the compilation “One Thousand and One Nights”. G. Jalolov noted that a significant

number of Uzbek folk tales and folk books are created based on the plots adopted from “One Thousand and One Nights” [18, p.153-154].

Folklorist and scientist Sh. Shomusarov has studied the influence of Arabic folklore and written sources upon the Uzbek oral literature and folklore. He extensively analyzed historical bases and thematic types of fairy tales, classification of tales and composition of characters [19, p.238], historical-genetic and typological commonalities of folklores of Arab people living in the Arabian Peninsula and Central Asia [20, p.124-132], the epic transformation of Arab fairy tales in Turkic folklore [21, p.304], historical bases of Arab-Uzbek folklore, the comparative study of Uzbek and Arab oral literature and fairy-tale traditions [22, p.38-44]. The scientist believes that the next layer of epic commonalities in the plot of fairy tales of Arab and Turkic peoples is directly related to the translation of the collection of Arabic fairy tales “Alf layla and layla” into the Turkic language [23]. According to his research, the plot system of Uzbek folk tales has several epic layers, among which the tales based on “wandering plots” from “One Thousand and One Nights” have a special place. The origins of a number of fairy tales, such as “Sayfulmuluk”, “Flower and Sanobar”, “Aladdin and his magic lamp”, “Sinbad”, “The crow that understands the human language”, are found directly in Arabic folklore [24, p.38-44].

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that although “One Thousand and One Nights” has been studied vigorously by world scholars, only a few works tried to analyze the concept of “wandering plots” specifically on the example of the impact of “One Thousand and One Nights” upon the folklore of Turkic peoples, including kazakh, tatar, azerbaijani, turkish, and uzbek nations. For this reason, the study of the influence of “One Thousand and One Nights” on Turkic fairy tales and the repertoire of storytellers is one of the most important and yet less studied issues in modern folklore.

The scientific value of any investigation in this direction is that under the influence of “One Thousand and One Nights” that many folk tales in Turkic folklore emerged, and this creative process had an impact not only on the development of folklore, but also on the development of written literature. Consequently, researches on this topic may further shed light on only our way of understanding folklore, and what is more, also expand our knowledge about the history and formation of written literature.

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