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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EPIC HELPERS IN
ENGLISH AND UZBEK FOLKLORE

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Abstract:

Introduction. *Uzbek and English people live in different continents, however the similarity in subjects, classification and representation of heroes can be observed in their folklore. Fairy tales, myths, legends, epics reflect the lifestyle, culture, beliefs and worldview of each nation. They embody national aspects for sure. National identities are reflected in images of protagonists and helpers in any genre of folklore.*

Research methods. *Awareness of other cultures demands investigations in many spheres, including literature and folklore. Comparative-typological and historical-comparative analysis of the image of epic helper are the main methods used in our research.*

Results and discussions. *The image of the patron saint heroes is rooted in pre-Islamic. They are based on ancient animistic, totemic, and shamanistic religious-mythological concepts. In folklore, whether it is a fairy tale or a saga, there are a number of characters who are close companions of the protagonist, who share his work and heroism to some extent, and this type of hero requires a special name. Hence, the names “epic helper” and “epic sponsor” are used for them.*

In English folklore fairy godmothers, talking animals such as horse, fox or bird serve as helpers. In Uzbek folk tales and epics, animals such as horses, wolves, lions, monkeys, tigers, snakes, foxes and rams are often interpreted as patrons and helpers as having magical properties. Since the ancients imagined rivers and seas, mountains, deserts and forests as places where spirits could find a place, the epic helper also suddenly encounters the protagonist directly in such places.

Conclusion. *Helpers can be identified in almost all fairytales throughout the world. They may have different characteristics, specific features as they belong to different nations. However, the motif is similar —to give support, advice or a hand to people in need. Helpers in English and Uzbek folklore can be divided into similar types. Heroes, as well as helpers in folk tales embody national aspects and national identities of culture they belong to.*

Keywords: *fairy tale, folklore, character, protagonist, donor, helper, motif, image, culture, national aspect, English fairy tale, Uzbek fairy tale.*

Introduction. Folklore is the mirror of the nation. It reflects customs, beliefs, lifestyle, culture and worldview of people. Folklore have been studied widely around the world. Stith Tompson`s Motif Index of Folk Literature is one of the important works in folklore studies in the 20th century. The Types of the Folk Tale by Antti

Aarne, which Tompson translated and enlarged, have greatly facilitated comparative work in folklore, that is ongoing today.

The number of fairy tales (of England, America, Australia and other English-speaking countries) translated into Uzbek by the peoples is growing every year. Tales such as "Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarfs", "How Jack went to seek his fortune", "Beauty and the Beast" are among them. It is known that in fairy tales, the protagonist prefers humanity to his own interests, strives to do good to everyone (whether human, animal or creature), overcomes evil and saves the victim, and when the time comes, such support is raised to a high ideological level. Studying English and Uzbek folklore comparatively allows us to distinguish commonalities and divergences between them. There are many researches in folklore, however the image of the helper needs to be investigated in depth.

Materials and methods. Russian scholar, folklorist Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp analyzed Russian folk tales discovered a donor character in them, which helps or gives advice to the protagonist only after setting tasks, making a query.

A prominent English folklorist Katharine Briggs investigated the images of fairies, hobgoblins, brownies and other supernatural creatures and researched the types and motifs of fairy tales. She considered fairies and brownies to be helpers to the main hero.

Russian scholars A.N. Svetkova, Y.M. Meletenskiy, F.G. Fatkullina carried out their researches on the images of mythological, cultural and supernatural characters and related them to the history and culture.

An award winning playwright, with a long time interest in comparative mythology and religious studies-Carol K. Mack and his daughter Dihan Mack carried out a research about demons, fairies, fallen angels and other subversive spirits. The mythic traveler who successfully harvests the benefits of his demonic encounter needs special qualities to succeed. Motivation counts, and somehow all the diverse demonic spirits-the Jewish Shedim, the Arabic Djinn, the Russian Leshii-discern what is in the heart of the hero. To the guileless goes the prize, to the innocent third son the victory, to the humble passerby the gold ring. According to Carol K. Mack demons are one of ancient spirits and they are often described as unpredictable, magical and riveting. [4] Universally, demons have been considered agents of both good and evil, and have been looked upon as vital or negative forces, but share key characteristics: all demon species are supernatural spirits of semi-divine status with limitless energy, excessively passionate natures, shape-lifting talents, and preference for concealment, "indwelling" and darkness.

Hizr is a common helper in Uzbek folklore. He is depicted as a patron, guide and a facilitator. It is worth noting that in the folklore of Turks, including the Uzbek people, Hizr usually appeared to people as an old man with a white beard, dressed in white, and supported him. In general, the image of Hizr, which is widespread in the folklore of the Turkic peoples who believe in Islam, is imagined as a mythological patron, a supportive spirit, an extraordinary helper in the form of an old man, and to some extent studied in Uzbek folklore.

Several scholars investigated this character. Well-known Uzbek folklorist M. Abzalov was one of the first scholars to research the image of Hizr and found out

that it was connected with ancient mythological notions and grew from the roots of folk views about pir-patrons. [1]

G. Akramov also admits that the image of Hizr was formed under the influence of ancestral beliefs and shamanism, and this image served as a basis for mythological elements for the whole “Gorogly” series of epics. [3]

Consequently, this scientific hypothesis that the ancient foundations of the image of Hizr may be directly related to one of the mythological concepts derived from the religious beliefs of the primitive period—the belief in the patronage and support of ancestral spirit—is also of great theoretical importance.

Folklorist K. Imamov believes that the image of Hizr is artistically interpreted in Uzbek folk legends as an ideal hero, so he is portrayed as immortal, impenetrable, non-flammable, a magical feature, not a religious miracle, it appears to exist, sometimes as an animal, sometimes in the form of an object, helping the hero to triumph in the path of goodness.

G. Jalolov’s opinion that “in fairy tales, Hizr is seen as a supporter of the hero, reason of giving children to the childless, and in general a solver of the people’s problems” allows us to shed more light on the nature of this character.

H. Egamov also studied the epic interpretation of the image of Hizr in Uzbek folk tales. Professor B. Sarimsakov writes that “Hizr was one of the leaders of kinship, and many pre-Islamic Turkic peoples worshiped him”.

M. Jurayev, who studied the image of Hizr in connection with the poetic functions of “magic” figures in folk tales, connects the origin of this character with the image of the “seven patrons” in the mythology of peoples of Central Asia.

F. Nurmatov, studying the genesis of the image of Hizr and its interpretation in Uzbek folklore, tries to generalize and elaborate on the views of people associated with it. M. Rakhmonova’s monograph “The art of Uzbek folk legends” also contains valuable information about this.

In Uzbek folklore, the image of a giant, as well as a helper was studied by Jabbor Eshankulov in 1997, while the image of a fairy was studied in 1999 by Olim Kayumov.

A. Tilavov specially studied the image of a snake. M. Jurayev spoke about the wolf, Anko the bird, the dog, and D. Urayeva researched the image of a camel in folklore.

In general, it is on this basis that the spirit of the ancestors is considered among all peoples as a patron in the form of “momo” or “bobo” and is embodied in the epic works as a helper. Often, the image of a helper embodied in the form of an old and enlightened old woman or an old man is actually based on the fact that people look at the spirit of their sacred ancestors at the level of patron cult.

Results. It is well-known that the realities that make up the plot of fairy tales and epics of all peoples of the world end in good, mainly in the form of a victor over good, a triumph over evil. In this case the motif of the epic hero’s sudden, unseen or pre-existing help to a creature or a person, to save him from something, to receive divine, supernatural help in return for this noble deed, is especially noteworthy. Of course, this motif is based on the image of an epic helper. Interestingly, epic helpers are interpreted in human (antromorphic), animal (zoomorphic), bird (ornimorphic),

and even mythological appearances. This shows that all beings in the world live in pursuit of good, that evil never brings happiness to anyone, and it is doomed to inevitable destruction. The image of characters in folk works embody national aspects. A comparative study of helpers in English and Uzbek folklore showed that they divided into several similar types. In Uzbek folk tales and epics animals such as horses, wolves, lions, monkeys, tigers, snakes, foxes, and rams are often interpreted as sponsors and helpers with magical properties. Supernatural characters like magic beings, talking animals, elves, fairies, brownies, boogies, etc. help the hero in an English fairytale.

Discussions. Folklore heroes differ in terms of their place in the reality of the work, their role in the development of the plot, the importance of the narrator in the expression of the artistic concept. In this respect, folklore heroes are usually divided into primary and secondary ones.

Helpers are considered to be secondary heroes. These heroes, who form a separate system in the samples of epic creations, have their own typical features, artistic and aesthetic functions, which can be identified by:

1. The plot has a special place in the samples of epic creations (such as legends, fairy tales, dossiers) based on romantic content, magic, fiction.

2. The protagonist moves around and obeys his will.

3. The protagonist is depicted in connection with other images around him.

4. The plot serves to unite the circle of events.

5. Through it, independent epic motives based on relationships are formed, such as helping, facilitating the protagonist's difficulty, helping him out of difficult situations, giving him the necessary advice and guidance, and even pulling strange objects.

6. Help the protagonist defeat epic opponents (such as Yalmogiz, giant, creature, dragon, etc.).

One of English folk tales contains a unique poetic interpretation of such views. In it, a young man named Jack achieves his goal with his agility, as well as his intelligence and politeness. On this journey, an unfamiliar old man whom he accidentally encounters on his way will be his main helper. According to the legend, in ancient times there lived an old king, and in his palace there was a witch. She was the King's daughter, and she said that whoever met this witch would give his daughter to this young man. In one village, a poor woman lived with her three sons-Bill, Tom and Jack. The eldest decided to try his luck. The mother prepared food for the trip and sent her son away. On the way the young man where he was going, he ignored him, passed by without answering. When he went to the palace, he saw the old witch and immediately thought that he would knock her down, but he could not resist the witch and died. At last, Jack set off, despite his mother's opposition. Since his mother cried a lot and could not even cook for the trip, Jack took the stale bread and set off. He greeted the old man he met on the way and said that he was looking for a ship that would sail on the ground, and that was the purpose of it. Now, the old man, he took out the bread next to him, saying that they would have breakfast together. The old man said to him, "Hurry up, take the stick first, follow the path I came from, a well will come out, you will throw the stick into it and wait until the

water turns into wine, there is a silver jug on the shore, then you know what to do” he said. The young man did as the old man told him to do, bringing a silver jug to fill the square. After they had breakfast together, the old man told the young man to take everyone he met on the road with him and to remember their names.

It is clear from this tale that the protagonist in the form of an old man or an old woman often meets him unexpectedly in a hungry state. Whoever disregards them, will be punished. On the contrary, if he does good, does what he says, respects him, does something, and is not jealous of the food he has, he will be rewarded.

In epic works, it is not uncommon for the supporting protagonist to ask the protagonist for bread or a drink. On this basis, again, there are traces of trust in the ancestral cult. It is well known that there is a walk hungry ghosts among the people. It is believed that if bread is not given to a hungry ghost, the ghost will be offended and harm the person. Based on such beliefs, it is often interpreted in fairy tales that an old man or woman appears in front of the hero and asks him for something to eat, and if the hero is jealous of the food, he will be harmed.

The old man is depicted in connection with water. Because it was believed that the Kingdom of the Dead, inhabited by the spirits of the ancestors, separated the world of the Living from each other. There was a notion that water was the way that connected that world with this world, the boundary that separated them from each other.

Typically, in epic works, the interplay of supernatural helpers, living beings, and magical objects is also observed. In particular, if the magic horse takes the protagonist to another epic space, the “flying carpet” performs the same function. An epic horse, a close ally of the protagonist, helps its owner by biting and kicking opponents during a battle, while the ‘Hit hammer!’ (“Ur Tuqmoq!”) also hits the enemy and even captures it.

Indeed, some magical objects interact in fairy tales with zoomorphic mythological symbols such as the magic horse, Semurg. For example, a flying carpet, a flying horse, like Semurg, takes the protagonist from an epic space - from the underworld to the above world, or takes the protagonist to a distant place in the blink of an eye. So, magical objects perform similar morphological function as mythological characters and totem creatures with magical powers.

The helpers in epics are of two types:

- a) active helpers;
- b) inactive helpers.

Active helpers are very active in the plot of the work. Their activity plays an important role in the development of the events. Tasks and performance results are clearly visible.

The role of inactive helpers is not clear, they are almost indifferent to the events around them. This often occurs when the protagonist moves directly independently at such a time, with almost no need for the help of the supporting protagonist.

In some epics, the protagonist refuses to receive the help of the helper. For instance, in the Uzbek folk epic “Alpomish”, when the main hero Hakimbek (Alpomish) is in prison, he refuses the help of Korajon, who came to rescue him.

As the protagonist interacts with any of helpers, new motives emerge in the plot system. As a result, the epic spirit and artistic impact of the work is further enhanced.

Servants are one of the helpers in the form of ordinary people. They are often embodied in the image of a shepherd. The shepherds who come to help the hero are described as strong, intelligent, visionary, loyal, faithful, dark-eyed, honest people. A direct example of this is the image of the wise shepherd in the English fairy tale "King John and the Abbot of Canterbury". An uneducated shepherd manages to do what skilled people can not do, freeing his master, the Abbot, from a difficult situation and saving his life. According to the tale, King John was unfair and cruel king of London. Once he knew that the Abbot of Canterbury was living more comfortable life, keeping hundred serving men and fifty fold coins in his coat. Being jealous he wanted to take revenge against the Abbot. He called Abbot to his palace and asked three questions to answer within two weeks. If he were not be able to answer those questions in given time, king would kill him. The questions were where is the centre of the globe? How quickly could he ride around the world? And what was the king thinking right then? Abbot became too much surprised and unable to answers the questions. He wandered from Oxford to Cambridge but no scholar could answer the questions. When being sad he came back home his shepherd encouraged him to answer the question. The shepherd wore king's clothes and went to King John. He answered like: centre of the globe was the place they were in. He would take 24 hours to go round the world. The king was thinking that the shepherd was the Abbot the Canterbury. Being fully satisfied with his answer King John gave pardon and rewarded the shepherd.

There are many types of helpers(fairies, magicians, dragons, animals, birds, people, etc.) who assist the protagonist in all fairy tales of the world. Both in English and Uzbek fairytales the hero often comes across the vital helper all of a sudden in the woods. Talking animals or mythological creatures often assist the protagonist, especially after receiving food or doing a favor. Bear, cat, hen and rooster are common helpers in English fairy tales. Wolf and fox are often negative images.

For instance, in English fairy tale "Three heads of the Well" the main hero washes the three heads and gains fortune afterwards with their award, finds her second half and becomes happy.

In the classical fairy tale, the animal helper is a key image to the survival of the protagonist. Animals assist through the journey and guide the main character towards self-realization. Both wild and domestic animals like pig, horse, ox, wolf, hare, dog, swan, birds are helpers in English and Uzbek folklore.

Cats perform the role of a helper in most English folk tales. They never act as a negative image.[8] In the English fairytale "How Jack went to seek his fortune" Jack comes across a cat, a dog, a goat, a bull, a rooster turn by turn and agrees to join him in the search of fortune. Further he gets help from each of them while gaining the treasure. In Uzbek fairytale "Botir" 40 camels help the hero to carry food for his starving mother.

There can be moments when more than one character tries to do the tasks, all of them meet the donor, however only the youngest son succeeds at last. It is through failing in the test that the older sons are marked out as not being the hero; only the

youngest son passes the test and receives the aid. For example, in the English fairytale “Childe Rowland” two elder brothers consult Warlock Merlin, who shows the ways of rescuing their sister from the king of Elfland. After their failure, the youngest brother Childe Rowland sets out and wins. Sometimes, all three sons succeed as in the Uzbek fairytale “Topqinchilar”, all of them own a supernatural trait of their dead father, a frequent motif that can be seen both in Uzbek and English folklore.

There may be three donors, while the first two are unable to assist and send the hero on to the next. A common motif, is that the protagonist can consult all the beasts, the next all the fish, the third all the birds, and only the last can discover what the hero needs. As in “Jack and his golden snuff-box”, the three little men help him in need, as well as all the mice, all the frogs try to assist in finding the castle Jack needs, at last, the birds discover it.

In other cases, each of the three may give the hero or heroine something, but only the third has the information necessary to them.

A great variety of other figures may also take this place and serve as a helper. In “Tom Tit Tot”, the heroine is aided by a supernatural creature, however, she had to guess his name at the end. There are a series of fairy tales related with the name of the helper in folklore of Europe and world folklore. This type of folk tales are investigated in Aarne-Tompson classification under the type 500 and called “Name of the Helper.”

In “Nix Nought Nothing” the giant carries a king over the river on his back and asks for Nix nought nothing for the pay. The king agrees, further it comes out to be the name of his own son.

In the folk tales of the world, an orphan girl is humiliated by her stepmother, forced to leave her home, and finally meets a magical old woman, it turns out that the rituals of serving spirits have a specific effect.

The hero may also meet up with several extraordinary men who will help him as in need. Each one has an ability, such as seeing things miles off, hearing things miles off, an extraordinary shot, ability to drink a river that allows them to fulfill the hero's tasks.

This magical helper is often loyal to the hero; the hero may fail many times after the initial test, often by not respecting the helper's advice. The helper may declare that the hero does not deserve his help after his disobedience, but still assists him.

Elves are another example of helpers in English folk tales. They keep the hero safe from harm, giving advice, or providing a means of rescue.

Giants are interpreted as unpleasant and cruel images in English fairy tales, but sometimes they are helpers like in the tale “Giants”.

Fairies are usually depicted in a positive light: they are usually of feminine gender and seen as winsome, dainty and tiny humans with wings, sometimes like a butterfly or angelic. The witch was overcome with the help of a fairy in “Allison Gross”. Succession of helpers in a quest is the essential motif in “Green sleeves” and “Nix Nought Nothing”. Bride helps her suitor (lover) to perform tasks in “Nox Nought Nothing”, “Green Sleeves” and “Swan Maidens”. Helpful deeds of brownie

or other domestic spirit are shown in “Billy Blind”, “Brownie”, “Puck”, “Silky”, “Luridan”, etc.

In Uzbek folk tales, the horse's tail, the lion's, the monkey's, the tiger's feathers, the snake's skin are interpreted as details with magical properties. For example, in the Uzbek fairy tale "The Hero and the Dragon", a lion, a jackal and a wolf pull out a sign from their feathers one by one. If a fairy-tale protagonist catches this feather when a difficult task befalls him, these creatures are portrayed to come and help in the blink of an eye.

There are traces of totemic views in the Uzbek people's fairy tale "The Lame Wolf". The patronage of the wolf to man is interpreted artistically in it. In the fairy tale, a lame wolf came as the young man, who had embarked on a long and arduous journey, went to the water's edge and ate a loaf of bread by touching the water. Fearing for his life, he gave half of the bread to the wolf. Grateful for this, the wolf accompanied the young man on his journey and tried to ease his difficulties. The wolf mounted the young man and took him six steps to “Borsa Khatar”, which was on a six-month journey. The young man enters the mysterious space directly with the help of the wolf and captures the mysterious things. Happiness and luck are achieved with the advice of the wolf.

The fairy tale also depicts the wolf's ability to evolve into the appearance of a blue dove. Because the ancients understood that when a person dies, his soul turns into a wolf or a bird. At this point, it is understood that the wolf patronized man as a totem ancestor. Belief in the totem animal as a protector is manifested in fairy tales in giving goats, oxen and roosters the qualities of a wise and enterprising animal, while the harmed animals are described as cowards. So, in this kind of fairy tales, this or that totem animal is the main character, he always does good, helps and plays a decisive role in the course of events. At the heart of this kind of fairy tale is the didactic idea of increasing the faith of the hunter or herdsman in certain animals, calling him sacred and not to kill him, strengthening confidence in his patron.

Conclusion. In general, in the fairy tales of the peoples of the world there are a number of strange creatures such as horses, rams, deer, deer, wolves, fish, camels, dogs, snakes, lions, which are interpreted as zoomorphic helpers who help the protagonist when needed. Until then, the protagonist is motivated to save their lives. In response to this human help, they also support the protagonist when necessary. The protagonist often uses magic to either rescue a loved one from magic, or capture some magical object, and so on.

To sum up, fairy tales often include magic, talking animals, or a touch of philosophy. Fairy tales don't always contain a moral, they can be pure entertainment, but often teach about consequences and values like kindness and patience. Helpers can be seen in most fairytales throughout the world. The helpers are often unnamed or anonymous, and provide help for no reward. The helper is important to the success of the quest or hero's journey. They may have different characteristics, specific features as they belong to different nations. However, the motif is similar – to give support, advice or a hand to people in need. Because, fairy tales advocate positive humanity and end in the exposure of the evil as a rule.

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