

Peculiarities of Transformation Motif in Uzbek Written Fairy Tales

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Abstract: Analysis of several works of famous Uzbek fairy tale writers shows that the transformation motif they use in their plots has some basic similarities from the position of core idea with the elements present in some traditional Uzbek folktales. The reason of such coincidence lies with the stability of moral values praised by Uzbek people for centuries. The preservation of cultural heritage results in creation of fairy tales that consider modern social changes but resemble traditional folktales from the position of the core message they are aimed to deliver.

Keywords: transformation motif, written fairy tales, Uzbek folktales, traditions and culture, moral values, commonality, difference.

Introduction. Transformation motif plays an important role in folklore-based written magic-fantasy fairy tales, and serves as one of the key elements for interconnecting the development of plot events. Using the said motif, heroes gain opportunity to shift shapes and forms, turn into various objects, animals, birds and etc., usually using magic. The main line in creating such tails has much in common with the traditional magic folktales, from the position of incorporating fictional metamorphosis into seemingly ordinary human life.

The comparison of transformation elements used in written fairy tales with the ones present in traditional folktales, reveals that despite the change of some fictional elements, the main concept of transformation motif remains quite the same. As could be seen from the examples below, the key methods of transformation, as well as the moral following in tale's conclusion, do not differ much from those often depicted in post popular Uzbek folktales.

Literature Review. Just as in many other nations, there is a big number of fairy tale writers in Uzbek literature as well. Their works are mainly addressed to children. One of such well-known Uzbek storytellers - Tursunboy Goyibov, widely implements transformation motif inherent in folktales into his works. For example, his "Bigfoot" fairy tale is based on the story of searching for the legendary Yeti. The story highlights people's belief in the existence of the Bigfoot. But at the end of the story it turns out that it is not a real creature, but a kid who once annoyed everyone with his laziness, greed and selfishness. He was the son of a store manager, and was sent to a wild hillside as a punishment by an old wizard for not apologizing for bad behavior. Living alone, in the wild, on a deserted mountain made him look like a Yeti. The boy was deeply remorseful for his actions and gained a chance to return to the people again due to making right conclusion.

Offending elderly people, and facing metamorphosis as a result of their curse is a typical form of transformation motif involving magicians, and the story above describes a case in which a kid was turned into a Yeti because of offending the old wizard. It can be seen that the writer has preserved the image of transformation resulting from curse, the old wizard

and the legendary creature, just as in Uzbek myths and folktales, however he used them creatively and in a form that teaches the readers a lesson. It should be noted that traditional folktales usually depict transformation into existing animals, or trees, and the introduction of Yeti in the story line highlights the modern nature of the plot.

This fairy tale also depicts the evolutionary processes undergone by the kid's character. And the old wizard's growth as high as a five-story building, and the description of his unusual appearance in details, might also be considered as the element of transformation motif. The image of a kid suddenly transferred to a far wild area by the old man, and covered with white fur are elements of magical transformation of the human body. So, readers find at least three forms of transformation motif in this story. While two of them are quite obvious and physical, the third one: the evolution of kid's views, is not that evident as a motif but very important for the tale's overall message.

In general, it is quite usual for Goyipov to depict in his tales the punishment of ignorant children through their transformation into various creatures. That's how the writer emphasizes the importance of education, implying that otherwise a person is nothing else but an unconscious creature. For example, in his "Greeting is the first word to say" the writer described transformation of a child into clay, thus sending a message that a person must live a meaningful life before he turns to clay, or dust. Here clay symbolizes death, and the transformation motif is used as a tool to emphasize the correlation between the person's behavior and the transient nature of life. Notable point about Goyipov's works is that they usually address issues of fostering, importance of zeal and differentiation of good from the bad.

For instance, Goyipov's "Giloskhon" (Cherry-girl) tells a story about a courageous girl raised from a cherry seed. The author was influenced by such famous Uzbek tales as "Nokhatpolvon", "Kulakboy", "Chinoqvoy", describing the struggle of small heroes and difficulties they meet in their lives. In "Giloskhon", the motif of transformation is used as a tool to highlight the fictional nature of the plot, but makes it in a manner that allows to draw parallels with the real-life situations.

Another well-known Uzbek writer, often using folktale-inspired transformation motifs in his works is Mahmud Murodov. His poetic tale, "The Most Valuable Thing", reveals the contradictions in characters of two children. One of them, named Ahmad, is a well-behaving and smart boy, while the other one – Toshmat, is his antagonist. Toshmat had many bad habits, for instance, he could throw bread on the ground after having a bite. While Ahmad appreciated bread and even collected grains from the ground to feed chickens and birds.

The message of the fairy tale is to teach children to value the bread which is described as "the most valuable thing", and even said to be more valuable than a diamond. When a magical stork turns the bread in Toshmat's hand into a diamond, the boy can't eat it, suffers and learns a lesson that the bread must be respected. Just like many folktales, the plot of this story might also sound a little naive, but an attentive reader can notice that it's not only about the bread, but also about the moral values correlating with the attitude to it. And the transformation motif here serves as the main element forcing Toshmat to make the right conclusion.

Another tale by Murodov - "Tilsim", praises the generosity of the Mother Nature. Here the image of Nature is enlivened in a generous rich man named Tabiatboy ("Nature-man")

whose wealth is huge and inexhaustible. But all of a sudden, another character named Toymasboy (Greedy-man) appears and makes Tabiatboy angry. As a result, Tabiatboy enchants many of his riches. And only Hayotboy (Life-man), helping people, can return the wealth into its original form. Finally, Tabiatboy and Hayotboy meet, and the enchanted valuables are returned to the people. This beautiful story utilizes transformation motif as a mean to address environmental, moral and social issues more vividly. Distinctive feature of this tale is the figurativeness of all of its characters, which is usually more intrinsic to ancient Uzbek folktales.

One more unusual form of transformation motif can be seen in Murodov's "Gulsum - Tabassum" tale in which whimsical girl's psyche underwent a serious metamorphosis. The girl's name was Gulsum and she used to cry very often, for that reason she had no friends at all. Even animals tried to run away from her. One day Gulsum went to the kindergarten with her mother. She didn't stop crying there either. As she wept, the sky got covered with clouds and it began raining heavily. Sensing this, other children asked Gulsum not to cry, and surprisingly, the day became bright as she stopped crying and smiled. That's how Gulsum realized that her smile was better than her tears, and stopped crying. Since that time everyone called her "Gulsum - tabassum" (Gulsum-smile). This short tale, although contains no elements of magic, includes a very interesting form of transformation motif, that not only links plot episodes, but also influences its overall message. And also, it should be noted that, the transformation of behavior is one of the most widespread forms of transformation motif used in folktales.

In the "Bird of Freedom" by Miraziz Azam, the author of many poetic literary tales, the beautiful wife of the protagonist butcher Nahang dies unexpectedly. The young man remains with a ten-year-old daughter named Olmos and an eight-year-old son named Olmas. Meanwhile, the enemy invades Nahang's country. Nahang forgets his pain and sets out to fight valiantly for the independence and freedom of his people. Fearful of his courage, the enemy plotted to seduce Nahang. In this regard, the story line of the "Bird of Freedom" resembles that of the legend of "Tomaris" and Alisher Navoi's epic "Farhod and Shirin" where marriage serves as a tool to gain control over certain territory.

Nahang becomes the victim of this trick, and influenced by his new wife kills his own son. However, his daughter Olmos collects her brother's bones, buries them under a red flower and sings a song to bring Olmas back to life as a bird. The boy resurrected in the body of a bird kills his father and stepmother, and starts a war with his stepmother's homeland. His sister also bravely participates that war, and after winning gets elected as the ruler of her nation.

Analysis. The motif of transformation of a child killed by own parents into a bird can be met in Uzbek folktales quite often ("Sparrow", "Blue Dove", etc.). And as a rule, the metamorphosis follows the act of burial of bones by siblings under a certain plant. Although, the birds embodying the child's soul can differ depending on the folktale (sparrow, dove, cuckoo), the main aim of such transformation is to take revenge on ones responsible for the murder.

Various forms of physical and psychological transformation are mixed in "The Tale of the Kidnapped Hero", a fairy tale, written in a traditional Uzbek epic folktale style by a well-known children's poet Anvar Obidjon. The protagonists of the tale are Durbekshah, a thirty-

year-old ruler of a prosperous country called Bagli, and his beloved companion Aykhan, who is unmatched in riding and hunting. They had no kids for a long time and finally, after many prayers, Aykhan gave birth to a child. The prince was named Khurbek. Durbekshah was very happy and held a great celebration. Meanwhile, Durbekshah's bitter enemy Sharmanshah, joined forces with a witch named Kekbu, and planned to make him suffer. The witch had a "magic mirror" through which she was able to see the events happening in the land of Bagli, also she had an ability to turn into various creatures. By turning into an eagle, a pigeon and a louse Kekbu reached Bagli and entered the palace. Then she turned into a parrot and greeted the king. The king liked the parrot and placed it in a golden cage in his son's room. One night Kekbu turned into a mosquito, escaped the cage, and by transforming into an eagle kidnapped the child and left the palace unnoticed. The child was brought to Sharmanshah, renamed as Hashrash, and has grown into a strong and brave man knowing nothing about his parents.

After losing his son, Durbekshah, became ill and died fifteen years later. Sharmanshah, who was waiting for his death, made an attempt to invade his rival's lands. But the population of Bagli resisted, so he had to ask young and strong Hashrash to join the war. The young warrior entered the battle and began to win. But at some point he meets his mother Ayhan fighting against him, and recognizes her by the triangular ring she had on her finger, shaped exactly as the mark on Hashrash's shoulder. The plot of this tale emphasizes that the transformation of good to evil and evil to good may occur according to very complicated laws of life, corresponding to the proverb stating that every coin has two sides.

Another skillfully used case of transformation motif can be seen in "White Swallow" poetic tale by famous writer from Bukhara Sadriddin Salimov. According to the plotline, the White Swallow saves a young girl, whose freedom and rights have been violated, from oppression, and the girl also turns into a swallow and flies with her savior to Gijduvan region. The metamorphosis described in the story figuratively reflects the transformation of pure soul into a swan, symbolizing freedom and chastity.

Similar transformation motif can be seen in D. Abdurakhimova's fairy tale "The Orphan's Happiness", where a wizard turns a woman into a crane. And her son disenchant his mother by playing a magic flute.

Discussion. One more element of transformation motif deserving consideration is depicted in the "Lesson in the Dream" fairy tale included in the "Children will save the world" collection by Kavsar Turdieva. It is about a boy named Bashar, who gave everyone nicknames. One day, hurrying down the street, he stumbled upon a hundred-year-old magician and shoved him over. Watching the old man falling on his back, the boy laughed and shouted, "Look at that myna, looking like a vulture", thus giving him a nickname. Suddenly the old man's eyes lit up and the city seemed to tremble. The old man said, "You have made fun of me, so I'll punish you. Whatever nickname you give to a person, he will turn into it!". But Bashar didn't pay attention to old man's words. Then, one day he opened his eyes in the morning and saw that his brothers were gone. Instead he saw a poplar tree in the room. The same situation was in his classroom. Bashar understood everything and started to cry. After a while bewitched classmates attacked and imprisoned him. Poor kid was sorry for what he had done and impatiently waited for the old man to show up in the window. And one day he saw a myna bird, and the bird told him that it used to be an old man before, but was enchanted by Bashar's words as well, and now can't help him to disenchant others. After hearing myna's

words Bashar lost his consciousness. But when he opened his eyes he realized that it was just a dream and vowed never to nickname others again. This fairytale describes the transformation motif appearing as a result of curse, which is quite usual for Uzbek folktales as was mentioned above. The conclusion of the story is shaped by the behavioral metamorphosis following the physical transformation, thus the fairy tale incorporates both types of transformation motif closely interconnected.

Dream-related transformation can also be seen in "The Mysterious Gate" fairy tale, where the protagonist named Alijon, being under impression of what he had seen in a historical museum, travels to the past, meets famous people and participates various adventures in his dream. The noticeable thing about the transformation motif used in this tale is that it relates to the transformation of time, while in previously mentioned stories the objects of transformation were mainly people.

Invisibility obtained by the help of magical objects (wand, stick, hat, cloak, etc.), invented or found medicines (pill, solution, powder, etc.), or magical powers of third parties (witch, genie, wizard, etc.) can also be considered as one of the forms of transformation motif widely used in fairytales around the world. In Uzbek written fairy tales such motif is brilliantly used in "The Invisible Child" tale, where a kid named Qobiljon tries to benefit his invisibility powers and fails. After being unmasked by a wizard, a ashamed kid begins to study hard and finally becomes a disciple of the magician. The message of the tale is that a work done without thinking will always lead to negative consequences. The utilized transformation motif is a classical form of invisibility-related metamorphosis. Similar forms of transformation motif can be seen in Khayritdin Tukhtaboyev's "Riding the Yellow Giant" and "Death of the Yellow Giant".

Conclusion. So, as it can be seen from the information above, the transformation motif helps to reveal the realities of life through creating mythopoetic images and thus enhancing the impact of the work. However, from the works analyzed it can be concluded that the usage of the transformation motif in written Uzbek fairy tales is quite similar to the one in traditional folktales. Writers of children's tales come up with amazingly original ideas, thinking out new the heroes and objects of transformation that grasp the readers' attention entirely, and they adapt their works to social changes as well. But despite the wide diversity of forms in which this motif is utilized, the core functions of the motif are usually based on the plotline resembling some of the famous folktales of Uzbek nation. This is probably due to the fact that the moral values that were historically praised in Uzbek culture, and served as a basis for folktales creation, hadn't changed much for the past centuries. Just as our ancestors, modern writers create tales that highlight the importance of education and love to the Motherland, veneration of old people and parents, and the belief that evil forces are always weaker than the good ones. And till these universal values remain unchanged, they will continue to be used, along with the transformation motif, as the core element of any fairy tale aimed at educating younger generations.

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