



FOLKLORE EXAMPLES OF WANDERING IMAGES

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the wandering images in the folklore of the world's peoples. The aesthetic aspects and reasons for such migration are highlighted.

INTRODUCTION. Folklore samples are not merely creative products created for entertainment and aesthetic pleasure; they manifest the way of thinking, psychology, and genetics of a particular people. Abdurauf Fitrat wrote about this field, which is considered the unique foundation of literature, in his work "Rules of Literature": "...the essence that distinguishes folk literature from 'literature' is not its unwritten nature, but its spirit. It is simple, natural, and appealing to the majority." [1; 82-83-p] Just as every nation has its own uniqueness in oral creativity, there are also instances of mutual influence, such as the transfer of plots or characters. In this process, the migrating objects can manifest in the genres of a specific nation's oral creativity or in the creations of various folklores. Folklore works primarily reflect the customs, desires, and ideals of their creators (a particular people or nation). When discussing universal characters, commonalities such as migrating plots (migration theory), archetypes, clichés (epic templates), motifs, and transformations come to mind. One of the main characteristics of folklore is traditionalism, which is also related to the migration of characters. The migration of characters primarily manifests in folklore. For example, characters like the one-eyed old woman, the three brothers, the old man and woman, the fairy, and the princess frequently appear in Uzbek folk tales and legends, while images such as the white apple, red apple, mulberry, dark-haired beloved, and black crow are often mentioned in folk songs. It is appropriate to use terms like migratory characters, wandering characters, and universal characters in relation to such images.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

For instance, the **Simurgh** bird, which frequently appears in tales and epics, is found in the mythology of many nations and is referred to by various names: Qaqnus, Zumrudianka, Phoenix, Humo, and Anqo bird, among others. The sacred book of Zoroastrianism, the "Avesta," also mentions a mythical bird named Varang, whose feathers and even bones are



described as bringing good fortune, which in some aspects resembles the Simurgh. In the sixteenth chapter of "Baxran yasht," it is stated:

This feather is good for us,
Of the powerful Varang,
The last of the strong bird —
It is even magical [2; 72-p].

From this, it can be said that the epic plots regarding the magical assistance of birds in folklore were influenced by animistic beliefs during the Zoroastrian period. Myths, legends, and tales related to this bird are found in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and even China. The Simurgh bird is also described as the most worthy candidate for kingship in the works of Alisher Navoi, "Lison ut-tayr," and Farididdin Attar's "Mantiq ut-tayr." In "Lison ut-tayr," when the birds are looking for a king and are puzzled because they cannot find one, the Hoopoe describes the Simurgh, stating that it lives on Mount Qaf, is also called Anqo, and is renowned throughout the world by the name Simurgh, acknowledging it as follows:

The king of all birds is he,
Aware of your state, oh, my dear.
He is close to you, yet far from you,
The connection is a game, but for you, it is separation.
Each feather has a hundred beautiful colors,
Yet in every color, there is a hundred strange patterns.[3;24-p]

The depiction of this image as a king appears in the literature of several nations. For example, in Chinese mythology, although the naming and structure of this bird are described somewhat differently, it is very similar to the Simurgh in its characteristics. This bird is called **Feng Huang** in Chinese and is depicted as the king of all birds ruling over East Asia. In Chinese, "**feng**" means "male" and "**huang**" means "yellow." This bird, which symbolizes happiness, is described in a hybrid form, meaning its tail is colorful and resembles the feathers of a peacock, while its chest and head appear similar to that of a heron. Due to its characteristics resembling the phoenix, it is also referred to as the "Red Bird of the South" and the "Western Phoenix."

Another bird found in Chinese legends is called **Jing Wei**, depicted as the spirit of a girl named Nu Wa, who drowned in the sea. According to the legend, the spirit that turned into a bird protects people from drowning in the sea. Since she herself drowned, she is portrayed as angry with the sea, trying to fill it with stones, and as a helper who saves those who have sunk. Another bird in Chinese mythology is called **Peng**, which is described as very large and can transform into a fish when necessary; this bird appears in several Chinese folk legends.

Looking at examples from world literature, the migration of archetypal images is primarily evident in folk oral traditions. For instance, the image of **Kayqubad** frequently appears in the mythology of the Iranian peoples. Additionally, in Abulqasim Firdausi's "Shahnameh," he is mentioned as the founder of the Kayani dynasty and a just king. For this reason, the image of Kayqubad is depicted as a ruler in the epic "Alpomish," where he falls in love with Toychikhan's daughter, Tovkaoyim, and presents himself as a simple shepherd, a name given to him by the people. In the epic, when Alpomish addresses Tovkaoyim, he emphasizes her foreign origin:



"Your connection to Kayqubad is necessary,
Both of you are longing for each other.
The words of lovers come like this,
From a distant land that has come to seek you,
Emerging from the Chin-Mochin valley." [4; 351-p]

It is known that there is a need to study folklore samples in collaboration with fields such as dialectology and musicology. In this regard, ethnography also holds significant importance. A particular nation depicts its heroes in genres such as myth, legend, fairy tale, and song, based on its national mentality and aspirations. Therefore, these ideal images migrate from story to story and from joke to joke. That is, the people want to see their beloved hero not in just one work but in dozens of works. Sometimes, these images can also migrate from the folklore of one nation to another. For example, the character **Hitar Petar** is a universal comic figure found in Bulgarian and Macedonian folklore. This character is portrayed in jokes as a poor peasant, lazy, yet cunning enough to outsmart unjust officials. In some jokes, the Hitar Petar character appears as clever and resourceful, while in others, he is depicted as a buffoon or simpleton, creating a light atmosphere of laughter. In this regard, Hitar Petar is compared to the character Nasreddin Afandi (also known as Khoja Nasreddin, Nasreddin Khoja, Mulla Nasreddin), which appears in the folklore of Turkic peoples, including Turkish, Uzbek, Karakalpak, Kazakh, and Azerbaijani jokes. Bulgarian director and screenwriter Alexander Vazov (1900-1972) created the film "Nasreddin Khoja and Hitar Petar" in 1939. In this film, the role of Hitar Petar was played by actor Asen Kamburov, while Stayan Bachvarov played the role of Nasreddin Khoja. Russian screenwriter Leonid Solovyov (1906-1962) also wrote a trilogy about the adventures of Nasreddin Khoja between 1940 and 1954: "The Disturber of the Peace" and "The Enchanted Prince." Based on these works, a film shot in 1942 depicts the adventures of Nasreddin Afandi taking place in the city of Bukhara.

RESULTS

Nasreddin Hodja, a figure in Turkish literature, is said to have lived in the regions of Aksehir and Hortu (a village located in Konya) during the Anatolian Seljuk period between 1208 and 1284. The oldest source attributed to Nasreddin Hodja is the work "Saltukname" created by Abulhayr Rumi in 1480, where three anecdotes related to Hodja Nasreddin are mentioned. However, it has been mentioned that in the work, the stories (anecdotes) of Nasreddin Hodja are compiled.[5; Mehmet Dursun Erdem, Saltuk Gazi Destani, I, II, III, Destan] The "Saltukname" is the result of Abulhayr Rumi's seven-year effort, created based on materials gathered from Turkish oral tradition, with a manuscript of this work being published in 1591 and currently preserved in the library of the Topkapi Palace Museum in Turkey under number 1612.

Characters who wander in folk tales are found in various literatures of different cultures. For example, the **Till Eulenspiegel** character in German folklore is also a wandering prankster in 14th-century literary examples. The name of this hero in German is sometimes pronounced as "Ulenspeigel," where "ulen" refers to entry and "spegel" refers to exit, indicating his simplicity. In the amusing stories of German folklore, Till Eulenspiegel is portrayed as the main hero. Thus, each culture has its own humorous hero, a master, someone.



Another notable playful character found in folklore is **Giufa**, a comedic character in Italian folklore. This character is present in amusing anecdotes and stories related to the people of Southern Italy and Sicily. **Jirenshe Sheshen** is also a quirky character related to Kazakh oral tradition, known by names such as Chirenche Chechen in Kyrgyz, and Yikrenche in Turkmen folktales. **Injili Chavush** is considered one of the significant characters of Turkish humor culture, with his real name being Mustafo Chovush. Although portrayed as the main hero in humorous stories and anecdotes, during the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century, he was said to have lived during the reign of Sultan Ahmed I and buried at the Edirnekapi Cemetery in Istanbul. History notes that he was sent as an envoy during the reign of Murad IV, engaged in diplomatic dialogues with Shah Abbas I to improve Turkish-Persian relations due to his activities in Baghdad.[6;162-p] The stories about this character describe him being rewarded with "Injili" (meaning pearl) for winning a reading competition, while in another tale, his pursuit of pearls earned him the name. An Uzbek folk tale illustrates Injili Chovush's responsibility:

During the era of Persian diplomacy, Shah Abbas wished to demonstrate the grandeur of his palace and magnificence to Injili Chovush and his companions. The throne had precious emerald and pearl encrusted golden goblets. A large gold bowl with a hypnotizing gemstone was placed on the tray. The hosts introduced the Turkish envoy to the palace, deceiving him by exchanging the valuable, extraordinary bowl from one room to another. They wanted the esteemed guests to believe that the palace contained such precious bowls in all its rooms. After his journey, Shah Abbas asked Injili Chovush:

- Have you seen our palace, have you admired it?
- Your palace is very grand and magnificent; we didn't finish exploring it. Yes, we have admired it greatly; your bowl also fascinated us; it fascinated us as we made our way around.[7;Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi]

Similar character representations, such as Birbol from Indian folklore, Aldarko'sa from Kazakh folklore, Mirali from Turkmen folklore, Juxa from Arabian folklore, and Afandi from Uzbek folklore, are also found in stories. The cunning and wit of these characters in dealing with kings and rulers are portrayed in a similar manner.

William Tell (in German: Wilhelm Tell, in French: Guillaume Tell) is considered a legendary Swiss hero who is believed to have lived in the 13th or early 14th century. This character is depicted in stories as a skilled archer, particularly noted for his bravery in the struggle to free Switzerland from Austrian domination. The famous Austrian writer Stefan Zweig also mentions this character in his novel "Clarissa."

DISCUSSION

Another character from European fairy tales is the orphan girl who suffers at the hands of her stepmother and ultimately finds happiness by marrying a prince. This storyline appears in over 550 versions across Europe. Known as Cinderella in English, Aschenbrodel or Aschenputtel in German, Zolushka in Russian, and Kulkedisi in Turkish, this character is associated with a tale that dates back to the 9th century and is considered a Chinese folk tale. In various versions of the story, the prince recognizes the girl by her glass slipper, golden slipper, silver slipper, or sometimes a ring. In "One Thousand and One Nights," the prince identifies her by the anklets worn by Arab girls.[8;



<https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BClkedisi>] Here, instead of small feet, slender ankles are presented as the standard of beauty. Such variations may arise from social relations, connections between peoples, or the appeal of the storyline. Although the essence is similar and there are not many differences in the plot or character portrayal, it is evident from the above example that each nation has adapted the fairy tale details to fit its own context and values.

The character of **Gershasp** is also a migratory figure in folklore and written literature. This character first appears in the myths of the "Avesta" under the name Kereshasp.[9;56-p] In the section titled "Xvarno alqovi," it describes how Kereshasp heroically defeats a monstrous serpent. In oral tradition, we frequently encounter this name, and it is expressed that this character, who fights against evil forces, does not succumb to death. The Gershasp character later transitioned into written literature, where it is mentioned as a descendant of the legendary Jamshidshoh in Ferdowsi's "Shahnameh." Abu Mansur Ali ibn Ahmad (Asadi Tusiy), who lived and worked in Azerbaijan, also created the epic "Gershaspnoma" in 1066, consisting of 145 chapters.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the migration of characters like those mentioned above occurs for the following reasons:

- I. As a result of social connections between peoples;
- II. Due to the aesthetic appeal of a creation that resonates with everyone, leading to its spread across regions;
- III. The popularity of a historical or fictional character in a specific nation's folklore, which elevates them to the status of a national hero.

The migration of such characters is also found in written literature, but these transitions are primarily manifested in oral traditions.

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