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THE REFLECTION OF REALITY IN UZBEK FOLK TALES

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ABSTRACT

In this article, it is given the criteria for reflecting the reality of the genres in Uzbek folklore and the issue of time and space in Uzbek folk tales. The problems of epic space in fairy tales have been sufficiently studied in a number scientific works of Uzbek folklorists and have been drawn certain conclusions.

KEY WORDS: *Time and space, genres of Uzbek folklore, homeland, country, home, place, town, village, place, concepts such as area, epic space.*

The methodology of teaching folk oral literature in primary education is recognized as one of the sources and tools that ensure the effectiveness of the process of students' moral and ethical upbringing. This approach has retained its importance even in the context of the globalization of education. Additionally, the methodology for teaching folk oral literature in primary grades is seen as an essential resource for developing students' oral and written communication skills, creative thinking abilities, reading habits, and speech culture. Studying folk oral literature and the genres of Uzbek folklore, as well as examining the criteria by which they reflect reality, allows for an exploration of the spiritual world, cultural, moral-ethical, and artistic-aesthetic views of the people [1].

In particular, it plays a significant role in identifying and enriching the foundations of independence ideology and national spirituality, in fostering and strengthening the sense of homeland in young hearts, in cultivating a sense of justice and bravery, and in promoting peace and goodness. Space, as one of the objective and real forms of existence, can be defined as the place where events and phenomena occur, and where subjects act. In speech, it is represented by concepts such as land, homeland, country, house, palace, city, village, place, and square. The space depicted in magical fairy tales is characterized by both reality and extraordinariness. It represents the place where events and phenomena unfold, and where characters act. In Uzbek magical fairy tales, the events of the plot develop within an epic space, with all characters operating within this realm. The events of the tale begin, develop, and conclude within this spatial framework.

The issues of epic space in fairy tales have been thoroughly studied in a number of scientific works by Uzbek folklorists, and certain conclusions have been drawn. Space in fairy tales is manifested not as a philosophical category, but rather in the form of an epic phenomenon. Nevertheless, both are reflected in a unified whole. Epic space, as an inseparable part of philosophical space, has its own unique characteristics [2].

These characteristics are related to the national life of our ancestors, their worldview, and their perception and understanding of the world. Various events occur in the epic space used in magical fairy tales. During the course of the fairy tale, each plot event has its own space, more precisely, its own microspace. Epic space initially appears in the initial formula (opening) section of the fairy tale plot. The epic space in the opening of the fairy tale is depicted in its unique artistic forms. In other words, the spaces that appear in the plot events are distinct from each other. Firstly, they are expressed in accordance with the nature of the magical fairy tale. For example, the spaces in the opening of this type of tale are rarely used in other genres of folklore, particularly, the epic space used in the opening of a magical fairy tale does not appear in epics. The beginning of plot events in magical fairy tales after the introductory formulas is a typological phenomenon. As a result, the interpretations of epic spaces are also depicted in similar, general forms. Nonetheless, they also stand out with their unique aspects. The elements of the initial (opening) epic space are initially presented in an indefinite form that does not convey reality, such as in expressions like "Once upon a time..." ("The Ring of the Snake King"), which convey uncertainty. This ambiguity of the epic space serves as one of the distinctive characteristics that define the magical fairy tale as a genre and draws the listener into the world of the magical fairy tale. The expression of the initial space in vague forms gradually changes and becomes clearer in subsequent sentences. That is, the epic space is no longer associated with elements that convey uncertainty but rather with elements that bring reality into focus. "Once upon a time, in an ancient city" ("The Ring of the Snake King"), "In an ancient country" ("The Forty Snakes"), "At the foot of the Alatau lived an old man and an old woman".

"It is evident that the subsequent elements of epic space convey not ambiguity but rather clarity (for instance, "a boy lived in a certain city") and vitality. Therefore, in the openings of Uzbek magical fairy tales, spaces are depicted in both clear and ambiguous forms (realistic and indefinite). They establish traditional micro and macro spaces in the structure of the tale [2].

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In Uzbek magical fairy tales, some spaces are named with specific geographical terms. In her research dedicated to the poetics of folk epics, scholar S. Mirzaeva writes: in folk tales, especially in romantic epics, the epic space does not correspond geographically to real places...

Consequently, attempting to replace these spaces with actual cities or places misinterprets the nature of the artistic conventions in folk epics. Often, these epic spaces are famous cities or countries that have left a mark on the history of human culture, with the events of the tale occurring in these spaces. For example, in the beginning of the Uzbek magical fairy tale titled "The Dark-Haired Fairy," the plot events take place "in ancient times, in the land of Sham". The plot events within the epic space occur in the countries of Iran and Sham, which were legendary locations well-known between the East and West and played significant roles in ancient cultural, social, and economic development. The use of these historical countries and cities as epic spaces in folk tales is intertwined with the conventions of storytelling. The naming of epic space with geographical or legendary terms aims to clarify the setting of the tale's events. In "The Ring of the Snake King", a wealthy merchant tells his son, 'Tomorrow, I will send you to the city of Rum for trading," and gives him a thousand coins. Here, the term "Rum" does not indicate a specific city but rather refers to the land of Byzantium. Rum is a legendary city and is commonly mentioned in tales. In The Dark-Haired Fairy, the epic heroes Prince Nadir and Qadir take the Dark-Haired Fairy to the city of Rum. At the beginning of the tale, events unfold in the land of Sham, and by the end, they conclude again in the city of Sham.

Thus, the plot events unfold within the framework of epic spaces related to the cities of Sham and Rum. In Uzbek magical fairy tales, locations are often named after cities where Uzbeks have traditionally lived, and the main events also take place in these epic spaces. For example, in the tale "Muqbil the Stone-Thrower," it is said, "There was a beautiful daughter of the Amir of Bukhara". In "Bektemir the Hero," the story mentions, "Long ago, in the direction of Ferghana, there was a ruler named Odil Khan". Similarly, in "Prince Salmon," the opening states, "Long ago, in the land of Khorezm, there was a king".

The use of geographical toponyms in fairy tales indicates their significant role in the spiritual and social life of the people. Additionally, ancient foreign locations are also used in tales. The presence of places like Rum and Egypt in Uzbek fairy tales indicates that there were cultural and economic ties between nations. Thus, it is worth noting the presence of foreign-related epic micro-locations in Uzbek folk tales. These epic micro-locations include culturally and educationally significant regions such as Rum, Egypt, Iran, Turan, India, and China. Nearly every tales events take place in these named epic spaces and conclude there.

In "Bektemir the Hero," the epic hero lives in the area of Ferghana and falls in love with Aqbilak at first sight, then sets off to Egypt to find her. The events start and end in the same place, meaning that Bektemir and Aqbilaks wedding takes place in Ferghana. In the tale "Tagrimtash," events unfold across various locations, and in the end, the epic characters return from the land of the demons to their own homeland, the city of Mashhad. In the story "Momir and Somir," the king lives "in the land of Turkmenistan," and by fate, "the fiery Somir of the Turkmen king marries the daughter of the king of India". After the celebration, "the king, with his two sons, daughter-in-law, and the entire army, returns to his own people". In "The Dark-Haired Fairy," after a forty-day celebration, Nodir and the prince depart from the foreign land and return to their homeland.

This recurring theme of returning home from foreign lands is common in many tales and has become a tradition, symbolizing the sense of homeland among the tales heroes. It shows that a sense of loyalty to ones land and a feeling of homeland have long existed among our ancestors and are expressed in Uzbek folk tales. Thus, the sense of homeland is exceedingly strong in folk tales. Loving and protecting ones country, as well as being loyal to it, emerges as one of the main themes of Uzbek folk tales. No matter where the hero goes, what he does, or what dreams he fulfills, he eventually longs for his homeland and returns to it. In the tales, events begin in the epic space of the homeland and conclude there. In Uzbek magical fairy tales, epic space appears in unique forms, and plot events take place in these spaces. The epic spaces can be categorized as follows.

Epic place	Sky	City, fortress, motherland
	On the road	Mountain, hill
	Under the	Desert, glance
	Road	Sea, cave and others

Epic space consists of macro-spaces like the sky, surface, and underground. These spaces, in turn, encompass micro-spaces

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where plot events unfold. We consider locations such as cities, fortresses, mountains, caves, deserts, steppes, rivers, riverbanks, and orchards as micro-spaces where the plot events occur.

The characters in fairy tales live in specific locations according to their status and responsibilities. Kings, merchants, and wealthy craftsmen live in cities and fortresses, as in "After a few days, the hero approached the rich mans fortress" ("The Ring of the Serpent King"). Poor people generally live on riverbanks or in the steppe: "The old mans hut was in a deserted, remote place" ("The Fiery Hero"). Mythological characters (such as demons and witches) reside in mountains, caves, and wells. We can say that the sky, surface, underground, underwater, and dream-world locations are the realms of fairy-tale characters. Epic spaces differ in their meaning, structural form, main function, and role within the plot. In ancient Turkic myths, the heavens were the domain of sky gods and cruel people, while the underground was the realm of evil spirits, such as demons, dragons, and old witches. In magical fairy tales, the surface of the earth is considered a vast space.

However, an analysis of Khorezm fairy tales shows that this concept is not always accurate. The use of topographical beginnings as a separate artistic formula is one of the traditional poetic phenomena of fairy-tale construction. According to our findings, a purely traditional topographical beginning exists in only two of the Khorezm fairy tales. For example, in "To the south of the Amu Darya, four demons lived, scaring everyone, stealing livestock, and fleeing to their hiding place. When the jackal howled a little to the east, there lived a man named Shamrot who would run home in fear ("Shamrot the Coward")". This traditional beginning is based on a model of topographical markers and biographical information, where the place where the fairy tale events occur is localized through a specific geographical term. This way, the listener is encouraged to believe in the reality of the events narrated in the fairy tale.

In the second instance mentioned, the topographical marker is given in a general manner, with the vague concept of an epic space interpreted through the phrase "in one land": "Once upon a time, in one land, there was a lone bald hero without parents or family ("The Bald Hero")". Most Khorezm fairy tales feature a mixed type of traditional beginning, known as a universal opening that simultaneously includes biographical, chronological, and topographical information. The compositional structure of this type of beginning is generally based on the poetic expression of artistic formulas in a consistent order: "affirmation-negation and again affirmation-negation formula" ("There was, there wasnt; there was hunger, there was plenty"), the expression of the time when the events took place ("a long time ago, etc."), and biographical information about the fairy-tale characters ("there was an old man and an old woman")".

"In Khorezm fairy tales, the mixed type of traditional opening with topographical markers generally consists of oasis toponyms. Place names like Khorezm, Urgench, Amu Darya, Khazorasp, and Suleiman Fortress are used in these tales: "Once upon a time, long ago in Khorezm, there lived an old man ("Loyalty")", "Once upon a time, long ago, there lived a poor but skillful young patchworker named Alouddin in the fortress of Solomon ("The Wise Mother and the Foolish King")". Sometimes, the setting of the tale is generalized and expressed vaguely: "Once upon a time, in ancient times, in the very center of their home, there lived two people ("The Crafty Monkey")".

In some forms of the mixed type of traditional opening, a confirmation-negation poetic model appears, starting with a direct chronological marker: "Long ago, far, far away, in this world, there lived two brothers ("The Brothers")"; "In ancient times, near Old Urgench, there was a king named Odilshah, blessed with power, a strong army, and content with his land ("Torabekhonim and Sultan Sanjar")". This traditional opening, based on rhyme, provides complete information about the time and place of the events, the epic qualities of the hero, and his social status. This epic information prepares the listener for the tale and captures their attention toward the events that occurred in Odilshahs country.

In the mixed type of traditional opening, the epic time of the events is expressed based on imaginative fiction. We previously reviewed the forms of chronological markers like "a long time ago". Such language units serve to express the time of the tales events in a generalized manner. The above reflections can be summarized as follows: The texts of Khorezm folk tales predominantly consist of traditional openings, with no full poetic form of the initial formula, characteristic of the broader Uzbek folk narrative, that is unrelated to the tales plot. This is one of the poetic features that indicate the unique compositional structure of Khorezm fairy tales. In Khorezm fairy tales, traditional openings of biographical, chronological, topographical, descriptive, and mixed types are used. Each of these opening types has its own poetic expression and aesthetic functions. The traditional opening provides information about the epic time and space in which the events occur, introduces characters into the sequence of events, and artistically describes the tales heroes.

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