



VERSATILITY IN VERSIONS OF EPIC NOVELS ABOUT “YUSUF AND ZULAYKHO” (“JOSEPH AND ZULEYKHA”)

Jumaeva Dilnoza Tursunpulatovna
Teacher of the Department of
“Languages and Literature”,
Uzbek State Institute of Arts and Culture

ABSTRACT

The article comparatively examines the issue of versatility in a literature piece in the translation of Abd ar-Rahman Jami's “Yusuf and Zulaykho” (“Joseph and Zuleykha”) by Muhammadrizo Agahi, in addition to series of epics by Durbek, Mirza Alim Devona and Holis and Nurmuhhammad Andalib's story on the same topic. As a result of a comparative analysis among the abovementioned, it has been concluded that any kinds of variations in artistic work is not a subject for the creation of a new piece. Versatility in a literary work should be assessed as a change in ideas, suggestions, the system composition, plot, characters, creative style and genre. It was estimated that these works are different in composition, plot, creative style and genre. The results of the comparative analysis are theoretically generalized.

KEYWORDS: *Yusufnama (tales about Joseph), dastan (epic story), translation, plot, composition, course of events, version, interpretation, comparative analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

The most frequently used plot in the literature of the Muslim East is the story of “Yusuf and Zulaykho”. The works on the basis of this plot have been created for very long time, taking place in various spaces and belong to a wide geographical area, as well as the participation of authors of different categories and strata, manifested in different ideological content, different artistic interpretations and views. This is not unique issue for only the plot of “Yusuf and Zulaykho”. There are many series of such works in the world literature, which are called “transferred plots”. As the word *variant* (French: “variante”, Latin: “varians” – to change, differentiate) represents different meanings in different areas of science. When described from a literary point of view, it is a view of a particular work of art that has undergone certain alterations. However, it should be kept in mind that a certain part of a work of art containing novelty alone does not mean that a new version of it has been created. It should be acknowledged that a variant is created only when the change occurs in the *idea, theme, interpretation, composition, plot, system of imagery, creative style and genre*. Sometimes the appearance of a work, which has changed as a result

of editing a line, paragraph or chapter, is also interpreted as a variant¹. Such alterations of the texts – variants correspond to the textual criticism. The comparative analysis of the epics written by Abdurahmon Jami (translated by Agahi), Durbek, Mirzo Alim Devona and Kholis, as well as the story of Nurmuhhammad Andalib, written in the plot of “Yusuf and Zulaykho” allows us to draw important conclusions in terms of variability.

RESOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

At the time of writing this article is a manuscript of the epic “Yusuf and Zulaykho” by Abdurahmon Jami, translated by Muhammad Rizo Agahi in the XIX century, stored in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan under inventory number 809 and a copy published in 2018 by Professor Nurboy Jabborov [1, 307- 612], Durbek 1959 edition of “Yusuf and Zulaykho”, Mirza Alim Devona's epic “Ravzai asror” in the fund of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan 1338 inventory number The manuscript of the epic “Yusuf and

¹ Literary encyclopedic dictionary. - Moscow: Soyuznaya encyclopedia. 1987. - p. 102.



Zulaykho" is kept in the department of rare books of the Samarkand State University Scientific Library under inventory number 824261 and the lithography of Nurmuhhammad Andalib's story "Yusuf Zulaykhoi turkiy" was published in 1915 in the lithography "Asia" in Tashkent. The fact that most of the essays discussed in the article are primary sources, some auxiliary sources were involved in the study of variability, the opinions of experts who conducted research on this topic were used and discussed with them where necessary, are the factors that ensured the analysis and conclusions.

In writing the article, scientific methods such as comparative-historical, comparative-typological, descriptive, which have been tested in the study of primary sources of Oriental literature, have been used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Second place according to possessing several variants of the same texts after "Yusuf and Zulaykho" in Persian and Turkish literature belongs to the epic story of "Layli and Mejnun". Its famous versions were created by such poets as Nizami Genjevi, Khusrav Dehlevi, Abdurahmon Jami, Alisher Navai, Muhammad Fuzuli, Nuriddin Andalib. In addition to those, it is well known that much many poets have written on this subject, as well. The basis of the epic, which consists of stories about a girl named Layli and young men who were in love with her, which existed among the Arab before Nizami Ganjavi, confirms this idea.

The story of Yusuf (p.b.u.h.), which is based on a religious source, later attracted the attention of great representatives of Turkish literature. Hundreds of works of art have been created in various forms of prose and poetry. Talented creators have further enriched the Qur'anic theme using their own skills and inspiration. They created true masterpieces. This great cultural heritage left by our ancestors is an everlasting treasure of our spirituality. It should be noted that "the introduction of Qur'anic themes into world and Uzbek literature in particular is not only from a religious point of view, but also clarifies for us the abstract aspects of Eastern literature, reveals the sources of various literary themes and connects modern Uzbek literature with Islamic literature. It has also helped to re-establish close ties with our national identity and traditional values."²

The theme of Yusuf and Zulaykha became widespread and a favorite work of literature for a lot of people sometimes in the form of a story, sometimes in a narrative, and sometimes in the form of an epic. Those Yusufnamas (stories about

Yusuf) can be divided into two groups according to their formal structure:

Yusufnamas of the first group are valuable as masterpiece examples of art, even though basing on an existing tradition. Qasim Ferdowsi, Qul Ali, Shayyod Hamza, Durbek, Abd ar-Rahman Jami and Alim Devona's works are prominent illustrations for this.

The works of the second group were written in a prose, enriching the series of Yusufnamas with a new literary genre. A vivid example of this can be Abu Ali ibn Sina's (Avicenna's) "Qissai Yusuf" ("Story of Yusuf")³, Rabg'uziy's "Story of Yusuf Siddiq (p.b.u.h.)" and Andalib's "Yusuf and Zulaykho". The stories reflect creative intentions, dreams, divine-mystical cognition and literary-life experiences of each writer.

The enumerated yusufnamas are even more valuable to the reader as they convey the truths of ancient history. Among them the stories of Abd ar-Rahman Jami, Durbek, Mirza Alim Devana and Nurmuhhammad Andalib are quite prominent with a unique artistic interpretation of Qur'anic story. The above-mentioned writers, on the example of their literary experiences, laid the foundation for the tradition of creating large-scale works based on the story of Yusuf and Zulaykho.

Every time writers start creating a new work based on the legends about Yusuf and Zulaykho, they base on a series of life events about the heroes. They make certain changes to the plot based on their creative goals. The main storyline reproduces the followings:

1. Yusuf (Jopseph) is the most beloved son of his father Ya'qub (Jacob), which emergence jealousy of all his brothers.
2. A dream story that foretells the future of Yusuf (Jopseph).⁴
3. Yusuf (Jopseph)'s being thrown into a pit by his brothers and being sold for slavery to Egypt.
4. Joseph's meeting Zulaykho and the romantic adventures between them.
5. Joseph's glory in Egypt and his accession to the throne.

³ See in: Irisov A. The Story of Yusuf by Ibn Sina. // Uzbek language and literature. - Tashkent: Fan, 1967, No 6. - p. 46-47; same author. The Story of Yusuf by Ibn Sina. // Uzbek language and literature. - Tashkent: Fan, 1971, No2. - P. 55; same author. Abu Ali Ibn Sino. Heritage of life and works. - Tashkent: Fan. 1980; Mirzaev S. Works of Ibn Sina at the Institute of Oriental Studies (bibliography). - Tashkent, UzFA Publishing House, 1955. - p. 19-20.

⁴ Romantic epic series often begins with a dream. There are many examples of this in Eastern literature: Ruzimbaev S. Khorezm epics. - Tashkent: Fan, 1985. - p. 65.

² Sanayev I. The literary environment of the Zarafshan valley in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. - Tashkent: Tafakkur. 2009. - p. 60.



Yusuf and Zulaykho, the third of Jami's seven epics, was written in 1483 and is recognized as a unique example of a transferred plot. According to professor Nurboy Djabbarov: "Abdurrahman Jami's "Yusuf and Zulaikha" has its prominent place among other stories of the same theme written in Tajik-Persian and Turkic languages. So the glory of this work is common in all the countries of the East, it has been translated into many languages. According to scholars, who explore the literal heritage of Jami, "Yusuf and Zulaykho" is distinguished by the breadth of the subject matter and the high art of Abdurahman Jami."⁵

This work, which was later translated by Agahi, served as poetic perfection of Yusufnoma epics due to its attractive language, general style of description, and artistic perfection.⁶ Plot lines are not complicated, the composition is thorough, the expression is clear and fluent. The course of events goes smoothly. Probably, Jami did not complicate this work because he gave it as part of his seven. Both in size (58 chapters only) and in terms of the course of events, the poet's epic "Yusuf and Zulaykho" is different from the works of other artists who addressed this topic.

It was noted that Abdurahman Jami wrote "Yusuf and Zulaykho" in the epic genre. Therefore, from the very beginning of the work peculiarities of epic story stand out. Traditionally, the following chapters are included at the beginning of the epic before the main events begin:

1. Praises to Allah.
2. Praises to the prophet may peace be upon him.
3. Praises to the prophet may peace be upon him, the one who possesses a highly order in the eyes of God and the ultimate day.
4. Wearing the dress of forgiveness and modesty is our realm.
5. Praises to the king and sultan.

After the above five chapters comes a chapter dedicated to Yusuf and the main events begin. "Analysis shows that the work is based on a free approach, not a literal translation. The lyrical experiences in the work, as well as the fact that there was a separate chapter dedicated to Muhammad Rahim Khan the second included, give grounds for such a conclusion."⁷

⁵ Jabbarov N. Thoughts on the Turkish translation of Jami's Yusuf and Zulaykho. / Abdurahmon Jami. - T: the Institute of Manuscripts, 1997 - p. 172.

⁶ Abdurahman Jami. Yusuf and Zulaykho. / The storehouse of love. (Translator: Muhammad Riza Ogahi. Prepared by: N.Jabbarov). - Tashkent: Tasvir, 2018. -p.307- 612.

⁷ Jabbarov N. Comments on the Turkish translation of Jami's Yusuf and Zulaykho. / Abdurahmon Jami. - Tashkent: Institute of Manuscripts, 1997. - p. 173.

The introduction to the epics of Durbek and Alim Devona is similar to the work of Abd-rahman Jami. Such creative pursuit is not in vain as ultimately there were a lot of authors who were inspired by Jami's "Yusuf and Zulaykho" and composed their poems of the same title. Professor N.Kamilov, who explored the translation of Agahi states: "It is correct to say that this epic is the masterpiece of Jami's creativity. Therefore, after Jami, dozens of answers were written to this work, which include some of the Uzbek poets as well."⁸ The most famous of these answers is Nazim Herati's "Yusuf and Zulaykho"; the epics of Jami and Herati have been comparatively explored⁹. Alim Devona also follows Jami, even though he created his epic under a different name. This can be seen in the following lines of the author:

Navhi haqiqat aro daryoi jarf,
 Hazrati Jomiy shahi iqlimi sarf.
 So'z duriga ul beribon intizom,
 Bog'ladi mazmunig'a mundoq nizom.¹⁰

Translation

Among the sea of the truth the river of truth,
 Hazrat Jami the king in the world of word.
 Creating the pearls of word wisdom,
 Gave he to the words the following meaning.

Chapters in the work of Jami are also available in Alim Devona's version. However, he included additional two more praising chapters devoted to four khalifas and Samarkand. Durbek composed the first three short chapters in his epic traditionally, starting with the praise of God and the Prophet that was followed by section devoted to the introduction of the book. This feature is different in the works of Nurmuhammad Andalib and Halis. Andalib created his work both in prose and poetry. That is why the praise is also different from other authors. Written in verse, it also includes information about the reasons for writing the story and his biography:

Keldi qoshimg'a mani bir shahsuvor,
 Nutqi tar ermish, so'za intizor.
 Keldi yana bir necha hamdardlar,
 Qurbi shijoatda sheri mardlar.
 Barchalari manga erdi hamnishin,
 Yuzlari gul so'zlaridur ankabin.
 Dedi onlar: Andalibi benavo,
 Ko'nglimizga tushti ajib mojaro.
 Bor qissa ichra ajib doston,
 Na bo'lador qilsang oni guliston.

⁸ N.Komilov. Khorezm translation school. Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philology. Tashkent, 1988. - p.106.

⁹ Shernazarov B. "Yusuf and Zuleykha" of Nazim Khirati and its comparison with Abduraxman Jami's poem. - Ph.D. Diss. - Dushanbe: TSPU, 2003.

¹⁰ Mirza Alim Devona. Ravzai-asror (Garden of secrets), Manuscripts Fund of Oriental studies university, No1338. - p. 29^a.



Yusufi Siddiq Zulayxoni san,
 Turki xaloyiqg'a sen qilsang chaman...
 Ismim erdi Nurmuhammad g'arib,
 So'zda taxallusim erdi Andalib.
 Shahrimiz Urganj viloyat edi,
 Xonimiz shoh G'oziy jamoat edi...

Translation:

A person came to me,
 Narrow speech, longing for words.
 A few more sympathizers came,
 The lions are brave in their courage.
 They all came to me,
 Their faces are the words of a flower.
 They said: person from Andalib,
 We had a wonderful conflict.
 There is a wonderful story in the story,
 Anyway, at least I didn't go down without
 explaining myself first.
 Yusufi Siddiq for Zulaykho,
 What can you do for the Turkish people ...
 My name was Nurmuhammad Gharib,
 My nickname was Andalib.
 Our city was Urgench region,
 Our King was Ghazi's congregation.

Halis starts his version of "Yusuf and Zulaykho" with introduction of his own life and previous works. He then praises God, combines the praise verses of the prophets Muhammad and Ya'qub (Jacob), and gives a short, more precise ten-byte prayer. After these chapters, he moves on to the main events.

Every author begins by introducing the main events, first and foremost, to Ya'qub (Jacob) and his children. However, the translation of Agahi is an exception from this rule. He starts the story with the description of Yusuf's beauty. The epic says that Adam (peace be upon him) was given a chance to constantly monitor the lives of the prophets who are his descendants. In time, the prophets will change one by one. When it comes to Prophet Yusuf Adam asks God why he was given such a beauty:

Hamul johu jalol Odam chu ko'rdi,
 Savol aylarga til mundoq evurdi –
 Ki: Yo Rab, bu qayu gulshan gulidur?
 Va yo qaysi kishi jomi mulidur?
 Ango qaydin etushmishdur bu davlat,
 Jamolu johu izzu zebu ziynat?

Translation:

As soon as Adam saw him,
 The question has been around for months -
 He said: O Lord, is this a wild rose?
 Or who is the he indeed?
 Where did he get all that beauty –
 That nobody has seen ever?
 God answers to the question of Adam (peace be upon him): He is your descendant, the fruit of Ya'qub (Jacob)'s garden. Then Adam divides his own beauty into three parts. He gives two-thirds to

Yusuf (Joseph) and the rest to the others. Then he blesses Yusuf (Joseph).

This episode does not occur in any other epic variations. This makes the version so different from the rest ones.

It is time to explore the descriptions of the children of Jacob. Naturally, they appear different in each of the plays.

Jami:
 Topib Yusufdin o'zga o'n bir avlod,
 Vale Yusufdin erdi joni obod.
 Durbek:
 Bir otadin o'n edilar sar-basar,
 Tengri yo'lida barisi rohbar.
 Bir onadin Yusufu Ibni Yamin,
 Ikki qarindosh edilar, pok din.
 Alim Devona:
 Tengri oning poyasin aylab baland,
 Berdi o'n ikki xalafi arjumand.
 Biri alardin guli tahqiq edi
 Koni adab Yusufi Siddiq edi.

Translation:

Jami
 Though having eleven children besides
 Yusuf,
 All of the Yusuf was well.
 Durbek:
 One father was there for ten,
 In God's way, everyone is a leader.
 Yusuf and Ibn Yamin had the same mother,
 They were two relatives, pure religion.
 Alim Devona:
 God made him walk high,
 Gave him twelve successors.
 One was just like flower
 Rish in kindness was Yusuf Siddiq.

In the variations of Jami and Alim Devona information about children is general, without excessive commentary. Durbek gives an ambiguous tale about Jacob's children. It states that ten sons were born from one father, of whom Yusuf and Ibn Yamin were born from the same mother. No word is said about the mothers of the remaining children. They remain uncertain.

In the story of Andalib, these images are given as follows: "However, Jacob had twelve sons. Each two sons had the same mother. Yusuf (p.b.u.h) and Ibn Yamin had the same mother. She passed away from this world. Her name was Rohila..."¹¹ The information about children is given in detail in Andalib's work. At this point, it is fair to mention that the author, unlike others, tries to connect the course of events more deeply and thoroughly, perfectly reflecting the names of brothers and character features: "Each son of Ya'qub possessed a

¹¹ Andalib Nurmuhammad. Yusuf Zulaykhoi Turki. - Tashkent: "Asia" lithography, 1915. - B. 3. (In the text is referred as Andalib)



unique characteristic. One of them was Yahudo. All the people would burst into tears if he screamed in anger. Each body hair would become as stiff as a spear. And another one was Sham'un. His characteristic was that if he would sword struck, the sword would cut the mountain and the stones into two. And another son was Rovil. His characteristic was that whenever an army came, His characteristic was that if an enemy would strike he would beat them with his lion-like roar.¹²

In this regard, Halis cited the following:

Zamon erdi, (ki Ya'qub) payambar,
 Bani isroiliyga erdi sarvar.
 Ani o'n ikki o'g'li ham bor erdi,
 Har ikki bir onadin bo'lub erdi.
 Yusufu Ibni Yamin onlag'aysiz,
 Alar birla bor erdi yana bir qiz.
 O'shal qizni oti ham erdi Norjon,
 Onalari o'lub erdi o'shal on...¹³

Translation:

There was a time when (Jacob) was a prophet,
 The chief of the children of Israel.
 And he also had twelve sons,
 Each two had same mothers.
 You know Yusuf and Ibn Yamin,
 There was another girl with them.
 That girl's name was Norjon,
 Their mother died at that moment.

From the passages quoted, it is clear that the works of Andalib and Halis have been quite perfect in this regard. That is, they briefly dwell on the mother of Yusuf and Ibn Yamin, making it clear that both children were from the same mother. Romantic relationships play an important role in both while describing events in detail is of little importance.

If we pay attention to the composition and plot of the works about Yusuf and Zulaykho, we can see that there are many differences, as mentioned above. Details of event-specific event in one author will not be a matter of importance for the narration of the other. We have attempted to analyze and highlight the most important of them. These types of stories owe a lot of special characteristics that make them unique literary works. All of them are the further matter of exploration for the future literary scholars.

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the results of the research, it can be said that Agahi's translation of the epic "Yusuf and Zulaykho" by Abdurahman Jami, the epics about the life of Yusuf and Nurmuhammad, described as "ahsanu-l-qasas" ("the best of stories") by Durbek, Mirza Alim Devona and Khalis. The

study of the narrative on this subject in the context of variance allows us to draw important conclusions for textual studies. The comparative analysis of the works in the above-named Yusufnama series does not mean that a change in a particular part of a work of art alone creates a new version, but that a change must take place within the idea, theme, interpretation, composition, plot, image system, creative style and genre. leads to the conclusion.

The results of the comparative analysis show that there are certain differences in the works analyzed above in terms of composition, plot, creative style, and genre features. Research on the variants of Yusufnama leads to the conclusion that Abdurahman Jami's epic "Yusuf and Zulaykho", translated by Muhammad Riza Agahi in the XIX century, is the most artistically perfect among them.

In general, a comparative study of a number of works created on the basis of closely related mobile plots in a particular category from the point of view of variability is important because it allows identifying their specific and different aspects. Consistent continuation of scientific research in this area is one of the urgent tasks facing textual critiques.

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¹² Andalib. - p. 3.

¹³ Halis. *Yusuf and Zulaykho.* - Samsu Scientific Library Department of Rare Books. No 824261. p. 10^b.