

<p>THE EPOS “SHIYRIN AND SHEKER” AND THE PHYTOMYPHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS IN IT <i>(based on Uzbek and Karakalpak versions)</i></p>		<p>Anthropology</p> <p>Keywords: saga, motive, child, tree, apple, pomegranate, productivity, blessings.</p>
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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The following article deals with the Uzbek and Karakalpak versions of the epic “Shiyrin and Sheker”, which are widely used in Central Asia, the use of phytomyphological concepts related to the fruit wood, their connection with the motives of childlessness including the idea of fertility and blessings. The typology of motifs in the epic is discussed.</p>

We all know that the folklore of the Turkic peoples embodies the centuries-old literary, cultural heritage and traditions of our people. Not only material, but also one of our cultural heritage epics contains traces of the way of life, customs and national identity of our ancestors. That is why the well-known Uzbek scholar M. Juraev notes that the events of folklore plays of poems are narrative in a large epic scale, rich in fiction, variety of plot systems and historical origins are distinguished by going back a long way and plays a major role in the folklore [5, p.141].

Indeed, poems are one of the major trends from generation to generation in the folklore of our people, narrated by bakhshi-storytellers. One of the most popular epics is ‘Shiyrin-Sheker’. The epic describes good and evil, the war between them, the family, the solidarity of child and family, happiness, peace of the people, loyalty, courage, generosity and love. In this article, we want to share some of our thoughts on the Turkish versions of the epic «Shiyrin and Shakar» and the mythological concepts and views associated with the fruit tree in it.

In Uzbek and Karakalpak folklore several studies have been conducted on ‘Shiyrin and Sheker’ poem. In the article, on the poem professor M. Juraev promotes and supports the idea that the Uzbek poet Shaykhzada was the first to prepare for publication and his views on the peculiarity of it. ‘Shiyrin and Sheker’ is between love and war.

It does not belong to any of these varieties in the narrow sense, in the broadest sense it includes both of these varieties. In the midst of the intrigue, the heroic demands an act of bravery and courage to achieve the goal from the very beginning [10, p.13]. Also the scholar notes that the Uzbek folklore of the epic includes such poets as Fozil Yuldash oglu, Muhammadqul Jonmurod oglu Polkan poet, Bekmurod Juraboy oglu, Yorlaqab Beknazar oglu, Saidmurod Panoh oglu, Matnazar Jabbor oglu, Rozi Kultura son. The existence of both versions of this epic in Uzbek folklore is noted by Uzbek scholars etc. Zarifov, F. Sultanova, T. Mirziyov, B. Sarimsakov, M.

Juraev, N. Madrahimova. There is information given about epic in the works of the scholar K. Matlabov in Karakalpak folklore.

According to the scholar M. Juraev, the plot of the version of the epic ‘Shiyrin and Sheker’ in the repertoire of the Khorezmian Matnazar Jabbor oglu is close to the Uzbek version of the Karakalpak Jirov, a talented epic narrator Tasadduqbay Tajibaev, who performed folk epics in the Uzbek and Karakalpak language. The reason is that Matnazar Jabbar’s son Tasadduqbay was a student of Jirov, and he learned the text of the epic from his teacher. The version is not close to the version which is popular in the repertoires of Uzbek bakhshies of Zarafshan.

It is stated that the epic ‘Erali and Sherali’ performed by Nazar’s son Islam poet is also a version of the epic ‘Shirin and Shakar’ in Uzbek folklore, which is historically and genetically related. In fact, when we compare these epics, that is, the epics ‘Shiyrin-Shakar’ and ‘Erali and Sherali’, they have a similar plot and motives. Therefore, the unnatural motives of the protagonists, which lead to the beginning of events in the construction of the plot of the epic, accompanied by the divinity of the birth of a child in the epic is described that is the protagonists are ‘chosen’ by ancestors, saviors and magical power before they were born.

The scholar M. Juraev, in his version of the epic Fozil Yuldosh oglu, became interested in the idea that after the visit of the king to the saints for the sake of childlessness, that is, after the support of the sacred saints their dreams come true. In the version of the epic Tasadduqbay Tajibaev, he says that the ancient view of the motif of unnatural birth in connection with totemistic thinking has been preserved. In the epic, these episodes are described as follows:

‘King Valikhan and his minister Khoramon, who were suffering from childlessness, said:’ “There are places where the cliff, hit our heads on the rocks and pray that maybe we will have a child too,” they said. In one place, the sons are confronted by “one grandfather, whose mouth is like a beard, his hands are like a whip, his fingers are like a whip, and he has a shapeless race.” When the strange old man, who introduced himself as the cunning grandfather of the land of Shom, learned about the king and minister’s condition, he took out a red pomegranate from his right pocket and gave it to the king, saying, “Give it to your first wife, and tell her to eat it with its seeds”. Then he took a red pomegranate from his left pocket and gave it to the minister, saying, “Give it to your wife, if you do not have children come back to me”, then he disappeared [2, p.31-17].

The plot of the epic ‘Shiyrin-Shakar’ is widespread in Karakalpak folklore. It was founded in 1939 by S. Mawlenov, Sh. Khojaniyazov wrote it from Khurbanbay Tajibaev. The text of this version of the epic has now been published in the 42nd volume of 100 volumes of Karakalpak Folklore. It is stated that the birth of the protagonists is associated with divinity, the childless king and minister are given red apples from sacred saints and they gave the apples to their wives. From this they will have a son. These episodes are described in the epic as follows:

“Once upon a time, there was a king in a country called Irat. His name was given to the governor. The king had two wives, the eldest one’s name was Akbilek and the youngest name was

Hinji. He did not have children until he was sixty years old, and he was childless. This king had a minister called Kharama. The minister was very wise and he had no children. One day the king was very anxious and rode out into the desert on their horses with his minister. A white-bearded old man came and greeted, looked at the king and said” [6, p.385].

At that time, the king said that they were childless. The old man said to them, “My children, be patient, satisfied, you will either see this grandfather or not,” and two red apples came out of his two pocket. He gave one to the king and one to the minister. They took it and put it in the pocket. Then the old man said:

- Listen to me, hey, my child governor,
Listen, listen to my words, Kharaman,
You two got apples from your grandfather,
When you have two sons,
If you name someone Shirin,
Let another’s name be Shekerjan.

At that moment the grandfather disappeared as soon as he could say the word. They put the apples in their pockets and the minister-king returned to the castle.

When he came to the king’s house, he was greeted by his eldest wife Aqbilek. The king thought about Aqbilek’s wisdom and wanted to give it to her. He took the apple and said, “Let me give you that red apple.”

- Listen, my dear,
I went out into the desert,
Joining the minister,
I saw a dream in front of me.
We sat and watched,
On the roof of the great palace,
When he came to ask my heart,
An old man came to me,
When he wanted to ask my soul,
Gave me an apple,
"You have a child, my son," he said.
Then disappeared the old man
Despite looking the right-left side,
On the way to the castle,
I came in a hurry, wandered around,
Took the apple in my hand.
Apples are a blessing,
If you eat an apple,
You will have a child. (386)

She ate the king's apple, was as pleased as drunk and was in a trance. And minister's wife ate the apple and was pleased, and both the king's eldest wife and the minister's wife became pregnant and after nine months, nine hours, the king and the minister had sons (386).

When naming these children, the grandfather, who had given the two apples to the king and the minister, came and took the king's child in his arms, spat in his mouth, named Sheker, and the another child was named Shirin. Taking the king's gifts, he gave the gift to the orphans and the widows and the grandfather went on his way. (387).

In the above-mentioned texts, it is clear that the mythological significance of fruits plays an important role in the fertility of the childless king and the minister. For example, in the first text a red pomegranate has sacred power; the second text a red apple has sacred power. The main reason for this is that the apple and pomegranate are often depicted as a magical symbol that combines a lot of fertility and productivity.

That is why the goddess of water and fertility, Onaxita, is often depicted in a robe holding a pomegranate, a symbol that symbolizes the fertility of abundance. In particular, according to the narrated facts of the ancient Varakhsha, there is a statue of a woman holding a pomegranate with her right hand [11, p.142]. The statue of the goddess holding a pomegranate in her hand was also found from the fortress of Kuykirilgan in the ancient Khorezm.

It is also known that during the Sassanid period, a picture of a mother carrying a baby in her right hand and a pomegranate in her left hand was painted on a silver jug [7, p.42]. In the past the thoughts of pomegranate about having fertile features are widely preserved in the traditions of our ancestors. For example, in the folklore of the Uzbek, Karakalpak and Kazakh peoples there is a wedding ceremony. This wedding has a ceremony for opening new bride's face when the bride comes home. At that time 'Betashar' songs were sung. When the 'Betashar' song is sung, a white shawl is placed on the bride, and the bride must greet and bow for his relatives, his grandparents, and his cousins in her new house. At that time, one of the older sisters must carry a small boy holding a branch of an apple, pomegranate or mulberry tree tied to the bridal shawl. This program is carried out with the idea that the bride grows like a tree. In the epic 'Shiyrin-Sheker' it is seen that the totemistic views related to the cult of phytonims in the motive of conceiving of the wife of the king and minister were revealed.

In the Karakalpak version of the epic 'Shiyrin-Sheker', the sacred power of the apple in the motive of having a child and the king's wife and the minister's wife ate two red apples of the white-bearded grandfather. They will be pregnant. It should be noted here that the apple is associated with the appearance of fertility. Above, in the Uzbek version of the epic 'Shiyrin-Shakar' Red Pomegranate is used, in the Karakalpak version, the Red Apple is used. We can see that it is close to the Karakalpak version of the epic.

The reason is that in the epos 'Erali and Sherali' the sacred power of the apple in the having a child of the king is widely described. From this point of view, the epos 'Erali and Sherali' are very similar to the motifs in the Karakalpak epic 'Shiyrin-Sheker'.

In the Uzbek versions of the epic 'Shiyrin and Sheker', the ancient foundations of the motive of becoming pregnant after eating the sacred fruits given by the heroes by sacred supporters are connected with the phytomorphological notions of totem-dwarfs of the Central Asian peoples.

For example, in the Yakut heroic epic, the motives such as the childless ruler's wishing for a present under the sacred tree of the 'Russian-Mak' named, and the unnatural conception of a mother who eats a magical plant are stated [9, p.19]. In the 1962 version of the epic 'Alpomish' written by Bori Bakhshi Ahmedov, the childless Baybori brought an apple to his wife, who was given by a hermit and after eating this fruit, she became a pregnant [8, p.6]. This shows that motivating the birth of the epic hero in a supernatural way as a symbol of fertility and prosperity in our people is one of the programmatic features of the folk epic.

Professor Bahoeddin Ógel writes in his work 'Turk Mythology' that the Turks still have the concepts that children are wood and leaves of wood. The concepts of 'childlessness and the apple' are reflected in the epic Anadoli and Manas. Yakup Khan 'went to the foot of the apple tree and rolled over there' and complained about his childless wife.

The notion of 'children are the branches and leaves of a tree' is still embodied in today's Turk proverbs. 'Boy Beyrek' is a branch of a tree, and 'Brother Beyrek' is a shady orchard. Professor Abdulkadir Inan gives daily information about 'branches of wood', writes Bahoeddin Ógel. Childless Yakutian women come to a pine tree with a nest, lie on the white horse hide on the bottom of a tree and pray at the bottom of a tree. The slender and leafless branches of some trees are often found. From a distance, these branches look like a 'bird's nest'.

In the Kyrgyz poems there was a pedigree of apple trees growing on the rocks and seeds are buried. It seems to have a different meaning. It seems that childlessness is associated with them. Therefore, Bahoeddin Ógel in his work in the book 'Dada Korkit' also cites materials related to the mythological concepts of wood.

In general, in the epic 'Shiyrin and Sheker' the strange motives of birth and the mythological notions associated with apples, pomegranate seeds, the religious views of our people embodied the idea of fertility and blessings, and in his epics the poetic image and sembya is characterized by the expression of the essence of love and child. Therefore, in the Uzbek and Karakalpak versions of the epic 'Shiyrin and Sheker' phytomorphological concepts are used on the basis of these ideas in which there are typological similarities in the use of such motives.

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