

APPLICATION OF PROPP'S MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS TO TURKISH FOLKTALES

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V.J. Propp's "Morfolojiya Skazki" is one of the fundamental works in the research of narrative folklore. Propp's work was translated into English with the title of "Morphology of the Folktale" (1) in 1958, thirty years after it was published in Russia. As have many researchers in the world, I have also encountered the English version of this work. This study which outlines broad perspectives in the analysis of tale, in many respects has outstripped the structural-typological research in the western countries. In addition to this, the importance of Propp's work is increasing constantly as numerous reprints of the original work and translations in other languages are being published. Also now, there are many studies of folktales in which the method elaborated by Propp is applied.

In my PhD. dissertation entitled "Folktales From Elazığ" (2) I have also examined seventy Turkish folktales which I had collected from Elazığ (a province in eastern Anatolia) according to the morphological analysis method developed by Propp. After this monographic work, I prepared a paper entitled "The Application of Propp's Morphological Analysis Method to Turkish Tales" (3). In this research I subjected Turkish Folktale variants which were collected all over Turkey to a systematic analysis using Propp's method.

In both of my studies I gave a concise review of Propp's work because I tried to familiarize the Turkish reader with this morphological analysis method, which was unknown to them in the 1970's. Propp was the first person to recognize that the number of functions in fairy tales were limited regardless of the unlimited numbers of actors. The important fact was that the same functions were always repeated in the domain of the narrative. In the analysis of the Turkish folktale texts according to Propp's schemes, I have added some information about the folktale and the narrator in the following manner:

1. The name of the narrator

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2. Possible classification according to the register system of Antti Aarne S. Thompson's "The Types of the Folktale" (4) and Eberhard-P. N. Boratav's "Typen Türkischen Volksmaerchen" (5).

3. Interpretation of content in brief sentences.

4. Classification according to occurrence of binary functions.

Then I followed the identification of the various functions, and eventually of movements as well. The analysis of each tale is supplemented with its scheme.

In both of my studies I arrived at the conclusion that Turkish folktales fit quite well into Propp's scheme of thirty one functions. However in the case of seven of the functions, Turkish material yielded new variants. For this reason I have found it necessary to add eight new sub-functions to Propp's list of functions. They are as follows:

The 8th function of Propp's list which is defined as: "villainy" (Designation: A) causes harm of injury to a member of the family is exceptionally important, since by means of it the actual movement of the tale is created. The previous functions, such as absentation, the violation of an interdiction, delivery, and the success of deceit, all prepare the way for this function, create its possibility of occurrence, or simply facilitate its happening. Therefore, the first seven functions may be regarded as the preparatory part of the tale, while the complication is begun in the 8th function by an act of villainy.

Propp presented 19 forms of villainy. I have come across two more forms of villainy in Turkish folktales, so I have added these two forms as sub-functions under the 8th function. The first sub function which I have added is "To slander A20". There are no samples of villainy of this kind in Propp's list. In Turkish folktales some villains give harm to a hero by slandering. Then, the hero tries to prove that he or she is innocent.

In many of Turkish folktales we find examples of this kind of villainy. The villain lies and makes up discrediting stories about the hero. For example, the sisters of the bride tell the prince that his wife gave birth to two puppies instead of the twins which she had promised to give him before they were married. The prince believes the villains and puts his wife into a well and orders everybody to spit at her face. In fact, however, she has given birth to fraternal twins-one boy and one girl- as she had promised.

The second sub-function which I have added is "Infidelity A21." In these samples infidelity occurs between married couples. This type of folktale in Turkish is taken from the Arabian Nights. In these samp-

les, the husband learns that his beloved wife deceives him. As a result of this he begins to hate womenkind. He marries everynight with a maiden and in the morning he condemns her to death. In the Arabian Nights the last maiden is able to survive by telling her husband a new tale every night. But in Turkish folktales differing from the Arabian Nights, only one tale convinces the angry husband to favour women again. In these tales usually an old man or the Vizier tells the hero that infidelity can be seen in life but that does not mean that all women deceive their husbands. There are also some women who devote their lives to their husbands or to the man they love. With this understanding comes the happy ending.

Functions XII, XIII and XIV in Propp's list are concerned with gaining a magical power or a kind of help which the hero needs. Also, with regard to these functions different samples occur in Turkish tales.

In the XIIth. Function, the hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, or otherwise oppressed, and this prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper. (Definition: the first function of the donor. Designation: D)

The Turkish tale texts which I examined in my research present new forms for the functions numbered XII D, XIII E, XIV F which play an important role in the tales with regard to the stage where the hero receives either a magical agent or helper. Function XII (D) indicates the testing of the hero directly by the donor. Function XIII (E) displays the hero's reaction to the future donor. Function XIV (F) is concerned with the acquisition of the magical agent or helper. These three functions constitute a whole. If the donor gets a positive response from the hero to his testing, then he transmits either the necessary magical agent or helper to the hero.

In Propp's study the agents which perform the supernatural functions of the donor or helper consist of animals, objects out of which magical helpers appear, objects possessing a magical property, or supernatural qualities or capacities to act which are directly given to the hero (such as the power of transformation). In the Turkish folk-tale material studied in my research, I have found it necessary to define the concept of God who performs the functions of the donor and helper under a separate heading. In these tales, Allah is accepted as the "Only Giver" by the narrators as well as by the listeners of the tale. In many tales which have no connection with religious stories (or parables) whatsoever, the overcoming of hardships by the heroes depend mostly on their being obedient servants of God. The heroes

who cite Allah's name are always successful in their tasks. I have found it necessary to make one addition to the sub-functions of the above mentioned three functions to demonstrate the sample presenting interrelation between God and the hero.

In Propp's list XIIth function (D) is comprised of 10 classes. The hero's begging to God directly for help is not included in any of these ten forms, so I have added an 11th sub-functions: "The hero begs to God for help" (D11). If the person who begs to God for help, is a pious person who has performed his religious duties completely, then he is considered to have successfully passed the test of Allah. According to Turkish Islamic faith, human beings are being subjected to tests every second of their lives by Allah.

The XIII-E function defined as "The hero's reaction" (Designation: E) actually explains the preparations for the transmission of the power of the magical agent or the helper to the hero. In Propp's list this function is also divided into ten subfunctions. In my research, I have added an eleventh sub-function to this group with the definition "God accepts the hero's request" as E11. Although, some forms of worship are mentioned under the heading "The hero performs some other service" (E7) in 7th subfunction of the XIIIth Function in Propp's list, I have considered it necessary to classify these examples under a separate new sub-function because the mentioned relation between Allah and the hero is very commonly seen and occupies a significant place in Turkish tales.

For the function XIV indicated with letter F and defined as "The hero acquires the use of a magical agent" Propp has enumerated 9 sub-functions. In my analysis I have added a tenth sub-function to this classification. This sub-function is not seen in the samples analysed by Propp under the title, F10, "Good fulfills the request". I have added a sub-function to include the quite commonly seen function in Turkish tales where the hero attains his request by the grace of God as the result of his being a good Muslim.

In Turkish tales the good hearted heroes, who fulfill their religious duties righteously can attain Allah's help only by praying. They can also obtain help from the persons such as derwishes or Hızır (saints) who are acknowledged as loved ones by Allah.

Propp has identified two sub-functions for the function XVII, named "The hero is branded" (Definition: Branding, Markings, .Designation: J.)

In these two sub-functions it is the hero who is branded or the one who receives something. In some of the Turkish tales which were

subject to my analysis the hero also brands other characters or gives certain things which bring a difference to the scheme of occurrences in the tale. Therefore I have added a third sub-function to the XVIIth Function with the heading: "the hero brands other characters or gives them something" (J3).

The XVIIth Function which is defined as "Victory", (Designation: I) consist of 6 sub-functions in Propp's list. This function does not include the villain's being wounded. In Turkish tales villain's receiving a wound is an important sub-function because tracing blood stains leads the hero to victory. Therefore for these samples of Turkish tales a new sub-function has been added to Propp's list under the heading "The villain is wounded" as a seventh sub-function of XIVth function.

Also a new sub-function is added to the four sub-functions of Propp's XIXth Function, "The hero is given a new appearance", designated as T. All of the four sub-functions are concerned with the acquisition of beauty, wealth or rank by the hero.

In Turkish tales the heroes also change their appearance to conceal themselves by disguising as Keloglan (bold head), as derwishes (wandering saints), or as a person of the opposite sex. This has been added to Propp's list and illustrated as: "T5" with the definition: "The hero changes appearance and becomes uglier or less notable to go unrecognized."

V.J. Propp has based his morphological analysis method on the principle of similarity and repetition of elements in their structure, but on the other hand fairy tales show a surprising variety of forms and variability. Characters in tales owe their heterogeneity to the environment in which they are created such as the customs, superstitions, and traditions of a given nation being projected into the tale. These elements enrich the tale, and rid it of the monotony which would otherwise derive from its uniform buildup. This imparts a special style to the narration of tales of various nations. They are analogous in the structure. When the themes pass from one nation to another, the receiving nation rejects elements foreign to its tradition and replace them with her own. In the overlapping of real life with fantasy, each nation expresses man's yearning after peace and well-being with its own symbols.

In Anatolia, the narrating tradition was alive up to the 1970's. This tradition is perishing year by year because of industrialization and modern civilisation. In Turkey the tale incorporates into it phenomena and concepts from the present times. This is attested to by

the occurrence of words and concepts linked with the penetration of Western civilization into this relatively remote region of Turkey, such as for instance, policeman, cinema, theatre, hotel, taxi telephone, and telegraph.

I would like to conclude that this method developed by V. Propp is dedicated to the study of fairy tales. The Turkish folktales which have been examined according to the morphological analysis method and the additions I have made for the Turkish tales also support Propp's opinion that the structure of a tale is not entirely apart from its content. The life vision of Turkish people, whether positive or negative, and their style of life have effect on the above mentioned functions.

As humankind has more or less the same skeletal structure but in appearance their features usually represent the characteristics of their national and personal identity, so the folk tales can be defined as the expression of the universal expectations of the psychologic structure of humankind in medieval times in general; expressed by the symbols of various particular national cultures. Modern transportation and communication technology have made some of the dreams expressed in folktales such as magic rug, magic horse, and magic mirrors come true. Humankind has the material means such as supersonic aircraft, very fast trains, telephones, faksimilles and T.V. for speedy communication and transportation, and has obtained global devastation power. Still, humankind has not discovered the eternal happiness attained in folktales after a major struggle. It is not always the righteous and the good who win at present. Humankind is still after one another's blood: still searching, missing and wishing for peace and happiness.

Notes

1. Viladimir Propp, *Morfologija Skazki*. Leningrad 1928, translation by Laurance Scatt, *Morphology of the Folktale*. U.S.A. 1970.
2. Umay Günay, *Elazığ Masalları (Metin-İnceleme)*, 1976 Ankara-Turkey.
3. Umay Günay, "The Application of the Propp's Morphological Analysis Method to Turkish Tales" *The First International Turkish Folklore Meeting (8-14 October 1973 Ankara-Turkey) Papers*. Ankara 1974, pp. 79-94.
4. Antti Aarne's *Verzeichnis der Marchentypen*. Translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folk-Tale*. FF Communications No: 184. Helsinki, 1961.
5. W. Eberhard - P. N. Boratav, *Typen Türkischen Volksmaerchen*. Wiesbaden - Germany, 1958.