

MAGICAL OBJECTS IN FAIRY TALES THAT TRACE BACK TO ANIMISTIC VIEWS

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Abstract.

Animism is one of the ancient worldviews, which is the belief in spirits and souls. The article discusses how magical objects in fairy tales trace back to animism and analyses English and Uzbek fairy tales.

Key words.

ancient worldview, animism, spirit, fairy tale, primitive people, genesis, magical objects, magical hair, bone, skull, magical feathers.

People of the primitive era did not understand how and why various things and phenomena in nature appeared, but deified them. As a result, interpretations of supernatural, mysterious, and strange events appeared. The worship of man is depicted on them. The origins of some magical objects can be traced back to the ancient worldview of animism.

Animism is one of the ancient worldviews, which is the belief in spirits and souls. English ethnographer and culturologist Edward Taylor introduced the concept of animism into science and described it as the initial stage of the development of religion in general. He also tried to trace the further development of animistic ideas in the worldview of highly cultured peoples. This is also evidenced by the following passage:

“I purpose here, under the name of Animism, to investigate the deep-lying doctrine of Spitual Beings, which embodies the very essence of Spiritualistic as opposed to Materialistic philosophy. Animism is not a new technical term, though now seldom used. From its special relation to the doctrine of the soul, it will be seen to have a peculiar appropriateness to the view here taken of the mode in which theological ideas have been developed among mankind. The word Spiritualism, though it may be, and sometimes is, used in a general sense, has this obvious defect to us, that it has become the designation of a particular modern sect, who indeed

hold extreme spiritualistic views, but cannot be taken as typical representatives of these views in the world at large”²⁹⁵.

For the first time, the term animism was used by the German scientist G. E. Stahl, who in his "Teoria medica" called animism the doctrine of the soul as a kind of impersonal life principle underlying all life processes²⁹⁶.

On the basis of the ancient people's animistic and manistic views on the immortality of the soul, the cult of ancestors, the depiction of the magical bone in folk tales originated. This also shows people's beliefs about the head. Based on this, in some fairy tales, the skull is depicted in a magical way. For example, in the Uzbek folk tale "Mysterious Carpet", a girl becomes pregnant from a skull. The interpretation of the epic motif related to such a strange feature of the skull has its own historical basis²⁹⁷. After all, the "skull cult" was worshiped in ancient times. The fact that the remnants of this belief are still preserved can be justified by the example of some householders hanging a ram's skull above their gate. For example, the ancient Ugars and Eskimos, who lived on the banks of the Ob, believed that the fourth soul of a person, that is, the name, lives in the skull. That's why the Uygurs made a doll and glued the dead man's hair to his head in order to revive his soul when he died²⁹⁸.

It is known that the motif of "rolling of a disembodied head" can be found in the plot of many toponymic legends. Toponymic legends such as "Kuvkalla", "Minorai Kalon" can be cited as examples²⁹⁹.

Symbols related to animism associated with bones are also found in English folk tales. For example, in the English folk tale "Three cows", the bones of a dead cow are gathered together, and when the cow is hit with a stick with its skin, the cow comes back to life:

"Round and round flew the imps, picking up the bones. "Arrange them," said the king; and they placed them all in their proper positions in the hide of the cow. Then they folded the skin over them, and the king struck the heap of bones and skin with his rod. Whist! up sprang the cow and lowed dismally”³⁰⁰.

In the fairy tale "Binnorie", a harp is made from the bones and hair of a dead girl, and it enters the language and tells how and by whom the girl was killed:

²⁹⁵ Tylor E.B. Primitive Culture. – London, 1871. – P.385.

²⁹⁶ https://www.historymed.ru/encyclopedia/doctors/index.php/ELEMENT_ID=4880

²⁹⁷ Сирли гиламча. Ўзбек халқ фантастикаси. V-китоб. – Тошкент: Ёш гвардия, 1987. – Б.175.

²⁹⁸ Чернищев В.Н. Представление о душе у обских угров // Труды института Этнографии. №51. – М., 1959. – С.67.

²⁹⁹ Жўраев М., Саидова Р. Бухоро афсоналари. – Тошкент: Абдулла Қодирий номидаги Халқ мероси нашриёти, 2002. – Б.66.

³⁰⁰ Jacobs J. English fairy tales and more English fairy tales. – London, 2002. – P.248

"And as she lay there in her beauty a famous harper passed by the mill-dam of Binnorie, and saw her sweet pale face. And though he travelled on far away he never forgot that face, and after many days he came back to the bonny mill-stream of Binnorie. But then all he could find of her where they had put her to rest were her bones and her golden hair. So he made a harp out of her breast-bone and her hair,..."³⁰¹.

The motif of "the head of an epic hero rolling" is one of the traditional epic motifs often found in Uzbek folk magic tales and toponymic legends. According to ethnographer V.N.Basilov, "the historical basis of the motif of the hero carrying his severed head in his hands or the rolling of the severed head is connected with the cult of ancestors and ancient ideas about dying and resurrecting deities"³⁰².

Hair magic and hair symbolism have been widely studied and interpreted by anthropologists, and it is associated with various rituals and ceremonies, particularly marriage ceremonies and mourning ceremonies. In some societies, hair is seen as a place where the soul resides. It is interpreted that even after the hair is cut, the connection between the person and the cut hair remains. It is also said that peoples who believed in protective amulets made amulets with hair.

English ethnographer J. Frazer in his work "Golden Bough" reports that ancient people were afraid to cut the hair and throw it into the fire, seeing the soul of the head in the hair. In fact, Western European peoples believe that each person has three souls, the first of which is called "Olori". It is located in the head of a person and always protects him from calamities, preserves him, and gives him useful advice.

An artistic interpretation of the belief in the magic of hair can also be seen in the fairy tale "Rapunzel", which is one of the most famous Grimm's fairy tales in European fairy tales.

There is also a reference to the magical properties of hair in the English folk tale "Yallery Brown". The fairy tale describes a creature with very long hair and a beard, whose hair covers him everywhere, and when he sings and dances, his golden hair wraps around him and lifts his body into the air, and he soars up and disappears from sight. The expression of magic through hair goes back to religious beliefs about hair. In this fairy tale, the beard of the magical creature is also very long.

³⁰¹ Кўрсатилган манба. – Р 44.

³⁰² Басилов В.Н. Следы культа умирающего и воскресающего божества в христианской и мусульманской агиологии // Фольклор и историческая этнография. – М.: Наука, 1983. – С.145.

It can be said that because the family is connected to fertility cults, hair is also interpreted as being associated with the idea of fertility due to its property of growth.

Among the Uzbek people, the baby's belly hair is cut in a special "hair wedding", after the girls get engaged, they braid their hair into two buns, and on the wedding day into forty buns. One can see the expression of faith in the cult of hair.

Such ceremonies in different cultures refer to the fact that hair has been actively used in witchcraft and black magic since ancient times, and the belief that a person's hair can have a magical effect on him.

Based on this, it is often observed that in fairy tales, horse, lion, tiger's paw, monkey hair, snake skin are shown as having magical properties. For example, in the tales of "The Mouse and the Gray Boy", "Father's Will", the lion, the jackal, the wolf in the tale "Bahodir and the Dragon", the tiger in the tale "Bulbuligoyo" plucked the hair or mustache from the hero. An example is the motivation of these animals to come to help in the blink of an eye.

The coming of the animal's path as a healer can also be found in fairy tales. For example, in the fairy tale "Generous and Stingy", Sakhi heals the princess from a serious illness with the help of a goat's hooves. In the fairy tale "Erkajon", the same horse appears as soon as the path of the horse is burned³⁰³.

The fairy tale "Erkenja" is one of many fairy tales with magical objects, in which the hero is shown helping several animals, and the animals give him magical objects as a gift. These are grasshopper hair given by the king of locusts, rat fur given by the rat, and fly wing, and when the hero gets hit, grasshoppers, rats, and flies will appear and make his trouble easier. Here is the interpretation of the spiritual connection between the animal and its fur.

In the fairy tale "Bulbuligoyo", the image of magical hair given to the prince by the monkey fairy is set on fire when the hero falls on his head, the monkey fairy is present and solves his problem.

In the English fairy tale "Three feathers" there is an image of a magical bird's feather, which the husband, who has turned into a bird, gives to his wife and appoints her to ask for whatever she wants from them. Here too, the spiritual connection between the feather and the bird can be seen.

It is observed that the genre of fairy tales is rich in archetypes, as it expresses the mythological concepts of ancient people and their beliefs about animism,

³⁰³ Ўзбек халқ эртаклари. II том. – Тошкент: Шарқ, 2007. – Б.226.

totemism, fetishism, magic, shamanism, customs and rituals of the early life culture in a specific poetic form. The tales of the English and Uzbek people are distinguished by the fact that they cover the history, culture, lifestyle, customs and rituals, and beliefs of these peoples.

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