

# ***Oriental Fairy Tale and its Influence on European Literature: Intertextuality of Texts and Translations***

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***Abstract***—From times immemorial, the East provided Europe with incense and spices, as well as with its legends and beliefs, symbols and fairy tales. These tales familiarized Europeans with exotic and previously unknown world of peri and jinns, merchants of opulent Eastern bazaars, maddening beauties and young men performing acts of bravery. Europeans were fascinating with the stories that combined invention and fantasies with reality, a kaleidoscope of alien morals and traditions, homilies and didacticism. Elements of the Oriental tales being retold and reinterpreted influenced the European culture. Multitudes of translations and imitations of the Oriental tales appeared in the European literature. This paper considers intertextuality of the Oriental fairy tale, expands the scope and content of the concept used in the practical studies of literary phenomena; justifications are given for significance of intertextual links in the process of reinterpretation and renewal of the Oriental prose texts, giving rise to new artistic meanings. The text of the fairy tales and their translations are seen as an intertext determined by a possibility of representing translation units as intertextual units.

***Keywords***—oriental prose, western translations; influence onto European literature; intertextuality; pretext

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1. Introduction to the Problem

Oriental fairy tale has been attracting attention of researchers for long time. The tales contain vivid and succinct images, whose analysis allows for better understanding of attitude that people have to reality, popular world view, features of psyche. V.P. Anikin notes that “fantastic of tales had a real foundation, its concrete forms were formed closely intertwined with life. Having risen once, the fairytale invention underwent certain development due to the whole set of existing popular traditional perceptions and concepts, undergoing multiple transformations”.

The fairy tales are filled with worldly wisdom, they teach love and beauty: the good prevails and the evil is always punished. These elements of the Oriental tales influenced the European culture: “Literature have become reach from the Eastern tales, so quaint, so ingenious!” [1].

Fairy tale is a significant component of the human spiritual culture. It tries to talk to a modern person allegorically, using diverse symbols and metaphors to convene the history of establishment of the whole human race; it manifests archetypes and exposes the structures of the unconscious. Deep layers of the human psyche may not be manifested in the robes of rational judgments. Tale, myth, parable, legend – they all are additional information channels that follow the way of extrarational influence.

### 2. Literature Review

Modern science widely uses interdisciplinary approach to study concepts at the boundaries of various fields and having a common research foundation. It allows expanding the field of knowledge and perceptions covering the subject of research, as well as providing it with a more complete characterization. In this context, one of the central object of linguistics is text, a foundation of multitudes of research works in various linguistic disciplines. For example, text is the common object of analysis when studying such different phenomena as translation and intertext. Classical understanding of intertext has been introduced by R. Barthes, according to whom “every text is an intertext; other texts manifesting in it at various levels in more or less recognizable forms...” [2]. The phenomenon of intertextuality was described by Julia Kristeva; according to it, “any text is built as a mosaic of citations, any text is absorption and transformation of some other text” [3].

In the modern Russian linguistics, tradition of studying the translated text as an intertext traces its origins to works of P. Torop, G.V. Denisova, N.A. Kuzmina and some other researchers. For example, P. Torop notices: “The text is conceived in one intertextual space... The text is experiences in another, different intertextual space and it appears in a field of more or less random links to other texts, thus obtaining new meanings and often losing some initial ones. Translation may become an alignment of these intertextual spaces and a transition to the third space. That is why various researchers notice a feature of translation as an especially intensive form of intertextual linking” [4].

G.V. Denisova, who is of opinion that the intertextual is a part of the human culture as a whole, defines translation as a

continuous indicator of intertextual relations, acting both inside a culture and during an inter-cultural contact [5;6].

Let us note, that the intertext theory was considered also in the poetics studies context, where it may be studied in the following aspects: “1) direct borrowing, quoting, inclusion of another author's utterances into a poetic text; 2) borrowing of an image, a certain allusion to the image organization of another work; 3) borrowing of an idea, world view, the way and principle of reflecting the world. This is the borrowing which is hardest to determine, as it assumes complete copying of an alien aesthetics without using another author's ideas in one's own creations” [7].

Of notice also is the translational aspect having a certain relation to interaction of different national cultures. Back in the days, L.N. Gumilyov invented an interesting image of a large historical microscope allowing a certain degree of observation of events [8], including, of course, analysis of intercultural links.

## II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. *Oriental fairy tale: Review of literature studies*

The Oriental fairy tale: has been traditionally known to Europeans in the form of a collection or a book (among the known collections are *Panchatantra*, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, *The book of Parrot*, *The Arabian Nights*).

*Panchatantra*, a collection of parables and fables, being a Sanskrit literary landmark related to folklore, appears in the Indian region in III – IV centuries CE. The full initial text is no longer extant: «We have several editions, the most well-known of them are anonymous *Tantrakhyayika* (*The book of Exempla*, about X century CE), and *Panchakhyayika* (*The Book of Five Stories*, XI century), as well as *Panchatantra* composed by Jainist monk Purnabhadra in 1198-1199» [9, pp39,40]. While creating *Panchatantra*, its unknown authors were supported by previous literature and works in legislation and science: «They used versified legislative collections *Manusmriti* (II century BCE.- II century CE), *Kamandakiyanitisara* (V century), *Yajnavalkya* (V –VI centuries), works of the famous astronomer Varahamihira (died 587), works of Ancient Indian poetic classics: Kalidasa (V century), Bhartrhari (VII century), Bhavabhuti (VIII century) and others» [10, pp. 6,10]. The collectors used canonical *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, interpreted in accordance with the goals of *Panchatantra*. Any text has the attribute of referentiality, traditionally described as «agency of names, name-based expressions (nominative groups) or their equivalents to the objects of reality (referents, denotates)» [11], the role of which is played by another text of pretext in this case. In this case, the works of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* serve as a pretext for *Panchatantra*. In this context, it is important to notice, that cultural memory reflected in borrowing and retelling of many stories taken from a certain epic work forms the mechanism of intertextuality as a method to renew the humanity's historical memory.

Thus, intertextuality is a certain prism where the cultural memory is reflected and the common semantic field of texts that forms a number of verbal, image and event-based associations is transformed [12].

*Panchatantra* is an example of framed story, consisting of separate stories. An opinion or utterance is given (with a hint to an event), a question is posed and the event is narrated; the next opinion, question and narration follow, etc. Often a narration includes other stories, of the second or even third degree. D. Iskandarova and S. Allamurodova [13] have described the structure of the framed story or frame story in fairy tales in detail.

In the prologue, a story of appearance of the *Panchatantra* is given: a certain king Amarashakti turns to Vishnu Sharma, a Brahman, with a request to teach his sons. The Brahman had fulfilled the request and wrote *Panchatantra*: «Having read his wise and at the same time fascinating work, the princes obtained both worldly experience and intelligence». All the five books (or tantras) in *Panchatantra or Five Books of Worldly Wisdom* correspond to the didactic goal: *On Causing Dissension among Allies* (introduction and 22 stories), *On Securing Allies* (introduction and 6 stories), *On War and Peace: the Story of the crows and the owls* (introduction and 13 stories), *On Losing What You have Gained* (introduction and 17 stories), *On Hasty Actions* (introduction and 14 stories) [14, pp. 10, 467-478].

The didactic function of these stories does not prevent their entertaining nature; there are stories of different nature collected together with the help of the framing story. This entertaining and sententious content attracted public attention, and today there are translation into 60 languages.

During the VI century, a Middle Persian translation appeared under the title of *Kalilah and Dimnah*. While in *Panchatantra* the prosaic narration is fortified with poems, *Kalilah and Dimnah* is a series of prosaic stories. The title of *Kalilah and Dimnah* is related to a mispronunciation of names of the two characters of *Panchatantra*, Karataka and Damanaka, first in Middle Persian and later in Arabic. Reworking changed the collection: translators introduced new parts (novellas), proverbs, quotes from Quran. These novelties were intended to meet the likes of Muslim readers. Addresses to Almighty and praise to him are combined with reflecting moral and ethical sides of life of the Eastern people: righteous deeds and generosity, fidelity to one's word, hard work and piety.

In the preface to *Kalilah and Dimnah*, its collector states the content of the work and relates the story of Borzuy being sent by Khosrow I, a chapter on Borzuy and 14 chapters of the main collection. According to legend, king Khosrow had heard about *Panchatantra*, and he, being an admirer of learned and sententious books sent doctor Borzuy to obtain the book. The history of the work in its Middle Persian variant is related to the period of conquests of Alexander the Great, when philosopher Beydabah wrote the book as a manual for king Dabshalim, “which would show how to rule the people and

educate them, would say about morality of kings and how he should rule his subjects in their obedience and service to king...". Sententious and entertaining readings alternate in *Kalilah and Dimnah*, as the collection was made with this feature in mind, in accordance with the will of king Dabshalam: "...It included things serious and amusing, jokes, wisdom and philosophy, so that a wise person would find what to do with the wisdom and that his chest would break with laughter caused by the jokes in the book" [15, pp. 9, 32-33].

In VIII century, an Arabic translation (*Kalila wa Dimna*) appeared, made by an ardent admirer of Persian literature, Abdallahibnal-Muqaffa', who introduced his own changes into the book.

Arabic text of *Kalila wa Dimna* served as a basis for Greek (XI century) and Persian (XII century) translation, its Hebrew translation (XIII century) was subsequently translated to Latin; Spanish translation was made directly from Arabic. Greek translation by Simeon Setkha is known as *Stephanit and Ikhnilat* and has become the source of translations into Slavic languages. Russian literature knows this work in two variants: «In 1762, «Boris Volkov, a translator at the Academy of Science translated from Latin *Political and Sententious Fables of Pilpay, an Indian philosopher*, seemingly having no idea that the readers of Muscovy were acquainted with the book under a different title». We have several variants in Persian, including the reworking of *KalilawaDimna* by Husaynibn Ali al-Va'iz al-Kashifi (*AnwariSukheili* - meaning *The Canopus Constellation*). A literary phenomenon is the book's return to its origin in India, in the form of literary reworking by Akbar AbulFazl, *Iyari Danish (Touchstone of Knowledge)*.

*Kalilah and Dimnah* is known through both West and East, there are Mongol, Tibetan, Malay and Siamese versions. «It is only natural that all these translations, while adapting the text of the original to the liking and needs of a certain people had a great influence onto development of national novella». The influence of *Kalilah and Dimnah* is seen in the European literature (Chaucer, Boccaccio, La Fontaine, Goethe).

Another collection, *Shukasptati (Seventy stories of Parrot)*, XI century) is known in reworks. In the frame story, a parrot holds a woman from meeting her lover telling her fascinating stories. However, didactic idea in this collection gives way to entertainment. This collection is reflected in Malay and Turkish literary traditions. The Indian collection *Shukasaptati* is known in the Persian literature as *Tutinama*, a Persian-Tajik literary monument, a book of fairy tales by ZiyauddinNakhshabi, dated 1330.

The next well-known collection of Arabic tales and novellas is *One Thousand and One Nights*, known in English as *The Arabian Nights* from the title of the first English-language edition. Its basis is formed by Indian stories about people of good morals, animal tales and a framing device novella, the Persian foundation – framing of the work with the narration about Sheherazade and Shahryar, tales of love and magic.

The characters of the Baghdad tales are Khalif and vizier, judges, merchants, artisans; magic plays a limited role; there are historical and daily events, borrowings from anthologies and scientific works.

Starting from XII century, *The Arabian Nights* collection is supplemented with Egyptian source material, which is characterized by a wider use of social motifs. However, fairy tales were also subjected to changes: spirits and powers had become obedient to the hero, while the hero of the urban novellas had become more inventive. The tale experienced influence from historical events, such as crusades, it is grounded in literary sources and poetic fragments – narration about Sindbad is obviously influenced by *The Wonders of India*, authored by a certain Persian captain, where he described his journeys to India, East Africa and Pacific islands. Geographical works of Ibn Khordadbeh, Al-Muaddasi, Ibn Hawqal, Al-Masudi, and other scientists and travelers contained quite accurate geographical, ethnographic and scientific knowledge about lands known to medieval Arabs.

Popularity of the tales is explained by their entertainment value, vivid narration, unlimited imagination, mastery in plot building and composition.

## 2. *Intertextuality of fairy tales and translations of Eastern prose*

Let us consider the texts and translations of the Oriental fairy tales as an intertext.

The scale of intertextuality may vary and fluctuate from small fragments borrowed from a literary work to the whole works. Any canonic literary work of the past, having become a certain standard after many centuries of constant repetitions may be reinterpreted and understood in a new way. «The author engages in a dialog with the text or with the text's author, and these two sources may be strongly opposed or blended together forming an integral whole. Fluidity of the boundary, its ever-changing nature reveals astonishing richness of creative thinking, its true freedom» [16].

There is no more famous work of literature through history than *The Arabian Nights* collection. "Zhukovsky, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Belinsky, Goethe, Dickens, Hoffmann, Tennyson and many others in one way or another expressed their admiration for this unique collection and used its images" [17].

There shall be no impression that it is a collection of Arabian tales: despite its final form was found in the Arabic language, creation of this collection involved many Eastern peoples. "The foundation of the book and its most ancient part is Arabic translation from Persian of Indo-Iranian fairy tales collected in *HezarEfsane* ("Thousand Tales"), whose existence is attested by Arabic sources and geographers of the X century" [18]. Correspondingly, three groups of tales and stories may be identified that were created in different times and regions: Indo-Iranian, Baghdadian and Egyptian.

The surge of interest to works with Oriental theme or Oriental story lines happened in the XVII century, when the

tales were translated into European languages. “Truly massive popularity of the East in Europe was caused by French translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* by Antoine Galland in 1704-1717, which was followed by a flow of similar translations and imitations: *Tartar, Mongol and Chinese tales* of Thomas-Simon Gueullete, *Turkish Tales* (1701) and *Peruvian Tales* (1710-1712) of French Iranist François Petis de La Croix [19].

The nature of intertextuality in such translated texts resolves itself to creating a new semantic world for artistic elements borrowed into a completely new artistic space where their previous conceptual relations cannot exist. The borrowed element is as if reborn and takes a necessary meaning depending on the common idea of the work for which its author is creating the new artistic space. Thus, the author “comes into intertextual game with individual artistic works of different eras, as well as with their creators” [20], and as a result, into a game with the recipient.

Tales of Antoine Galland and imitations of F. Petis de La Croix, T-S.Gueullette, Charles Pinot Duclos and others astounded their readers with depiction of a fantastic world, new images, life and customs of unknown peoples, exotic pictures of nature, peculiar poetics. Russian reader was getting acquainted with the Oriental fairy tales in translations to European languages or in Russian translations. The first translation of *The Arabian Nights* into Russian was made from French (Galland) in 1760s by A. Filatyev. In the end of that century, I. Sytin published the tales again, this time translated from different French translation (by Denis Chavis and Jacques Cazotte). In 1796, the *The Arabian Nights* were printed in translation by Ye. Lemiparsky” [21].

Speaking of imitating nature of such literature, we shall note that despite scholars started discussing intertextuality only in 20th century, the roots of the concept, or, actually, those of the concept of dialogism that is the foundation of the notion of intertextuality — may be traced to Classical philosophy and its teaching on the imitating nature of arts. The most complete development of this concept may be found in the works of Aristotle, who used the imitation principle to lay the foundation his explanations of nature, functions and features of artistic creativity: “Since childhood, it is inherent to all people to imitate ... and admire imitation”. However, imitation is not synonymous with copying; it is more of a creative rethinking of images, their reinterpretation. Aristotle relates the artistic cognition to “an unknown moment of getting pleasure and joy of recognition, when something known is reconstructed in memory and provides a deeper understanding of the object” [22].

In that way, under the influence of Oriental fairy tale, a new phenomenon arises in the European literature, so-called Eastern novella. The Eastern novella may be represented by novellas proper, legends, fairy tales, apologues, fables and short stories, which, according to V.N. Kubacheva [23], reflects the diverse nature of the genre. On the one hand, success is guaranteed due to exotic and fantastic content,

images and poetic form, on the other hand, writers turned to the Eastern novella with sententious and didactic tasks or to express political and philosophical ideas. “All these authors created fashionable entertaining reading, borrowing elements from other types of works to achieve the entertaining value: gallant adventure novel, pastoral literature, magic chivalric romance, etc” [24, pp.297, 299]. Literary adaptation of the Oriental fairy tale has left costumes, names and clichéd motifs as examples of intertext. This external cover for long would stay in the literature as a fancy dress, hiding any type of content, leading to a new direction in the development of the Eastern novellas – educational. Ideology of Enlightenment had an impact on the literary development: the Eastern novella had become an ideological and satyric genre. A number of circumstances facilitated a prolonged success of Enlightenment novella: Eastern clothes were convenient from censorship point of view; depiction of the Western world through perception of a naive easterner was an ideal for Enlightenment method for analyzing the phenomena of life from the point of view of rationality and nature; masquerading as a fashionable genre facilitated broad popularization of philosophical ideas. Consequently, it is possible to discuss translation as an intertext formation. Finding support in the theory of R. Barthes, according to which “the text ... is formed out of anonymous, elusive and at the same time already read quotations – quotations without quotes”, one may say that a translation of a text consists of multilevel and polycomponent elements of the original, defined by translation studies as translation units, which quote the pretext broadly defined. In the end, the whole text of the translation, just like any other text is an “unacknowledged quotation” [25].

Let us remind that the Eastern novella existed in two incompatible forms: “One is the entertaining genre tracing its roots to Oriental fairy tale and gallant romance, while another whose similarity is limited to appearance only is the Enlightenment Oriental philosophical novella”. The Oriental novella did not make distinction between the original and the translation, thus, any work became an original, being a reworking, imitation or analogy, in other words, intertext.

In the European literature, such authors as Montesquieu, Voltaire, A. Hamilton, S. Johnson, D. Hawksworthy, and D. Ridley turned to the Oriental novella. The Oriental fairy tale found its reflection in the works of A.S. Pushkin and V.A. Zhukovsky, while the Eastern novella was a genre used by such well-known Russian writers as M.M. Kheraskov, N.I. Novikov, I.A. Krylov, A.N. Radischev, O.I. Senkovsky, D.P. Oznobishin, A.A. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, F.V. Bulgarin, N.G. Chernyshevsky, I.T. Turgenev, L.N. Tolstoy and others.

Thus, in the modern art, intertextuality as a mechanism of rethinking and renewal has turned into one of the main principles of generation of literary texts, the total of which is determined by such attributes as “openness, mobility, extended in the infinite cultural space” [26].

The literary text “remembers” not only the culture of the past and present, but the culture of the future as well, as each

individual work is but a stage in the development of the spiritual tradition, its continuation at a new turn of the spiral of history. Thanks to establishing links between a certain work and previously created works, intertextuality becomes a productive method for forming new semantic structures, as well as a method for multifaceted reading of literary texts.

### III. CONCLUSION

Fairy tales are quite possibly the most stable form of cultural transmission. They are embedded into the texture of living culture, unlike their contemporaries – myths, laws, moral principles and technical devices – today may be found in dedicated sciences in the best cases. The goal of intertextuality is creating new unique meanings of literary works, which are becoming more complex and conceptually intensive, requiring, in its own turn, a higher degree of attention from the perceiving individual.

Folklore of the East and works of classical Persian-Tajik literature, wide saying and aphorisms, Eastern world view, topics and images of eastern classics influenced Russian and European writers, having become a property of the European society. It should be clarified, that the historical and cultural communality of Eastern peoples had its role: Indian, Persian and Arabic influences are so intertwined that a Russian reader may find it very hard to separate origins of various themes and images.

Undoubtedly, Eastern sources, including Persian-Tajik, had their role in acquisition of the Eastern material. Captivating and magnificent Persian literature attracted Europeans with its diversity of passion, abundance of figures and metaphors, refined images, luxury and heat of feelings, splendor of comparison and parallelism, collection of gorgeous words and images representing intertext (the nightingale singing about a rose; the moth burning in candle flame; the drop that became a pearl, etc.).

Interest to motifs, plot lines, topics and images of the Persian-Tajik literature is an integral part of European Orientalism. It had found vivid implementation in the Oriental novella. Residual interest to the Enlightenment novella is evident in turning to the fairy tale collections such as *Kalilah and Dimnah*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Tutinama* (The Book of Parrot). We consider translations and imitations that later were replaced with original works of intertextual nature. Thus, the intertextual relation may be considered as a process playing a role in enriching the literary text, adding elements from previously existing texts with the aim to provide the literary images with more expression, saturating the text with additional connotations, which in no way impede functioning of the source text. However, these additional connotations may only be perceived by the subject familiar with the source text.

Russian writers had various goals in mind while turning to works of classical Persia: providing their readers with exotic entertainment, interest to didactic content of the Eastern literature, examples of good deeds and condemnation of vices.

Behind traditional interest to Eastern exotics, they saw a possibility to advance Enlightenment ideas or a political agenda: multi-topic and multi-genre nature is related to the search of a method to influence the reader's mind. Eastern aphorisms that have become an integral part of Romanticist literary process, appearance of interest to Persian-Tajik literature and examples of using the motifs borrowed from Saadi, Hafiz, Khayam in the Russian literature: fountain, grain of sand turning into pearl, dervish, etc. Melodic and charming poetic lines of Persian classics, full of delight and towering spirit, reflections on misfortunes and joys of life, ambiguous and full of imagery, heard in the Caucasus mountains, Indian jungles, Black Sea coast, Asian steppe and deserts, they changed their sound due to translation, obtaining new interpretation, but never losing connection to their origins.

It is evident that the Oriental novella as intertext in all its varieties is still present in the literary world, it still has its characteristic attributes typical of the Oriental fairy tale: exoticism and entertaining nature, philosophicity and didacticism.

In conclusion, let us note that Postmodernism rejects the understanding of intertextuality as a genetic derivation of text from its sources, as the phenomenon of intertextuality is more important functionally than it is genetically. It allows stating inexhaustibility of the semantic component of literary text and literary culture as a whole, their continuous renewal and youth.

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