

## Semantics of Magic Items in Uzbek Folk Tales

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**Abstract:** In fairy tales, magical objects are used to reveal some secret related to the fate of a person or the natural world (through magic stones, love spells, magic apples, etc.), to destroy evil (for example, using a magic comb or a magic mirror to destroy a creeping villain, punishing deceitful and evil creatures with a club for whipping), to manifest high human desires, such as alleviating the torment of hard work, to achieve a peaceful and comfortable life (with the help of an open tablecloth, a hot pot, a bin, a flying carpet, etc.). The article deals with the semantics of enchanted objects.

**Keywords:** Fairy tales, magical items, strange thing, folklore, anthropomorph, zoomorph.

Oddities in Uzbek folk fairy tales are in an anthropomorphic image or in the image of a person (Khizr, an old wizard or an old woman, a child with golden hair, a child with flowers from his mouth when he laughs and from the eyes of pearls when he cries and others); in a zoomorphic form or in the form of an animal, a bird (a flying horse, a nightingale, a simurgh, ango, a goldfish, a deer with golden hooves, and others); in the form of plants (flower of life, healing magic herb, love plant); "strange things" (an open tablecloth, a hot pot, a club for whipping, a magic flute, a magic carpet, a mirror world, a magic lamp, a magic comb and others); mythological characters (giant, witch, elf, fairy, baba yaga, dragon); strange types of edible things (living water, magic apple, golden watermelon); magical space environment (Eram garden, paradise, dungeon, underwater possession, realm of the dead, hell, greatest mountain); shown on the example of the action of a magic word (for example, split a rock with a word, open the entrance to a cave).

In folklore, certain experiments were carried out on the classification of "strange things" in fairy tales. In particular, according to the famous scientist V. Ya. Propp, it is advisable to classify "strange things" in fairy tales not according to their function, but according to the sources of their occurrence [5. – P.174.]

In our opinion, taking into account that "strange things" perform an important compositional task in the artistic construction of a fairy tale, it is advisable to group them according to their functional purpose as follows:

1. **Multifunctional or multitasking "strange things"**. An example of this is *a magic ring, a mysterious mirror*.
2. **Monofunctional or single-tasking "strange things"**. An example of this is *the whipping club, the flying carpet, and the hot pot*.

Many "strange things" appear in fairy tales with mutual functions. For example, the hero can find information about the desired reality through a magic book with a magic mirror and a magic ring. All three of these things can acquire an artistic function as a means of communication. They pave the way for new adventures of the hero.

*Knife* (dagger), *sword* (sword), *scissors*, *ax* occupy a special place in the plot of Uzbek folk fairy

tales. They are usually artistically interpreted as miraculous helpers, magical tools in fairy tales.

In ancient times, knives and scissors were widely used in magical rituals. Interestingly, the custom of using sharp objects during the ceremony is still preserved. More precisely, it is known that even today magicians effectively use knives during the ceremony of removing the evil eye. They effectively use a knife to expel an evil spirit (evil eye, corruption, envy) that has entered the human body. In this case, it becomes clear that people look at sharp objects as a magical means of protection. Belief in the magical properties of sharp objects is also reflected in folk customs.

Among the peoples of Southeast Asia, belief in a magical, extraordinary sword is widespread. In fact, the sword is interpreted in connection with the elements of water and sky. In particular, the sword is depicted as a creative force, personifying the power of fire (the sun). The sharp blade of the sword, its strong spirit is compared to the power of sunlight.

The sword is interpreted by different peoples in connection with the name of a certain epic hero. For example, he is associated with Ali among the Uzbeks, Le Loy among the Vietnamese and King Arthur among the European peoples.

In the past, there was a special taboo on sharp objects. [7. – P.219.] Especially in the case of death, they were used very sparingly or not used until a certain day. The reason is that sharp objects are believed to hurt the invisible spirit of the deceased. It is believed that the offended spirit harms the living and sows among them the seeds of death or disease. That is why during the days of mourning, it was superstitiously forbidden to use sharp objects and piercing objects such as spears and needles. Say, when a person dies, the Chinese eat food only with their hands, without using knives, needles, or even special sticks [7. – P.219.]

Basically, people used knives and swords as hunting and combat weapons, and axes and scissors as working tools. They also used knives, axes, and scissors as household items. In particular, the knife and ax were widely used in preparing things for cleaning or chopping for cooking.

Sharp objects in fairy tales are artistically interpreted in different ways. Nevertheless, they can be reduced to four different artistic movements. In particular, these are:

- a) magical objects set in motion by the will of the hero or set in motion by themselves;
- b) the place of the soul or spirit;
- c) a talisman warning about the state of the hero;
- d) is described as an imitation magic tool capable of exerting a magical effect on the environment.

Uzbek folk tales such as "The Fiery Strongman" and "The Poison Sword" describe how the magic sword mysteriously moves on its own, depending on the hero's desire to have his wish come true without difficulty. For example, in the fairy tale "The Fiery Strongman" it is said that the sword, pulled out of its scabbard by the will of the hero, stretches for forty seconds, and even if he does not move his hand, he moves on his own and begins to cut off the heads from the shoulders of the opposing forces - the robbers. [1. – P.58.] A similar scene is observed in the fairy tale "The Poison Sword". That is, the sword, pulled out of its scabbard, in the blink of an eye is extended forty yards, knocking the enemy down and dragging him into a trap. [6. – P.43.] In the fairy tale "What a flower did Sanobar, what Sanobar made a flower" it is told that the hero achieves his goal with the help of a sword, that "if he collects one foot, if he lays forty feet".

In these tales, the magical properties of the sword are exaggerated based on artistic animation. For the assertion that such an inanimate object as a sword, when it comes out of its scabbard, expands forty feet and pulls the enemy into its trap, and even if the hero does not move his hand, he moves by himself and destroys the enemy, is nothing nothing but artistic texture, imaginary fiction and exaggeration. The purpose of this animation of the sword is to present it to the audience as a magical item.

In fairy tales and epics, swords and daggers (knives) are interpreted as constant companions and helpers of the hero, no doubt that such concepts and ideas are the basis for interpreting him as an assistant.

In epic works, the sword is usually the sword described by the name "diamond sword" [4. - P.197.]. Since the diamond is the sharpest, most cutting and most precious stone, the sharpness and honor of the sword are compared with it. Glassblowers are known to use diamonds to cut glass. No wonder the word diamond is used in relation to the sword. Because in the past, diamond craftsmen made good examples of swords.

In the Uzbek folk tale "The Rich Man and the Peri", scissors are interpreted as an imitation magical weapon that can have a magical effect on the environment, a "strange thing" that can change a certain place. In the fairy tale, the scissors are shown as belonging to the mythological symbol - Baba Yaga. They lie on the windowsill of Baba Yaga's house, along with magical items such as a mirror and a comb. These things are stolen by the hero of a fairy tale with the help of a trick, deceiving Baba Yaga. Sensing this, Baba Yaga, angry, begins to pursue the hero. The hero then uses these enchanted objects as a means of defense and throws them one by one to block Baba Yaga's path. When the hero throws the scissors, they turn into a huge forest with no beginning and no end. So the function of scissors as a magical protective tool is exaggerated here.

Folklorist K. Imomov argued that "enchantments idealize the image of the main character. The role of enchantment is important in a hero's victory". [3. -P.86.] In fact, even in the above tale, it is easy to see that the image of the hero is idealized with the help of magic scissors, a mirror, a comb, and so on.

In fairy tales, knives are also often found among sharp objects. It is even known that an Uzbek folk tale called "The Magic Knife" was created. In it, the knife is characterized by the words "magic", "characteristic". This exaggerates the magical properties of the knife.

To emphasize the magical nature of the knife, the fairy tale describes the mysterious process of its manufacture. That is, the blade master creates it using the magical properties of fire and water. That is why the master describes the magic knife he made as "the son of fire and water." In fact, this definition has a vital basis. Because in order to make a knife, the craftsmen first take a piece of iron (metal) and heat it well on fire. Thus, working with him becomes easier. The treated metal is then cooled by placing it in water. It seems that this vivid reality is emphasized by the description of the knife in the fairy tale.

In fairy tales involving the "magic knife", special attention is paid to the inheritance of the magic knife from the father to the youngest son. Such a family heirloom is the slave of a magic knife, and when the hero addresses him with magic words, he appears in human form and instantly completes any difficult task in the blink of an eye and leads the hero to his dream and desire. For example, in the fairy tale "Ernazar and Kimonazar", the father said to his son on his deathbed: "Let this sharp knife be your testament. This knife is a magic knife," he says. When the son uses the knife, he refers to him like this: "Kimonazar." Then the following words come from the knife: "I obey, Nazar!" "I am the slave of the one who takes me into his own hands," and immediately listens to the desire of the hero and fulfills his desire in an instant. [2. - P.40-56.] A similar plot motif can be found in the fairy tale "Mulla Pankush". Before dying, the old man gives his youngest son a knife called "Mulla Pankush". [2. -P.87.] When used, the "Mulla Pankush" knife slave is called.

Thus, the religious beliefs of ancient people and animistic ideas about sharp objects widely used in magical rituals are preserved in folk tales based on strange details, such as a magic ax, magic scissors and a magic sword. Each of them has its own artistic function in fairy tales and is interpreted in a certain way.

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