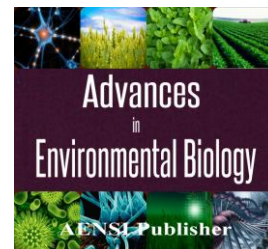




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Structural analysis of story love of Asli and Karam on the basis of Prop theory and comparing it with the Nezami's Leily O Majnun story

Dr. Roqaye Neisari Tabrizi

Department of literature, Abhar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abhar, Iran

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ABSTRACT

Love story of Asli and Karam which has an excellent and high position among love stories and is counted like the best love stories, in folk culture and folk literature of Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey and some countries of Asia middle is narrated in different forms but in all of them the main content of story and its heroes is the same.

This story which has tragic and sorrowful ending, like many of Azarbayjan's stories, is combing of poetry and prose and according to tradition, Ashiqs (story tellers) relate the prose parts with utilizing the art of diction and speech and with their effable trilling and with their own pleasant voice perform poetry parts - which has profound relation with emotions and sense and excitements of heroes story. Analysis of story of Asli and Karam with using Prop method and comparing it with story of Nezami's Leily and Majnun manifests that both stories despite of their different and various appearance, in the perspective of hero's actions, and character's field of action, have many similarity.

The sameness of these works, encourage us meanwhile introducing the story of Asli and Karam do Another indecision in this stories and camper some similar issues.

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INTRODUCTION

The story of Asli and Karam has wonderful and nobleplace among the love stories of Azerbaijan. So many years, the Ashyqs quote it in their circles. It is the counterpart of the greatest love stories of the world. It is common in the folk culture and literature of Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and some countries in Asia. This story is quoted in various forms, but the main content and characters are the same.

Some researchers believe that Asli (Beloved) and Karam (love), the heroes of the story, lived at the end of 10 AH century, this story were formed in about a century later, and the base of story is the songs and poems (Ashyq) of Karam about this life which had become increasingly popular as legend over the time. [7]. However, some other researchers believe that there are some ancient and mythological signs showing the story has a long history [4]. Some poems of this story were recorded in war stories and manuscript collections. Also, some of its narrations had been lithographed. After the promotion of lead printing in Ottoman era, the first written text of Asli and Karam got printable by Cream by Ahmad Rasim (1351 AH).

The artists in different countries have developed many poems, stories, and plays based on the legend of Asli and Karam which has been become the symbol of pure love. Nazim Hikmet, the Turkish poet, was inspired by this story and wrote the Karam Gibi. Khachator Aboyan (1264 BC), Armenian author, wrote the story of Dokhataretork and Nariman Narimanf wrote the story of Bahadur and Sana based on it. One of the most famous works based on this legend is the opera of Asli and Karam. It was composed in 1330 BC by Aziz Haji Bigof (1303- 1367 BC), a famous Azerbaijani musician and composer, and reached to a global reputation (Ibid: 265).

For the first time in Iran, M Elias, a merchant in Tabriz, registered the story of Asli and Karam along with the poems of Nasimi, Fozooli, Ghoosi, Amani, and others in 1142 AH. Hossein Saedi (2002) collected this story from Azerbaijani Ashyqs and published it as poetry and prose in Tabriz. Also, Ali Barzandeh (2009) rewrote this story based on a lithographed version, wrote an introduction to this story and introduced its manuscripts and printed versions, and published it in Tabriz.

According to Saai, the origin of this story is Ganje city. But according to Barzandeh, the starting point of this story is Esfahan. Also, the Turkmen narrations show that events of the story were occurred in Tabriz.

Corresponding Author: Dr. Roqaye Neisari Tabrizi, Department of literature, Abhar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abhar, Iran.

E-mail: naisaritabrizi@yahoo.com

It should be noted that because of the extraordinary allure and splendor of Barazande narration, his translation is used in this study.

The morphology of story based on Propp's theory

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A new approach in stories research is the analysis of their structure, constituents, and the relationship among them (morphology) [5]. With the help of this type of research, researchers conduct proper comparative studies. In light of such studies, they can gain a better understanding of the studied works and conduct proper comparisons among the similar works of different nations. This field of research has its origins in the ancient literary studies and poetics of Aristotle [6]. In the past, it was efficient in the area of development in the study of poetry. In Today World, it created a dramatic change in the study of fiction and established a new literary knowledge called narration science [3]. Therefore, the narration science which is a new and structural method in the study of literature was began with the studies of Vladimir Propp (1970- 1895) [1].

Based on the study of hundred folk tales, Propp extracted the patterns of stories. He showed that despite the apparent diversity of heroes and actions, stories have limited structures and their functions does not exceed from thirty-one items; these stories do not need to have necessarily all these functions [13]. He also classified the characters of in seven main categories:

1. Brave hero who is adventurous, sometimes the victim of a conspiracy, but usually wins.
2. Hero searches for a prince or in cases a good woman.
3. A soothsayer or giver which is first the examiner of hero and then becomes his helper.
4. Helpers and friends of hero.
5. The sender who sends the hero to a mission.
6. A wicked and evil who is the enemy of hero.
7. False or trickster hero who introduces himself as a hero.

It is possible that a character is placed in more than one category, for example the bad character to be also a false hero, soothsayer plays the role of sender, several bad characters exist, or the number of helpers to be more.

In the analysis of Asli and Karam story by using the Propp's morphology method, it becomes clear that with little displacement in functions and removing some others, Propp's theory can also be extended to this story.

However, some instances of Propp's functions cannot be seen in this story. Sometimes, different elements are found in the story that is special to the Iranian and Azeri stories. Among these elements is the role of religion in the end of stories or sequences of functions. This is not fully matched with the model proposed by Propp.

Theme of the story:

* Religious differences:

The main theme of this story is the religious differences which create barriers to the marriage of lovers. This type of barrier can also be seen in Persian love stories such as the story of Sheikh Sanan in Attar's *MantegholTeyr*. The trend in these stories makes it clear that even differences in beliefs cannot be a barrier to love between human beings.

* Worshiping and praying:

The worshiping and praying is the most important element in this story. It causes the miraculous birth of hero and actually prepares the field for entrance of hero to the story.

* Class status of lovers:

Karam is a prince and Asli is minister's daughter. Basically, lovers in romantic stories often have a royal lineage or belong to a great dynasty. There are limited stories which lover or beloved are from the lower classes [8].

* Charm and Magic

In folk and sometimes romantic tales, usually anti-hero can bind with the strange and supernatural forces to do weird and wonderful things, dominate on human beings and nature, and influence on their works. The depersonalization, disguising into different characters, enchanting, and bewitching are the sorcery manifestations in this form of stories.

In the story of Asli and Karam, Qarakshysh gives his daughter fetish clothing and wants her to allow Karam to open its buttons. But that night Karam tries to open the buttons and cannot open them. This fetish clothing converts all the body of Karam to fire and ashes.

The story characters:

In the story of Asli and Karam, Karam is the hero and main character of story. This character is a skilled artist and poet, and a desperate lover. He always suffers from separation because of deception and trickery of those like Qarakshysh. No one is aware of his secret pains. His method to reach to beloved is different from other lovers. He has no weapons except regret, cry, whine, and curse. He just sighs, moans, and complains in the times of Qarakshysh deception. Finally, he lost his lives in this way.

Asli is another important character in this story. She is a pure, innocent, modest, shy, and with true love. She knows tact is not along with fate. Therefore, she does not conflict with the fate. Although sometimes she tries to escape from the vortex of trouble, she has accepted the futility of her efforts. Father, wherever he wants, accompanies her. Asli cannot object to improper behaviors of her father. Her pain and separation reminds the sufferings of Lily in separation from Majnoon.

The father of Karam is a glorious and very fair king who has friendly behavior with people. He, like many fathers in love stories, sees the restlessness of his child and intervenes. In any way, sometimes kindly and sometimes with angry, tries Karam marry Asli.

Qarakshysh, other character in this story, is a priest with old thoughts. He deceives Asli and Karam with lies and deception and in the veil of religion. Even he does not preserve the covenant with his friend, Father of Karam, which has spent his life with him.

Pashaye Aleppo is one of the positive characters in this story. He is the person who sees the Ashyqyart of Karam, becomes aware of his love story, and forces Qarakshysh to consent to the marriage of these two.

Mother of Asli does not emerge in the story more than once or twice. Her most important role is collaboration with her husband to add the pain of lovers' separation.

Sufi, the fellow of Karam, is one of the significant characters in this story. He is an honest person who is aware of the anxiety of Karam and tries to bring them together.

However, some other characters are also in this story which has not a prominent role.

Ali Syed Salamat, an Azerbaijani researcher, considers this as a mythological story. He believes that all of the characters in this story are mythological characters such as Ziyad Khan, Goddess of light, Qarakshysh, the goddess of darkness, Asli, the symbol of moon, and Karam, the symbol of sun [12].

The theme of story:

The mystery of this story is protest and hate of people to ignorant and bigoted individuals like the Qarakshysh who cause libel in human societies. In some other versions of this story, for example, the Armenian cemetery is described in which red flowers have emerged from the tombstones of these two lovers. But, thorn arises from the grave of Qarakshysh and prevents the two flowers to reach together. Images of this kind are all curses to this type of priests. Surely, the purpose of creating such stories is strengthening the friendship between Armenian and Muslim nations. They indicate that the difference of religions cannot be a barrier to love between human beings.

The similarities between the story of Asli and Karam and the story of Leili and Majnun:

The story of Asli and Karam has many similarities with the story of Leili and Majnun. The following similarities in these two stories are considerable:

* Both stories describe the powerful love between lovers and beloved which separation has made it attractive, such that you want hear it again and again.

* Both stories begin while none of the fathers (father of Karam and father of Majnoon) have child. Majnoon's father, the chief of the BeniAmer tribe who was very friendly with people and had much wealth, always wished to have a child to gain the heritage of father. Finally, his dream got real and Qais, his boy, was born [14]. The father of Karam was a great king in Esfahan. He was very fair and friendly with people. But he had no child and always had dreams of having child to leave the throne to him [4].

* In both stories, fathers see the restlessness of their boys and begin to suit for them. Rejected by the families of girls, they both advice their children and want them to be patient and restraint [14,4].

* The father of Majnoon (the chief of BeniAmer tribe) and the father of Karam (king of Esfahan) are both great men [14,4].

* The tribe people complained Majnoon to their king and the king allowed killing him, but his father and the tribe people went to find him and got back him to his home [14].

Karam went to Caesarea to secretly visit his beloved. The father of Asli complained him to the judge and the judge ordered him to jail. But Sufi, the friend of Karam, explained his true love story and changed the opinion of judge. The judge forced Qarakshysh to engage Karam and Asli [4].

* Lovers' illness

In the story of Asli and Karam, Karam gets ill because of love and no doctor can treat him. In the story of Leili and Majnun, when the family of Leili rejects him, Majnun gets mad, leaves, and wanders into the desert.

* The inevitableness of fate from the perspective of Leili and Asli

Leili and Asli follow fate in their life. This is the same in both two stories. Leili is prevented from going to school and imprisoned in her house. But she does not complain, because she believes the fate is inevitable. She even is forced to be in the harem of an unwanted husband and spend her life, but still she does not complain. Also, Asli obeys the demands of her father. Against her will, father takes her from one region to another region, but she considers it a bad luck.

The two women occasionally attempt slightly to escape from the trap of evil, but these efforts are not effective. Seeing the futility of their efforts, they return more desperate and depressed than before to the world of isolation and solitude.

* Impatience, restlessness, and self-sacrifice of Leili and Asli

Leili and Asli love their lovers. Leili occasionally composed a poem, wrote it on the sheet, and dropped it from the roof; so maybe a passerby would take it to Majnoon.

Because of intense passion and devotion to the lover, Asli ignored everything such as religion, youth, parents, and even her life.

* The help of gentlemen and valiant men to lovers

In the story of Leili and Majnun, Nofal is a brave and high-minded warrior. He promises Majnoon to bring Leili to him and sometimes Majnoon goes to the camp of Nofal and spends a few months with joy and happiness [14].

Also in the story of Asli and Karam, when the king of Aleppo hears the love story of Karam tries to bring together these two lovers [4].

* The talk of lovers with non-human creatures

One of the significant issues in the story of Leili and Majnun is the fondness and affection of Majnoon to the wildlife such as lion, deer, wolves, foxes, and etc. this is similar to the miracles of mystics.

Also Karam in his way to the home of beloved speaks with rivers, mountains, ruins, gazelles, and etc and asks about the beloved [4].

* End of Story

The end of both stories is painful and tragic. The lovers embrace death to reach together in the altar of love [10].

After the death of Leili, Majnoon went to her tomb weeping and composed romantic poems until he died and was buried beside the grave of Leili [14].

The fire and flames of Karam's love turned him into ash. With heart-rending cries and moans, Asli was gathering the gray with her hair. Suddenly, flames were ignited from under the ashes and fired her hair and burned all her body [4].

Finally, although both lovers face with death at the end of both stories, in fact their failure in love has changed them to legend.

The story of Asli and Karam:

Narrators have narrated a righteous king ruled in Isfahan. He had no child and always had dreams of having child to leave the throne to him. The King had a Christian treasurer named Qarakshysh and trusted on him. Ironically, he also had not child. One day, these two men talked about this matter and vowed if their dream would become true and they would have child, one girl and one boy, they marry each other. Their prayers were answered and after nine months, one boy for king and one girl for treasurer were born. The king thanked this blessing by releasing prisoners and feeding numerous dervishes. They named the boy as Ahmed Mirza and the girl as Qarasoltan.

After a few years, one night in the dream world, the king's son who was now a young mandrank a bowl of love wine from the hands of Qarasltan and this flamed the fire of love in him. When he woke up, his calmness was lost. The face of girl was in front of his eyes and he could not eat or asleep anymore. When father saw his boy is upset, he sent many doctors to his bedside for treatment. However, they did not know any medicine to remedy him. Every day, this pain haggard Karam more and more. Because of this event, his father became more distracted and distressed. One day, he said that I would give great wealth to everybody who diagnoses the pain and disease and treats him.

An old woman realized that the pain of love had prevailed over Karam. She stated this issue to the king. The king got happy because of hearing the cause of his illness and blessed the old woman. Then, he called the Qarakshysh to the court, stated the issue, and suited his daughter for his boy. But the priest was not too satisfy about this marriage and excused the religious differences. King said it is better to accept willingly; otherwise, I would force you to accept your daughter to marry my son. Qarakshysh saw he had no choice and asked the king for a period of five months to prepare the wedding party requirements. King agreed and two rings were exchanged between them to show the covenant of marriage. But the priest secretly left his residence with his daughter. The news reached Karam and his pain, illness, and anxiety soared.

The king asked the wise men to attend in the court and treat the pain of Karam. All the wise men requested Karam to forget her. But Karam did not accept any admonition and the added pain made him impatient. To soothe his pain, the father forced to send Karam for looking for Asli. He went on horseback to several town and villages. Arriving to each town, he sang his love story and asked everyone about his beloved. In this way, he not only addresses humans, but also mountains, valleys, gardens, rivers, and etc. and looks for his sweetheart. In their path, he and sufirepeatedly faced with overwhelming hardships such as being trapped in snow, storm, cold, and thieves. However, each time they miraculously saved.

In the way, he found that Qarakshyshhad gone to Daqqooyazo, Aorkob, Parsaq, and finally Caesarea. In the Caesarea, he asked about Qarakshysh and heard they had resided in the Oveirneighborhood and the mother of Asli treated the damaged tooth of people. Karam searched for them and finally found the house of his beloved and with the excuse of dental pain knocked the door. Asli opened the door and seeing the Karam got astonished, but she said nothing and took him to his mother. The mother did not recognize Karam and asked her daughter to put his head on her knees, so she could easily treat the patient's teeth. Doctor asked: which tooth is hurt? Watching his beloved, he showed one of the teeth. The woman pulled out the tooth and saw it was healthy. Karam showed another tooth. She pulled out it, but it was healthy too. Similarly Kaam showed another tooth after each tooth to the doctor, but no sign of pain could be seen in his face.

The mother of Asli got surprised. He looked at the face of boy and recognized Karam. She saw he was senseless because of beloved and was unaware of the pain. Very soon, she sent the news to the Qarakshysh. Karam sang about his confusion, distress, and turmoil to Asli. Karam requested from Asli to get Muslim and she accepted.

The father of Asli complained Karam to the judge and the judge ordered him to jail. But Sufi, the friend of Karam, explained his true love story and changed the opinion of judge. The judge forced Qarakshysh to engage Karam and Asli. The priest apparently accepted and determined tomorrow for holding the ceremony. But the priest fled again at night. Karam again with pain went looking for them. He left behind many cities such as Tekke, GharePeykar, Antakie, and Tarkoosh and finally he found they were in Aleppo.

One day, the Golkhan, one of the commanders, heard the songs of Karam and liked them. He invited Karam to be his guest for a few days and hearing the story of his love, he vowed to bring his beloved. Gvlkhan visited the Pasha of Aleppo and told him the story of Karam. Pasha summoned the Qarakshysh and ordered him to engage these two lovers. Qarakshysh again requested a deadline. This time, however, Pasha kept Asli in the palace and gave a time to the priest.

By magic and deception, Qarakshysh prepared a red wedding dress. He went to the palace of Pasha, gave the dress to his daughter, asked her to wear it, and got ready for the wedding. He asked his daughter to allow Karam to open the buttons of dress at the night of wedlock. At night, Asli said to Karam: I promised my father you would open the buttons of my dress; however, he is my father.

Karam began to open the buttons. But his attempt failed and the buttons were not opened. He sang and said prayer to God and suddenly one of the buttons opened. But when he wanted to unlock the next button, the previous button closed. He tried for hours, failed, and sighed plaintively. This sigh became fire and its flames swept Karam.

Asli screamed and the agents of Pasha who were ordered to look out for possible tricks of Qarakshysh quickly rushed into the room. Karam burnt and became ashes. They asked about the event from Asli and sent the news to Pasha.

The original was restless and her screams drew everyone's attention. All the girls in Aleppo said: Today should be a day of laughter and happiness to you, why are you weeping? Gathering the gray with her hair, Asli showed it to them. Suddenly, flames were ignited from under the ashes and fired her hair and burned all her body.

The news spread all over Aleppo and all got sad because of this event. However, they all knew that they would join in Heaven. For this reason, the Pasha ordered to hold forty days for celebrating their union. Then, he ordered to kill Qarakshysh and his wife for their fetish. The ashes of Karam and Asli were buried and gold dome was built over their tomb. It became the shrine of lovers.

Conclusion:

Love story of Asli and Karam has an excellent and high position among love stories and is counted as the best love stories in folk culture and folk literature of Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey and some countries of middle Asia. The mystery of this story is protest and hate of people to ignorant and bigoted individuals like the Qarakshysh who cause libel in human societies.

The analysis of Asli and Karam story of Leili and Majnun story using Propp's method suggests that despite the apparent diversity of heroes and actions, stories have limited structures and functions. The comparative analysis of these stories shows many homogeneities and consistencies. Sometimes, these consistencies cause we consider a single source for stories. The more important reason is that the subject of these stories, love and faith of friendship, is a common and popular matter among the whole human race. That's why these kinds of stories can be seen in the literature of all nations. Consistent with their life, culture, and belief, every people and nation have spoke repeatedly about love and its pleasant adventures.

In the analysis of Asli and Karam story by using the Propp's morphology method, it becomes clear that with little displacement in functions and removing some others, Propp's theory can also be extended to this story.

However, some instances of Propp's functions cannot be seen in this story. Sometimes, different elements are found in the story that is special to the Iranian and Azeri stories. Among these elements is the role of religion in the end of stories or sequences of functions. This is not fully matched with the model proposed by Propp.

The table of Asli and Karam's morphology, according to Propp's morphology:

Starting situation: The family of king and minister both pray for having children.

	Sym bol	Function	Description
1	e	Moving away	Sufi proposed Karam to go out of Esfahan and improve his feeling
2	k	Prohibition	Qarakshysh considered different religions as a major barrier to marriage of Asli o Karam.
3	q	Violation of the prohibition	Because of restlessness of Karam, his father did not accept the excuses of Qarakshysh and insisted on his desire (the marriage of lovers)
6	j	Deception	Qarakshysh escapes with his family at night
8/2	x	Deficiency	Separation of Karam from beloved
9	y	Moment of bonding	The father of Karam allows his son to go with Sufi for looking for Asli..
10	W	Decision-making of hero	The lover decides to go with Sufi for looking for Asli
11	↑	Go	Karam leaves Esfahan and in every town asks about his sweetheart
12	D	The first function of the gracious	In the mountain, Karam and Sufi get trapped in fog and
13	H	Reaction of hero	The doleful songs of Karam
14	Z	Getting help or achieving to a magic	Help of shining and white hair (Khazar) old man and the magical melody of music
15	R	Traveling from land to other land	Karam travels to many towns and villages looking for Asli
16	L	Struggle	The chase between Karam and Qarakshysh is a fight between the two.
18	V	Victory	With the excuse of toothache, Karam goes into the house of beloved and asleep on the knees of his sweetheart (Victory is not totally achieved)
19	E	Elimination of Evil (adjustment)	Visiting the beloved, Karam calms down
20	↓	Return	Asli requests from Karam to leave her house and he returns.
21	P	Chase	The father of Aslicomplains Karam to the judge and the judge ordered him to jail.
22	S	Save	Hearing his true love story and forces Qarakshysh to engage Karam and Asli
25	T	The hard work	Qarakshysh gives his daughter a fetish clothing and wants her to allow Karam to open its buttons in the wedlock night
26	A	Problem Solving	In this story, the issue is not resolved, but the hero falls in problem and themagical buttons of clothes cast fire on him and burn him
28	Dv	Disclosure	Qarakshysh' tricks are revealed
30	PU	Penalty	Pasha of Aleppo orders to kill Qarakshysh and his wife
31	N	Marriage	According to some traditions, many years later, with the help of Prophet's breaths, they become alive and begin a new life together

This story is consistent with Propp's thirty-one functions, while removing some of them. It should be noted that the story does not end with the function number 31 (N marriage). The hero dies and the story ends with the punishment of the wicked.

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