

## Comparison of Folklore Culture in Nizami's Khosrow and Shirin and Armenian Literature

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**Abstract:** The study tries to deal with a comparative consideration of folklore culture, which is the set of cultural knowledge and behaviors as well as beliefs of common people getting emergence in various manifestations as contemporary poem, in Nizami's Khosrow and Shirin and Armenian Literature. For doing so, it deals with definition of comparative literature and its role in understanding nation's cultures, introducing Khosrow and Shirin and considering its folklore cultural elements as well as Armenian folklore culture elements. Then it explores the cultural similarities in Khosrow and Shirin and Armenian folklore culture, distinct between the folklore culture element in the Armenian and Iranian nations are the central points. Hopefully, it provides the background of understanding the two nations and great civilizations.

[Giti Faraji. **Comparison of Folklore Culture in Nizami's Khosrow and Shirin and Armenian Literature.** *Life Sci J* 2013;10(1s):239-244] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 39

**Keywords:** Armenian Folklore literature, Comparative Literature, Folklore Literature, Khosrow and Shirin, Nizami

### 1. Introduction

Among the world nations and people, category of culture always includes some points for comparison. The two Iranian and Armenian nations have interacted in the fields of customs, traditions, rituals and religion because of their long and collateral co-existence and correlation. This research tries to compare the elements of folklore culture in Armenian nations and Khosrow Shirin by Abo Mohammad Elias Ben Youssef Nizami, who is the great Iranian poet and scholar, in the thirteenth century AD. He lived in the Aran soil and land located along the Aras River to the Kor River. Nizami name is tied up with "Khamseh" (Five Treasures) that shines in the chest of Literature of Iran. Undoubtedly, among them Khosrow and Shirin is a specific luminosity.

Finding the common culture elements of the two cultures in the mentioned above literatures is significant because there is not any research in this field particularly in the area of public culture. Moreover, construction a cultural correlation and unification between the two neighbors-Iran, Armenia- seems necessary.

### 2. Material and Method

Emergence of comparative literature returns to about two centuries ago during which it has produced some agreeable and disagreeable discussions. Moreover, it has been established in the universities of many countries. Accompanying these struggles, the thinkers and critics of the countries with a rich and authentic literature applied this new knowledge to promote their own literature works and thoughts. Consequently, they not only introduce their

poets and authors to the other nations but also fertilize their own literature, thought and culture by the thoughts, works and literary figures of other nations. Assessment and comparison of literary works of two various lands are useful because by deep investigation of literary works, we will achieve historical finding, traditions, costumes, folklore, and classic literature.

Understanding the ways of applied storytelling in the Iranian and non-Iranian works is another use of comparative literature in the worldly range. In other word, we can claim that "comparative literature is a kind of interdisciplinary research which deals with the study of the relationship between the literature of different nations as well as relation between literature, arts and human sciences. In its provenance, French comparative literature is taken into account as a part of literature history and French researchers were seeking the inspiration sources and historical evidences which confirm the literary connections between nations and express their impressionable capability by each other. Therefore, aesthetic aspect of literary works was not important in the literary school of French comparative literature. In contrary, American comparative school emerged in the second field (aesthetic) in the twentieth century and it regarded aesthetic, criticism and analysis as the main target of comparative literature. The mentioned school recognizes literature as a universal phenomenon in relation to the other branches of sciences and fine arts. Some contemporary American compounded comparative literature and cultural studies.

With regard to the produced schools in the extent of comparative literature, the research, which

is based on French school, tries to compare the common and non-common element of nations literatures namely Folklore elements in Nizamie's Khosrow Shirin and Armenian literature.

### 3. Discussion and Results

Folklore consists of "Folk" meaning common and mass and "lore" meaning culture, knowledge and episteme. In Persian, these terms mean people culture, common culture, common knowledge, public knowledge, public literature... Sociologist and anthropologist have expressed different definitions of the Folklore.

William John Thoms used the term "Folklore" for the first time. He defined folklore as customs, traditions, rituals, superstitions, songs, legend and fables, the heritage of ancient people in the contemporary Britain (Beihagi H., 1986).

According to "Sen Tiu", folklore deals with the study of common mass life in the civilized countries because there is the binary opposition of common/official and elaborative cultures. In other words, the substances of folklore are found by the nations including two natures educated and common people. In India and China, for instance, there is folklore but it does not do in Australian wild tribes who are lack of writing and book (Ibid).

Social scientists and anthropologists recognize the oral literature or traditional narrative as myths, tales, legends, fables songs, spells, riddles and other forms of oral literature. William Baskam restricts folklore in "Oral art" and calls the cultural elements including legends, tales, proverbs, songs enigma and ballads in the both primitive and developed societies as folklore. He does not recognize the physical and dramatic arts, dance, music, dress, medicine, traditions and beliefs of nations as component of oral art or folklore (Bolukbashi A., 2537).

Tales, legends, songs, fables, riddles are called folklore. Furthermore, traditions and people's knowledge out of schools, beliefs and imaginations, mass knowledge, tradition and customs of life as birth, childhood, adolescence, youth, marriage, oldness, mourning ceremony, national, religious and routine celebrations which related to the public life are added to this science (Hedayat S., 2536).

Seiyed Ali Mirniya, in his book, "Common Culture" has dealt with the following parts: 1. National festivals and dances, national and traditional musical instruments, national and traditional sports 2. Beliefs and customs 3. National customs and traditions 4. People's beliefs 5. Popular medicine 6. Children local plays 7. Tales and legends 8. Fables or advise of the old 9. Folklore poems and songs (Bolukbashi A., 2537).

On the whole, folklore includes oral literature, fables, terms, legends and tales, myth and songs transformed orally as a heritage of our past in one side, and it contains traditions and customs, beliefs, habits, knowledge and popular medicine including the practical ways of life namely food, cloth, profession, house... In other words, it is the general information about the spiritual, social and materialistic life of a nation expressing the real ways of life, thought and feeling of the society. With regard to the mentioned definition as well as Sadeq Hedayat's view on exploration of folklore of a region, folklore in Nizamie's Khosrow and Shirin and Armenian literature will be considered by tracing the some elements.

At first the research traces the beliefs about Animals and Supersites Creatures Cock as a folklore element. If a cock crowed in too early morning, it would be slaughtered and eaten. They licked their fingers after it.

According to Armenian beliefs, cock should crow on time to keep the house away from evil forces. But its in time crowing is an unlucky omen and it should be killed (Sevak P., 1976).

The term cock is etymologically synonymous with roaring in Persian. Therefore, cock means roarer. In Khordisna dictionary, cock is taken into account as a holy hen. It causes flee of darkness demon by his crowing in the dawn and calls people to get up, worship and cultivation. The reminder beliefs in the common people's belief show that the ancient narratives have influenced people's beliefs (Yahagi. M. J., 1996).

The patient flew the hens soon

Cock crowed "patience is the key of success" (Ganjavi, N. 2007).

Oh Nocturnal hen! If you are not a blasphemous  
Why do not you song God is the I  
greatest? (Ibid)

Heard that if a demon comes at a  
night Cock of house crows Ali  
OAllah (Ali is God'representative)  
How night was the night in which  
many demons

There was not a cock song of God  
is the greatest as a shot (Ibid).

Another folklore element in both countries is Fairy. It has been used and discussed both cultures through literature:

A lack in which fairy has been sunk again  
The burnt youth also has been died after her  
(Isahakiyan A., 1974).  
Fairy lives by springs  
If is difficult, if she is a fairy  
There are many fairies by springs (Ganjavi,  
N., 2007).

By lack a spring day  
 The shepherded son was sitting wandering  
 He sings a sweet song in a simple voice  
 Then get out of it, the kind fairy (Isahakiyan  
 A. 1974).

According to the ancient narratives, fairy is a delicate and very beautiful creature originated from fire and it is invisible, and deceive human by his extraordinary beauty. In Persian literature including Shahnameh which is based on Iranian ancient culture, the term "fairy" has been used in the form of a simile as an attractive face.

Fairy of lack, a mermaid with  
 golden hairs

With cave eyes as a lack (Ibid)

Fairy is symbol of beauty. In ancient narratives, it is symbol of delicate and beauty and Nazami has mention it in his poems and used the complex terms as: In a fairy body, (4/63), fairy-faced (12/379), fairy's daughter, (3/50), Roman fairy (5/367, 7/286, 7/286, 10/167, 4/117, 3/68, 7/57, 1/153) and fairy-born (9/135, 3/80), as a fairy (7/159, 3/68, 8/198).

You are a fairy's daughter, leave fairy, you are a moon

Under the veil, you are the owner of hat (Ganjavi, N., 2007).

Moreover, Marine Bride is observable in both cultures and literature frequently:

As a marine bride  
 The marine brides,  
 Call me in an anguish voice  
 All dedicated to my memories,  
 I reached to that beach again

Note: The marine brides live in sea and they are called the soft foot fairies (Charents C. S.)

According to the narratives, demons which are another element are the ugly faced creatures who are horned and trickster and they eat human's flesh. Mainly they are cruel and inexorable and too powerful. Also they are professional wizards and disguise favorably in the stories... Although the demons have been embodied in black color, the most famous demon of Shahnameh, who is the head of Mazandaran demons, is the white demon that Nizami remembers:

Once s/he is deviated by passion  
 demon

That: s/he should follow the king  
 (Ganjavi, N., 2007).

According to Armenian belief, demon escape from metal because it has a spell-broker force; therefore, they hang a horseshoe on the door or window of their houses in order to prevent the genii and evil forces.

They can put metal on them to submit and urge them to serve human as long as they deceive someone "to untie it compassionately".

Lalayan in "genii and Satan's" writes: they rub sticky substances (tar or gum) on a horse tail to catch demon or genii. It is believed that the demon or genii, while getting on the horse, is caught by needle and it severs honestly for seven years, because the metal power has been determined for seven years meaning seven magical forces.

After seven years, the demon or genii says if they ask me how a mule will be able to deliver a child I will say: ...and it disappears.

Also genii rob women's clothes, in particular in the wedding times, and wear them; therefore, people put needle among dresses to prevent demon's entry. Moreover, Armenian believes that demon and genii come and kidnap babies or suffocate them in cradle; therefore they put a steel object on cradle or needle within the baby swaddling-clothes (Lalaiyan Y., 1988).

Also, it is believed that demon "passes through iron" (Oshidri J., 1992).

S/he was escaping from enemy  
 and friend

As magic from Sepand and  
 demon from iron (Ganjavi, N.,  
 2007).

Enemy escape from his iron as  
 demon

Because he does not forgive if  
 he capture somebody (ibid).

And unlimited love of mother,  
 Gives divinity power...

And the bad-nature force has fallen  
 Saved baby in cradle

Note: it is about cradle in which demon, according to Armenian ancient beliefs, steals baby and kills it at night (Tumaniyan H., 1990).

Beliefs about Flowers, Plants and their Healing Properties are prevalent among Armenian and Iranian cultures. Violet flower is a good example. Once, there was a beautiful daughter but very meddler and spy. She betrayed her family mysteries for people and vice-versa. After her serious advice, her disappointed mother has said: I wish you homelessness and wandering and you tounge come out of your neck; thus, she has been metamorphasized into the Violet flower (Qanaliyan A.T., 1969).

It is believed that Violet Flower is shameful and Curl. This belief has been manifested in both literatures so:

How gives that earthly  
 creature [Shirin] generously,  
 Who is as shamefulness as

violet (Ganjavi, N., 2007).

Grunded Violet in Shadow (Armenian C. S., 1986)

If I say of violet, they say of mount  
If I say of jewel, they say of stone  
If I say of the moon, they say of the year  
As the sun, a beautiful piece (Ibid.)

Although there are many examples in the field of drugs, Opium (Taryaq) is explored in both cultures as a common element. It has been defined in persion culture so: "Each drug that repels poisons, it is called Taryaq...." (Bageri Khalili, A. 1992). Also it is believed that "antitoxin or taryaq is a drug which keeps health and power of spirit to repel poison..."(Ibid).

Is my soul burning by opium  
and yours by poison?  
Are you so while I am so?  
(Ganjavi, N., 2007).  
If you are pure essentially  
You are instead of poison and  
opium (Ibid)  
In envy of this nimble eye, deer  
Dropped poison from her  
eyelashes not opium (ibid)  
Drug of all Pains  
That, it is both drug and king,  
over all grasses  
Congratulate oh Losh Tak

Note: it is about a drug super-plant which is called "people flower" or "Loshtak" in Armenian. (In Latin: Bryonia L.)

Armenian clergyman researcher, Q. Alishan saye: "Hybusak" or Armenian plant has been printed (1980. M, p. 124). Also, the Mars Sphere should be calm, in Tuesday and sunrise moment. The Lushtak plant, which is similar to human, should be uprooted by dog protection which is accompanied by magical prays (Harutuniyan. S.B., 2006).

Red Rose Flower which is abundant in both lands (Iran and armeni), tulip flower, Hamaspram (widespread everywhere) Flower and Enigma are another common folklore component:

Its mouth is two layered  
That, red rose flower is dropping from her  
lip (Armenian C. S., 1986)

Red rose is symbol of happiness and freshness and yellow flower is symbol of weakness and disability.

Which flower whom he  
cultured  
Did not give him the color of yellow flower  
finally? (Ganjavi, N., 2007).  
That I am from mountain, but  
cultured in rose-garden

And my rosy flower became  
yellow because of your love  
(Ibid)

Her breast is brilliant filled with  
rose flower (Armenian C. S.,  
1986)

Red rose has a good smell Red  
(Ibid)

and reddish yellow corn-poppy,  
Adornment of black and dark  
grey velvet (Slazvery D., 1979)  
special hair

It is an Atlas cup

The inter of which is full

It is red but its heart is black  
(Harutuniyan S.B., 1965)

Tulip is famous for its short lifetime: Tulip flower lifetime is one day; therefore, it becomes old in its youth (Ganjavi, N., 2007).

It became the target of shot

It became old in its youth

Moreover people plant is a "plant like human which grows in china and it is upside down as if its root is its head hair. Male and female put their feet around one another firmly. It is believed that everybody who picks it up, s/he dies soon..." (Hedayat S., 2536).

Released a sigh from the  
burning liver

That fire within a people plant  
as me (Ganjavi, N., 2007).

I call the flower as flower

That is my festival

That, it has grown snake on its own mouth,

Note: It is about "Hamaspram" or scattered everywhere flower that has been praised by Medieval Ages poets (David Salazvery, Minas Tukhani). The scattered everywhere flower is "Milam" which is the opium, and flower good smell "Nuruz" (new day) flower keeps king snake. Snake power and force is because of the flower. There are important informations in the Hand Writing museum of "Mesrup Mashbetus" of Yerevan in "Matnadaran" of Armenia. It is the Hand Writing 1495 No. 152 of "Matnadaran" Mashtus (Armenian C. S., 1986).

Basalan is a very perfumed flower

The article, in this part, deals with the common beliefs about Stones and Jewelries including Gold, pearl.... It is evidently used in both literatures and cultures:

Gold causes happiness

The king appointed Sansa as  
host

And Baghdasar as Meibod  
(Sasuni D., 1981)

Pearl is famous that shell comes on the surface of water when it rains and opens its mouth and gets the rain drops. When the drops reach into the shell, it produces pearl by the property that has put an eternal power in the shell nature. The pearl is nurtured and gets vegetation within the shell.

A group says that pearl is the shell's mouth water. Nasr says it is confirmed because it rains more in the reed-brake per year and it gets increase after it.

The increase which is more than temper

That you cannot get shell from the rain (Tusi Khajeh Nasir 1984)

The pearl "is moderate for physicians and it is used in electuaries. It enforces heart and reduces the heart weakness and destroys fear and supports animalistic spirit and destroys sadness... (Ibid).

From that ruby and sugar laughter

The exhilarating has made much trade (Ganjavi, N., 2007). S/he ate a wet kebab in the first day

A powder on him at a light (Ibid)

The son had a pearl necklace He hangs it around the sweet-heart (Isahakiyan A. 1974).

Lily returned from dew By light rays picked up from pearl

Your flower became as dew The dew is from cloud and cloud is from the sun

Gregory Nargats (951-1003), great famous Armenian poet and philosopher in the 10<sup>th</sup> century has written a book, like Ferdusie's "Shahnameh", in which he expressed his sadness and complain with God, although it is smaller than Shahname. In fact, it is the greatest Armenian poets and man of letter after the Holy Scripture. The book, which is in poem, has been recognized as the book of pray and prevention of the evil ghosts and saving Armenian. The book has been recognized as the healer of spirit, body and humans psyche by Christian Armenian. Its name is "Wailing Book" as or "Graon Book" (Armenian C. S., 1986).

### Conclusion

By comparative study of literature of nations we can achieve a new perspective in term of differences and agreements in the world. The article explored the folklor elements as fairy, demon, flowers and jewelries in Nizami's Khosrow and Shirin and Armenia. Therefore, he shows how the folklore

elements of the two cultures are reflected similarly through literature. As we know literature is the greatest manifestation of a culture. This fact is depicted through such studies. On the whole, the researcher believes that such studies inaugurate new phases of cultural dialogues and friendship.

### Acknowledgment:

The author is grateful to Dr. Raheb Arefi Minaabad for his great supervision and support of this article.

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12/28/2012