

also an Old Turkic word, later used mainly to denote the Tsar (A. Lintrop).

⁵See Note 3.

⁶*Biger* – in contemporary Udmurtain, ‘a Tatar’.

⁷Yashin, D. Lokalnyi kharakter epicheskoi traditsii v folklore permskikh narodov. In: *Spetsifika zhanrov udmurtskogo folklor*. Izhevsk, 1990.

⁸Kosven, M. Raspad rodovogo stroya u udmurtov. In: *Na udmurtskie temy*, No. 2. Moscow, 1931.

⁹Vladykin, V. Drevnie finno-ugorskie epicheskie motivy “Kalevaly” v folklorno-etnograficheskoi sisteme udmurtov. In: *Problemy epicheskoi traditsii udmurtskogo folklor* i literatury. Ustinov, 1986, pp. 5-21.

¹⁰Yashin, D. Opyt sozdaniya udmurtskogo eposa (O rukopisi M. G. Khudyakova “Iz narodnogo eposa votyakov”). In: *Problemy epicheskoi traditsii udmurtskogo folklor* i literatury. Ustinov, 1986, pp. 82-97.

AETIOLOGICAL REMARKS AND LEGENDS IN THE CONTEXT OF ABKHAZIAN NART EPIC

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Abkhazian Nart legends represent one of the main versions of Nart epic – the remarkable folklore monument of Caucasian people. In the real texture of the plot of the epic besides the latent ritual-mythological components¹ one can find also aetiological ‘insertions’ in the epic stories and aetiological narrative legends.

In this case, we are interested neither in myth² (or proto-myth) as a ‘verbal’ part of the ritual³ nor in the artistic-aesthetic dynamics (creative potential) of the formation of folk epics. In other words, we analyse the myths and legends to the extent they have significance in the context of Abkhazian Nart epic. Examining the myths and legends in this respect we can find two principal forms: separate elements and independent stories.

We can distinguish a certain set of texts which include aetiological elements and episodes, explaining the reasons of different occurrences and signs (Appendices 1-9). All these textual details carry definite independent information originated from the fantasy of the story-teller. Therefore, at first sight they seem not to be connected with the textual events, they are introduced as outside elements, as a digression from the main plot. At the same time the inside

textual factors are commented, thereby often re-accentuated and the latter acquire an aetiological character in the interpretations of certain story-tellers. From this point of view, these inorganic elements are relative and cut off from the plot. They occur frequently in form of narrator's remarks, but in contrast to the other explanations, aetiological 'comments' are more unfolded and steady. With some exceptions (Appendix 1), they appear in the final part of the text. It seems to be conditioned by the function of the final formulas by which the story-teller explains the recent phrase, but comments also the real plot. Thus, the whole plot is summarised.

However, all the aetiological remarks do not have the similar characteristics. Co-ordination of the same episodes is noticeable (Appendices 3, 5, 7): they are present almost in all variants of the analysed legends. Moreover, they have an attributed character: aetiological remarks are invariable components of the same legends and they are constantly connected with the certain epic characters. Remarks are inserted to the final part of the legend, connected with the present state of affairs and thereby they complete the course of events.

These characteristics are not typical to the aetiological commentaries, which are not as firm as remarks (Appendices 1, 2), appear only in the repertoire of particular story-tellers or can be identified as exceptions (Appendices 8, 9). Some aetiological descriptions (in particular Appendices 1-4) may form separate legends resembling epic narratives (Appendices 19, 20).

In the second set (Appendices 10-20) one can find texts which have the pattern of legend. In this case, the elements of legend and aetiological interpretations are important semantic components of the narratives. Popular conceptions about the events reflect the epic world outlook and the whole text explains the provenance of some phenomena. These are legends in an epic guise and therefore we can designate them as 'Nart legends' in a substantial sense.

It is important to mention that these texts are not transformations of Nart epic (the inclusion of epic names and images into the legends, etc.), but a result of the more complicated creative work. In this case the epic images transmit the artistic-poetic nature (essence) of the legends. A certain 'epic knowledge' and the traditional mastery of performing Nart epic enables to create these 'Nart legends'.

The small number of aetiological legends in the whole corpus of narratives is remarkable. Only 3 texts (Appendices 11, 12, 13) in the second set have been recorded from different persons in 2 or 3 variants and the elements of one text (Appendix 10) occur in contamination. All the other texts are single records. Several legends have been recorded from the same story-teller: two or more texts have been collected from three persons (Appendices 11, 15; 14, 16 and 17, 18). Hence, we can state that the majority of 'Nart legends' are improvisa-

tions of single story-tellers.

The analysis of 'Nart legends' affirms the idea that they were not formed at the early stage of the development of Nart epic. We can not see the proper epic universe, which according to M. Bakhtin's expression "is separated from the present, that means from the time of the singer (author and his listeners) by absolute epic distance".⁴

Unlike the proper epic narratives the personages in 'Nart legends' acquire non-traditional features. To a certain extent it can be defined as a decompensation (imperfection) of the epic image. Typical archaic characters appear to us in a non-traditional form, related to a new artistic context. These tendencies can be seen in the use of circumstantial everyday realities in 'Nart legends' which enrich the historical-ethnographic aspect of the narratives and emphasise their connection with a present time.

Literature

¹In this case, the findings of V. Ardzinba are remarkable. On the ground of the detailed analysis of the set of main plots (of the same type in their structure) of the Nart epic in the context of mytho-epical traditions of the Caucasian people and the ancient East, the explorer exposes the archaic semantics of a number of epic motifs and images. See Ardzinba, V. Nartskii sjuzhet o rozhdanii geroja iz kamnja. In: *Drevnaja Anatolija*. Moskva, 1985, s. 128-168; Ardzinba, V. Primety obraza "pastuha" abhazskikh nartskikh skazanij. In: *Trudy Abkhazskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*. V. Sukhumi, Alashara, 1987, pp. 131-135.

²As A. Anshba correctly wrote, in the material of Abkhazian epic "there are few or even no myths in the proper meaning of the word... the myths are used only as poetic material for heroic legends, as any other poetic material – tales, traditions, legends, anecdotes, migrant short-stories". See Anshba, A. Voprosy poetiki abhazskogo nartskogo eposa. Tbilisi, Metsniereba, 1970, pp. 41-42.

³Toporov, V. O rituale: Vvedenie v problematiku. In: *Arkhaicheski ritual v folklornykh i ranneliteraturnykh pamyatnikakh*. Moscow, 1988, p. 28.

⁴Bakhtin, M. Epos i roman. In: *Voprosy literatury*. No. 1, 1970, p. 102.

Appendices

The list of the epic texts with aetiological remarks and "Nart legends".

1. "The release of the water source": The moon contains the image of Sasrykva, the principal personage of Abkhazian Nart epic. Sources: 1, pp. 173-176; 5, pp. 205-216.

2. "The heroic matchmaking": The origin of the holy place ("Dydrypsch-Nykha" and "Lydzaa-Nykha") is connected with the epic personage Dyd. Sources: 1, pp. 306-307; 3 (2 records).

3. "The abduction of Gunda the Beautiful": The only Nart sister Gunda the Beau-

tiful became the patroness of bees and honey, Khvazharpys turned into a rhododendron and Nardzhkhou into a stone. Sources: 1, pp. 270-272; 274-276; 297-298; 298-301; 301-302; 457-459; 2, pp. 178-180 (3 records); 4, pp. 13-16; 5, pp. 331-350; 233-235; 6, pp. 21-23.

4. "The search for a stronger rival": Nart dogs turned into wolves and hens into crows. Sources: 1, pp. 57-58.

5. "The capture of the fortress and the argument of the Narts": The origin of fruit-trees and the wine is connected with brothers. Sources: 1, p. 103; 121-123; 200-201; 205-208; 208-209; 217-218; 223-225; 226-227; 228; 228-229; 232; 249; 253-255; 426; 427; 497; 3 (2 records); 5, pp. 236-240; 285-291; 292-297.

6. "The vengeance for the ancestors and heroic travels": The song arises from onomatopoeia of Nart names. Sources: 3 (3 records).

7. "The death of the hero": The origin of different signs of birds and animals are connected with the image of the hero Sasrykva. Sources: 1, pp. 135-138; 138-139; 182-185; 185-187; 187-188; 188-189; 3 (2 records); 8, pp. 282-283; 290-291.

8. "An attempt to spoil the beauty": A dumb Nart child is born and the origin of dumb people is connected with it. Source: 1, pp. 312-318

9. "The fight with the rivals": The place where the abducted girl crossed the river with the help of a bent pear branch was called the Pear Bridge. Source: 1, pp. 442-443.

10. "The genesis of song, dance and pipe":

10.1. The hero was bitten by a snake while hunting; the cries which he utters from poignant pain started the song; the hero kept the cattle in the forest and made a pipe from the sounding branch of the tree. Source: 5, pp. 64-70.

10.2. After the wedding of the hero, the Narts make a festival; during sifting the flour they begin to dance and sing, imitating the sound of sifting. Source: 1, p. 144.

11. "Domestication of the wild horse": After the loss of his Herculean horse, the hero tames a wild one, starting the domestication of horses. Sources: 1, pp. 267-268; 5, pp. 314-315; 8, p. 285.

12. "The Herculean sabre": Working in the ploughed field, the hero finds a piece of iron of wonderful durability; a Nart blacksmith forges the Herculean sabre out of it. Source: 3 (1 record).

13. "The creation of cereals": The mother of the Narts milks the milk which overflows her breast on the ground. On that place maize starts to grow. Sources: 1, pp. 401-402; 6, pp. 27-28.

14. "Nart prayer": On a hunt the hero kills a female deer, after that Nart-brothers give the promise not to kill animals with cubs. Source: 1, pp. 402-405.

15. "The arrival of an azana-dwarf to the Narts": The dwarf teaches the the Narts how to make a sickle. Source: 1, pp. 193-194.

16. "The food of the Nart ram": the Narts teach azana-dwarfs how to feed rams properly. Source: 1, pp. 411-413.

17. "The prayer of the Nart brides": the Nart brides begin to lead a social prayer on the advice of Satanei Gnasha ("azu-nykha"). Source: 6, p. 21.

18. "The sacrifices to the god-patrons": the Narts begin to worship the god-pa-

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trons and make animal sacrifices to them, or become the patrons themselves. Source: 6, pp. 23-24; 24-25; 26; 26-27; 28.

19. “The death of the hero”:

19.1. The hero is bothered by the brothers’ pursuit; he goes up to the moon and stays there. Source: 9, p. 77.

19.2. The hero falls seriously ill; and before his death he puts the pledges on dogs and wolves. Source: 8, p. 288.

20. “The vanishing of the Narts”: Before death, the Narts put the pledges on the dogs and wolves. Source: 3 (1 record).

Source Index

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THE SOCIAL STATUS OF A LOCAL FOOL IN A FINNISH VILLAGE

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A local fool is a person who in one way or another deviates from the rules of behaviour of a society. The deviation may manifest itself in a person’s appearance, thoughts, ways of life or actions. I have studied the local fool in a village in Häme, through the life of a shoe maker Juho Mäkäräinen who was also known as Heikan Jussi. He was born in 1892 and died in 1967 after having spent all his life in the village of Herrala in Hollola.