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## The Transformation of Myths in Folk Tales of Mashdi Galin Khanum

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### Abstract

On this basis, this research is looking for mythological themes in one of the valuable collections of Iranian folk tales named *Mashdi Galin Khanum's stories*. In this research, after identifying mythical elements and characters among the stories, it is determined that the process of transferring myths into the folk tales of this book has changed them. Among other things some components of mythology have been removed or changed in their folk definition, or other details have been added to them and some ancient myths are reflected in the bodies of other characters. The total evolution of myths in the stories of this book, based on the pattern given by Mehrdad Bahar, has been studied under four headings: transformation, fracture, integration, and the entry of foreign elements. In the end, it is concluded that based on the evolving nature of myths, mythical characters and phenomena in folk tales are also narrated with changes to make them believable or in harmony with the new space. It is also possible to find out some neglected aspects of mythology by examining folk tales.

**Keywords:** *Myths and folk tales, Mashdi Galin Khanum's stories, Iranian myths, metamorphosis of Iranian myths.*

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***Extended Abstract***

**1. Introduction**

Folk tales are an important part of the culture of any nation. There is a connection between folktale and myth. Researchers have offered different opinions about the nature of this relationship. One hypothesis is that folk tales, or at least some of them, are remnants of ancient mythology, which cannot be determined when they are originated. Other researchers believe that one of these two cannot be considered as the remnant of the other, but each of them uses the similar material in their own way, and the relationship between myth and tale is complementary. Considering the connection between folk tales and mythology, folk tales can be counted as a considerable form of the perspective in the presence of mythology. Based on this, in this article we want to analyze the folk tales of Mashdi Galin Khanum from the viewpoint of the presence of mythological elements in them.

**2. Literature Review**

The tales of Mashdi Galin Khanum are a collection of 100 Iranian folk tales collected by Elwell-Sutton. In the present article, the basis of our research is based on those tales from the book, which are dominated by the structure of fairy tales. Mythological thinking, like other cultural elements of human societies, are constantly subject to evolution and change throughout history. One of these changes is turning mythology into folk tales. Mythologies undergo various transformations in this process. Transformation of Mythological elements in Mashdi Galin Khanam's tales can be classified to Mehrdad Bahar's fourfold categorization of developments of Iranian mythology.

**Transformation**

Perhaps the most tangible transformation that has occurred in the form of Mashadi Galin's tales for mythology can be called metamorphosis; Among these transformations in the tales, we can mention the following: 1. Simorgh in the form of a young seahorse: in the "young Seahorse" tales, the young horse's function is amazing, like what Simorgh does in the tales of Zal. 2. Zal in the form of a girl character: In the tales of "Betting Simorgh and Hazrat Suleiman", the myth of Zal is represented with a little difference and in the form of a girl. 3. Soroush Gheybi in the form of two birds: In several places in Mashdi Galin Khanam's tales, we come across two pigeons guiding one of characters. In these tales, the bird can be seen as a manifestation of

Soroush Gheybi that brings news from the sky and helps the hero of the tale. 4- Baz, Homai Saadat of Tales: Baz In Galin Khanum's tales, appears like Homa in Iranian myths and legends, whose shadow falls on anyone who reaches happiness and kingdom.

#### Fracture:

1. Young Seahorse, a mythical horse: In the tales of "young Seahorse", horse has amazing powers. This position could be due to the fundamental value of the horse among the ancient Iranians. Also, the attribution of this young horse to the sea is rooted in a close mythological relationship between horse and water. 2. Manifestation of the ritual of scape goating: The meaning of scape goating is to transfer an unpleasant disease or calamity to another being. In the tales of Mashdi Galin, the characters of the tales sometimes take action that seems to be rooted in the thought of the scape goating. 3. Choosing a foreigner as a king, a reflection of the holy king religion: the way of choosing a king in the tale "servant who master's daughter ascended to the throne" has a mythological background called "holy king" which in Iranian culture have manifested in the "Mir Nowrozi" ritual. 4. Anahita as a water fairy: In several tales of this book, we come across a character who lives in water and takes the hero with him into the water. It is not unlikely that this fairy that lives in water is another form of Anahita, the guardian goddess of water. 5. The div of the tales, the underground div: in the tale "Malek Jamshid and Dib Sibdozd", the Div lives underground and in a well. In the narratives of Iranian mythology, the div are driven from the earth by Zoroaster and continue their lives in the underground. We do not find any trace from the fate of this feature in Div in the Shahnameh, which is the main manifestation of Iranian myths.

#### Merge

Merging means a state in which a number of mythological figures or gods are gathered in one particular person. In Mashdi Galin's tales, we find this mythical transformation in the tale "young Seahorse". In this tale, Prince Ibrahim is a combination of the mythical characters Siavash and Goshtasb; In this way, the first part of the tale is similar to the tale of Siavash in Shahnameh, and the other part is very similar to the tale of Goshtasb and Ketayoon.

#### Entry of Foreign Elements

Mythologies, especially due to being in different places and among different peoples under the influence of geography and culture of

different peoples, take on some new elements and characteristics. In the book we are discussing, the legends have adopted new features as a result of this issue, which include the following: 1. A different Simorgh: In the tale "betting Simorgh and Suleiman", Simorgh takes a child with him to the mountain and raises her similar to the tale of Zal in the Shahnameh; but Simorgh in the tale of Mashdi Galin has significant differences from the tale of Zal and Simorgh in the Shahnameh. 2. From Mythologies' Alborz to tale's Qaf: In the tale "Simorgh betting and Sulaiman's", Qaf mountain is Simorgh's place of living. It should be noted that in Shahnameh, Simorgh's place of living and nest is in Alborz mountain. It seems that the mythical Alborz has been considered the same as the Qaf Mountain in Islamic narratives over the course of history.

### 3. Methodology

The current research was done with a descriptive-analytical approach and library method. First, the tales that had mythological elements were selected, and then the changes that took place in that mythological character or story were determined and based on that they were included in the same category.

### 4. Results

The existing myths of Mashadi Galin's tales have undergone various changes in the process of becoming folk tales. The evolution of mythology in these tales is more of the type of fracture and transformation, and merging has happened only in one case. Part of these transformations is for make mythological phenomena and characters more tangible so that they appear in the form of tales in a more up to date way. Also, some myths have appeared in tales in a new form to reborn by harmonizing with the arena and space of the new narrative. Another issue that can be found by analyzing the traces of mythology in tales is the reflection of some forgotten dimensions of mythology in them.

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