

ESTER KHEMCHYAN*

PhD of Philology

Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA

ekhemchyan@yandex.ru

THE MOTIF OF IMMORTALITY IN ARMENIAN FOLKLORE PLOTS ON ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Key words: fairy tale, the motif of immortality, longevity, mortal, apple, temporary death, folk tradition.

Introduction

In the Armenian folklore tradition, the stories on Alexander the Great are mainly expressed as realistic tales, stories and legends. In the realistic tales and stories, the character of Alexander is sometimes reduced to a level of everyday life so that the historical figure can only be revealed through an in-depth analysis. But the task of the Alexandrian plots is not to reveal the historical figure. Of course, the historical facts and events did contribute to the formation of folklore plots and are important, but they are under the influence of folklore traditions and have a certain philosophical, moral tendency, the conclusions of which emphasize the idea of the transience and emptiness of life, putting it in contrast to the heroic life and activity of a man, Alexander in this case. The fictional Alexander is mainly a character of a realistic tale. Sometimes he penetrates in the folklore tradition from literature and is perceived as a fictional hero. However, it should be noted that the process of fictionalizing the character of Alexander in some sense brings him closer to the degree of a fairy tale character. There are two types of Alexandrian plots in the Armenian fairy tales. The first one is the contamination, that is, the mixed plots, such as the tale “Agheksandri ksen”¹, incorporated in the “Golden Candle” tales registered in the village of Qerts of Vaspurakan by Yervand Lalayan². This type of fairy tale is kept in several versions, including a printed version in

* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 26.05.20, գրախոսվել է 18.09.20, ընդունվել է տպագրության 04.12.20:

¹ Լալայեան 1912, 123–151 («Ոսկի կանթեղ»):

² Լալայեան 1912, 161–165 («Աղեքսանդրի կսեն»: Հեքիաթի շարունակությունը տե՛ս ԱՀ 1912, 117–123):

archival funds³. **The second type is the “Tale of King Eskandar”⁴**, the parallel of which can be seen in the regions of Shirak and Moks⁵.

The motif of the search for the land of immortality with reference to the name of Alexander the Great has not been studied by Armenian scholars.

The attitude of a human being towards his lifespan became a basis for the development of a number of folklore plots with different interpretations, and one of the most famous folklore motifs – the search for the land of immortality, is closely associated with the name of Alexander the Great. The fact of the divine origin of the epic Alexander prepared a ground for his character of a striver for immortality, the realization of which is in the search for the land of the immortals, in finding it and settling there.

I recorded the Alexandrian tale used by us back in December 1987 from Arshak Ohanyan, a storyteller, in the village of Yenokavan of Idjevan region. He heard that tale in 1937 in Stepanavan, during the years when he studied at the agricultural technical school. The storyteller could not recall from which region the narrator student was, but since he liked the story, he wrote it down not to forget⁶. The information provided by the storyteller gives us ground to say that in the 1930s and 1940s this plot was spread in Armenia, especially since a similar plot had also been written by Vard Bdoyan in the region of Akhuryan, by the storyteller Tevan Hakobyan, who was from the village of Bashkyadiklar of Kars.

According to the International catalogue of the folktale types by Antti Aarne, Stith Thompson and Hans-Jörg Uther, the plots concerning the search for the land of the immortals and of settling there correspond to the motifs gathered under AaTh 470*, ATU 470B and ATU 470*, ATU 332C*⁷. According to them, the character visits the land of immortals and marries the queen. At some point he **wishes to return home, breaks the queen’s ban and dies. The tale associated with King Yskandar (Alexander the Great) sets completely in this schema.** It has the following plot.

³ Կարս 2013, 214–225 («Ալեքսիանոս և Լյուսովիկ»):

⁴ ՀԱԲ 2008, 25, 208–211 («Ըսկանդար թաքավորի պատմությունը», № 74(74):

⁵ ՀԺՀ 1963, 4, 434–440 («Մահ չուզող տղան»): Վերահրատարակվել է Կարս 2013, 121–124 (№ 16(16)); ԷԱԺ 1901, 2, 443–447 («Խոճա Հյուսեփի Գառնիկ տղեն», № 42): Վերահրատարակվել է ՀԺՀ 2012, 17, 673–679 (№ 77):

⁶ ՀԱԲ 2008, 25, 442:

⁷ Aarne Thompson 1961; Uther 2011, 224, 277.

The king Yskandar does not want to die and decides to search for the land of the immortals. During his searches he meets people who have some longevity, one of them should plow the land given to him for 200 years, the second has been given 300 years to reap a huge millet field, another has to cut the forest trees for 400 years. Each of them suggests Yskandar to stay with them and to live in accordance with the years given to them. But Yskandar does not accept the offer, since he is looking for immortality. The king reaches the shore of a boundless ocean, where he cannot find any possibility of crossing it. The character, overloaded with thoughts, falls asleep and in his sleep he sees a bird, who offers to help. The King awakens and notices the bird of his dream by his side, who repeats his offer and orders to feed him every time he calls. Before the ocean is completely crossed, the food runs out and Yskandar starts feeding the bird with his own flesh. The bird understands what is happening and keeps the flesh under its tongue⁸. The bird lands him on the opposite shore of the ocean, restores his damaged body and expresses a willingness to take him back if he wishes to return. Yskandar reaches a large green garden, where a woman lives with her daughter. The woman marries her daughter to Yskandar, but warns that they will not have an heir. A few years later, the king decides to visit his **birthplace, and the girl's mother allows him to go**, giving him three apples and ordering him not to give them to anyone. The king returns by the same route and finds out that the time of the three long-lived people is over, his kingdom is gone and only the history is left of him. To prove that he is the lost king Yskandar, he **orders to demolish his father's royal stable where treasures are kept. He gives the treasures to the people and takes the way back**. On his way back, however, he gives his forbidden apples to a pregnant woman with heavy childbirth, to a dying young man, and to a newlywed bride. With each apple he gradually ages until he reaches the ocean shore. The bird transports elderly Yskandar to the land of immortals. But he has exhausted his life and dies.

⁸ In this part of the tale an echo to the ancient ritual can be found. The piece of meat from the flesh of the character is a unique ritual sacrifice to God. The supreme being, accepting human sacrifice, inevitably compensates the one who makes it. In this tale, the protagonist has nothing but his life; and dismembering it he sacrifices it to God, who valuing the fact of sincere sacrifice, preserves the life of the character and returns the part of the sacrificed flesh. The custom of sacrificing a body part was especially practiced by sacrificing the plaster copies of the diseased human organs in anticipation of the healing of the latter (Տրեգեր 1989, 11).

The motif of immortality has been introduced in the folk tradition since ancient times. The mystery of life and death, the insufficiency of human lifespan has been the basis for the thinking of longevity.

According to folk beliefs and myths, immortality is the monopoly of the gods. Greek mythology states that the immortal gods of Olympus had created the first human race happy, and they did not know what the old age was, and their death was like a gentle dream⁹. Gradually the human race, due to its disobedience, dishonesty and other reasons was not only deprived of longevity, but also got many mischiefs and misfortunes from the gods.

There was almost the same model in the Christian tradition. Creating the first man and woman, God placed them in the garden of paradise, in the centre of which, among others, there were the tree of life and the tree of knowledge¹⁰. He warned the humans: **“You may eat freely from every tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil¹¹”**. The fruit of the tree of life which could give immortality, was not forbidden, while the fruit of the tree of knowledge was forbidden, and since the forbidden fruit was sweet, by tasting the fruit of knowledge the man lost his unique ability – immortality and became mortal and was expelled from the paradise. If God did not expel man out of heaven, he could eat the fruit of the tree of life and restore immortality, thus he should have been distanced from the tree of life.

One of the first folklore manifestations of the motif of immortality is found in Gilgamesh. The mortal Utnapishtim got immortality after the flood. The seawater divided these and those countries, or, simply said, the lands of mortals and the immortals. The water not only served as a boundary but also had a life-giving feature. Hence, after giving Utnapishtim immortality, Enlil placed him from the land, near the source of the river, that is closer to gods¹².

The folklore, distinguishing the boundaries of longevity and immortality has presented the traditional perceptions of the flow of life through certain plots. Accordingly, immortality is the monopoly of the gods, supernatural beings, and the life span of a mortal is limited. It is predestined from above, and by his fate the human being lives as long as he is destined to. The last chord of divine

⁹ Կոն 1979, 98:

¹⁰ Genesis 2:9.

¹¹ Genesis 2:16-17.

¹² Գիլգամեշ 1963, 99–100:

creation is the sharing of lifespan. According to a folk tale interpretation, God gives equal number of years to a donkey, a dog, a monkey and a man¹³. The man complains, believing that he has not been given enough. Each of the animals gives a certain amount of its years to man, as a result of which human life becomes quite long (ATU 173). According to the folk interpretation, the stages of human life correspond to this division: the first period of his life the man lives humanely, it is the period that is given to him. Then he works as hard as a donkey, at the expense of the years given by the donkey. Then come the years given by the dog – **“dog life” with a miserable** lifestyle, and in the end, man lives like a monkey at the expense of the years donated by the monkey.

In the versions of the above-mentioned stories, an attempt was made by folk etymology to regulate the life span of a mortal, to divide it according to stages, to give an explanation for each stage with a corresponding conclusion. The immortality granted to the privileged ones is the unattainable dream of the mortal, which is discussed in oral folk tradition via various plots.

Now back to the Alexandrian plot, which distinguishes between the phenomena of ordinary everyday life, longevity and immortality. In some legends about the birth of Alexander the Great there is an obvious attempt to attribute to him a divine origin¹⁴ that gives him the right to be considered even if not immortal but a character striving for immortality. If God is immortal, then his son can also be immortal.

In the oral folk tradition, there is a certain boundary between the land inhabited by the tale characters and the land of immortals, moreover, the place of the latter is unknown. Besides, the immortality apple and water for the gods are in that land. In the Armenian folklore plots Alexander tries to get immortality in two ways: a) by finding the immortality water¹⁵, and b) by finding and settling in the land of immortals. Yskandar, who is looking for the land of immortals, by his behaviour and functions is an ordinary tale character, whose main task is directly connected with his desires. Nobody directs him, nobody sends him to accomplish a mission. He is the son of a king who replaced his father and ruled his kingdom, but the death of his father pushed him to reflect on philosophical questions: “If

¹³ Հայ ժողովրդական առակներ 2008, 107–108 («Մարդու տարիքը»): Համշենահայ բանահյուսություն 1991, 217–218 («Մաշտոլ, էշը, շունը հընու գաբիկը»):

¹⁴ Խենյան 2002, 28:

¹⁵ Խենյան 2010, 494–503:

my father died, I would die too, **wouldn't I, why should I stay here**¹⁶". According to the rules of traditional tale-creation, the life purpose and the tasks of the main character are immediately formed. In this fairy tale, Alexander, as a tale character, has lost his historical significance. The stable opening-formula of the tale **"There was or there was not a king..."**¹⁷, who has had a son named Yskandar, abolishes the space – time boundaries, turning the story into a series of actions in **an unknown area and unclear timeframe. The character's lifespan is clearly distinguished in the tale, thus, it is assumed that a person dies at old age just as the king-father did. There are characters – the farmer, the mower, and the woodcutter, for whom longevity is intended, and whose lifespan is conditioned by the completion of their work and by earthly standards. From the point of view of a mortal that is considered to be immortality. In the folk tales this approach is further clarified and the number of years granted to mortals by God is perceived by both God and man as immortality: "He summons both of them and says: "when you took care of the poor and helped him, did a good thing, the God sent me and said: "Go and tell them that immortality will be endowed to whoever does good deeds, give each of them a hundred years of life**¹⁸". That means, a hundred years is perceived as immortality.

And finally, immortality, which is not an earthly phenomenon, and in order to achieve it one must make a transition to the world whose inhabitants are immortal, is perceived as infinity in the context of the tale. The character seeking immortality reaches the ocean that borders this and the other worlds. By the logic of the tale, the character must make the transition from this world to the other. For that, an auxiliary force is needed. One of the oldest ways of crossing this world and entering the other is preserved in the tale. First, there is a temporary death, and often the transition of the character happens in sleep, but in the case of Yskandar, the way of transition is mentioned to the character in his dream. The presence of the bird in the tale has a twofold interpretation. First of all, the bird is a means of communication between these worlds. The second function of the bird is the embodiment of a dead soul, which similarly communicates with the other world. **Passing to the other world, the character gets immortality. The character's journey is comparable to the daily rotation of the sun from sunrise to sunset.**

¹⁶ ՀԱԲ 2008, 25, 208 («Ըսկանդար թաքավորի պատմությունը»):

¹⁷ ՀԱԲ 2008, 25, 208 («Ըսկանդար թաքավորի պատմությունը»):

¹⁸ ՀԺՀ 1973, 6, 488 («Ով անի պարուփին՝ կստանա անմահութիւն», № 114):

According to the mythological ideas and linguistic interpretations, the sun is the symbol of life, existence, living¹⁹, hence the character seeking immortality should head to the sun. From this point of view, the plot of the tale in question is formed according to the mythological legend of the sun. Alexander, passing the way that is passed by the sun, reaches the house of the sun on the other side of the ocean where a mother (the mother of sun) and a daughter (the sun) are living and marries the daughter.

The land of the immortals by his description is reminiscent of the Garden of Eden. **The character's aspiration to return back is typical** of the plots created around the immortality motif. This is motivated by the desire to see his birthplace. In the Shirak version of the immortality motif the character is not a king, he is the son of the priest, whose passage to the other world is happening without assistants or advisers. He simply shows up in the Wonder Sisters Palace and then wants to visit his parents. The culmination of the tale in both versions is provided by the three forbidden apples given to the character. There is usually no return from the other world, and if the character is given a return opportunity, it is due to compensation, the value of which is life. The tale apples are special, they have the ability to heal the patient, to give life, to give a long, happy life to the newly-weds²⁰. The apples given to Yskandar symbolize his life. At the same time they are the guarantee of his life and should be preserved²¹. The main purpose of the tale

¹⁹ Հարությունյան 2000, 56:

²⁰ According to Armenian beliefs, the origin and location of the apples of immortality are connected with the other world. The immortality apples have a powerful force. An interesting belief is preserved in the Armenian folk tradition which is connected with the Tigris River. The source of Tigris is an abundant spring called the Kingdom source. According to the belief of the people of Shatakh, on the night of Vardavar, an apple of immortality comes out of that source, which passes through Shatakh, so the people sleeplessly watch that night on the river bank to see the apple, and if they wish something, it will be fulfilled (Լալայեան 1914, 31–32). The apple of the Kingdom Source emerges from the ground, endowed with magical powers, being able to fulfil the desires of mortals. By its origin this apple and the apples received by Alexander in the land of immortals have almost the same function.

²¹ The theme of immortality has been tackled in many versions of the world mythological tradition. The parallels of the Alexandrian plot in Japanese mythology are the myths of the fisherman Urasima (Urashima) and the hunter Hoori. These mythological characters, showing up in the maritime kingdom, are being wed to the daughter of the king of the seas, and get immortality. Being led by the desire to be back home, Urashima gets a small box from his wife that cannot be opened. Being persuaded, that a lot of things have been changed on the earth during his absence, he opens the box and loses his life. The apples of Alexander and

is the moral conclusion: “If there is a birth, there is also a death²²”, so the plot of the tale develops in such a way that the character has to give his apples to the people who need it most.

It should be noted that the tales with a motif of searching the land of immortality are limited and the “Tale of King Yskandar” stands out among them with its unique plot development. The plots of the fairy tales with the motif of immortality in the Armenian folklore have similarities and differences. The main similarities that bring all the versions together, are the following: a) the character goes in search of the land of immortals; b) he meets long-living people on the way; c) he returns from the land of immortality with three apples. The differences are: a) it is only Alexander who has a name and is a king, the other characters have a common origin, but the midwives during their birth are women from the other world, and they endow their godchildren with some miraculous gifts, such as fulfilling their wish; b) the long-lived ones are modified in variations and perform different functions (for example, in the Alexandrian plot – farmer, mower, woodcutter, in the Shirak plot – bird Sinama on a tree, an old man who empties a millet hill sized with mountain Alagyaz, a sparrow that empties the ocean by a beak full of water yearly, in the Moks version – an old woman emptying the sea with a ladle, a bird perched on a high tree, the stump of which should reach the top of the tree, a horse grazing in a huge grassy field); c) it is only Alexander’s passage to the land of the immortals that is certain. He crosses the ocean with the help of the bird, the other characters after a long wandering appear in a place or in a garden; d) it is only Alexander who marries a girl from the opposite world.

In the Armenian folklore tradition, the desire of the characters, striving for immortality, is considered a natural phenomenon that is justified in one case by the fact of being the heir (Alexander) and in another case by having the patronage of the other world.

the cloud of the box of Urasima are the lives of these characters that they pay for striving for the impossible (Симонова-Гудзенко 1988, 550, 595; Թումանյան 1994, 5, 263 («Փոքրիկ ձկնորսը»)). The earthly life is like a cloud that dissolves and disappears in the depth of the sky. Neither Urasima, nor Alexander or any other tale character that strives for immortality can keep it. The philosophical conclusion is that earthly life is ephemeral and empty and a mortal can get immortality only by his work and deeds.

²² ՀԺՀ 1963, 4, 440 («Մահ չուզող տղան»):

By combining the episodes of long-living people in the fairy tales, the human – anima - bird relationship is revealed, which develops in the boundaries of the traditional perception of the functions and the semantic roots of those characters. In the Alexandrian plot the priority is given to the man and, symbolically and according to the degrees of importance, the means of human life are presented: to cultivate the land, to reap the result and, thus, provide food, and to solve the questions of house-building and warmth by woodcutting. These are the reasons of immortality of this world according to the standards of mortal society.

From the observation and comparison of the plots it can be concluded that they have undergone great changes in the way of transition. Every region has its own stamp of epic approaches conditioned by the person of the character, their individual actions, especially in the case of apple sharing, and they are very different. The fact that the character must lose the apples is predestined from above, but they are given to the needy with a clear conscience. There is usually no return from the other world, and if the character is given a chance of returning, it is due to a compensation, the value of which is life. The apples, that symbolise the life of the character and at the same time are the guarantee of his life should be preserved, but the plot of the tale develops in such a way that the character has to give his apples away. Subsequently, the disturbed earthly natural order is restored, and the truth is established that the predetermined order from above is inviolable and cannot be changed by a mortal, even in case of an intervention by higher powers.

The research shows that the fairy tale observed in the Armenian folklore heritage in which Alexander the Great acts as a fairy tale character with its typical functions and features is unique in its kind. Although Alexander the Great, as a son of God, aspires to immortality and enters the land of immortals as a fairy-tale character, his mortal nature forces him to return where he has come from, to live the life allotted to him. According to the main problem of storytelling, the opportunity given to mortals is destroyed by colliding with the ordinary earthly situation and the fatal predestination.

The coexistence and natural sequence of life and death is one of the important motifs that accompany the Alexandrian plots, in the developments of which the age-old wisdom about the inviolable order of the physical existence and transience of life is established. The themes of the immortality-seeking mortal and the immortality motif in general in the Armenian folklore heritage are not just

local and national, but also imported-localized phenomena which are subjected to the national folklore thinking and with their appropriate expressions and thematic developments reveal the national notions and the unique analysis of the phenomena of immortality.

ՄԱՏԵՆԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

ԱՀ 1912, Ազգագրական հանդես, գիրք XXII, № 1, Թիֆլիս, տպ. օր. Ն. Աղանեանցի, 265 էջ:

Աստուածաշունչ 1994, Գիրք Հին եւ Նոր Կտակարաններու, եբրայական և յունական բնագիրներէն թարգմանուած, Moscow, “Zeus”, “Major” ltd.

Գիլգամեշ 1963, Հին արևելքի դյուցազնավեպ (թարգմանությունը և ներածականը Նշան Մարտիրոսյանի), Երևան, Հայկ. ՍՍՌ ԳԱ հրատ., 122 էջ:

ԷԱԺ 1901, 2, Էմինեան ազգագրական ժողովածու, Մոսկուա-Վաղարշապատ, Լազարեան ճեմարանի արևելեան լեզուաց հրատ., 450 էջ:

Թումանյան Հովհ. 1994, Երկերի լիակատար ժողովածու, հ. 5, Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն», 839 էջ:

Լալայեան Ե. 1912, «Վասպուրականի բանավոր գրականությունից», Ազգագրական հանդես, գիրք XXI, № 1, Թիֆլիս, տպ. օր. Ն. Աղանեանցի, էջ 101–165:

Լալայեան Ե. 1912, Վասպուրականի բանահյուսությունից, Ազգագրական հանդես, գիրք XXII, № 1, Թիֆլիս, տպ. օր. Ն. Աղանեանցի, էջ 117–197:

Լալայեան Ե. 1914, Վասպուրական-Հաատք, Ազգագրական հանդես, գիրք XXV, № 2, Թիֆլիս, տպ. օր. Ն. Աղանեանցի, էջ 21–60:

Խեմյան Է. 2002, Երկեղջյուր Ալեքսանդրի հայկական պատումները և նրանց ծիսաառասպելաբանական ակունքները, Մովսես Խորենացի, Պատմաբանասիրական հանդես, № 2, Երևան, էջ 26–38:

Խեմյան Է. 2010, Անմահական ջրի մոտիվը հայ բանահյուսության ալեքսանդրյան սյուժեներում, «Ավանդականը և արդիականը հայոց մշակույթում, Հայ ժողովրդական մշակույթ XV, Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն», էջ 494–503:

Կարս. հայոց բանահյուսական մշակույթը 2013, (կազմողներ՝ Հարությունյան Ա., Վարդանյան Ա., Խեմյան Է., Ղեջյան Լ., Խեմյան Մ.) Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն», 752 էջ:

Կուն Ն. 1979, Հին Հունաստանի լեգենդներն ու առասպելները, Երևան, «Սովետական գրող», 629 էջ:

Հայ ազգագրություն և բանահյուսություն, Իջևան (Ձորովոր) 2008 (կազմող՝ Խեմյան Է.), Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն», 490 էջ:

Համշենահայ բանահյուսություն 1991, (հավաքեց, կազմեց և ծանոթագրեց Հակոբ Գուրունյանը), Երևան, «Լույս», 335 էջ:

Հայ ժողովրդական առակներ 2008, (կազմեց և մշակեց Արտաշես Նազինյանը) Երևան, «Նաիրի», 190 էջ:

Հայ ժողովրդական հեքիաթներ, Շիրակ, 1963 (կազմող՝ Մկրտչյան Մ.), հ. 4, Երևան, ՀՍՍՌ ԳԱ հրատ., 552 էջ:

Հայ ժողովրդական հեքիաթներ, Արցախ-Ուտիք, 1973 (կազմողներ՝ Նազինյան Ա., Սվազյան Վ.), հ. 6, Երևան, ՀՍՍՀ ԳԱ հրատ., 779 էջ:

Հայ ժողովրդական հեքիաթներ, Մոկս, 2012 (կազմող՝ Հայրապետյան Թ.), հ. 17, Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն», 840 էջ:

Հարությունյան Ս.Բ. 2000, Հայ առասպելաբանություն, Բեյրութ, Համազգայինի Վահէ Սէթեան տպարան, 527 էջ:

Ֆրեզեր Զ. 1989, Ոսկե ճյուղը: Մոգության և կրոնի ուսումնասիրություն, Երևան, «Հայաստան», 880 էջ:

Симонова-Гудзенко Е.К. 1988, Урасима // Мифы народов мира, т. II, Москва, изд-во «Советская энциклопедия», 550 с.

Симонова-Гудзенко Е.К. 1988, Хоори // Мифы народов мира, т. II, Москва, изд-во «Советская энциклопедия», 595 с.

Aarne A.-Thompson S. 1961, The Types of the Folktale: A classification and bibliography. Antti Aarne's Verzeichnis der Märchentypen. Translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson, Second Revision, Helsinki, 1961.

Uther H.-J. 2011, 1, The types of international folktales: A Classification and Bibliography Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, part I, Animal Tales, Tales of Magic, Religious Tales. and Realistic Tales, with an Introduction, Helsinki, Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

ԱՆՄԱՀՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՈՏԻՎԸ ՀԱՅ ԲԱՆԱՀՅՈՒՍՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱԼԵՔՍԱՆԴՐՅԱՆ ՍՅՈՒԺԵՆԵՐՈՒՄ

ԽԵՄՉՅԱՆ Է.

Ամփոփում

Քանալի քառեր¹ հրաշապատում հեքիաթ, անմահության մոտիվ, երկարակեցություն, մահկանացու, խնձոր, ժամանակավոր մահ, ժողովրդական ավանդույթ:

Հայ բանահյուսական ավանդույթում, ի թիվս վիպական մյուս ժանրերի, հանդիպում է նաև հրաշապատում հեքիաթ, որի գլխավոր հերոս Ըսկանդարի (Ալեքսանդր Մակեդոնացի) գերխնդիրն անմահների երկիրը գտնելու և այնտեղ հաստատվելու ցանկությունն է: Ի տարբերություն ալեքսանդրյան մյուս սյուժեների՝ անմահության մոտիվով հեքիաթում Ալեքսանդրի վիպական կերպարը վերաճել է հրաշապատում հեքիաթի հերոսի, որը ձգտում է

անմահության: Բուն ալեքսանդրյան սյուժեն («Ըսկանդար թագավորի պատմությունը») համադրվել է հայ բանահյուսության նմանօրինակ այլ սյուժեներին (Կարսի և Մոկսի տարբերակներ): Քննությունը ցույց է տվել, որ ընդհանրություններով հանդերձ՝ ալեքսանդրյան սյուժեն խիստ տարբերվում է նմանօրինակ հեքիաթներից: Այն տիպիկ հրաշապատում հեքիաթ է, որի հերոսն ընդհանուր վիպական բնավորություն ունի և իր վարքագիծն ու գործառույթները բնորոշ են սովորական հեքիաթային հերոսին, այսինքն՝ Ըսկանդարի կերպարի ձևավորումը կատարվել է հեքիաթաստեղծման ավանդական կանոնների սահմաններում:

Անմահության մոտիվը հայ բանահյուսության ալեքսանդրյան սյուժեում ձևավորվել է տեղական ընկալումների, պատկերացումների ու դրանց ինքնատիպ վերլուծությունների վրա:

МОТИВ БЕССМЕРТИЯ В СЮЖЕТАХ АРМЯНСКОГО ФОЛЬКЛОРА ОБ АЛЕКСАНДРЕ МАКЕДОНСКОМ

ХЕМЧЯН Э.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: волшебная сказка, мотив бессмертия, долголетие, смертный, яблоко, временная смерть, народная традиция.

Одним из эпических жанров фольклора является волшебная сказка. Героем одной из волшебных сказок в армянском фольклоре является Искандар (Александр Македонский), который поставил перед собой сверхзадачу – найти страну бессмертных и обрести бессмертие. Сюжет об Александре («История царя Искандара») сопоставлялся с другими аналогичными сюжетами армянского фольклора (варианты Карса и Мокса). Наши исследования явствуют о том, что наряду с совпадениями сюжет об Александре в то же время отличается от аналогичных сказок, поскольку характер и поведение героя типичны для обычной сказки, созданной по канонам жанра. Искандар во сне находит ключ к решению вопроса. Обретя бессмертие, он желает вернуться на родину. Однако взамен он должен пожертвовать своей жизнью, вновь стать смертным. Символом его жизни

являются три табуизированных яблока, которые он не может сохранить, поскольку длительность его жизни predetermined свыше.

Нами исследованы народные представления о бессмертии и их толкования по поверьям, мифам, сказкам и сказаниям. В сюжетах армянского фольклора об Александре Македонском мотив бессмертия сформировался на основе местных восприятий и представлений, а также их самобытного анализа.