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TEXTUAL STUDY OF THE FAIRY TALE “KARAMERGEN” FROM THE RARE EDITIONS COLLECTION

Abstract. Books published in Kazakh before the October Revolution are currently considered a valuable source of material. They hold great significance for the study of literary and cultural life, alongside folklore texts, ethnographic information, and historical data. These publications contain rich information about the collection and preservation of Kazakh folk literature, as well as the activities of collectors and publishers. Collections issued in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries were published in Petersburg, Kazan, Orenburg, and Tashkent. The Karimov and Kusainov Publishing House at Kazan University played an active role in this process. Beginning in the mid-19th century, Russian scholars studied the life, traditions, customs, language, religious beliefs, military art, and oral literature of Turkic-speaking peoples, including the Kazakh people, and began collecting materials for their comprehensive analysis and study. Among them were N.F. Katanov, A.E. Alektorov, P.M. Melioransky, V.V. Bartold, I.N. Berezin, N.Ya. Bekimov, A.A. Divaev, A.D. Nesterev, N. Pantusov, N.I. Ilminsky, G.N. Potanin, and other Turkologists. The examination of archival materials and rare editions in libraries revealed that a significant portion of the oral tradition materials they collected had been published more than a century ago. It is known that these works were not reprinted during the Soviet period. Over the years of independence, they have gradually been published in various folklore collections and scholarly publications. In this context, our research conducted a textual analysis of the fairy tale “Karamergen”, originally published before the October Revolution, which revealed differences and distinctive features between the original and later published versions. The article also examines the works of Russian orientalists and Turkologists who collected and studied the rich heritage of Kazakh folk oral literature.

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Key words: rare editions collection, original text, folklore, fairy tale, text, textual study.

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СИРЕК БАСЫЛЫМДАР ЖИНАҒЫНДАҒЫ «ҚАРАМЕРГЕН» ЕРТЕГІСІНІҢ ТЕКСТОЛОГИЯСЫ

Аңдатпа. Қазан төңкерісіне дейін қазақ тілінде басылған кітаптар қазіргі таңда құнды материал көзі саналады. Әсіресе, фольклорлық мәтіндер, этнографиялық мәліметтер, тарихи деректермен қатар, әдеби, мәдени өмірдің зерттелуі үшін маңызы зор. Онда қазақтың халық ауыз әдебиетінің жиналуы, сақталуы, жинаушы және бастырушылар туралы мол мағлұматтар сақталған. XIX ғасырдың екінші

жартысы XX ғасырдың басында жарық көрген жинақтар Петербург, Қазан, Орынбор, Ташкент қалаларында басылды. Әсіресе, көбі Қазан университетіндегі Кәрімовтер мен Құсайыновтардың баспасынан жарық көрді. XIX ғасырдың ортасынан бастап орыс ғалымдары түрік тілдес халықтардың, оның ішінде қазақ халқының тұрмыс-салтын, әдет-ғұрпын, тілін, діндік ұстанымын, әскери өнерін, ауыз әдебиетін зерттеп, жан-жақты талдап, зерделеу үшін материалдар, деректер жинауға кірісті. Олардың қатарында Н.Ф. Катанов, А. Е. Алекторов, П.М. Мелиоранский, В.В. Бартольд, И.Н. Березин, М.Н. Бекимов, Ә.А. Диваев, А.Д. Нестерев, Н. Пантусов, Н.И. Ильминский, Г.Н. Потанин және т.б. түріктанушы ғалымдар болды. Аталған зерттеушілердің халық аузынан жазып алған, жинаған, ғылыми зерттеу нысаны ретінде пайдаланған материалдарының дені осыдан бір ғасыр бұрын, тіпті, одан да арғы уақытта жарияланғанын кітапханалардағы сирек басылымдар қоры мен архивтердегі материалдарды мұқият зерттеу барысында анықталды. Осы шығармалар кеңестік дәуірде, қайта басылым көрмегені белгілі. Ал, тәуелсіздік алған кезеңнен бастап, түрлі фольклорлық жинақтар мен ғылыми басылымдарда там-тұмдап болса да жарияланып келеді. Сондықтан зерттеу жұмысымызда Қазан төңкерісіне дейін жарық көрген «Қарамерген» ертегісіне текстологиялық сараптау жұмысы жасалып, нәтижесінде түпбасылым мен кейінгі жарық көрген мәтін арасындағы айырмашылық пен ерекшеліктің бар-жоғы анықталды. Мақалада орыс шығыстанушы, түріктанушы ғалымдарының қазақ халық ауыз әдебиетінің бай мұрасын жинап, зерттеген еңбектері қарастырылды.

Алғыс: Мақала ҚР Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігі Ғылым комитетінің 2023-2025 жж. Мақала «BR20281009 (ФНИ) «Қазіргі әдебиеттану мен өнертанудың өзекті мәселелері» тақырыбындағы жоба бойынша жазылды.

Кілт сөздер: сирек басылымдар қоры, мәтіннің түпнұсқасы, фольклор, ертегі, мәтін, текстология.

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ТЕКСТОЛОГИЯ СКАЗКИ «КАРАМЕРГЕН» В СБОРНИКЕ РЕДКИХ ИЗДАНИЙ

Аннотация. Книги, изданные на казахском языке до Октябрьской революции, в настоящее время представляют собой ценный источник материала. Они имеют большое значение для изучения литературной и культурной жизни наряду с фольклорными текстами, этнографическими сведениями и историческими данными. В них содержатся богатая информация о процессе сбора и сохранения казахской народной литературы, а также о деятельности собирателей и издателей. Сборники, изданные во второй половине XIX – начале XX века, публиковались в Петербурге, Казани, Оренбурге и Ташкенте. Особо активную роль в этом процессе сыграло издательство Каримовых и Кусаиновых при Казанском университете. Начиная с середины XIX века русские ученые изучали быт, традиции и обычаи, язык, религиозные верования, военное искусство и устную литературу тюркоязычных народов, в том числе казахского народа, а также начали собирать материалы для их всестороннего анализа и изучения. Среди них были Н.Ф. Катанов, А.Е. Алекторов, П.М. Мелиоранский, В.В. Бартольд, И.Н. Березин, М.Н. Бекимов, А.А. Диваев, А.Д. Нестерев, Н. Пантусов, Н.И. Ильминский, Г.Н. Потанин и другие тюркологи. При тщательном изучении архивных материалов и редких изданий в библиотеках было выявлено, что значительная часть собранных ими материалов устной традиции была опубликована более ста лет назад и даже позднее. Известно, что в советское время эти труды не переиздавались. За годы независимости они публиковались в различных фольклорных сборниках и научных изданиях, хотя и постепенно. В связи с этим в нашей исследовательской работе был проведен текстологический анализ сказки «Қарамерген», опубликованной до Октябрьской революции, который выявил различия и особенности между оригинальным и позднее опубликованным текстом. В статье также рассматриваются

труды российских востоковедов и тюркологов, собравших и изучивших богатое наследие казахской народной устной литературы.

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Ключевые слова: фонд редких изданий, оригинал текста, фольклор, сказка, текст, текстология

1. Introduction

During the academic expeditions of Russian orientalists and Turkologists to the Kazakh steppes prior to the 20th century, valuable and extensive materials related to Kazakh oral literature, folklore, and ethnography were collected. Much of this rich heritage remains incompletely published. Some of these materials were first published a century or even two centuries ago, and since then, they have not been reprinted. Consequently, these publications have become rare bibliographic works today. They may be absent even from the collections of the largest libraries in our country. It is also important to note that, due to objective reasons, the published works could not fully encompass all the collected materials. We do not diminish the efforts of the scholars who gathered and published Kazakh folklore and literature, and documented the life and customs of the Kazakh people. Their contributions to both in-depth and extensive research are immense. Thanks to the dedication of Russian collectors and researchers, many texts of Kazakh folklore and literature, as well as historical and ethnographic information about the nomadic life of the Great Steppe, have been preserved.

The materials collected and studied by Russian scientists, as well as the scientific works they wrote, were not limited to expeditions to the Kazakh steppe. They also played a key role as organizers of scientific research, cultural, educational, and regional studies institutions. For example, in 1845, at the initiative of Levshin and Dal, branches of the Russian Geographical Society were established in the cities of Omsk, Orenburg, and Semey. These institutions trained specialists and sent them to the remote regions of the Kazakh steppe, where they tried to collect and systematize comprehensive information about the geology, mineral and water resources, flora, fauna, and climate of Kazakh lands, as well as about the local population, the Kazakh Khanate, customs, and social structures.

Scientists collected fairy tales, songs, legends, and stories relevant to the themes of their research. Thanks to this information and data, extensive collections were later published. These books, in turn, were preserved in libraries and archival collections across many cities of the Soviet Union. The significance of the work carried out by these Russian collectors and researchers lies not only in their gathering of materials but also in their expression of insightful and rigorous scientific analyses. For example, their scholarly evaluations of the content and artistic features of materials collected from oral literature and folklore are of great importance. Moreover, research scholars traveled from village to village, witnessing firsthand the narrators of folklore, listening carefully, and striving to record the works accurately without altering their pure and natural form. Based on the collected materials, they honestly and openly expressed their opinions and provided fair assessments.

The evaluations of these orientalists who highlighted talented individuals with strong poetic abilities and emphasized the ideological and artistic qualities of folk songs, were particularly high, helping to elevate folk poetry to a higher level. Turkologists recognized Kazakh folklore as exceptionally rich and diverse.

This valuable heritage collected by Russian scholars has become an irreplaceable asset and a precious contribution to Kazakh oral literature and folklore. All the materials preserved in archival collections have retained their relevance in folklore studies to this day. These collected works continue to be widely used in the comprehensive study of Kazakh oral literature.

2. Research materials and methods

2.1 Research Methods

In the process of writing the article, chronological, historical-comparative, comprehensive, and textual research methods were employed.

2.2 Material description

In the second half of the 19th century, many genres of Kazakh folk oral literature, including heroic poems, fairy tales, aitys (song competitions), proverbs, riddles, laments, blessings, and folk songs, were published for the first time. Before the 20th century, the number of Russian orientalists and Turkologists who collected and studied Kazakh folklore and oral literature increased substantially. They include N.F. Katanov, A.E. Alektorov, P.M. Melioransky, N.Ya. Sarkin, M.N. Bekimov, A.A. Divaev, A.D. Nesterev, and N. Pantusov. Also notable are V.V. Radlov, N.I. Ilminsky, N.M. Yadrintsev, G.N. Potanin, I.N. Berezin, A.V. Vasiliev, G.I. Spassky, N.F. Kostyletsky, A.N. Haruzin, M.M. Miropiev, Ya. Lyutsh, A. Melkov, and many other scientists whose names can be remembered with respect.

These scientists traveled extensively throughout the Kazakh lands and villages, collecting materials on the oral literature of the Kazakh people. They gathered, categorized, and published Kazakh fairy tales from different regions in their works.

During the study of this topic, methods of textological (textual) comparison, description, compilation, and scientific analysis were applied to both manuscript and published versions of the well-known Kazakh fairy tale "Karamergen".

Attention is given to the process of collecting and studying Kazakh fairy tales by Russian orientalists and Turkologists, with emphasis on their scientific significance. In particular, the fairytales collected by A.E. Alektorov (1, 2022 : 258-272), A. Divaev (1, 2022 : 193-254), N. (Pantusov, 2022: 102-137), (Potanin, 2022: 403-494), (Vasiliev, 2022: 411-475), (Melkov, 2022: 353-376), (Ilminsky, 2022: 63-73), (Beloslyudov, 2022: 377-402) have been taken into account. Most of these scientists' works (except those of V.V. Radlov) on the topic, were originally published before the October Revolution and were reprinted for the first time in 2022 (Radlov, 2022: 744). The scientific opinions of folklorist B. Abzhet, presented in his article (Abjet, 2021: 7-15), as well as the issues raised in the fantastic fairy tales published in the hundred-volume collection "Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors)", served as foundational sources for our research topic (Auyesbayeva, 2020: 1-12).

3. Discussion

Russian orientalists and Turkologists collected all five main types of Kazakh fairy tales. They are fantasy, short stories, heroic, animal, and satirical tales. As a result of this research work, the first version of the fairy tale Karamergen, one of the tales recorded and published by the Russian Turkologist N. N. Pantusov during his travels across Kazakh lands, and belonging to the genre of fantasy fairy tales, was compared with its second publication from 1988 using textological methods. The analysis determined the extent to which the printed text of the fairy tale had been altered or distorted by later compilers, and this was demonstrated through specific examples. In addition, the results of this study can also serve as a valuable source of information for domestic scholars and doctoral candidates conducting fundamental research in the field of the humanities, as well as for teachers, master’s students, and undergraduate students at higher education institutions.

4. Results

The object of our study is the fairy tale “Karamergen”. It was first published in 1901 in the collection “Materials for the Study of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz Dialect” by the Russian Turkologist N. N. Pantusov (Pantusov, 2022: 102-116), written in Arabic script, with a Kazakh transcription and a Russian translation. This fairy tale was later republished in a collection of Kazakh fairy tales prepared by the staff of M.O. Auezov Institute of Literature and Art (Alpysbaev, 1988: 7-1), as well as in the hundred-volume collection “Babalar sozi” (Words of the Ancestors) (Toishanuly, 2011: 9-15).

Now let us compare, study, and analyze the original version of this tale, published in 1901, with the version published in 1988. To do this, we will place the two texts side by side in a table and identify the differences.

1901 version	1988 version
In the past, there lived <i>among</i> the Kazakh <i>people</i> a <i>man</i> named Karamergen.	In the past, there was <i>from</i> the Kazakh <i>people</i> a man named Karamergen.
He had neither wealth <i>nor</i> children.	He had no wealth and no children.
Using his <i>hunting skills</i> , he hunted deer for their <i>antlers</i> , kulans for their <i>rumps</i> , and various other animals, then sold their skins to make a living.	Using his hunting skills, he hunted deer, kulan, and other animals, then sold their skins to make a living.
When summer <i>ends</i> , winter <i>comes</i> ; and when winter <i>ends</i> , summer <i>comes</i> . Yet they walk alone, without a companion.	When summer <i>comes</i> , winter <i>goes</i> ; and when winter <i>comes</i> , summer <i>goes</i> . Yet they walk alone, without a companion.
One day, the <i>lone</i> hunter took his rifle and said, “ <i>I’m going</i> to a faraway place where no one goes, where no one walks, neither in winter nor in summer,” and set off.	One day, the hunter took his rifle and said, “ <i>I will go</i> to a faraway place where no one goes or walks, neither in winter nor in summer,” and set off.
<i>After traveling for many days, he came to a large mountain...</i>	– <i>(This sentence was omitted)</i>
<i>He led his horse along a ravine on foot</i> , endured much hardship, and climbed to the top of the mountain.	<i>(The sentence at the beginning is missing)</i> With much hardship, he climbed to the top of the mountain

Looking around, he saw <i>countless animals</i> and deer.	Looking around, he saw <i>countless</i> deer.
... built a house of stone, <i>made a roof like a camping tent</i> , covered it with many <i>thick</i> sticks, and covered the <i>roof of the house</i> with animal skins.	... built a house of stone, covered it with many <i>small</i> sticks and animal skins.
–	<i>The horse that had tired him out over seven or eight days became a well-fed, strong horse.</i>
Since Mergen was born, he had never seen such a <i>variety of grass growing together</i> .	Since Karamergen was born, he had never seen <i>such a variety of fruits growing</i> .
<i>And</i> it was a beautiful <i>blooming steppe</i> with so many different trees, <i>so many different red and green flowers</i> , where nightingales sang, and where the <i>scent of cloves was fragrant</i> .	It was a beautiful <i>meadow</i> with so many different trees, where nightingales sang.
The hunter shot many animals, and <i>bundled</i> and preserved their horns and skins.	The hunter shot many animals, and <i>salted</i> and preserved their horns and skins.
Without a word, he <i>dropped</i> to one <i>knee</i> .	Without a word, he <i>fell</i> to one <i>knee</i> .
<i>neither the sniper nor the woman took their eyes off each other...</i>	<i>the woman did not take out the two eyes from the hunter...</i>
He silently, without sticking hand <i>out of sleeve...</i>	He silently snatched the <i>meat</i> from the <i>end</i> of his sleeve, without sticking his hand
<i>Then</i> , taking another bite of meat, he said, "Ma!" and roared again. <i>Just as before</i> , without saying a word, he took it and swallowed it...	<i>Later</i> he took another bite of meat, said, "Ma!" and roared again. Without saying a word (<i>the word was missing</i>) he took it and swallowed it.
<i>The hunter thought, 'There she comes, what should I do?' and when he looked he saw the woman walking slowly.</i>	When he looked back, the woman was walking slowly.
<i>Praying to God</i> , the hunter fired his rifle.	<i>Having learned that she was a monster</i> , the sniper fired his rifle...
<i>The garment with which he covered himself was torn and full of holes.</i>	<i>...the tree that lay there, resembling a man, had been cut into pieces, as if sliced with a knife.</i>
The woman did not make a <i>sound</i> .	No <i>voice</i> came from the woman.
The snake <i>had a steel head, its neck was cut off</i> .	It was a snake with <i>its head cut off</i> .
A scarf <i>made of fine white silk, adorned with various gold ornaments</i> , came and hung before him.	A scarf <i>made of fine white silk</i> came and hung before him.
A golden curtain was <i>draped over the bed</i> and set up at the right threshold	A golden curtain was set up at the right threshold of the <i>house</i> .
The girl said, "We are nomadic <i>fairies</i> ".	The girl said, "We are from a nomadic <i>country</i> ".
<i>When he woke up with a start... he saw that all the treasure was gone.</i>	There was no girl, no house, nothing near him.
<i>Multiple layers</i> of exquisite bedding lay beneath her side.	There was an exquisite bedding beneath her side.
It was carved out <i>in a circle</i> and taken away.	<i>They cut all around it</i> and took it away.
He sat there, <i>scolding himself</i> and wondering why he had fallen asleep.	<i>He felt unhappy</i> and regretted that he had fallen asleep.

He cried, saying, "If you put wheat on the hem of one who has no luck, his hem will come off and spill the wheat".	– (This sentence was omitted)
Worried, he asked: "From which side will she come?"	From which side will the voice come?
– Oh, you unfortunate one, do not cry anymore, may your eyes go blind!	– (This sentence was omitted)
Finally, by the power of God, this hunter became immeasurably rich, and even became a great khan, and eventually died.	Eventually, this hunter became incredibly rich, even became a great khan, and died.

The genre of the text "Karamergen" is defined as a fantasy tale. This tale consists of two plots. The first plot tells the story of the main character Karamergen, who, while hunting, encounters a zheztyrnak (woman with the copper claw) at night and escapes from it safely. The second plot is about how he meets a beautiful girl from the land of nomadic fairies, falls in love with her, and is happy, but then falls asleep and loses her, unable to fulfill the condition she set.

Accounts of hunters and marksmen frequently appear in the myths and heroic narratives of Kazakh folklore (Alpysbaev, 1988: 188-194; 214-216), (Alpysbaev, 1989: 49-54; 160-164; 213-214). Fairy tales about the zheztyrnak are widespread among hunters. Although it appears as a beautiful, graceful woman, its sharp talons like those of an eagle are strong enough to tear logs into pieces. The stories about the zheztyrnak are similar: she usually comes to the hearth of a hunter or traveler who is cooking meat on a fire and eats the meat together with him. The hero, who grows suspicious of her, places a log or a scroll in his bed to fake his presence, while he hides outside to observe her true nature. In the middle of the night, a hunter shoots and kills a zheztyrnak as she digs her claws into a log (Alpysbaev, 1988: 22-23). The existence of the zheztyrnak as a being from another world beyond the human realm is discussed in articles devoted to fairy tales (8, 2014: 61). V.Ya. Propp connects the plots of fantasy fairy tales with ritualistic elements (Propp, 2000: 10).

In this tale, one can clearly recognize an initiation ritual related to hunters. The exposition of "Karamergen" portrays the everyday life of a real hunter. The plot begins with the main character entering the territory of the zheztyrnak. According to the initiation, Karamergen must prove himself as a true hunter by conquering the territory belonging to the zheztyrnak. Using a new hunting tool (gun) the protagonist demonstrates humanity's superiority over nature. This plot synthesizes the initiation ritual with the relationship between man and the divine (Zheztyrnak). Therefore, the core of this tale is a mythical narrative. The subsequent plot focuses on the actions related to the hunter's status within society. The hunter is expected to attain divine status through his victory over the zheztyrnak (former god whose status has diminished). However, Karamergen fails to achieve this status and does not pass the test set by the fairies. This plot highlights humanity's superiority over nature-associated gods due to technology, while simultaneously revealing man's low standing in the spiritual

realm. In the fairy tale, fairies represent not only beings from the spiritual world but also embody elements of new religion and ideology. Among Turkic peoples, fairies are often depicted as beautiful maidens and are frequently symbols of extraordinary beauty. The narratives emphasize their captivating appearance (Auyesbayeva, 2007: 221–227). With their enchanting beauty, fairies cause humans to fall in love with them and live together as spouses for a certain period. Occasionally, fairies choose special individuals and form unions with them. The children born from these unions are notable and exceptional, for example, Edige and Genghis Khan. Fairies can live among humans, but they often long to return to their own realm. Although the fairy agrees to become his wife, she sets a condition that he must never forget that humans and fairies belong to two different worlds. The origins of stories with this theme begin in myth and continue into fairy tales (Kerim, 2015: 26). More detailed information about the hikaya genre in general, as well as about the zheztyrnak and the fairy – two of its main characters – can be found in the article “Turkic ‘hikaya’ genre and its characters” (Akhmetbekova, 2018: 87-106).

As for the text of the fairy tale itself, we can observe that there are no significant changes in the content between the two versions. However, the text published in 1988 shows lexical and stylistic differences when compared to the original 1901 version. In particular, the later version has undergone noticeable literary editing. While such editing is often necessary to correct the text and make it accessible to modern readers, it should not compromise the original style of the fairy tale or the distinctive features of colloquial speech. The editorial changes made to the fairy tale under analysis have disrupted its traditional style by replacing colloquial language with more formal literary language. Let us now demonstrate this with a specific example. First, consider the sentences in both versions of the text. In the 1988 version, several changes were introduced to the original sentences. However, the compilers could have preserved the original phrasing, as it was already written in language understandable to readers. In the second text, the fairy tale’s oral style characteristic of oral literature and folklore has been modified to resemble written literary language as closely as possible.

There is another important point to note here. At the beginning of the first published version of the tale in 1901, there is a phrase that includes the ancient Kazakh expression *qulan atyp sauyrysynyn* (shooting kulans for their rumps). The word “sauyrysyn” refers to “the upper part of an animal’s back, from the ridge to the withers” (Janabekova, 2011: 37). This phrase is entirely absent from the 1988 edition of the tale and deliberately removed. The compilers of the book likely considered it an obscure and unnecessary word for contemporary readers. One of the subsequent sentences reads: “Mergen köp añ atyp, müyiz, terilerin *symboldap* qatyryp jattı (The hunter shot many animals, and *bundled* and preserved their horns and skins)”. In the second text, the phrase “Mergen köp añ atyp, müyiz, terilerin *tuzdap*, qatyryp jattı (The hunter shot many animals, *salted* and preserved their horns and skins)” replaces the word *symboldap* (*bundled*) with *tuzdap* (*salted*). According to the Dictionary of the Kazakh Literary Language (Janabekova, 2011: 502), *symbolda* means “to tie tightly” or “to bundle”. The ancient word originally used by the

storyteller from that region was altered by the compilers of the collection, who replaced its meaning with a different term. Now let us examine the following sentences from the tale. In the sixth sentence of the 1901 original version, it reads: "*Neshe kün jol jürip, bir ülken tauğa kelipti... (After traveling for many days, he came to a large mountain...)*", whereas this sentence is completely absent in the second text. In the seventh sentence, the original states: "*He led his horse along a ravine on foot, endured much hardship, and climbed to the top of the mountain*" but in the second text, it is shortened to: "*With much hardship, he climbed to the top of the mountain*". The ninth sentence reads: "*The hunter, rejoicing, came to the spring and built a house of stone, made a roof like a camping tent, covered it with many thick sticks, and covered the roof of the house with animal skins*". In the second text, this sentence is shortened to: "*The hunter, rejoicing, came to the spring and built a house of stone, covered it with many small sticks and animal skins*". The tenth sentence in the 1988 version – "*Jeti, segiz künde boldырған atı semirip, qur at bolıptı (The horse that had tired him out over seven or eight days became a well-fed, strong horse)*" – is completely absent from the original 1901 publication. The eleventh and twelfth sentences of the first text read: "*Since Mergen was born, he had never seen such a variety of grass growing together. And it was a beautiful blooming steppe with so many different trees, so many different red and green flowers, where nightingales sang, and where the scent of cloves was fragrant*". In the second text, this is changed to: "*Since Karamergen was born, he had never seen such a variety of fruits growing. It was a beautiful meadow with so many different trees, where nightingales sang*".

In the eighteenth sentence of the first text, it is written as: "*The hunter lowered his bucket and ate the meat, and neither the sniper nor the woman took their eyes off each other,*" while in the second text, this sentence is omitted: "*The hunter lowered his bucket and ate the meat, the woman did not take out the two eyes from the hunter*". In the twenty-fourth sentence, the first text states: "*The hunter thought, 'There she comes, what should I do?' and when he looked he saw the woman walking slowly,*" whereas in the second text, it is shortened to: "*When he looked back, the woman was walking slowly*". In the twenty-fifth sentence of the first text, it is written as: "*Praying to God, the hunter fired his rifle,*" while in the second text, it appears as: "*Having learned that she was a monster, the sniper fired his rifle*". There is one important point worth noting here: the word "monster" in this sentence is not meant to be taken literally. In this context, the hunter perceives the woman in the blue dress, who appears at night, as a malevolent and dangerous force – one that threatens humanity. Thus, he refers to her as a "monster". The features and behaviors associated with such monstrous figures are remarkably similar across many cultures, including those found in Turkic folklore. The collector N. N. Pantusov, who recorded this tale from oral tradition and translated it into Russian, seems to have misunderstood the character's appearance and actions, rendering the term as "Baba Yaga". However, in the original tale, the woman is described as follows: "*The palms of her two hands are made of steel, like knife blades. The tips of her fingers are sharp as spears – they can pierce stone*" (Pantusov, 2022: 107). It is known that one of the fairy-tale characters of Kazakh tales and stories is Zheztyrnak.

In addition, the sentence in the first text, "*The garment with which he covered himself was torn and full of holes,*" is completely absent from the second text. While the sentence in the original first text is given as "The snake had a *steel head, its neck was cut off,*" in the second version it is changed to "It was a snake with *its head cut off*". In the 1901 tale, the sentence reads: "A scarf *made of fine white silk, adorned with various gold ornaments,* came and hung before him", while the 1988 version shortens it to "A scarf *made of fine white silk* came and hung before him". In the thirty-first sentence of the first version of the text, it reads, "The girl said, 'We are nomadic *fairies,*'" while in the second version it changes to, "The girl said, 'We are from a nomadic *country*'". In the first version, the sentence reads, "*When he woke up with a start... he saw that all the treasure was gone,*" whereas in the second version it changes to, "There was no girl, *no house, nothing near him*". Additionally, the sentence in the first version, "*He cried, saying, 'If you put wheat on the hem of one who has no luck, his hem will come off and spill the wheat,'*" is completely removed in the second version. The sentence "*Someone, crying, cried out 'Karamergen'*" in the 1988 version of the tale was shortened to "*He cried out 'Karamergen!'*" in the first version. While the 1901 version says, "*Worried, he asked: 'From which side will she come?'*", in the 1988 version, it was changed to "*From which side will the voice come?'*". In our opinion, some sentences in the original were revised in the 1988 version of the tale to make them more understandable to the reader. The sentence "*Oh, you unfortunate one, do not cry anymore, may your eyes go blind!*" in the original version is completely absent in the second version of the tale and was removed.

So, regarding the sentences we compared and analyzed above, the characteristics of pure colloquial speech in the first version were removed, and the second text was changed to adopt the character of literary language. At the same time, the compilers of the collection removed some words and phrases from the original and replaced them with new ones. In other words, the compilers made corrections and edits at their discretion. As a result, some sentences in the second version of the tale became more literary and lost the distinctive features of colloquial speech. Therefore, the editing here is completely inappropriate. Another point to note is that if the collection is intended for researchers or reporters, it will be necessary to preserve the phonetic features inherent in the text of the storyteller or the collector who recorded the tale. Folklorist S. Kaskabassov argues that, since the compilers of fairy tale collections often rely on their own experience when editing the text, the storyteller's style and the spoken language of the people are not fully preserved, their features are lost, or dialectal characteristics are erased. If some sentences in the text are too long or rambling, they may be divided into shorter sentences; however, one word cannot be replaced by another word or sentence (Azibaeva, 1983: 23). This clearly demonstrates the importance of textological research when working with the original text of a fairy tale.

5. Conclusion

The discovery and collection of materials related to the rich heritage of Kazakh folk literature, as well as the literary, historical, and ethnographic traditions preserved in the private archives of Russian orientalists and Turkologists, the study and analysis of

manuscripts, and the preparation of scholarly collections have become some of the most pressing issues today. In this article, we examined one Kazakh fairy tale as a representative example of research into the rich and abundant legacy of Kazakh folklore prior to the October Revolution and presented our own conclusions based on this analysis.

We believe that such research should become a key trend in the future. Unfortunately, works and information on Kazakh oral literature and folklore have been published at different times and in various journals and collections; however, a complete and comprehensive source database or unified collection has not yet been created. The materials remain scattered across the collections of central and regional archives, museums, research institutions, and libraries. Not all archives containing pre-Soviet documents are accessible; in particular, access to certain collections within the National Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan is restricted.

In conclusion, in our article, we focused on the first version of the Kazakh fairy tale "Karamergen", collected orally by the Russian Turkologist N. N. Pantusov and first published in 1901, which has since been preserved in the fund of rare publications. We compared it with the version published in 1988 during the Soviet period and, through textual analysis, observed that the text had undergone several changes. In particular, the fairy tale's text had been edited to correct punctuation and spelling errors. The correct pronunciation of Arabic, Persian, and ancient Turkic words in the text was carefully preserved. The word usage characteristic of the storyteller's oral speech, features of oral narration, and instances where ancient words in the tale's text were replaced during the local storyteller's narration were identified. In other words, correctly used words, phrases, and sentences were restored to preserve the authenticity of the original oral tradition.

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