

## **An Epical Look at the folk tales ‘Dali - Shahu and Zarif Khan - Mabie’ of ‘National Mirror’**

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### **Abstract**

Dali - Shahu and Zarif Khan - Mabi are folk tales of the Pashto language which some Pashtun writers have preserved in poetry and some in prose. The stories, which I discuss here, are taken into consideration as prose based on Mohammad Gul Noori's work 'National Mirror'. The value of this research is that no one has internationally researched something like this in this field so far. Therefore, I want to make Non-Pashtu Speakers aware of Pashtu folk tales, their messages, and their characters. In this regard, my aims are: (1) to introduce the two Pashto folk tales to the world, 'Dali - Shahu and Zarif Khan - Mabie', (2) to introduce the characters of these stories, and (3) to explore the epic features in these stories.

It is a library research and the methods are comparative and descriptive. In this section first, the characteristics of the epic are specified and then the above two stories will be studied in the light of comparative and descriptive methods accompanied by the result.

The main characters in the story of 'Dali and Shahu' are King, Shahu, Dali, Shahu's female friends, and King Akbar of India.

The story of Dali and Shahu is a simple folk tale in which the characters have played in a very simple way. The theme of the story is very simple. As the goal of Dali is to earn money, he steals. Then, for living a prosperous life, he aims to go to

India and see the king's daughter. There is nothing in this story that makes us consider it an epic.

The main characters in the story of 'Zarif Khan and Mabie' are Mirwais, Khadri, Mirwais's servant, beggar, Zarif Khan, Mabie, and the King of India.

In the story of Zarif Khan and Mabie, the prayer of the beggar and eating apples are just some of the epic features of the story. The rest of the story has simply folk features and does not have any mention of adventures and fighting with other dangerous characters, national emotions, the role of animals, and any other similar features of epic. Even if Zarif fights, he does it in a very normal way.

Of course, to do good with the nation, to refrain from deceit and oppression, to pay attention to the boy's happiness at the time of engagement, the commitment of kings and elders to their promises, to respect the prayer, to respect one's husband can be considered valuable goals of the story.

## **1. Introduction**

'Dali and Shahu' is a simple and folk love story with simple incidents. In order to understand the story and then measure it by the scale of the epic, I first introduce you the valuable characters of the story and briefly summarize the story and then mention features of the epic.

## **2. Value**

Familiarizing People around the world with the Pashtun Culture and introducing the Pashtuns as culture-loving nation are the major values of this research.

## **2. Objectives**

1. Introducing two Pashto folk tales 'Dali – Shaho' and 'Zarif Khan – Mabie' to the world
2. Introducing the characters of these stories
3. Exploring the epic features in these stories

## **3. Questions**

1. Are there any folk tales in the Pashto language?
2. Do the folk tales 'Dali - Shaho and Zarif Khan - Mabie' have epic features?

## **4. Methods and Methodology**

The type of research is the library and its method is comparative and descriptive.

**Key Words:** Epic, Dali, Shahu, Zarif Khan, Stories, Mabie

### **Characters of the Story**

**The King:** He is the father of Shahu who has seven sons but does not have a daughter. He asked Allah for a daughter and Allah granted him a daughter. Thus, the daughter became the only sister of seven brothers, one of whom was her half-brother.

**Shahu:** She was the only daughter of the king about whom the king had said: "If Allah grants me a daughter, no man in the world will be able to see or marry her. If someone sees her and she too likes him, I will let my daughter marry him legally."

**Dali:** Dali is the hero of the story who is a thief and whose business is to steal. He tries to increase his wealth and eventually falls in love with Shahu.

**Shahu's Female Friends:** They accompany Shahu from childhood onwards.

**King Akbar of India:** When Dali goes to India, he is imprisoned.

### **The Summary of the story**

Nine months, nine days, and nine hours later, Allah (SWT) grants the king a daughter. The king names her Shahu and builds a great castle for her. There was a big willow in the castle. They cut its middle and made a throne for her. They sent her to the castle with forty girls and maids. Shahu grew up with these girls and maids.

Dali, the notorious thief, thinks and says, "Go to the castle of the king's daughter, if you die or survive," (that is, if he saw the king's daughter or if the king's daughter saw and liked him, he will marry her.) "If she doesn't like you, you will die."

Dali walks towards the castle and climbs into the castle in a hurry, but also writes a letter and keeps it with him, the text of which is as follows:

"I love you and I want to sacrifice my life for you, drowning in your grief, a madman of desert and bored of my life, I am your lover (Dali). I tried to see you, put my life in danger of death, and became the first man to have the honor of seeing you. Now, what is your wish? Do you like me or not?" (Noori, 2010, 234)

At the time of sleeping, when Shahu's friends go, Dali throws the letter at Shahu's face. When Shahu reads the letter, looks up and sees Dali. For the first time, Shahu sees a man in addition to her father and falls in love with him.

Dali is a very lively young man. For saving his life, she shouts, so that her father does not kill him:

شهو ناسته وه د خپل بابا پر غولي

د پاسه کاغذ راغی وشهو ته

وا راځه دلی دې بولي

(Noori, 2010, 235)

(1)((While Shahu was sitting in her Grandfather's house, a letter fell from the upper area, saying, come, Dali wants you.))

With this shout, all the friends of Shahu are astonished and come running towards Shahu and see Dali.

(۲) شهو گلي په سپين مخ دې دلی مين سو

دلي ځان پر خدای سپارلی

شهو ستا په زلفو خوار دلی لا بند سو

(Noori, 2010, 235)

The meaning of the above Poem:

(2)((Beautiful Shahu, Dali fell in love with your white face, Dali has surrendered himself to Allah, Poor Dali has been imprisoned with your hair)

When Dali goes, she gives him a shout as she is in love with him.

شهو ناسته وه د گل سره خوشحاله

دا دگل مجلس دې اور سو

د دلي په غم به ناسته وي ملاله

(Noori, 2010, 235)

The Meaning of the Upper Poem:

(3)((Shahu was sitting happily with Gul. Sitting with Gul may put you in trouble, then you will be grieving for Dali.))

Dali then shouts at her from the castle wall:

که ژوندی وم شهو گلي پر دنيا باندي  
زه به لاس له تا وانه ظلم  
که مي سر له تنه څوک را څخه پري کاندې  
(Noori, 2010, 235)

The meaning of upper poem:

(4)((If were alive in the world, I will not leave you even if someone beheads me.))

Dali says if you go to the king and tell him that you saw his daughter, he will tell you that you are the notorious thief and will kill you. It would be better to go and steal something big to become wealthy. Then you can propose the king's daughter. You have time because she does not marry. Dali goes to India and loots King Akbar's treasure, but he is captured by the king's bodyguards, sentenced to three years in prison and after prison, he is put to severe death.

When Dali is sentenced to three years in prison, Shahu burns in the flames of waiting for Dali and is very upset and worried about what happened to Dali. There was a bigger in the prison with Dali who had completed his imprisonment time. Dali gives the beggar a letter that has all the things about the prison. The beggar delivers the letter to Shahu and Shahu becomes even more upset.

This is the time when Shahu's father 'The King' and her six brothers have died and his half-brother has become king. Shahu tells the whole story to his brother and asks for permission from his brother to go to India. First, he does not allow her to go, but later, he allows her to go. Fearing, she may run away and embarrass the family. So he decided it is best to let her go. After arriving in India, Shahu goes to the court of King Akbar. It has taken three years since the king ordered to kill Dali, but Shahu prays and Dali survives. Then the king orders his people to kill him with the elephants. Then Shahu prays that may all the elephant die, when the executioner sees that all the elephants are dead, the news comes to the king. The king is surprised and asks why this is happening. After the king realizes the pure love between Dali and Shah, the king forgives Dali and they marry.

The above story is a simple folk tale in which the characters are played in a very simple way. The theme of the story is very simple and as Dali wants to earn wealth and money, he starts to steal. Seeing the King's daughter and going to India are his objectives to have a prosperous life.

There is nothing in this story by which it can be called an epic. I would like to highlight the characteristics of the epic in the light of some authoritative references to make the subject clearer to the readers.

In the epic, war and bravery are inevitable, animals play an important role in it, and the hero kills the big and scary beasts and monsters. In addition to it, the plants have strange and magical features, the hero has superhuman structure, and the unseen power plays a role in it. The gods are divided into two groups, some of which are with the good and others are the supporters of evil, and Goddess falls in love with the hero of the epic, but the hero does not value her. Its hero is a tribal and national person, the hero's territory is everywhere and does extraordinary and unnatural activities, the hero always faces an antihero. The hero goes on long dangerous journeys, the hero performs great deeds that have spiritual and national value. The epic hero fights hand in hand in various ways. Weapons are used, tricks and deceptions are used in the epic, and the hero is half human and half god. In an epic, things are prophesied, as well as magical and sorcery actions of magicians are performed in it. (Arghand, 2016: R – B B)

Dr. Abdul Ghani Barzin Mahar writes: "Epic is one of the genres of descriptive poetry which includes discussions about wrestling, masculinity, pride, and greatness of the people and somehow reflects the different activities of their lives ... The hero of the national epic expresses the aspirations of his people." (Barzin Mahar, 2004, 75 and 76).

Commenting on the epic, Shamisa writes: "Epic means courage and bravery. It is one of the oldest and most exciting genres of literature. After a lot of definitions, epic conveys the concept of war, bravery, and expansion of the country to the mind, but it still encompasses a wide range of meanings and concepts. Epic is a description of prehistoric periods. It is the report of ancient periods and situations and pictures the activities of early humans. Epic talks about periods ever since a nation has taken steps to achieve civilization and greatness. The epic is created based on a nation's struggle for independence and defeating the enemy, or of gaining its fame and state, and a better life. (Shamsia, 1998, 59 and 60)

Hyatt Gilbert writes about some of its specialties: "The great natural part of the romantic epic is magic, magicians, the things that have magical features, such as hats, swords, winged horses, and medieval and illusory features." (Hayet, 1998: 253).

In the first volume of his book 'History of the Literary World, Dr. B. Travik has mentioned the characteristics of epic based on Homer's epics. Here I mention a few issues related to our subject: "for the issues of epic, a hero (Usually national hero), mentioning self-actions. Asking the gods of poetry and art for help, having enduring qualities and the interference of gods in human actions have been shown." (Tarawik, 1995, 60 and 61).

Now, if we measure the story 'Dali and Shahu' with the scale of epic, it may have very little to do with the epic and thus it cannot be listed as an epic. The rest of the story is a folk tale and does not have any characteristics of epic by which we can call it epic.

### **'Zarif Khan and Mabie' Folk Tale**

The story 'Zarif Khan and Mabie' is a simple folk tale, the incidents of which are also very obvious.

#### **The characters of the Story**

1. Mirwais: Khan of the Village and the leader of his tribe who had no children.
2. Khadri: Mirwais's brother was always thirsty for leadership.
3. Mirwais's Maid: The beggar begs, but she gives him ashes.
4. The Beggar: The beggar prays for him, but on the condition, that if Allah grants Mirwais a child, the child would be given to him.
5. Zarif Khan: The eldest son of Mirwais who then marries Mabie.
6. Mabie: She is the daughter of a poor man but firmly supports her husband.
7. King of India: Who has Zarif put under house arrest.

It also has other small characters.

#### **The Summary of the Story**

Mirwais is the chief khan of his village. He is rich but has no children. Khadri is the younger brother of Mirwais but has many children. In the middle, a beggar comes and begs for food. Mirwais's maid throws ashes in his bag. Malang gets upset and asks why she did that. She tells him about Mirwais's problem of not having children and says, "Your prayers do not have any effect." The beggar gives his stick to her and tells her to go to the garden, hit the apple tree with it and bring him all the apples that fall from the tree. When she did that, only three apples fell

off the tree. She brought the apples to the beggar. Saying holy words, the beggar blew upon the apple and told the maid, “The Khan and his wife should eat them together.”

A year later, Mirwais Khan was granted a son by Allah (SWT) named Zarif Khan. After the baby is born, the beggar comes and says if you remember my condition, that the child is mine. Khan says: Yes, I do, but I can give you as much as you want or live with the government, accept one of these two conditions and leave the child! The beggar accepts the second condition because his goal is to get rid of begging and he will also be able to see Zarif Khan all the time.

Now, Zarif is an adolescent and has a sister (Bubby) and a brother (Lal) as well.

Mirwais wants Zarif Khan to marry, but Zarif Khan refuses and then the beggar mediates between them and convinces Zarif Khan. Zarif Khan agrees to marry, but Zarif Khan likes Mabie (who is a poor girl). Luckily, his parents agree with him.

Meanwhile, Zarif Khan's father Mirwais dies. Zareef Khan lives with his younger brother and sister. Khadari, who has been waiting for a long time for leadership and becoming Khan, finds the opportunity.

Khadari tricks Zarif Khan and takes him to India for trade. He deceives him and Zarif Khan was sentenced to imprisonment by the king. The king loves the adolescence of Zarif Khan and puts him under house arrest with him. Khadari happily returns home. A slave of Zarif Khan, who wanted to tell everything to Mabie, was killed by Khadri. The others remained silent for fear of death and did not tell Mabie or anyone else about Zarif Khan.

Khadari tells people that Zarif Khan died due to diarrhea. His FATEHA ceremony lasts for three days. He makes Lal work as a servant with a steak seller, makes bubby marry an Ethiopian slave who has two other wives but the Ethiopian slave does not betray Zarif Khan and keeps Bubby as a guest at home. Khadri asks Mabie to marry him, but Mabie says that even if this happens, it will be 25 years later. When Khadri gets disappointed from the marriage, he takes her out of the house and she lives a very poor life waiting for Zarif Khan.

Khadari does not allow anyone to go to India and does not allow anyone to come here from India.



As the days go by, the beggar comes and tells Mable to write a letter containing all her information. He said, "I will try to go to India secretly. If I found Zarif Khan, I will give him your letter." The beggar succeeds in doing so. When Zarif Khan becomes aware of the cruelties of Khadri, he gets extremely angry and asks the king to permit him to go to his own country.

The king, who is in love with the youth of Zarif Khan, refuses to go, but Zarif Khan insists. The king finally allows him but orders his servants to destroy the bridge over the river. When Zarif Khan reaches the bridge, he becomes sad and tells the king that a king is not supposed to break his promise. The king knows that he beautifies his two daughters at night and sends them to Zarif Khan, so he proposes to one of them, but the king gets disappointed because Zarif Khan shows no interest in them. Therefore, he tells Zarif Khan to kill or surrender the Raja of a castle. Zarif is a very brave man with his plan and thirty young men, he goes to Raja's Castle and kills his people, bringing the Raja and his wife alive to the king.

When Zarif Khan returns victorious, the king grants permission as well as strong young men to return to the country. When Khadri defends his cruelty, Zarif Khan does not accept it. Finally, the story ends with the death of Khadri. (Noori, 2010,188 - 211)

## **5. Conclusion**

In the above story in the light of epic features, the only prayer of the beggar and eating apples are considered just some of the epic features. The rest of the story has simply folk features and does not have adventures and fighting with other dangerous characters, national emotions, the role of animals, and any other similar features of epic. Even if Zarif fights, he does it in a very normal way.

Of course, doing good for the nation, refraining from deceit and oppression, keeping into consideration the boy's happiness at the time of engagement, the commitment of kings and elders to their promises, respecting the spiritual healing power and prayer, respecting one's husband can be considered valuable goals of the story.

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