

Analyzing the Epic of Mem and Zin According to Vladimir Propp's Narratology

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ABSTRACT:

This study is an attempt to analyze the plot of Ehmedê Xanî(1650-1707)'s *Mem and Zin* based on Vladimir Propp's (1895-1970) Narrative Theory who is a Soviet folklorist. The effort is to find out how many functions have appeared in the epic and to point out seven broad character types that are mentioned by Propp in his most famous book the *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928).

There are several theories that analyze some basic elements of stories, such as Joseph John Campbell's "The Hero's Journey" and Maureen Murdock's "The Heroine's Journey". But among all, this paper has chosen a narratology structuralism study which has been explained by Propp. His theory is one of the well-spread theories and views all literature genres in the form of certain fixed structures.

KEYWORDS: Ehmedê Xanî, Mem u Zin, Epic, Vladimir Propp, Morphology.

1. Introduction

Vladimir Propp has examined a variety of Russian myths and folktales in order to introduce the main themes among them. He has identified seven typical characters and 31 functions that can be applied not only to folktales but also to films, theaters, epics, and other different genres of literature. The aim of this research is to analyze one of the most well-known epics in Kurdish literature which is *Mem u Zin* according to Propp's narrative structure. The epic is written by Ehmedê Xanî (1650-1707) who is one of the most famous figures of Kurdish Classical Literature in the 17th century. This paper's effort is to show how a Kurdish classical epic has so many worldly standards and can be used as an argument to prove how important a Kurdish epic is.

2. Literature Review

Since the early 20th century, several attempts have been made to develop a discipline now referred to as Narratology. These efforts were influenced by the findings of Structuralism, Russian Formalism, and the New Critics. Many of these draw inspiration from Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, a classic work that is widely acknowledged as the source of the entire discipline (Aguirre, 2011). A large number of folktales, movies, epics, and stories have been analyzed according to Propp's Narrative Theory. Narratologists have regarded Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the Folktale as one of the most significant contributions to the

understanding of plot structure. This work has demonstrated a continued attraction for both screenplay authors and structuralist analysts of narrative fiction. Essentially, Propp's important work has provided a method for evaluating folktales in terms of their functions (Sundari, 2014). Vladimir Propp examined a number of Russian fairy tales and found common themes within them. He divided the fairy tales into thirty-one "functions". His research, the Morphology of the Folktale was published in 1928. After the publication, folklorists realized that a unique element can be found in all stories. Many regions in the world have similar stories with recognizable themes, characters, and situations (Dogra, 2017).

The concept of "folk tale" has been extended to include not only a form of narrative among European peasants but also to cover all the forms of narratives in non-European societies and ancient communities. Propp's work has been translated into several European languages. His 31 functions were reduced to 20 by Greimas (1917-1992), who also stressed the importance of dramatis personae (Arvidsson, 2006).

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3. Thirty-one Functions of Propp

Russian folklorist, Vladimir Propp¹² has analyzed the fundamental structural elements of many selected Russian folk tales in order to identify the common structural aspects. In 1928, he published his book, the *Morphology of the Folktale* in Russia. After thirty years, the majority of European and American scholars read the book when it was translated into English in 1958.

Then, folklorists from all around the world realized that each folktale had a distinctive element that could be repeated. Propp's Morphology is useful to understand narratology in general not only folktales. Therefore, his analysis is applicable to not just folktale genres, but also it can be applied to all kinds of narratives including those in literature, movies, television shows, theatres, games, mimes, cartoon strips, advertisements, dance forms, sports commentaries, film theories, news reports, and stories.

In the *Morphology of the Folktale*, Propp hypothesizes that a folktale consists of a concatenation of short plots called

functions. "All fairytales are constructed on the basis of one single string of actions or events" (Aguirre, p. 2), and "this means that FUNCTION = ACTION (or EVENT) + POSITION in the sequence" (Aguirre, p. 5). Based on this idea, he isolates thirty-one "functions" that make up the main structure of many of the folktales. Even though, a given tale might not contain all 31 functions. He clarifies the meaning of the word "morphology". He contends that this term has been borrowed from Botany which is the study of various parts of a plant and how they relate to one another and to the whole.

The standard presentation of the system starts with a list of the 31 functions. The regular arrangement of the introduction is in Roman numerals. The definition of each function is often one single word. The conventional signs are given for identification purposes; each of the first seven functions receives a Greek letter, and the rest of the functions receive Roman capitals (two functions receive signs in place of a letter).

The functions can be seen in the following table:

Number	Designation	Definition	Examples
I	β	Absentation	One of the members of the family absents himself from home
II	Γ	Interdiction	An interdiction is addressed to the hero.
III	δ	Violation	The interdiction is violated.
IV	ε	Reconnaissance	The villain makes an attempt to reconnaissance.
V	ζ	Delivery	The villain receives information about the victim.
VI	η	Trickery	The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings.
VII	θ	Complicity	The victim submits to deception and thereby unwillingly helps his enemy.
VIII	A	Villainy	The villain causes harm and injury to a member of a family.
VIIIa	A	Lack	One of the members of a family either lacks something or desires to have something.
IX	B	Meditation	Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched.
X	C	Counteraction	The seeker agrees to or decides upon counter action.

¹ Proppian function is a classification for abstract pieces of plot that are repeated across folktales.

² Vladimir Propp (1895-1970), is a Russian folklorist and scholar who is the father of narratology. The best known and

most effective use of Propp's thought is in the study of genre fiction. His most famous works are; *Morphology of the Folktale* and *Theory and History of Folklore*.

XI	↑	Departure	The hero leaves home.
XII	D	Testing, the first function of the donor.	The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper.
XIII	E	Reaction	The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor.
XIV	F	Acquisition	The hero acquires the use of a magical agent.
XV	G	Guidance	The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of a search.
XVI	H	Struggle	The hero and the villain join in direct combat.
XVII	J	Branding	The hero is branded.
XVIII	I	Victory	The hero is defeated.
XIX	K	Liquidation of Luck	The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated.
XX	↓	Return	The hero returns.
XXI	Pr	Pursuit	The hero is in pursuit.
XXII	Rs	Rescue	Rescue of the hero from pursuit.
XXIII	O	Unrecognized Arrival	The hero, unrecognized, arrives home or in another country.
XXIV	L	Unfounded Claims	The false hero presents unfounded claims.
XXV	M	Difficult Task	A difficult task is proposed to the hero.
XXVI	N	Solution	The task is resolved.
XXVII	Q	Recognition	The hero is recognized.
XXVIII	Ex	Exposure	The false hero or villain is exposed.
XXIX	T	Transfiguration	The hero is given a new appearance.
XXX	U	Punishment	The villain is punished.

XXXI	W	Wedding	The hero is married and ascends the throne.
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4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Analyzing the epic of Mem u Zin by using Propp's 31 Functions:

Every nation has a folktale that has been handed down, mostly orally, from one generation to the next. However, once writing grew increasingly common, many of these tales were recorded. In Germany, the Grimm Brothers collected a number of fairytales including Cinderella. Aladdin and Ali Baba are a couple of examples that are written by Arabs and Persians in the 1001 Night Tales. Different cultures are identified with their own different folktales, and the Kurdish nation is identified with Mem and Zin which is Ehmedê Xanî's most important work.

The epic is based on a true story and revolves around two lovers falling in love with each other; Mem, a young Kurdish boy from the "Alan" clan falls in love with Zin from the Botan clan. She is the daughter of the governor of Botan. The two young lovers are separated from each other and they are unable to marry due to some reasons. The main factor is that Mem is the son of a clerk rather than an aristocratic household. Meanwhile, Zin is from a noble family whose brother is a prince. In spite of his lowly state, Mem has gained the prince's trust, but the epic's main antagonist soon breaks his trust. He makes satanic plans to separate the two lovers through the Mir³ (Zin's brother) as soon as he finds about their affair. Here we realize that the antagonist indirectly works. The Prince keeps Bekir by his side, even though he is aware of his trickery. Bekir's satanic plan works and causes Mem to be imprisoned. Tacedîn, Mem's friend, tries to help the two lovers and asks the Mir to free Mem. Tacedîn tells the Prince something notable: "Unless you change your mind, we've lost our public face; we'll have to flee an emigrate to far Damascus" (Xanî, p. 231). Despite his friend's attempt to save him, Mem ends up passing away in prison. After receiving the news, Zin faces great sadness. Therefore, she dies on Mem's grave. The people of Jazira Botan learn about the two lovers' deaths quite quickly. When Bekir's contribution to the tragedy is revealed, the people become so furious that they threaten to kill him. Eventually, Mem's friend kills him and he is buried beneath the feet of Mem and Zin.

Within the epic, there is another story which is the story of Tacedîn and Sitê. Tacedîn is Mem's friend and Sitê is Zin's sister. They meet at the festival and fall in love with each other. But unlike Mem and Zin's fate, they easily get married without obstacles on their way.

The functions that are recognized in the epic:

4.1.1. Absentation (β): One of the members of the family absents himself from home.

According to Propp, a member of the family⁴ leaves the security of the home environment. This may be the hero or other members of the family that the hero needs to save later. Generally, "Usual forms of absentation: going to

work, to the forest, to trade, to war" (Propp, p. 26). In the epic, the first function appears when the people leave their houses in the festival of Newroz. They walk towards the mountains and valleys. They enjoy the beauty of nature together, just as Xanî explains at the very beginning of the epic:

The day on which the Newroz festival begins,
The whole wide world comes out to celebrate the party.
(Xanî, p. 79)

All left the city and their shops and all their homes;
You might have taught them thieves and robbers fast
absconding. (Xanî, p. 80)

In droves, they promenaded out through the hills and vale
Together seek pleasing spots in fields and forests (Xanî, p. 80)

The main characters in the epic; Mem, Zin, Tacedîn, and Stê, also leave their homes to participate in the festival. "And just as Mem and Tacedîn had dressed up as girls," and "The lovely girls, in turn, had donned, for fun, men's clothing" (Xanî, p. 93). In the epic, all four characters choose to disguise themselves as the opposite gender in the festival.

4.1.2. Interdiction (γ): an interdiction is addressed to the hero.

In the second function, the hero is warned against some actions. The form of the interdiction is represented in the form of an order or a suggestion ('don't go there', 'don't do this'). Warning the hero is also a warning to the reader about some actions that are dangerous in life. In the epic, Zin and Site have been prevented from participating in men's gatherings. But they joined the festival just as Xanî explains:

Identical in clothing, face, and comely form,
But recognized by not a soul in all the city, (Xanî, p. 85)

In fact, pursuant to Kurdish culture, women cannot usually walk alone and gather with the people around, especially men. But both girls enter the festival with the trick of changing clothes and disguising themselves as men. Xanî also mentioned that nobody recognized them in the city.

4.1.3. Violation (δ): the interdiction is violated.

This function argues that the hero ignores the interdiction and moves on. At that point, the reader may shout to the hero 'don't do it' but the hero cannot hear the voice of the reader and goes ahead. In the epic, Zin and Stê take no notice of the interdiction and go to the celebration. They meet the two young men, Mem and Tacedîn, and their souls are attracted to each other when they first meet at the

³ Mir (Persian and Kurdish) is derived from the Arabic title Emir which means; prince, general and leader.

⁴ Family need not mean a genetic unit, but can be any group that has some degree of cohesion can be considered as a family.

extraordinary Newroz celebration. Just as Xanî mentions in the epic:

They were confused, bewildered, and bewitched by love
And both were shorn of sanity and lost their senses. (Xanî , p. 86)

This couplet spells out the two lover's violation of the interdiction. According to Kurdish culture, women cannot enter men's gatherings and see other men as the paper has previously stated. But they actually meet the two young men and exchange their rings with them so that they can discover deep secrets later. This violation happens elsewhere in the epic:

Like strewing sugar's sweetness on each other, now
Their lips approached and met, remaining there in passion.
(Xanî , p. 192)

And each desired to be the other's inmost self,
Exchanging kisses and then sometimes trading love bites,
(Xanî , p. 192)

These couplets mention that two lovers, Mem and Zin, meet each other on the day of the hunt in the garden and then in the palace hall. When they meet each other, they exchange kisses and love bites which are forbidden in the manner of Kurdish culture.

4.1.4. Delivery (Z): The villain receives information about his victim.

People are judging two lovers and pointing fingers at them when they find out about their secret relationship. We all know that the relationship between the two lovers would last longer if nobody knew about it. But "The sun of truth will pierce through all barriers, clouds, curtains, and cloaks. The smoke of Tazhdin's fire cannot confuse the truth for long. Sooner or later people will talk, Bekir will act and the Mir would know the truth" (Mirawdeli, p. 428). Xanî describes the public thirst for gossip about lovers. He argues "But now bad people started wagging evil tongues" (Xanî , p. 205). Now, everyone knows about their love. This function appears when Bekir learns about their love affair as Xanî describes:

When Bekir, too, that watchman at the palace gate,
As hypocritical and mean as any devil, (Xanî , p. 206)

Now heard these libelous aspersions make the rounds,
This slanderer knew nothing better than denouncing. (Xanî , p. 206)

He crossed the entrance to the chambers of the Prince
And told embellished tales, reporting them as gospel.
(Xanî , p. 206)

When the villain, Bekir hears the news, he tries to reveal it to the prince and prove his villainy. The villain's seeking now pays off. He gains information about his victims and tries to tear their relationship apart.

4.1.5. Trickery (H): The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or his belongings.

When the news of Mem and Zin's affair reaches the Mir, he drowns in thoughts. He actually realizes that it is a serious condition that challenges his honor. He wants to unveil the truth of the reports and investigate the occasion. In contrast to the Mir, Bekir is prepared; he is sharp and very quick. He wants to create a shortcut to force Mem to confess his love to Zin. Bekir knows the character of Mem as a proud constant lover. So, he plans to suggest a chess match between the Mir and Mem. He advises the prince to receive a covenant to reveal the name of his sweetheart before the game begins. Xanî explains:

I tell you, Mem's in love, completely blind with it.
Invite him to a game of chess - a perfect pretext!

Before you start the game, demand he promise you:
The loser must reveal the name his heart is stuck on.

And when you've won the game, extract the penalty.
Say, 'Mem, now speak the truth: which girl is your beloved?' (Xanî , p. 207)

As the game starts, Xanî portrays the trickery of the villain. "Now, Mem remained victorious in all three games". Bekir is worried and "Bekir kept a watchful eye on all the playing" (Xanî , p. 211). His plan B is to deceive Mem by lover when he notices that Zin is standing there right behind Mem. This function appears in the following couplets:

"It's custom in the game of chess:
Between the rounds, the players should exchange their places. (Xanî , p. 211)

And if you do, this time this Mem will taste defeat,
And you will finally achieve what you are seeking (Xanî , p. 211)

Now the trickery of villain works. Bekir asks the prince to exchange his place with Mem. He knows that Mem is crazy about Zin and that he is not strong enough to stand the shock of seeing Zin. The villain tries to trick his victim in order to lose the game.

4.1.6. Complicity (0): The victim submits to deception and thereby unwillingly helps his enemy.

In accordance with this function, Bekir's trick now works and Mem acts in a way that helps the villain. The victim may give the villain something valuable.

In the epic, Bekir asks the players to exchange their places; Mem unwillingly helps his enemy and accepts to change his seat with the prince. Zin sits in front of Mem and fills his vision. Bekir already knows that Mem cannot stand seeing his beloved one. As a result of the trick, Mem loses the game. Xanî explains the trickery and argues:

The Prince stood up and walked around to take Mem's seat,
And Mem now took the Prince's; Zin now filled Mem's vision. (Xanî , p. 211)

His mind and heart were focused on beloved Zin;
He sacrificed a knight and not the pawn he should have.
(Xanî , p. 212)

Thus, six times in a row, the Prince defeated Mem,
For helpless Mem was like a man inebriated. (Xanî , p. 212)

As we know, the game's real goal is nothing but to uncover a secret. According to their agreement, the one who loses the game must reveal the name of his beloved. When Mem loses the game, Mir says "I've wealth enough and need no more; instead, you shall reveal to me the truth: your secret!" (Xanî , p. 212). Mem hesitates about his answer. Bekir who is standing near, notices his hesitation and shouts out "I've seen the girl, the one with whom our Mem's in love; Her lips are covered with tattoos. She is an Arab" (Xanî , p. 212). He also says that the girl is black as if she's made of tar. The reader knows that what Bakir does is on purpose. He wants to force Mem to reveal his secret. Mem's feelings were hurt by such a nasty utterance about his sweetheart. He answers Bekir's nasty speech about his beloved and says "Of all the angels, she is the highest and the first" she is also "an angel, Zin is what they call her" (Xanî , p. 213). Bekir's plan is successful. He forces Mem to reveal his secret and cause him problems.

4.1.7. Villainy (A): The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family.

In the epic, Bekir informs the Prince that Mem is in a love relationship with his sister. So, the prince asks him for proof. In order to justify his words, Bekir organizes a chess game in order to trick Mem. He plans to force Mem to lose the game and reveal his secret relationship with Zin. Unfortunately, his trickery works. He drives Mem to tell the prince about his affair with Zin. The prince immediately imprisoned Mem because of his honor. Despite Tacedîn and his friend's attempt to free Mem, he stays in prison for one year. Xanî has shown this scene in the epic:

The Prince seized Mem and sent him to the prison yard.
He told the warden, "Cast him in a narrow dungeon." (Xanî , p. 215)

Bekir, who is the main reason for Mem's imprisonment and the separation of the two lovers physically, now makes a devilish plan to kill Mem. He asks the prince to go and meet Zin, for the first time in over a year. He wants him to ask Zin to go to Mem in prison and release him because the prince has agreed to their marriage. He also tells Mir that Mem will "die at once if he should catch a glimpse of her", and there is "little reason to believe in his survival" (Xanî , p. 237). Bekir knows that Mem is too weak and ill, that he cannot survive from the shock of seeing Zin and die. Delightedly, she pays Mem a visit. Just as Bekir has planned to happen, Mem passes away when his eyes fall on his beloved, Zin.

4.1.8. Mediation (B): Misfortune or lack is made known.

In accordance with this function, the "hero now discovers the act of villainy or lack, perhaps finding their family

community devastated or caught up in a state of anguish and woe"(Brusentsev, Hitchens, & Richards, 2012). This function appears when Tacedîn realizes that Bekir is the villain just as Xanî mentions in the following couplets:

At every threshold, post a soldier as a guard.
Let every man prepare as well he can for battle. (Xanî , p. 228)

To start, let's tear this blackguard Bekir sheer apart,
Let's clear the court of this intriguer and conspirer. (Xanî , p. 228)

When Mem's friend finds out that Bekir is the main reason for the suffering, he asks "Mir to sack his servant because he is not worthy to be his doorman as he acts like a sly biting dog" (Mirawdeli, 2012). Tacedîn wants to sheer Bekir apart and take revenge.

4.1.9. Beginning counteraction (C): the seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction.

This is an important moment for the hero as this is the decision that sets the course of future actions. It is very important to not stay silent about your battles. Be a victor over your struggle, not a victim of it. Xanî has drawn the scene when Tacedîn stands up to the prince several times to propose to his beloved:

We speak for Tacedîn, who requests the hand of Sitê,
And he, black slave, is proud of your illumination. (Xanî , p. 120)

He is enslaved, so kindly manumit the man!
And he is worthy to be made the Prince's in-law! (Xanî , p. 120)

"What you regard as worthy, now replied the Prince,
"I too will equally regard as fully worthy. (Xanî , p. 120)

And so today let Sitê and Tacedîn be betrothed.
Amen, I say and hereby give assent and blessings. (Xanî , p. 120)

In the given couplets, Tacedîn sends a number of notables and religious men to ask Stê's hand. In the end, he gets his dream and marries her.

4.1.10. Departure (↑): The hero leaves home to get his goal.

At the beginning of the epic, the four characters leave home. They meet each other in disguise. They also exchange their rings. Before receiving magical help, the characters shall create some series of events to make other series of events happen.

4.1.11. Acquisition (F): the hero acquires the use of a magical agent.

According to this function, the hero acquires some kind of magical agent usually given by the donor. In the *Morphology of the folktale*, Propp has mentioned a variety of things that have the potential to act as magical agents including animals, objects out of which magical aids emerge, objects with magical properties, such as cudgels,

swords, balls, and many others, and abilities that are directly given, such as the capacity of turning into animals, etc. (Propp, pp. 43-44). The reward may also be more normal, such as help from others or knowledge. Nevertheless, it has to be essential in helping the hero in completing the quest.

In the epic, Zin and Stê experience a strange feeling after the meeting at the Newroz celebration. They fall for two people from their own gender. As soon as they come home, they immediately take their masculine costumes off, so that their Nanny, Heyzebûn, cannot discover their secret. They are so surprised that they remain naked. Heyzebûn goes to their bedroom in order to know why they left the festival so early. She surprises when she sees them naked and act strangely. Now they tell her the whole story. They confess that they have fallen in love. Heyzebûn decides to help them and find the identity of the two lovers. They both give her the rings, as Xanî mentions:

So from her finger, Sitê removed the ring she wore
And handed it to wise old Heyzebûn, her guardian. (Xanî ,
p. 103)
But Zin was hesitant and said to Heyzebûn,
"My heart's become a wildly churning, bloody maelstrom,
(Xanî , p. 103)

This function appears when Heyzebûn takes the rings to a famous fortuneteller to help her determine who the owners are. She gets magical help from him to find the two owners. She pretends that the rings belong to his sons and says: "Two boys, and both quite innocent, Two fatherless young orphans, poor and miserable (Xanî , p. 104). The fortuneteller soon discovers that she is lying and tells her that the rings actually belong to two men. The fortuneteller refuses to reveal the identity of the men but advises the nanny to find them. He claims that love has made them sick. The nanny disguises as hakim specialized in psychological illness. She goes to the two lovers and tells them about Zin and Site

4.1.12. Spatial transference between two kingdoms, guidance (G): The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of the search.

In the epic, the four characters (Mem, Zin, Tajidin and Stê) meet each other in disguise and fall in love. They exchange their rings. As soon as Zin and Stê get home, they take off their male clothes and stay naked by the shock of the experience. They tell Heyzebûn everything about their experience of falling in love with two people of their own gender. They showed her the two rings and explained everything. So, Heyzebûn decides to find the owners of the rings for them. According to this function, the object of the search is located in another kingdom. So, Heyzebûn now travels to another region in which the object may be gained. The rings belong to another place which she doesn't know where to search.

Broadly, the traveling of the character in the epic may be a long journey or maybe he/she uses some form of magical transportation to reach the destination. Heyzebûn gets a shortcut to reach the destination, she gains a magical agent. She goes to the fortuneteller to reveal the identity of the two lovers. Here, G3 states "He is led" (Propp, p. 51), and G4 also expresses "The route is shown to him" (Propp, p.

51) have been appeared when the fortune teller leads her to find the owners and describes the state of them.

4.1.13. Victory (J): The villain is defeated

At last, the villain is defeated in some way. This function can be clarified in 6 sections. But only one section, which is the fifth one that says "he is killed without a preliminary fight" (Propp, p. 53) has appeared in the epic. Bekir, the villain of the epic, captures and separates the two lovers. He is the reason for Mem's imprisonment. He doesn't give up on his villainy and intends to kill him. He advises the prince to send Zin to see Mem in prison, and explains that Mem cannot bear to see Zin and his soul will fly out. Unfortunately, he gains that aim.

After hearing the news of Mem's death, Mem's close friend, Tacedîn, goes out and murders Bekir. This is the story's victory.

In the epic, the real victory is about the two lovers when they finally are with each other in heaven. They lose their physical marriage on earth, which has temporarily happiness. They end up gaining their true and eternal happiness in heaven. This is victory.

4.1.14. Exposure (Ex): the false hero or villain is exposed.

In the epic, this function becomes visible when the villain is at last seen to be what he is. This function is recognized in the following couplet:

The news of Mem's decease now spread and made the rounds,
And people started loudly sobbing and lamenting. (Xanî ,
p. 265)

Now everyone knows that Bekir is the villain and is the reason for Mem's death. This brings great sadness to Zin, Mem's friends, and the people of Botan.

4.1.15. Punishment (U): The villain is punished.

This function states that "the villain is shot, banished, tied to the tail of a horse, commits suicide, and so forth" (Propp, p. 65). The punishment of the evil and treacherous is a warning to others including the reader. Xanî shows how Bekir is punished at the hands of Mem's friend:

He seized ahold of Bekir, raised him in the air,
And cleft the villain's evil spirit from his body (Xanî , p.
266)

So Tacedîn tore the crown of pride down from his head
And in despair, he threw it over Mem's poor body. (Xanî ,
p. 267)

In the epic, Mem dies due to Bekir's satanic plans to destroy their love relationship. But in the end, he gets his punishment. Tacedîn kills him at the end of the story.

4.1.16. Wedding (W): The hero is married and ascends the throne.

Most of the time, the main characters get the final reward for all of their actions. But sometimes things might be left unresolved to allow later stories of the hero's future adventure.

The major characters in the epic, Mem and Zin wish to have a happy marriage. Their dream is to live together. But the two lovers cannot marry each other due to some reasons beyond their control coming their way. Mem ends up dying in prison, something that has brought deep sadness to Zin. She faces the same fate and passes away while grieving the death of Mem at his grave. Before her death, she asks her brother to not keep her away from her sweetheart. She wants to be buried with Mem without a barrier. Xanî believes that the two lovers leave the material world to marry in the spiritual and eternal, heaven. Through the epic, the writer tries to tell the reader that, both Mem and Zin sacrifice physical love in order to win spiritually. They go through a series of tragic events to achieve their dream of togetherness. Xanî throws light on the scene at heaven:

And at a wedding where the angels come as guests
The bride and groom should dwell in paradise and heaven.
(Xanî , p. 250)

They wait there for the final day of our ascent
And proudly gaze upon our wedding ceremony (Xanî , p. 264)

The paradise for lovers, though, is different:
Another place, where God the Lord Himself will meet them (Xanî , p. 264)

On the contrary, the minor characters of the epic, Tacedîn and Stê, get married. Tacedîn sends a group of notables, religious men and ordinary people to ask Stê's hand in marriage in a traditional noble majestic Kurdish manner. Mir agrees to give Stê's hand to him because Tacedîn is from a noble family. He orders his servants and the present audience to start an all-night party immediately. In their wedding ceremony "All around was lively dancing, music sang" and "By beauties who had honey tongues and lips

like sugar" (Xanî , p. 134). Through relating to their wedding party, Xanî offers a description of a national royal wedding including various scenes of dancing, music, and different ways of expressing joy and general happiness.

4.2. Mem and Zin's Character types according to Propp's Dramatis Personae

Not only did Vladimir Propp identify 31 different functions, but he also defined seven character archetypes. It is a classification scheme for the major functional roles that characters play in the stories.

Propp proposed seven classes of characters, for which he gives the following definitions:

1. The Hero: Every story has a prominent character who is the key person. The heroes may appear in various roles, such as the victim or the seeker after some treasure or knowledge.
2. The Helper: The hero is supported to complete his or her goal by a helper who is always a wise old man or a magician.
3. The Villain: The negative character who creates struggles for the hero. The villain seeks to prevent the hero from completing the task.
4. The Donor: A person who gives the hero something unique or special, such as a magical agent or knowledge.
5. The Dispatcher: "The character who illustrates the need for the hero's quest and sends the hero off" (Jahan, Mittal, & Finlayson, 2021). This can be a parent or other member of the family. It may also be the princess's father. Sometimes the dispatcher is combined with another role, for example, the fake hero who is disguised as a helper.
6. The False Hero: Somebody who acts heroically and pretends to be the hero.
7. The Princess: The one who exists as a goal and usually recognizes and marries the hero as the reward.

Character types in the main epic:

Number	Characters	Roles
1	Mem	The hero.
2	Zin	The princess.
3	Tacedîn	The helper.
4	Stê	The helper.
5	Bekir	The villain.
6	The Fortuneteller	The Donor.
7	Zin al-Din (Mir)	The helper and the villain.
8	Heyzebûn	The helper.

Character types in the minor epic:

Number	Characters	Roles
1	Tacedîn	The hero.
2	Stê	The princess.
3	Mem	The helper.
4	Zin	The helper.
5	The Fortuneteller	The donor.
6	The Mir	The helper.
7	Heysebun	The helper.

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Conclusion

From the discussion, we can take a conclusion that the epic of *Mem u Zin* has a similar structure as Russian folktales and can be treated as a universal epic. The researcher has mentioned that not all narratives will contain all of Propp's functions; they might be impacted by the culture where the stories come from.

In the epic, sixteen functions appeared including; Absentation, Interdiction, Violation, Delivery, Trickery, Complicity, Villainy, Mediation, Beginning counteraction, Departure, Acquisition, Guidance, Victory, Exposure, Punishment, and Wedding. Among 31, fifteen functions are absent which comprise; Reconnaissance, Lack, Testing, Reaction, Struggle, Liquidation of Luck, Return, Pursuit, Rescue, Unrecognized Arrival, Unfounded Claims, Difficult Task, Solution, Recognition, and Transfiguration.

Based on the analysis of the dramatic person; there are 5 character types in in the main story which is the story of Mem u Zin including; the hero, the princess, the helper, the villain, and the donor. But the minor epic that tells the story of Stê and Tacedîn has only 4 character types containing; the hero, the princess, the helper, and the donor.

تحليل ملحمة الميم والزين في ضوء علم السرد لفلاديمير بروب

خلاصة:

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لتحليل مؤامرة رجال وزين أحمددي خاني بناءً على نظرية السرد لفلاديمير بروب. يتمثل الجهد المبذول في معرفة عدد الوظائف التي ظهرت في الملحمة، والإشارة إلى سبعة أنواع واسعة من الشخصيات التي ذكرها بروب في التحليل السيميائي حكايات. كما أنه يثبت كيف أن للملحمة الكردية وظائف عديدة لنظرية عالمية للملاحم والقصص. هناك العديد من النظريات التي تحلل بعض العناصر الأساسية للقصص، مثل "رحلة البطل" لجوزيف جون كامبل، ومورين مورديوك "رحلة البطلة" ولكن من بين كل ذلك، اختارت هذه الورقة دراسة البنيوية السردية التي شرحها بروب. في كتابه، قام بتقسيم القصص الخيالية إلى (31) وظيفة وحدد سبعة أنواع عريضة من الشخصيات داخلها. نظريته هي واحدة من النظريات المنتشرة بشكل جيد وتتنظر إلى جميع أنواع الأدب في شكل هياكل ثابتة معينة.

الكلمات الدالة: أحمددي خاني، مم وزين، ملحمة، فلاديمير بروب، مورفولوجيا.