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**STAGES OF ORIGIN OF THE FAIRY TALE IN THE SPANISH  
CULTURE**

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***Abstract***

The Spanish national fairy tale is the special type of oral folklore creativity which reflects centuries-old experience of the Spanish people, its cultural values and tenor of life. The Folklore of Spain has undergone serious influence of the Persian, Indian and Arab culture, having left the mark in folk art of the country where interest in national fairy tales has arisen late enough. In the Middle Ages had circulations of the manuscript with cautionary stories from where people derived plots for national legends. During this period the term *cuento* in value of the act of telling something was widely adopted in informal conversation. Several centuries later collections of fairy tales, parables and jokes began to appear. The word *cuento* was used already with "short story" value. During era of the Golden Age and romanticism works of storytellers were handed down. *Cuento* even more often applied to various genres of a small form. In the 19-20th centuries the Spanish researchers have begun to allocate various genres in the term, using it with the corresponding adjective which indicated a concrete type of the fairy tale. At the moment there is a set of collections of national fairy tales, and each region of Spain has own folklore works.

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## 1. Introduction

Modern era is marked by enormous progress in all fields of knowledge. At the present time Researchers "submit" the new fields of science. Therefore Scientists feel the need to know about sources of the infinite movement of a human thought. One of the main sources which shows the development of a human thought, undoubtedly is folklore.

The cultural heritage of each nation is an integral part of universal world cultural property. The most important and remarkable feature of national culture is an unusual identity, originality, a variety of forms and contents. The culture of any country can't be presented without benefits and achievements which go back deeply to the past. They are a link between sources of this nation and present, enriching with variety of "paints" a human civilization. It is about folklore as it most fully expresses national spirit.

The national fairy tale as folklore genre, on the one hand, combines the aspects peculiar to each folklore work. On the other hand, the national fairy tale includes the features characteristic directly only of a fairy tale genre. Besides, the national fairy tale exerts impact on formation of national self-development and is one of the most interesting and extraordinary means of national literature in the Spanish culture.

## 2. Problem Statement

In the present article the main stages of origin in Spain of amateur and scientific approach to folklore heritage are considered, where the traditions of collecting and accumulation of records of texts of folk art develop gradually.

The following tasks were posed during the research: to study history of the Spanish fairy tale; to reveal the characteristics and meanings inherent of the Spanish fairy tale (*cuento*); to investigate a folklore basis of the national Spanish fairy tale; to mention features of genre division of the folklore fairy tale; to indicate the main researchers and storytellers in this area; to reveal major meanings which were possessed by the word *cuento* throughout a way of the development.

The relevance of the real research is defined by need of identification of the main stages of origin and development of the national fairy tale for the Spanish culture. It is important to study in dynamics history of development of the word *cuento* as it is represented very relevant for creation of history of the Spanish folklore, its scientific systematization and classification.

In Spain the term *cuento* is applied to designation of the word "fairy tale". According to "The dictionary Royal Academy of Spanish" the lexical item of *cuento* is used in the speech for designation of a genre of the fairy tale. Also it is applied with story, short narration of fictional or real events of folklore or literary origin meaning.

As well as the majority of the Spanish words, the term *cuento* has Latin origin and goes back to the verb *computare* "number objects" and a noun of *computus* "account" (Nominative case). In grammar the accusative case of singular of the second inducement of a masculine gender of the word *computus* will be *computum*. This lexical item in the Middle Ages "branches" and gives two words (*cómputo* and *cuento*). The book term *cómputo* began to be used for designation of all actions connected with the account and figures. In folk informal conversation the word *cuento* was related to the act of telling something. Therefore, the fairy tale (*cuento*) is one of peculiar and original genres of folklore heritage of the Spanish people and has a long way of development.

### 3. Research Questions

During the research we need to answer the following questions:

- 1) What influence of cultures was undergone by folklore of Spain?
- 2) What was the way of development of the Spanish national fairy tale (*cuento*) and what features did it absorb?
- 3) What meanings acquired the word *cuento* during various eras?
- 4) From where did the Spanish people derive stories for national legends?
- 5) What existed and there are collections of folklore works?

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of work is consideration and the analysis of the main stages of origin of the national fairy tale (*cuento*) in the Spanish culture.

According to a target goal, in article the special part of the Spanish fairy tale is defined and assigned. Folklore of Spain has undergone serious influence of various cultures, having left the mark in folk art of the country where interest in national fairy tales has arisen late enough. In this research amateur and scientific approach to folklore heritage is described, the stage-by-stage historical description of meanings which were appropriated by researchers and storytellers to a word *cuento* is provided.

### 5. Research Methods

To solve the problems posed in the study, a number of research methods were used.

They are theoretical methods (a classification and systematization method, a generalization and systematization method, a comparative method); empirical methods (an observation, method of experiment, a method of expert evaluation).

As work assumes studying of formation and development of the national fairy tale as one of folklore genres, it has historical character. Therefore actual data from etymology of lexical units were attracted; so-termed historical and semasiological method was used.

### 6. Findings

#### 6.1.

In the 8th century Arabs have brought to Spain thoughts and the ideas for national folklore. Their customs and traditions have got into the culture of the country and have left an imprint on the Spanish folk art. Spain became the intermediary between the European and Muslim world. Therefore Europe «has got acquainted» with narrative literature of the East, in particular with "The book of Sinbad" and some plots of "Thousands and one night".

In the Middle Ages the broad use was received by the verb *contar* "tell, transfer events". In the country there were national legends and the heroic epos which basis was made by incidental songs of epic character. There was known an anonymous poem which has been written in the form of legends of "El Cantar de Mío Cid" ("A canto about my Cid"). The Spanish literary critic in the work devoted to *cuento* genre says that for the first time the verb *contar* is mentioned in this poem and gives an example "cuenten gelo delante" (Goyanes, 1998).

The Spanish folklore creativity has continued to soak up not only local and Arab features, but also the Indian culture. In the 12th century the author of short stories narrations writer Pedro Alfonso has released a meeting of

cautionary stories from life of people of "Disciplina Clericales" which consisted of thirty three small stories. These stories take the plots from the Arab, Indian and Persian folklore. "The instructive book by the clergyman" becomes a source from where the people derived plots for new fairy tales (Piskorski, 2013).

The Spanish researcher L. A. Girgado mentions the medieval period in his work and writes that as nouns medieval lexical item of *fábula* (the fairy tale, an invention) mean by the term *cuento*, *apólogo* (a parable, the fable) (Girgado, 1993).

## 6.2.

In Renaissance also *anécdota* (joke), *casocurioso* (a funny case), *chiste* (joke) began to understand as the word *cuento*. At all these genres there was fiction, an invention and imagination. Therefore still, in the Spanish speech it is possible to use also other words and synonyms for the designation "fairy tale", for example, *fábula*.

The term *cuento* for the first time began to be used in "traditional short story" meaning in the 14th century in the book "Libro del caballero Zifar" ("The book about the knight Zifar"). Modern scientists define this book as something between the fairy tale and the tale of chivalry. During this period the word *cuento* it has begun to be applied both to the whole work, and as examples of short stories.

In the 16th century there were not so many storytellers. Although, various collections of fairy tales, jokes and parables were published and were widely adopted among the population of the country. Besides, prosaic collections have gained popularity.

## 6.3.

The Golden Age of the Spanish literature plays a significant role in cultural life of the country. The huge importance was shown in works of folklore. During this period great interest to folklore works has appeared. Authors have begun to include folklore in the texts whose style and language exerts impact on classical literature (Gorenko & Kryukova, 2014).

The lexical item *cuento* has begun to be used in meaning of the fictional story. In the 17th century works of storytellers were handed down and have gained big distribution in the folk field. Besides, the word *cuento* was used already often for designation of various genres of a small form, for example: *el cuento de sátira* (satirical story), *el cuento cómico* (comic story).

## 6.4.

During a romanticism era interest in fairy tales has grown. However there were few collections. In the 18-19th centuries except the term *cuento* authors in the works used the words *leyenda* (the legend, the fable), *balada* (ballad) for designation of the national fairy tale. Researchers of this time paid attention that *cuento* in folklore meaning is connected with such oral national genres as *romances* (tales of chivalry), *coplas* (verses), *adivanzas* (riddle), *refranes* (proverbs).

## 6.5.

Over time, fictional stories in prose or verse that were collected from the "mouth" of the people became popular. In the XIX century, a woman writer Fernán Caballero wrote folk tales and published collections for children. Then, she has published the work, which included all the material collected and adapted by the writer. In her book

"Cuentos, Oraciones, Adivinas y Refranes Populares E Infantiles" ("National and children's fairy tales, sayings, riddles and proverbs") she wrote that this collection to be considered as the first children's literature of Spain (Caballero, 1878).

There was serious interest in studying and collecting folklore creativity. Besides, there was published a large number of collections with fairy tales of the people of Spain. The term *cuento* became even more uncertain according to contents. This term in literature began to understand and mean a prosaic genre – the story. The story had lyrical and drama features, also as well as the term *romance* which came close to the folklore fairy tale.

The Spanish researchers in the work devoted to the Spanish national fairy tale say that *cuento* (the national fairy tale) is a prosaic work. Scientists claim that the work narrates about fictional actions which constantly change as the fairy tale is a genre of oral tradition. This factor distinguishes the fairy tale from the novel, proverbs and other genres of epistolary literature (Camarena & Chevalier, 1995).

## 6.6.

Numerous national legends which were fixed in various books with folklore creativity have been collected in the 20th century. Thanks to activity of linguists of Aurelio M. Espinosa-father and his son A.M. Espinosa, written texts of the Spanish national fairy tales have appeared. Language and stylistic features have been kept in these legends. During this period was published a large number of collections on certain regions.

Scientists of Spain have begun to allocate various genres in the term *cuento*. Aurelio M. Espinosa-father in the research "Cuentos populares de España" ("National fairy tales of Spain") has presented classification of the fantastic genres divided according to contents into several groups: Cuentos de Adivinanzas (tale of fortune-telling), Cuentos Humanos Varios (tale of people), Cuentos Morales (tale of morals), Cuentos de Encantamiento (magic fairy tales), Cuentos Picarescos (clownish fairy tales), Cuentos de Animales (tale of animals) (Espinosa, 1946).

The heritage of almost all regions of the country is represented in this fantastic collection. All folklore creations of this work are published in that look in what they have been told, and are national fairy tales in the true sense of the word.

The linguist A.M. Espinosa-son has devoted himself to the fantastic world of Castile and Leon, reasoning it with the fact that this area of Spain always played an important role in development of the Spanish culture and history of the country. In his creation of "Cuentos populares de Castilla y León" the researcher has divided all the collected material into eight types of fairy tales: Cuentos de Brujas (the tale of witches), Cuentos de Animales (the tale of animals), Cuentos de Encantamiento (magic fairy tales), Cuentos Ejemplares at Morales (tales of morals), Cuentos Novelescos (household fairy tales), Cuentos de Ogros (the tale of monsters), Chistes y Anécdotas (jokes), Cuentos de Formulas Fijas (fairy tales with fixed phrases) (Espinosa, 1988).

Aurelio M. Espinosa Jr. adhered to the following criteria, firstly, fairy tales can be considered as national if they have been heard by the storyteller from other people, but aren't read in written sources. Secondly, it is necessary to fix all features of the speech of the story-teller, that language in which the story passed from father to son with the maximum accuracy. Thus, especially important is that originality which allows to see reflection of a certain national spirit in this work.

## 7. Conclusion

The term *cuento* (the Spanish national fairy tale) has gone a long way of the development and has absorbed not only local national peculiarities and experience of the people, but also peculiarity and value of other cultures. It should be noted that the Spanish linguists of the 21st century focus the attention on questions of preservation of folklore heritage in the concrete region of the country. At the moment there is a set of collections of the Spanish national fairy tales. Each region of present Spain has the history, traditions and of course, folklore works (Shubert & Junco, 2017).

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