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Tale of two brothers (Part 2)

"Die Urheimat dieser Vorschriften aufzusuchen überlasse ich Kundigeren.
Mir genügt es, auf die Zusammenhänge hingewiesen zu haben."
D.H. Müller [1]

This is the second and final part of the text of the Socotran folk tale of "Two Brothers" (the beginning of this tale was published in *CLN Volume XXXIV No. 1, 2009*).[2] The whole tale was tape-recorded in1979 [3] from the informant Fatima Salim Sho'o (ca. 19, a daughter of Salim Abdalla from Sho'o tribe and Maryam min Keshen tribe) just in front of her family's little cave home in the north face of the small Ma'una Mountain (Muri area) in the north-west coastal - and dialectal - area of the island of Socotra.

Prof. D.H. Müller, who had also found a "Geschichte zweier Brüder"[4] tale on Socotra during his field (and "sea" - on board of the "Gottfried" ship off Socotra shores) work with Socotran informants, published it within the Austrian South Arabian Expedition (1898-99) materials and linked it with the "Two Brothers" tale of the Papyrus d'Orbiney: "Dieses soqotranische Märchen erwecket ein ganz besonderes Interesse, weil es, wie schohn Professor L. Reinisch bemerkt hat, sehr an das altägyptische Märchen des Papyrus d'Orbiney erinnert." [5]

However, he made this conclusion on the basis of the second, not the beginning or initial part, of his Soqotri oral text recording, which he named "Geschichte zweier Brüder": the first part of his Socotran story is absolutely different from the first part of the Egyptian one in connection with its subject. Only the idea of an untrue woman as a source of conflict is here, but he stated: "Die Aehnlichkeit unserer Erzählung mit dem ägyptischen Märchen und die gleiche Reihenfolge bestimmter Thatsachen in beiden springt in die Augen. Hier wie dort zwei Brüder,

von denen der eine durch ein Weib (dort die Frau, hier die Mutter des Brüders) verfolgt wird." [6]

Prof. Müller himself made clear that the story consists of two parts, or rather two different stories, as he said: "Es besteht aus zwei verschiedenen Geschichten, die mit einander combinirt worden sind. Die erste Geschichte wird spater(zu F.) ausführlicher mitgetheilt und soll hier nur, so weit es das Verständnis erfordert, gestreift werden." [7]

Thus, he had found the main coinciding items in both – the Socotran and the ancient Egyptian – texts in the second part of the tale. And he described these singular coinciding items in a special essay: "IV Zur Sagen- und Märchenbildung. B) Geschichte zweier Brüder" . [8]

On the contrary, in the first part of our publication in *CLN*, when we presented the beginning part of the Socotran "Two Brothers" tale, we said that the story told in it is, exactly, the same which was disclosed in the first beginning part of the well known Papyrus d'Orbiney of the British Museum – the first written Ancient Egyptian "realistic fantasy" story from the end of the 19th Dynasty (around 1185 BC) of the New Kingdom times. The story of the two brothers and the unloyal wife of the elder of them is told there in the same way that it was likely told by the illiterate Egyptians before recording on the papyrus.

However, the story of the second part of our "Two Brothers" Socotran tale, which is presented here, contrary to the Prof. D.H. Müller's recording made at the end of the19th century, too, is fully different from what we find in the ancient Egyptian version. In this connection we should say that first, folklore story tellers often combine their stories from a number of blocks, fragments and subject turns just at the time of telling, thus the orally recounted tale is not a stable, formalized masterpiece like a written and published one; and second, this Socotran version, from our point of view, discloses another important tie of the Socotran folklore, or the *Soqotran civilization* (الحضارة السقطرية), as the modern Socotran intellectuals say, – its tie with Ancient

Canaan and the cult of Moloch (or Molech).

The younger brother - or *gisses* 'a castrato' in this, second part of the tale - is finding the solution of his health problem after his sudden meeting with *mala'ika* 'the angels' in the night. However, the angels of the Socotran tale are "not so good" as we can expect from the angels: they tell the younger brother after they had returned him his *penis head* that he must bring them his newborn twins another day, and they will eat them! Thus, *mala'ika* 'the angels' of the Socotran tale are hardly to be linked with the angels of Islam or Christianity. On the contrary, they seam to be a folklore reincarnation of *mlk* of the early Canaan Semites known as Moloch (Molech) with his demand for newborn children sacrifices.

Anyway, after Prof. D.H. Müller we would like to say that we rather will allow the specialists to look for the source of both parts of this tale and their possible homeland, and we just would like to indicate a coincidence which, apparently, is not random at all.

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1 German quotations are given in the original spelling of the publication.
[2] V. Agafonov. Tale of Two Brothers. *California Linguistic Notes, Volume XXXIV* No. 1, Winter, 2009. http://hss.fullerton.edu/linguistics/cln/W09PDF/Agonov-TWO%20BROTHERS-C2.pdf (In English and Soqotri)
[3] The recording of this Socotran folk tale was made by me in 1979, not in 1980 as I mistakenly mentioned in "Tale of Two Brothers" (Part 1, *CLN, Volume XXXIV* No. 1, Winter, 2009.)
[4] D.H. Müller. *Die Mehri — und Soqotri — Sprache. Volume I: Texte. Südarabische Expedition, Band IV.* Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien. Wien: Alfred Hölder 1902, S. 69-91
[5] *Ibid., S.* 193
[6] *Ibid., S.* 194
[7] *Ibid., S.* 193
[8] *Ibid., S.* 193-203

tru ʾaˤho (part 2)

1. yileq, yileq mon qilaˊ bi

    picks up, picks up who had thrown (it)

2. yiti taḏe (1) we ol ʾiˈaraḥ

    eats a rubbish und do not go (do not become well?)

3. firhim d-ṣoṭhon ... yiṭibil-is d-ḥan be ˊele.

    the daughter of the Sultan - they set (prepared) her with us (a) on her sitting place at the top

         [a. 'with us' - a figure of colloquial speech]

4. we yikol ˊ-es fteˊe

    and (they) let her naked

5. mi-yhen fte-s d-si b-miglis (b) - yiboˊel-s.

    and who from them jumps up to her sit - will marry her

6. we ˤuwyaghen di gi̱s̱s̱e̱s̱

    and the boy who was a *gissees* 'a castrato'

7. * ʾin gi̱s̱ gi̱s̱s̱e̱s̱

    because he was neutered, *gissees*

8. (yh)i šker, šker ˤuwyaghen.

    he [was] handsome, handsome [was] the boy

9. ˤimero: ho, ʾol ʾibeˤel k-ol gi̱s̱s̱e̱s̱, yaʾ!

    she said: I will not marry [some one else] but the *gissees*, well !..

10. fto-s fteˤe - beˤele t-š.

    he jumped to her naked - she married him

11. ˤomar: ho ʾol ʾinafaˤ bi-š

    he said: I'm not of some use with you

12. ki biśi d-ˤumor biy.

    because there is nothing which it is done by

13. - ye, ken nim tiba ʿal t-š̌?

- hey you (f. sg.), why will you marry him? (b)
    [b. - ye, ken nim tiba ʿal t-š̌? = - hey you (f. sg.), why will you
    marry him? Possible, here is a speech failure of the informant
    story teller and it should have been: - ye, ken nim tiba ʿal t-ho?
    = - hey you (f. sg.), why will you marry me?]

14. ʿomero: ḥatta! (3) ʾigebk hat we mi!

she said: even so, I want you and a death!

15. ṭay yom (4) rabaḥ yhe we ẖaydem d-soṭhon, robaḥ.

one day he bathed with Sultan's servants, they bathed

16. ʾum baʿd ʾol robaḥ,

after they bathed

17. min ʾol ʿad yirobaḥ - śona-š̌ fetaḥ.

when they were bathing jet - they saw him naked

18. ʿomar: ʾaẖ, dyo ʾiž̌e! (5) ḥeʾr śino t-ho,

he said: ah, my wife! today they have seen me (I have been seen)

19. śane t-ho li-t-aẖdam,

those servants have seen me

20. ẖaydem di-t-bebe

servants of your father

21. śane se (?) t-ho fotaʿ

have seen (... ?) me naked

22. naʾa yiśalaʿ (6) b-e we ḥuṣiṣen.

now they inform him and we (c) will be slaughtered

    [c. "...and we will be slaughtered" - a figure of speech: "we"
    here goes instead of "I".]

23. ʾiqfel ʿe-s, ʾiqfel ʿe-s, ʾiqfel ʿe-s

they closed her, [they] closed her, [they] closed her

24. we yhe - ʾin qabe t-š̌ (7) qiye (8) le driš̌e,

and he - she concealed him stealthily, she opened the window

25. w-ʾiṭorib d-ḥoyhi - firod.

   he has got down to the ground – fled away

26. ši‘i w-ol ʿad buleq kise melaʾike

   he run and did not delayed - met *mala'ka* 'angels'

27. min ʾol yiṣoqaʾ śayoṭ.

   those who were making a fire

28. ḏolaʿ ʿa-yhen.

   he told them [all]. (d)

      [d. he told them all of his problem]

29. ʾimer: yo, tilohom-š ta! ḥelohom-š (?)

   . they said: take it this way!

30, leheme-š ṭod rhay (?).

   he took it - one head (?)

31. ʾimer: d-(h)et ʾiže ṭo teqar ʿe-s,

   they said: your wife when you will enter to her

32. tedine tro mebri: muqšem we firhim.

   she will be pregnant with two children: a boy and a girl

33. qeriri di-l-ʿaṣir (9) gidiḥin!

   tomorrow in the evening come here!

34. ʿomar: suwaʾ!

   he said, 'good'!

35. biro ʾiže d-se l-ʿaṣer,

   the woman gave birth in her evening

36. we hag ṭahar.

   and the man went

37. ṭoher ʾaḫdam ʾil-ṣoṭhon ʿaf śene ṣoṭhon.

   the servants of the Sultan went till they saw the Sultan

38. - ya ninhi!?

   - o, (your) Majesty!

39. - ʾa?

   - what?

40. - mibriho - m-ol ʿad biśi b-ri (10) di tʿud ṭo.

   - the child – from those there is no head that they are making it so

41. ʿomar: biśi?

   he said: there is not?

42. ʿimar: biśi.

   they said: there is not

43. ʿimar (ʾomar ?): ʾol k-ino ʾeḥziṣ-ken?

   they said.. he said: would I not slaughter you if it is there?

44. - ṭheziz t-ho! ʾendark (h-)ak d-yo b-ri

   - you will slaughter me! I promise you my head

45. *mara k-ino!

   if it is there!

46. ʿag ʾuqor d-ye l-ʿaže we dino

   the man came up to his wife and she became pregnant

47. ʿammar ta w-ol ʿad...

   he went so and did not delayed

48. qeriri robaḥ

   tomorrow [the next day] they bathed

49. ʿomar: ʾol ʾini?

   he said: if there is not?

50. - ša-k, ʾeʾ!?

   - hi, with you (here you are)?

51. - ʾimšin biśi!

   - yesterday there was not!

52. qiṣaṣ mo-y rhay (11) ʾimbaʿel.

   the head was cut to him, the slave

53. ʿawyaghen dino ḥa-y d-(h)i ʾiže

the boy – his wife became pregnant for him

54. we biro tro: muqšam...

and she gave birth to two: a boy...

55. muqšam we firhim.

a boy and a girl

56. zuʿiyo w-ol ʿad biliq

they two were taken and he had not delayed

57. * (ʾaf t-šabir bi yiḏi)

until (... ?) (e)

[e. the translation is not clear.]

58. m-ol ʿimere qabir.

from those making the grave

59. bass (12), yiqabero - we yiʾiḏaḥko.

finally, they two were being buried - and they two were laughing

60. * ṭoliyo - we yiʾiḏaḥko.

(... ?) (f) and they two were laughing

[f. the translation of the word is not clear.]

61. ḥus̱alo - we yiʾiḏaḥko.

they two were being divided into parts - and they two were laughing. (g)

[g. the order of these actions not quite clear. However, if we expect that instead of *yiqabero* – 'they two were being buried' another Soqotri word *yiqadero* – 'they two were being cooked' was used and recently we know that in some variants of this very tale the *mala'ika* 'angels' are cooking their newborn victim.]

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(1) Soq. taḏe - compare ṭadi 'stocks' in *Leslau, 199.*

(2) Ar. مجلس

(3) Ar. حَتّي

(4) Ar. يوم

(5) Soq. ʾižê < ʿažê

(6) Soq. yiśaḏaˊ < yiḏalaˁ

(7) Soq. - see *Leslau, 213*: kebi

(8) Soq. qiye < qiˀe

(9) barrowed from Arabic: Ar. العصر

(10) Soq. ri "a head" in the Hadibo dialect but not in the North-Western dialect of Fatima, where it sounds "rhay" - see (11). However, the African slaves of the Sultan of Socotra, bought from Africa and settled in Hadibo area to work on the Sultan's properties (and their children afterwards), were speaking exactly the Hadibo dialect.

(11) Soq. rhay (!)

(12) Ar. Dial. بسّ

Two Brothers. Part 2
Translation

The daughter of the Sultan was set at her sitting place at the top (of the Sultans house). She was naked. They say: who could jump up to her would marry her. And the boy who was *gisses* - a castrato - was handsome. She said:
- I shall never marry but this boy!
He had jumped to her - and she married him.
He said:
- I am not who is useful for you. Because there is nothing to do with. Why do you marry me?
She said:
- Even so! I want you or a death!
One day he bathed with Sultan's servants, and they saw him naked.
He said to his wife:
- Ah, my wife! Today the servants of your father saw me naked. They will inform him, and I will be slaughtered.
They closed her (in the house), but she secretly opened the window, and her man got down to the ground - and fled away.
The boy ran and had not delayed to meet Angels, who were making fire. He told them his story. The Angels said:
- Take it this way!

And he found the head of his *penis* in its place.
The Angels said:
- Now, when you enter to your wife, she will become pregnant with two children: a boy and a girl. Tomorrow in the evening come here (with them)!
He agreed.
The servants of the Sultan went to him and said:
- O, your Majesty! The boy is from those who have no head of what they are doing it with.
-There is nothing? - the Sultan said.
- Nothing, - the servant said.
- And if there is -will I slaughter you? - the Sultan said.
- I promise you my head, if there is you will slaughter me! - the servant said.
The boy came up to his wife, and she became pregnant.
Another day they bathed - the servants and the boy - together. (The Sultan was here).
- Hey, you! - said the Sultan. - If there is not?
- Yesterday there was not, - the servant said.
They cut him his head off.
The boy's wife became pregnant and (another day) gave birth to two children: a boy and a girl.
They were taken and the boy had not delayed and went with them to the place, where he met the Angels.
He met them making a grave.
Finally, the newborn twins were laughing when being buried (cooked?), were laughing when being ... (?), were laughing when being cut into parts.

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