

*ISAYEVA PARVANA BAKIRGIZI, assistant professor  
Literature Institute named after Nizami Ganjavi of  
Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences*

## **FROM MYTHOPOETIC STRUCTURE OF A.HAGVERDIYEV'S WORK "THE LETTERS OF KHORTDAN FROM HELL": TRAVEL MOTIVE TO THE OTHER WORLD**

Представления, корни которых связаны с архаическим мышлением, по сути своей структуре бывают стойкими и устойчивыми. Одним из таких представлений является мотив путешествия в потусторонний мир, который был объектом неоднократного обращения в культурах исламского Востока и христианской Европы. В произведении выдающегося Азербайджанского писателя начала XX века Абдурагим бек Ахвердиева «Письма из ада», этот мотив представляется в новой интерпретации, в новом видении, на фоне социально-политических событий общества. В этом произведении автор использовал хтонический образ Хортдан (Оборотень), который обладает особенностями мифологического мышления.

Представления, основанные на религиозном и народном мышлении, выступают как главный способ передачи авторской идеи. Представления о потустороннем мире и образы-посредники в этом пути формируют единую структуру в произведении.

В этой повести также отражены особенности утопического и антиутопического жанра, к которому обращались во все времена. В произведении описания реальных событий, свидетелем которых был Хортдан по дороге из Тифлиса в Шушу, выражаются в соответствии с адом, хотя целью и главной идеей автора не является создание мифических мотивов и образов с мифологической структурой, эти элементы переплелись воедино с сюжетной линией произведения.

*Ключевые слова:* Абдурагим бек Ахвердиев, Письма из ада, Хортдан

Submission, the roots of which are related to the archaic way of thinking, in fact its structure are stable and sustainable. One of these concepts is the motive of travel to the underworld, which was the object of repeated treatment in the cultures of the Islamic East and Christian Europe. In the work of prominent Azerbaijani writer beginning of the XX century Abdurrahim bey Hagverdiyev "Letters from Hell", this motif appears in a new interpretation, a new vision, against the backdrop of social and political events of the society. In this work, the author has used the image of a chthonic Khortdan (werewolf), which has the characteristics of mythological thinking.

Views based on religious and national thinking, act as the main way to transfer the author's idea. Ideas about the afterlife and images intermediary in this way form a single structure in the product.

In this story also reflects the characteristics of the utopian and anti-utopian genre that has been accessed at all times. In the product description of real events witnessed by Khortdan the road from Tbilisi to Shusha expressed in accordance with hell, even though the purpose and the main idea of the author is not the creation of mythical motifs and images of the mythological structure, these elements are intertwined together with the storyline of the work.

*Keywords:* Abdurrahim bey Hagverdiyev, Letters from Hell, Khortdan

There are such imaginations immortalizing the traces of archaic thinking that become long-lived due to their structure and sustainability. One of these imaginations is the motive of travelling to another world to which literary and philosophical thought addressed repeatedly in the cultures of Islamic East as well as Christian Europe. These outlooks are the complex of ideas associated with the dark underworld and supernatural beings existing within the religious and mythological system.

In Eastern-Islamic culture the views with regard to the Prophet's Ascension were not only influenced to the Islamic world but also to the history of Western literary and philosophical ideas. From this point of view the plot of "Divine Comedy" which is considered as a valuable example of Western literary thought, as noted by Spanish Arabist M. Asin. Palasnos in the book of "Muslim eschatology in

“Divine Comedy” published in 1919, is rich with ideas associated with the end of the world coming from Islamic religion. In the article “Dante and Islam” S. Garagoch writes that the idea put forward by M. Asin Palasnos was not accepted, but not denied either and led to the new studies [1, p. 73].

In the middle of the XX century the Italian scientist Enrico Cherulli based on fact that translation of his “Ascension book” reflecting Arabic eschatological thought into Castilian, then the Latin and French languages in the XIII century, put forward the idea that Dante Alighieri got acquainted with this resource and used the same plot in “Divine Comedy”. In our opinion, addressing to an ancient literature and Christian resources as well as to Islamic theology in “Divine Comedy” which was accepted as religious poem in some studies was ordinary case. According to the researcher, the addressing of K.H.L. Borkhes to this motive in the XX World Literature, more precisely, his dealing with al-Buraq carrying the Prophet Muhammad to Ascension, prove that Borkhes was aware of the events. But unlike the people with Islamic faith he independently approaches to Ascension event” [2, p.138].

The motive of another world is reflected in immortality searches of Bilgamish - in “Bilgamish epos” that is one of the earlier period monuments of Ancient East, as well as in the old Oghuz monument called the “Book of Dede Korkut” –in the words of Salur Gazan in “The boy when Salur Gazan was prisoned and released by his son Uruz”. The first thoughts of past time human about death, setting out to the dark world to search for eternal life, seeking for the water of life and finally the formation of religious-mythological outlooks complex combining together of human’s imaginations about mortality complement each other.

At the beginning of the XX century the motive of Ascension of Islam Prophet which is one of the religious and mythological plots stands on the basis of Abdurrahim Bay Hagverdiyev’s narrative called “The Letters of Khortdan from Hell”. The writer presented the motive to travel to the other world that used in classical literary specimen, in new interpretation and against the background of socio-political events of society which he belongs to. The character which travels to the other world in the narrative is distinguished by its mythological character. Unlike the writers addressed to this motive before him the author used mythological character who had peculiarity of dying and resurrection. This was a very original approach. It is true that the dream motive plays an important role in Khortdan’s travelling to another world and this element was used in many religious and literary texts. As a rule, one of the divines or angels shows the way to the ones travelling in such texts.

In “The Letters of Khortdan from Hell” a hero goes round all the layers of another world. His dream which shows the way sends him to Karabakh- Mirza Goshunali Tabrizi for elixir. The character of Mirza Goshunali and image of one of the last representatives of sect dervishes living in Karabakh and other regions were created in the narrative. It was pointed out and said in the text: Mirza Goshunali: “Hazrat-Vala Navvab accepted Shusha city as a residence and lived here. My deceased father, May God rest your father’s soul, was secretary and cabalist of Hazrat-Valan who came here with Bahman Mirza” [3, p 45]. In our opinion, the character of Mirza Goshunali is a prototype of poet, artist, musicologist Mir Mohsun Navvab who lived in Shusha in the XIX century. There is information about the perfect knowledges of M.M.Navvab on astronomy, chemical sciences and painting activity. In foreword, which Z.Safarova wrote to the writer’s letter called “Vuzuhul-Argam” gives information about the experiences conducted by Navvab on the basis of copies of alchemist [5, p.8]. In “Tazkireyi-Navvab” the author was closely interested in sciences such as “astrology, chemistry, khavatin and others as well as disclosed that “he was engaged in spiritualism -summoning a holy spirit that he wished and interrogating it.” [6, p.59].

From the work it is known that, nobody knows “the secret of medicine made by Mirza Goshunali except him. In past times only Mir Damad and Khaje Nasir-Tusi knew this” [3, p.49]. Here A.Hagverdiyev did not accidentally used the name of well-known thinker of East Khaje Nasraddin Tusi and his teacher Faridaddin Damad. Nasraddin Tusi, in 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of first article of “Akhlagi –Nasiri”, dealt with passion, fear of death and ways to get rid of it [6, p.12].

In the work A. Hagverdiyev benefited from religious elements as well as imaginations which took place in people’s thought. According to the people’s thinking Khortdan is a being that revives, gets out from grave at night and harms people. Though the Khortdan is known under various names among Turkic peoples it performs similar functions. This superstitious force which is known as “Khortlag” in various places of Anadolu, “Ubir” among Bashkirs, Obur/Ubir in demonological imaginations of Tomsk Tatars and as “Hobur” among Gagaus people has a power to harm people and is distinguished by its metamorphic function [7, p.282].

The author who created the character of underworld resident -Khortdan in literary text turns its traditional progress and the plot in which it walks among the people after getting out of a grave, in the opposite direction. In the narrative Khortdan says “unexpectedly hell came to my kind” and wants to go to another world from this one. The author who mentions the names of voyagers such as Christopher

Columbus, Magellan, Vasco da Gama, by showing the difference between geographical places where they travelled and that is known as the “new world” in another world and literatures as well as between Khortdan’s travel to the hell and assimilates it to Isgandari-Zulgarineyn’s travel to the dark world. This motive was also used in the poem “Isgandarnama” and here a hero of Nizami Ganjavi goes to the dark world to find water of life. Khortdan- which is the hero of A.Hagverdiyev especially travels to the hell and its main purpose is to bring the news from another world. Different and sometimes ironic approach to the same motive can be accepted as the influence of literary school which A.Hagverdiyev belongs to.

In the middle centuries many writers were away from giving spiritual- mystic meaning to the motive of travelling to paradise and hell. I. Filshinski writes that, in the work of Andalusite Ibn-Shuhaydda and Abul-ula-al-Maarrin “Risalat al-gufran” the motive of travelling to another world was used in satirical spirit. The hero of the work- connoisseur of language and literary sciences of this period Ibn al-Hariha travels to the paradise and hell, analyzes and criticizes the works created by the well-known writers lived before him [8, p.63].

Researcher also deals with the above mentioned work of Al-Maarrin in the monography called the “History of Arabic Literature”. Al-Maari discusses some thoughts about another world with the words of devil. In this work the devil who objects to many thoughts of Sheikh gives the order to satans for holding him in the hell but the black powers can’t go against the person deserving heaven and so the difference is expected among hierarchies. The dwellers of hell do not make a complaint about their situation and accept everything as capriciousness of fate [9, p.218-219]. In “The Letters of Khortdan from Hell” the dwellers of hell are not only reconciled to their fate but also puts it in the partition and reckons with it as instigator of all the sins.

The landscape which the hero of A.Hagverdiyev came across on the way while going from Tbilisi to Karabakh was the beginning of things which Khortdan would see in the hell. The writer describes different features of ignorance, obscurantism and foul on the way from Tbilisi to Shusa. This detail manifests itself in most of the texts where the motive of travelling to another world was described: both in folklore texts and literary texts [mainly in the texts written in utopian and antiutopian genres]. While remembering the samples of world literature we can see that, returning from another world is described very superficial or none of them are described in the works written by T.Mann, T.Kampanella, F.Bacon and others. In modern Azerbaijani literature this motive can be followed in the novel “White ram, black ram” by Anar. Almost, in some mythological and literary texts going to and coming back from another world is asymmetric in the course of time. Though all the details of going is described thoroughly, returning back occurs with speed. This can be seen much more in folklore texts-at the moments when shamans go to another world for spirit. Generally, there was no a serious barrier between this world and that world. The hero could step to another world by passing an act of death, encounter many difficulties there and then could return back without any obstacle. This element can also be found in Azerbaijani folk tales. At some moments the motive of overstep another world is distinguished by its ironic character in Azerbaijani stories. Overstepping another world through the fire is used as one of the plot elements in “Bakhtiyar” tale. In the story the temporary death is presented in opposite projection and in a certain sense bears a game character: it is presumed that the soot and ash on Bakhtiyar who returns back from another world is one part of this game and is one of the elements that we find in most of the story plots. In this tale Bakhtiyar who is taken of fire by the help of fairy girl is deemed to be passed from initiation ceremony and his strewing ashes on his clothes during his “return” and as mentioned by V.Prop, in some ceremonies it is lighted in symbolic sense and expresses regeneration [10,p85].

Death and resurrection is one of the forms of passage to another world as a death act. In the work A.Hagverdiyev introduces this passage through the dream element. Khortdan’s sleeping for forty days in this world is equal to a period of more than 4 years of another world. “The dream which was not differing from reality at times “in a sense of traditional world” was perceived as amnesia or death act...According to Sufism dream removes the covers which impede people to reach the disappearance.” [7, p.407].

While visiting the another world White Mullah advises to keep Khortdan in chest. Here the chest is used in the meaning of grave and the same element is also distinguished by its initiation character. The motives of temporary living in this world and death- resurrection can frequently be found in fairy- tales. Transition to another world in Azerbaijani folk tales shows itself in the picture of well, water [river], forest etc. In one of the legends among Kazakhs about Gorkut-ata which appeared as a product of mythological Outlook of Turkic people it is shown that, Azrael wants to make a chest and put Gorkut in it but Gorkut deceives Azrael, puts it in that chest and throws into the water but death does not occur [11, p.16].

One remarkable point in “The Letter of Khortdan from Hell” is a character of White Mullah who sends Khortdan to another world. Generally, in most cases the author creates Darvish’s image in the

narrative. This opportunity shows itself in the functions of both Mirza Goshunali Tabrizi and White Mullah. Especially, the color symbolism in the name of White Mullah does not bear a superficial character. This element is connected with traditions of shamanism and mystic symbolics in archaic thinking. White color carried the meanings of sublimity, justice and power. Ulgen- one of the supreme spirits was addressed as White Ayas and Ayas Kaan in shaman prayers. According to B.Ogel, the white color which represents Ulgen in beliefs of Altay Turks symbolizes the heaven. For this reason, in many cases the bashlyks of shamans were white [12, p.431]. In mythological outlooks of Altay and Siberian Turks shamans' the motives of shamans' going to and returning from another world for spirit and seeing the spirit off gives the ground to think that in a certain sense, White Mullah also carries out the same function in the text. It is not accidental that, in one of the publications of the work "The story of Odabashi" bears the name of "Unfortunate Darvish". Though the features, such as striving of sect representatives belonging to Sufi Order, for highest, perfect creature and going all the worldly things in this way are not reflected in narrative "The Letters of Khortdan from Hell", the authors' referring to these type of images should be estimated. In the article called "Theater in Azerbaijan" A.Hagverdiyev dealt with the people who came to the most places of Azerbaijan and engaged in mystery, magic and dervish activity.

Besides content of "The Letters of Khortdan from Hell", its structure is of great interest. The part given under the name of "A few Words" was added here later. "Introduction" was used more widely and reminds us dibacha in the Examples of Oriental Literature. The hell watched by Khortdan in the real world is exactly described here. His way to hell goes through the inside of real world. The adventures of Khortdan in the other world begin by seeing the hell as dragon. Winning the hell by dragon with the order of Allah, and giving the flame outdoor for six months of year and inside for the next six months within a year and connecting this with the seasons of year in the work is based on the ancient myth plot. The man meeting Khortdan in the hell represents chthonical creatures with its strange appearance. Walk of Khortdan in the hell accompanied by Odabashi, putting the devil into the partition by the people of hell and words of devils such as: "Look at your own inside, see how many evils you can find there, I cannot even pour water to their hands" [3, s.70] or: "- People! I'm not the devil, it is he, there is not a single good deed, being restored by his body... These devils cause more damage to people than me" [3, s.72] is very meaningful. A. Hagverdiyev looks for the imperfection in the inside of people being the slave of their passions in the obscurantism and ignorance of people.

And blind imagination of devil as a mythological character is the sign of its relation to the underground world being a chthonical character. In the work, A. Hagverdiyev includes existing religious and mythological tradition about blindness of devil referred to in "Nasikhut-tavarikh": "In the age of the Prophet Abraham, Hazrat Jabrayil has pulled out one of the eyes of devil with his blessed wings. So, while damning the evil, it is said "Damn you, blind devil" [3, s.65]. And one of these texts is that, after withdrawal of Adam and Eve from the paradise, son of the devil Khannas is given to them as servitor. In order to get rid of Khannas which is religious and mythological character, which does not sink in the water, is not burnt in fire, Adam and Eve eat him by cooking in boiling water. "Since then, the devil remains in the hearts of the Children of Adam, and attracts them to every type of evil. "And they call this Nafsi ammara" [3, s.83].

A.Hagverdiyev, who was preserving literary traditions of East in Azerbaijan Dramaturgy, merging mythical views, mythological characters living in the thoughts of people harmoniously with the new type of literature in fact, was the first author the human-soul conflict to our literature in the twentieth century. "Story of Odabashi" which was later added to "The Letters of Khortdan from Hell", of course, does not become completed with the overall structure of the work. Thus, those which Khortdan saw in the hell throughout the work are the endings of what he encountered and heard on Tbilisi-Shusha road; here realist views and People's thinking from the traditional perception complete each-other. And the story told by Odabashi was the reality of contemporary period. This reality is also reflected in the end of the work; when Khortdan sees Russian troops who made the people of hell anxious, then coming back from that life, his attitude towards the new government sounds like this: "We are also expecting our punishment" [3, s.125].

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