

THE INDEPENDENCE PERIOD POETRY OF AZERBAIJAN AND “KITABI DEDE-GORGUD”

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ABSTRACT

The subject of article has been organized with the poems which published in various magazines and books appealing to the characters and the motifs of “The Book of Dede Gorgud”, by our poets after Azerbaijan gained its independence (1991). The subject is wide, urgent and comprehensive that is why learning of poems that written on this sphere are considered as an important direction.

One of the important directions which connect the poetry with folklore in independence period of Azerbaijan is to bring the characters and motifs of the epos “The Book of Dede Gorgud” to the poetry. In this period in the poetic activities of the poets the usage from the epos of Dede Gorgud is seen clearly. Using from the characters and motifs of the Dede Gorgud majority of the poets try to show their connection of poetical thinking style with the folk literature. The poems by master poets such as Shahriyar, Mammad Araz, Bakhtiyar Vahabzade, Sohrab Tahir, Sabir Rustamkhanli, Ramiz Rovshan, Zalimkhan Yagub, Vagif Bayat, Fikret Goja, Musa Yagub and many young poets assume a special importance. The scientific innovations of investigation are to learn the characters and motifs of “The Book of Dede Gorgud” from the modern scientific-theoretical aspect in Azerbaijan independence period poems. This investigation is learnt in Azerbaijan folklore for the first time.

In the article the poems have been defined and their sources have been investigated which written on the basis of the characters and motifs of “The Book of Dede Gorgud”.

KEYWORDS: Dede Gorgud, Mammad Araz, folklore, Azerbaijan, Garabag

INTRODUCTION

The Importance of Subject

The eposes “The Book of Dede Gorgud” have been staying as an important problem in investigating of the connection between folklore and written literature, and the literary-theoretical and literary-artistic thought. So, today the eposes attract not only scientific thought but also the people interested in literary activities. According to Anar’s scenario, the film “Dede Gorgud” was made by the film studio “Azerbaijan film”. B. Sehend’s poem “Sazimin sozu” (“My saz’s word”) (Saz is an Azerbaijani folk musical instrument like guitar), Nabi Khazri’s poem “Afsanavi yukhular” (“The mythical dreams”), then Altay Mammadov’s play “Dali Domrul” (“Mad Domrul”), Nabi Khazri’s play“(Burla Khatun”), Bakhtiyar Vahabzadeh’s play “Ozumuzu khesen gilinj” (“The sword cutting ourselves”), Kmal Abdulla’s play “Casus” (“The scout”), Shemil Sadig’s play “Gan gana garishdi” (“The blood mixed to blood”), Kamal Abdulla’s novel “Yarimchig elyazma” (“The unfinished manuscript”), Arif Abdullazade’s poem “Ulu Gorgud” (“Holy Gorgud”), Rashid Tehmezoghlu’s poem “Dedem Gorgud” (“My father Gorgud”), and Vagif Aslan, Dilsuz and Nusret Kesemenli’s poems

occurred in Southern Azerbaijan.

THE OBJECT OF SUBJECT

The subject of article has been organized with the poems which published in various magazines and books appealing to the characters and the motifs of “The Book of Dede Gorgud”, by our poets after Azerbaijan gained its independence (1991). The subject is wide, urgent and comprehensive that is why learning of a poem that written on this sphere is considered as an important direction.

One of the important directions which connect the poetry with folklore in independence period of Azerbaijan is to bring the characters and motifs of the epos “The Book of Dede Gorgud” to the poetry. In this period in the poetic activities of the poets the usage from the epos of Dede Gorgud is seen clearly. Using from the characters and motifs of the Dede Gorgud majority of the poets try to show their connection of poetical thinking style with the folk literature. The poems by master poets such as Shahriyar, Mammad Araz, Bakhtiyar Vahabzade, Sohrab Tahir, Sabir Rustamkhanli, Ramiz Rovshan, Zalimkhan Yagub, Vagif Bayat, Fikret Goja, Musa Yagub and many young poets assume a special importance.

In the literary activities of the folk poet Mammad Araz this branch has been a special attention. Though the poet sometimes used the personages of the epos “The Book of Dede Gorgud” he has written the poem “Dede Gorgud Seslemesi” (“Dede Gorgud’s calling”) appealing direct to Dede Gorgud.

Ozun kochdun, hayin galdi dunyada.

Seslemler payin galdi dunyada.

Dedem Gorgud, harayini eshitdim. (11,247)

(Translation: You moved, but your response stayed in this world, your calling part stayed in this world, Dedem Gorgud, I heard your call)

Though the poet told that they heard Dede Gorgud’s callings and admonitions, the poet also wants to express his anxiety about the chaos of the modern period with the artistic colors to both the readers and at the same time Dede Gorgud. He is sorry, because we can’t protect the opportunities which have been remained to us and our ancestors by Dede Gorgud and sometime we lose these opportunities. Our land is being occupied and the trees are being cut. Till this country has been intrusted to us Dirse Khan’s, Bughaj’s and Uruz’s blood were revenged on these regions. Has that holy blood been forgotten?

Our mothers are still crying and our land is being trampled by the enemies. As the poet says “If the mothers are still crying, the land also cries, whose land cries his rights are still crying” (11, 248). Our cold attention to Dede Gorgud’s safekeeping hurts Mammad Araz very much.

In the poem the motif “tree” is very effective which comes from the epos “The Book of Dede Gorgud”. The poet is disappointed by the cruelly “masacre” of the Gaba trees which are praised by Dede Gorgud as “Let your Gaba tree not dry”. “Let them be crippled who cuts the trees. Let the trees of our country never be dry. Don’t cut the greens, don’t cut the heads, it means to cut greens is to cut the heads” is said. (11, 248)

The poet mourns and says the elergy for the cutting of oak trees, the rare tree Narbend, olive trees instead of the money, simply citing the epos he tries to express the holiness of the tree as Dede Gorgud:

Sellerin ustunde korpuður agaj,
 Nevazish isteyen korpedir agaj.
 Ulu peyghamberden tohfedir agaj,
 Mekke ile Medinenin gapisi agaj (11,258).

(Translation: The tree is a bridge on the torrent, the tree is a baby wanted care, The tree is a gift from the great prophet, The tree is the entrance of Mecca and Medina!)

The motif of “tree” is given in the part “Informing about the ransacking of Salur Gazan’s house” of the epos so: “The giaours brought Uruz under to the tree. Uruz said: “Hey, hard-hearted, for God’s sake! There can be no doubt God’s unity! Let me speak to this tree”. Calling the tree he began to speak:

“If I call “Tree! Tree!” doesn’t deviate from me, Tree!
 You are the door of Mecca and Medina!” (9, 146)

As it is seen Mammad Araz in his poem tries to intensify the influence power of some parts of the tree motifs and to explain the sense love for tree which has not lost its necessity from the ancient periods up today. The tree is holy, the tree is the immortal friend of the man. It is pity, sometimes the man forget this simple reality, cutting the tree, the man cuts his generation.

The poet’s conclusion at the end of the work is the man’s animosity relations to himself. Damaging the nature the man damages himself. In order to understand this simple truth it is necessary to turn over the pages of the history. The future of “those who make the gallows and bark the trees” has finished with the miserable ending. It is one of the instructive admonitions which the epos “The Book of Dede Gorgud” suggested.

It is clearly seen from the content, the expression means of the idea, artistic style in the poem “Agaj” by folk poet Bakhtiyar Vahabzade that this poem has been connected with the motif of tree of the epos “Dede Gorgud”.

Daglari, dashlari yashillashdirib,
 Gozellik hissini oyadan agaj.
 Insana shirinje yukhu bekhsh eden,
 Gushlara hem yuva, hem hayan agaj (16,8).

(Translation: Making the mountains, stones green, the tree awakes the beauty feeling. It also gives the sweet dream to the man; The tree is also a nest and the care for the birds)

In the poem “Agajlar guruyur” (“Trees are dryung”) by Mammad Tahir it is said about the bitter fates of the trees of the border villages which are both the nest and the stronghold for the birds. As a result of the occupation of the Armenia invaders the trees become dry which are trampled under feet and pointed to fire intensively. Perishing of these green trees during a night doesn’t shake the conscience of the leaders of the international organizations. Nobody tells “stop” to this savagery and hostility:

Agajlar guruyur ayagusteje

Gulle havasina gollari galkhmir

Sessizje olurler onlar her geje

Kimse bash galdirib onlara bakhmir. (14,244)

(Translation: The trees become dry, they don't rise their branches when is fired, they die each night quietly, no one look at them)

We are the witness of the love and the great belief to the tree in the eposes "Dede Gorgud". This belief has found its poetic reflection in the activities of the poets during the following period. The episode of the belief to the tree in the poem "Dagdagan agaji" ("Tree of "daghdaghan") by Kazim Korpulu is about to be protected from the bad evils formed on folk beliefs. Being waterproof and firm the tree "daghdaghan" usually grows in mountainous places. Its little fruits are gathered and used as a medicine in pharmacology. Its fruit prevents from diarrhea, it is affective in stomachaches and it helps the treatment of the children who have the problem in the backbone. The beads are usually prepared from its little, thin branches. The sign of eye is engraved on these beads and such beads are hanged to children's arms, the horns and necks of the cows and rams. According to the belief spread among the people that beads protect them from the bad evils, break the eye rays and rescue from the dangers.

Dagdagan agajindan

Goz gaytaran duzeldib

Asardilar nedense,

Ineyin yakhasindan,

Tekenin bogazindan.

Ushaglarin golundan.

Buganin buynuzundan (8,121).

(Translation: Making a bead from the tree "daghdaghan", they usually hand it on something, such as from the neck of the cow, the goat and from the hands of the children and the horn of the bull)

Though the years pass the people who plant the trees are remembered by the trees. The trees presented for us by the nature are the friends of the human, the reliable food deport and the guarantee of the health. To plant a tree is one of the traditional habits gifted us by the ancestors. As it is said in the saying "Who plants a tree, he will have a long life" (3, 26).

Let's summarize the love to the tree inspired to us by the epos "The Book of Dede Gorgud" with our ancestors' edifying expression: "The village having a lot of trees will have very few graves" (3, 27).

The sanctity of homeland has become a friend of our genetic memory as a celestial feeling coming from Dede Gorgud's spirit. In the part "Salur Gazanin evi yagmalandigi boyu beyan eder" ("Informing about the part of capturing Salur Gazan's house") of the epos the love of the country has found its shinny expression as the following:

Gom gomlamim goma yirdum!

Gulanla sigin-keyike qonshi yurdim!

Seni yagi nerden darimish, gozel yurdim (9, 44).

(Translation: Hey, my lovely country with a lot of relatives! You are neighbor with elks and goats! How did the enemy ransack you, my beautiful land?)

The love for the mother land also takes an important place in our independence period poetry. In the poem “Torpagima himn” (“Hymn to my mother land”) by Huseyn Hatam it is said about the holiness of the mother land. This land is also the mother land of Shakh ismayil who was a king and a military leader. In this land quatrains by Mahsati are harmonious with Shah Ismayil’s poetry and sword:

Dede Gorgud zirvesidir bu torpag.

Mehsetinin neghmesidir bu torpag.

Khatailer olkesidir bu torpag.

Azerbaijan kelmesine gurbanam. (7,161).

(Translation: This land is Dede Gorgud’s summit, this land is Mahsati’s song, this land is Khatais’ country, I am sacrifice to the word “Azerbaijan”)

The motif “horse” is one of the main motifs met by us in the eposes “Dede Gorgud”. One of Dede Gorgud’s blessings “Let your white-grey horse not stumble while galloping!” (9, 78) means the great importance of the horse for Oghuz heroes. Some sayings such as “The horse is the brave man’s brother”, “The horse is a faithful animal” (12) has sourced from the Turk heroes’ love to the horse.

That is why the scene of the part “Hey, khanum, Gam Bore’s son informs the part Bamsi Beyrek” of the epos is very edifying when Beyrek meets the horse Boz after the sixteen years captivity. Beyrek entered the enemy’s herd and said: “If I find a horse, I’ll ride it”. He saw that his own horse was grazing there. The horse Boz also recognized Beyrek and neighed. Beyrek began to praise the horse as the following:

At dimezen sana, gartash deyerem,

Gartashimdan yeg!

Bashima ish geldi, yoldash deyerem,

Yoldashimdan yeg! (9, 60)

(Translation: I don’t call you as the horse; you are a brother for me! When I am in difficulty I name as my friend!)

It is clear that Beyrek’s horse is not an ordinary horse; his horse is thoroughbred and a sea horse. These thoroughbred horses never leaving their masters are considered the Turkic brave heroes’ brother. And being the stud-horse this stallion horse can be also considered as the predecessor of the further horses. The famous Garabagh horses can be reproduction of this generation.

It is said about this event in the poem “Garabag ati” (“Garabag horse”) by Bakhtiyar Vahabzade. In the poem it is especially noticed that Garabag thoroughbred horses which were followers of Bayandir khan’s and Koroglu’s horses are the gift by our ancestors from the past till nowadays.

“Zamanamda “Girat”, “Durat”

“Zaman” oldu.

Igidliyi kitablara kochuruldu,

Yaddashlarda unuduldu.

“Zaman atim”, aman atim!

Kechmishimden bu gunume amanatim! (17, 107)

(Translation: During my period “Girat” and “Durat” (horses) became as “Zaman”. Its bravery was printed in the books and forgotten in the memories. My horse “Zaman”, my mercy horse!)

The cause of dislike the horse lately is connected with the development of technical opportunities. During Koroglu period as discovering the fire-arms the saying “The heroism went when the fire-arm appeared” by Koroglu showed the reality the development of the technique also removed the horse from the active life. The horses became ownerless.

In the poem “Sahibin hani?” (“Where is your owner?”) By Mammad Aslan the scream of the horse lost his owner by the trick of the enemy is heard. The exciting moments of the ownerless horse are described in the poem during the occupation of Shusha region. In the recorded film the horse bustling right and left looks for its owner under the bullets in the valley.

Goy perishan, yer kuskundur,

Ne pis dovran, ne pis gundur?

Yetimliyin ne miskindir,

Sefil at, sahibin hani?!(2,109)

(Translation: The sky is sad, the earth is hurt, What a bad period, what a bad day it is! Your orphanage is miserable, where is your owner, the vagrant horse?!)

Remembering the neigh of the horse the poet wants to resemble the horse its ancestors. Being ownerless under the bullets in the fight square this horse belonging to the famous Garabag horse generation, being vagrant is the call of the native land. Here the mountains and the stones fuss, the trees and the rocks shiver, the defenders of the fraud enemy have blockade the horse and the mountains from all sides. The horse must neigh so the heavens can hear:

Ele kishne, goy kishnesin!

Arzin bagrina ishlesin!

Hami senin, sen hech kesin –

Sefil at, sahibin hani?! (2, 109)

(Translation: Neigh so that the heavens can neigh too! Let everyone hear it! Everyone is yours, you are no one’s, hey, the vagrant horse, where is your owner?)

The poem “At hagginda aghi” (“Elegy about the horse”) by Mirseyyaf Zamanli expresses the artistic appeal to the character of the horse totem become in the museum which we have met in the eposes “Dede Gorgud”. Here we would like to remind Prof. Kamran Aliyev’s thoughts about horse: “The horse’s role is unexampled in formation and renewing of Turkic thought and outlook, life and appearing of Turkic heroism. Instead of tucking up and making civilized the horse from the fields by the ancient Turk the horse has also presented the world to Turk” (5, 17).

Meeting the horse monument in the museum the poet tries to wake up its past memory:

... Ele bilme eslin-neslin ushagdi,

At babanin ruhunu bir silkele.

Dash olsan da at yaddashin oyagdi:

Gor muzeyde olmusdumu at hele?! (18, 54)

(Translation: Don’t think that your generation is a child, Try to shake your horse grandfather’s spirit. Though you are a stone, your horse memory is awake, was there any horse in the museum before?!)

The poet thinks that with this way the sign of the horse can be disappear from the memories, that is why waking the harden memory of the horse he wishes to awake the harden conscience of the humanity too.

The poem “Garabag ati” (“Garabag horse”) by Gachay Kocherli has also been devoted to the actual theme. The stock of Garabag horses which are unexampled in the world has become diminished; one can count it with the fingers. Garabag horses which were our ancestors’ fight horses are in the neglected form. The poet wishes fight on Garabag horse in the fight area. But is there anybody fighting as a brave?!

Hardasan, hardasan Garabag ati?

Gel gotur meni gedek doyushe.

Senin yalmanina elim chatmadi,

Chatsaydi dushmeni chekerdim shishe. (10, 121)

(Translation: Where are you, Garabag horse? Come and take me to the fight. I couldn’t reach to you, But if I could reach I would spit him)

There is a doubt in the poet’s heart and it worries him. He thinks that may be we have lost Garabag region together with Garabag horses in the fights?!

The poem “Sonradan dushmeler” (“Later added”) by Telman Huseyn was published on the 3rd number of the journal “Azerbaijan” in 2013. As it is seen from the name of the poem everything afterwards added into our lives, the ancient traditions, the cultural heritage directed to destroy the Oghuz culture. The main reason of ceasing of the horses such as Boz (sea horse) from the period of Dede Gorgud, Koroglu’s horses Girat and Durat, Giziroglu Mustafa’s horse Alapacha and at last the thoroughbred Garabag horses is the visit of the strange trotters in the herd:

Azal atlarimiz dartilmish yaydi,

Atdisa, at teki gerek chapaydi.

Giratdi, Duratdi, Alapachaydi,

Ilkhiya yorgalar sonradan dushub. (15,125)

(Translation: Before our horses were as the tight bow, if it was as horse, it had to ride as a horse. Horses are Girat, Durat, Alapachaydi, the trotters came to the herd afterwards)

As a result of the “Sonradan dushmeler” (“Later added”) we lost our lands, such as Khojali, Garabag. In order to return these lands back we need Bay-Bejans, Beyreks, Gazan khans. These heroes need horses such as Boz sea-horses, Girats, Durats, the thoroughbred Garabag horses.

But they are kinds of horses which were reared and wished by Oghuz Turks for thousands of years; those horses were also called “the holy father”. We consider giving a citation acceptable from the book “Turkish mythology” by Baheddin Ojal: “Each tribe belonging to Yakut Turks believes to be generated from the holy animal and that is why they haven’t eaten its meat, that information was also repeated in other sources...

The followings are counted among the animals which are holy fathers of the Yakut tribes: the horse with white spots, the crow, the swan, the eagle, the crane, the grey cow, etc.” (13, 49)

As it is known among Azerbaijan Turks the meat of the horse is not eaten, the horse is loved and taken care. With the spreading of Islam religion in Azerbaijan territory quickly and wide the shamanism and the belief to the ancestor animals have been forgotten, simply the archaic roots have been remained. But at the same time there is a great and irreplaceable history of horse breeding culture in Azerbaijan.

One of the interesting motifs met in the epos is about the wolf. In the expression “The wolf’s face is holy, let me take information from it” told by Salur Gazan the special love to the wolf is seen.

Ordumun khabarin bilirmisin, degil mana,

Gara bashim gurban olsun, gurdum, sana! (9, 45)

(Translation: Do you know the news about my army, hey, wolf, tell me, let my head be sacrifice to you, my wolf!)

Why the wolf is selected? Why the wolf is loved so much?! As it is seen, in the saying “gurd yuzu mubarakdir” (“wolf’s face is holy”) the deep roots of the idealizing love renews our mythological thought. In the mythological thought the wolf becomes phenomena as in the meaning of becoming the ancestor of Turk. After praising the wolf in his speech Salur Gazan ends it with the following words: “Gara bashim gurban olsun, gurdum, sana!” (Let my head be sacrifice to you, my wolf!)

But paying attention later Salur Gazan says so: “Gara bashim sagliginda eyelukler edem, kopek, sana!” (“Hey, dog, I shall do goodness for you!”) The difference is completely clear. Though the wolf is destroying and wrecker animal for the flock of sheep it is loved. But as the dog guards Salur Gazan’s sheep flock it is not loved as much as the wolf. Turkologist Prof. Bahaddin Ojal writes: “The legend of generation from the wolf and come out of the cave was seen as the state mythology accepted formally by Goyturks” (13, 41).

There is a belief coming from the period of Dede Gorgud about wolf’s ancestor problem. This belief lives in the blood memory of our modern poets and finds the poetical expression in their activity.

In the poem “Ayaga dur, Azerbaijan” (“Azerbaijan, stand up”) by Mammad Araz the appeal to the wolf comes

directly from Dede Gorgud eposes. Addressing to the patriotic citizen the poet tries to propaganda to return to own root, to turn into the grey wolf, to become a brave man:

Dur ichinden gorkhunu gov,
 Olumunle, galimini ayird ele.
 Dur ichinden gorkhagi gov,
 Dur ozunu Bozgurd ele! (1,595)

(Translation: Stand up and drive away the fear from your heart, choose your death and life. Stand up and drive away the coward from your soul, stand up and make yourself Bozgurd (Grey wolf)!

Fakhraddin Asad notes in his poem “Turkun sesi” (“The voice of Turk”) that the warm breath of the grey wolf has made sleep the Turkish lands. But one day in the future Turk will wake up from the sleep and wake up the stone-rocks in the empty fields:

... hele ki uyuyur chol
 Isti gurd nefesine.
 Bir azdan oyanajag
 Boyuk turkun sesine. (6,141)

(... The field is still sleeping in the warm breath of the wolf; it will just wake up by the Turk’s voice)

In the poem “Gelejek Turanin Atillasi” (“Future Turan’s Atilla”) by Rustam Behrudi the wolves howl in Turk’s anxious spirits. These spirits look for the past of Turk. Now there are only memories as a tale from the honorable past. Turning to the past the poet also turns over the leaves Turk’s glory chronicle and calls the brave Atilla:

Men seni gozledim, neche
 Ildir, Atilla, Atilla.
 Gel yatmish bextini Turkun
 Guldur, Atilla, Atilla. (4)

(Translation: I waited for you for many years, Atilla, come and make laugh Turk’s slept fate, Atilla)

CONCLUSIONS

It is necessary to note that the eposes “The Book of Dede Gorgud” are always modern. It keeps its own place in the historical arena with its idea-plot line, the content and the authority in all times. The eposes “The Book of Dede Gorgud” is a valuable and irrefutable chronicle of Turkic morality existing thousands years ago, being the example to all the humanity. The modern Turk literature has an important inheritance which must be learnt, be investigated from the eposes “Dede Gorgud” and be delivered to the modern readers. Azerbaijan poetry also is continuing to become rich with the citations from the eposes “The Book of Dede Gorgud”.

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