



THE PROBLEMATICS AND SYSTEM OF IMAGES OF THE STORY “LEZGHINTS ASAN’S STORY ABOUT HIS ADVENTURES” BY V.I.DAL

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Abstract:

The events in the story take place in the village, in the city of Cuba, in the forests of the Caucasus, in Finland, and in St. Petersburg, and the events experienced affect the changes in the character of the hero.

Keywords: Lezgins, events, highlanders, customs, a river passed, a village, a city of Cuba, a way out, loved, noble people.

This story was first published in the first issue of the journal "Sovremennik" in 1848. As the title suggests, the story is told by the hero himself. In it, we get acquainted with the daily life, life, and customs of the mountain inhabitants of the Caucasus. In depicting the life of the Lezgins and other peoples, the artist uses the techniques of the naturalistic school. From the very beginning of the story,



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the reader will find out where the events and incidents take place: “I come from Lezgin, from the city of Cuba, where my father lived from an early age.”¹

The father's name was Maymand-Ali and the mother's name was Oglan-Bazhi. He grew up in a large family. It should be noted that the events in the story take place not only around the city of Cuba but also in other settlements and forests of Dagestan, as by the will of fate, the hero ends up in St. Petersburg and Finland. Parents loved Asan for his honesty, generosity, and they sometimes scolded him like any teenager. So the days and months passed.

An unforeseen circumstance happened, Asan's father accidentally killed his neighbor during a family quarrel. From this moment, difficulties begin in their family life. Ali had to hide with the Dagestan highlanders, leaving his family in the village of Mangulikend near Cuba. Many residents of the city knew about the incident, but according to the established order of the mountain residents, they did not give out hiding in the nearby forests. Over time, such a life brought the hiding man to despair, and he asked the village elders to reconcile him with the three brothers of the killed Safarbek. Their efforts were useless, the brothers of the killed man not only did not agree to a peace settlement but, on the contrary, began to look for him. One day, Asan visited his father, returned home, and met Safarbek's brothers on the way, they asked about the location of his father, but the boy did not give out the location of the wanted man, in this collision the boy cut his hand with the sharp blade. When the news of the incident reached the hiding father, he imploringly asked to try it on with the warring ones by having gathered the village elders. According to local customs, after reconciliation and

¹Works of V.I. Dahl, novels and stories, volume 2 i building 3, edition of the bookseller and typographer M.O Wolf S. Petersburg , 1883 p.43.



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the conduct of appropriate ceremonies, he lived for two months with his new relatives. Then he returned to his family in Gadazihar and lived a peaceful village life.

The villagers guarded the channel like the eyeball, where they put dams and directed the water in the right direction. There was platinum for a mill at the mouth of the village of Gadazihar, and this platinum broke through. Upon learning of this, the inhabitants of neighboring Moghulikend came to restore the dam. They asked for help from the Gadazihars, many of whom at that time worked for them in their fields. That's why they couldn't help them. The offended guests began to break the mill, and the miller, running out of the mill with a hammer in his hand, hit one of the visitors on the head and killed him on the spot. On this basis, a big scandal flared up, and as a result, several dead bodies of residents remained on the field as they were in smaller numbers. Many came running to see this confrontation, including children, Asan was among them. When he saw the killed fellow villagers, he took a shovel left by someone and hit one of the newcomers on the head, so he involuntarily becomes a participant in this battle. Next to him in this fight were his relatives, brother, two sisters, and uncles, one of them was a village foreman, and resident of a neighboring village. Thus, the conditions of life contribute to the selection of the hero from the environment. After the end of the confrontation, the old people invited children and adults to the meeting, praised Asan for his act, and advised him to continue in the same spirit. And those who yawned were spat in the face and driven away in disgrace. It so happened that one of the participants in the meeting, out of resentment, decided to drown himself. His aunt barely persuaded him not to do this, suggesting that it would be better to kill one of the participants in the



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confrontation from a neighboring village. At this meeting, Mingulikans were considered as their enemies, and they were to be punished for the murders. Meanwhile, three of the inhabitants of the neighboring village, who went out to clean up the river, without suspecting anything about what had happened, ended up in Gadazihara. Despite Ali's efforts, having learned about their whereabouts, the inhabitants of the local village began to demand the extradition of strangers to them.

Thanks to the efforts of Maimand, two of the three inhabitants of the neighboring village got out at night and escaped, and the third was still killed. This is how people lived in the Caucasus mountains. Meanwhile, the year 1828 came, and terrible cholera began, from which the boy's father and mother died, leaving four young children - Asan, a brother, and two sisters. After the death of their parents, the life of children became much more complicated. The old-timers of the village gave them the care of Uncle Asan, with whom they began to live. Meanwhile, his great-aunt lived in the village, whose husband was a shepherd, one day he drove his herd to the mountains, and at night he had to stay there. As she was afraid to stay alone at home, she asked Asan to spend the night at her house. Knowing about it, her mother-in-law, suspecting her of treason, sent her two sons to punish Asan. A fight ensued, in which both brothers were injured. At the most critical moment, when they caught him, the girl named Guzal helped push her father away, thereby saving Asan from detention. And the older cousin gave Asan a horse, on which he rode off. After some time, Asan met an old man going into the forest on his own business and asked him what was said about happening in the village, he advised him not to return to the village as both brothers were seriously injured, he asked him how it would all end: "Only God



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knows!” Thus, the accelerated events that took place in the life of the hero could not but affect the consciousness and way of life of the hero. Justifying himself to the old man, he says: “I am not guilty of anything and I am not the instigator of a quarrel, and I will not let anyone kill me like a sheep!” So after a certain time, he ended up in the house of a familiar Lezgin. A week later, he became unbearable and asked his master to go to the village and identify what was happening there. Having gone there, the Lezgin arrived with disappointing news. It turned out that his guardian was imprisoned, and his uncle was punished so that he would get his nephew at least from the ground within a month, otherwise, he would be punished himself. The story of the hero's life is described according to the rules of the naturalistic school. Hearing the story, he decided to go to his village and was the first to be in his uncle's house from the door he heard the plaintive voice of his aunt, she carried Asan, because of which her husband was imprisoned. Entering the house and turning to her, he said that he had come himself, no one had brought him, and he would never leave his uncle. He also visited the courtyard of the beautiful Guzal who saved his life. Approaching that half of the house where she lived, and from the window of her bedroom, he heard a voice telling his younger sister about the feat of Asan, who punished two adults who attacked him. Coming out of there, on the street, he saw people sitting in a semicircle by the fire, burning stones for lime. Asan imperceptibly approached them and heard a conversation about himself, one of the participants boasted to others, saying that if he were a relative of the wounded, he would not let him live in this world. But still, when he saw Asan himself, he got up from his seat, without saying anything, went home. And then Asan came to his uncle, the village headman, and by his persuasion, he agreed to go to court the next morning. Waking up early in the



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morning in his room, he saw Guzal and knew from her story that her life became more complicated after what happened, her father was dissatisfied with her, punished her, and did not let her go out of the house. The painting is reminiscent of Turgenev's Rudin. And yet Asan is above his surroundings, confrontations in life contribute to his rapid personal growth. It should be emphasized that in his environment there are more enemies than friends, and the confrontation is intensifying day by day. In court, they did not prove his guilt, but he was imprisoned in a punishment cell for three months, only after the complainant pointed out that they were to blame, Asan ended up at home. Famine has been added to the terrible cholera since 1831, due to crop failure in the Caucasian mountains, the famine lasted more than three years and many people died after stuffing their stomachs with moss and other herbs, and Asan was looking for a way out of this situation. Taking his father's rifle, Guzal hurried to his father, asking him to give him flour instead of a rifle, but was refused. He loved Guzal and wanted to marry her, but he was poor and had no money for a bride price. Returning home, he witnessed a terrible picture: "I saw a younger sister without memory, on the floor, and my brother was leaning against the wall, and foam swirled from his mouth. After waking up my elder sister, who could hardly stand on her feet, I made a fire; we had a talk, took the soul, and returned it to the life of the children "²

The circumstances of life forced the hero to go on a robbery, he went to the village mill when he saw the miller he asked for flour, otherwise, he promised to kill one of the three who were in the building, frightened by threats they gave him half a

²Works by V.I. Dahl, novels and stories, volume 2, publishing house 3, edition of the bookseller and typographer M.O Wolf S. Petersburg , 1883 p.60.



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bag of flour, after that he went to the village bazaar, they no longer sold flour, hunger tormented many, people died, no one spared anyone. And all this forced the hero to steal again and again. During these years, the glorious robber Mulla Nur was on the lips of many, his fearlessness was known to everyone. Sometimes going out on robbery, Asan called himself the captain of Mulla Nur and demanded a duty from everyone on his behalf, and after a certain time, the meeting of these two persons takes place. Glorious Nur was a kind fellow, they dined together at the edge of the forest and said goodbye, hoping for the next meeting. He stole on the roads, and one day he saw a caravan of camels, the owners were poor, but they pointed to a rich Jew. As a result, Asan stole two of his horses. And the next day, he decided to visit Father Guzal, as he was very offended by him, in addition, the old man did not help anyone while living in abundance. The rich man was very frightened when he saw unexpected guests. Those who came stole two cows, taking four sacks of flour in addition, and the next morning they organized a feast for the whole world, all the hungry came, slaughtered both cows, boiled, and baked so much bread and it was idle and fun. For this act, Asan was praised even by the elders of the village. By this time, a decree was announced, which said that if those who have bread, after a three-fold request, do not give to the starving, then it was possible to take a fourth part by force from these people, and Asan covered himself with this kind of instruction. One day, being on the road, he ran into three Persians and dealt with them. Turning to them, he says: “I am not a robber, but I’m only trying to save myself and others from starvation, because relatives, friends, and all wealthy people refused to help me”³³

³³Works by V.I. Dahl, novels and short stories, volume 2 publishing house 3, edition of the bookseller and typographer M.O Wolf S. Petersburg , 1883 p.73



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Having said this, he returned their horses, weapons, and all the goods that he had taken from them. At the invitation of Ali Pashshi, the hero finds himself in his residence. To the question why he does such things, he answers: “My sisters and brother had to die of hunger, and I didn’t have to live for many days, because you won’t be full of pistons; I asked for bread on loan and the security of weapons, ask relatives, friends, and even enemies; nobody gave; then I went, contrary to my promises, to rob wealthy people, for the duration of the famine, to take away from them a fourth part according to the law, and to feed the hungry ”⁴

Admiring Asan's deeds, Ali Pashsha says: “Your truth is Asan” and sent two cartloads of wheat to his house, giving him clothes and a saber, and finally asked if he would still steal, and the hero honestly answers: “I will, Prince, until it runs out.” hunger, because I put such an inviolable stare, the wheat that you sent home to me will not be for long, because my sisters, on my strict orders, do not dare to refuse bread to more than one hungry, and now there are more hungry than full ones ”

Hunger drove people into its mouth, and it became more and more terrible to live, returning to his house at his house, he saw a crowd of people with tears in their eyes demanding bread, among them were children, women, and the elderly, many of whom came from the surrounding villages. According to Asan's instructions, everyone was fed to the full. This motif recurs throughout the story.

This is how the image of the noble Robin Hood arises in the Caucasus, in the person of Asan, with his entourage, he robs the rich and gives what he has gained to the poor. He gathered noble, brave people around him and went to rob not because of self-interest, but also because of hunger, Asan was respected and

⁴Ibid p.74



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loved, and even the princes sympathized with him, which include Aslan Khan, who gave the hero rich gifts. He continued his craft without killing anyone, robbing the wealthy, and giving to the needy. Months passed, and in his detachment was the son of a merchant, a Persian acquaintance, who invited Asan to visit him on the occasion of the holiday. On a tip from this man, Asan ended up in the hands of the police. The reality was that the main character was assisted by Ali Pasha, Prince Aslan Khan, they were noble people besides this, he met judges, chiefs, prisoners, officers, and soldiers, people with heroic natures and they are shown in semi-ironic contrast. He was brought to the authorities and his question was, how many souls did he destroy? He confesses that he did not kill anyone, but admits the robber's guilt: "You are famous as a just boss, but what kind of a just boss can forgive a robber? I should be executed." He spent two years in shackles in prison while the showdown was going on. And then he was sent to serve as a soldier in Finland. From this moment on, changes in the hero's soul accelerate. The next morning, a Russian officer comes to him and gives him money for the journey, which touches the soul of the hero. In the story of V. I. Dahl, parallels are persistently drawn between the two cultures of the Slavs and the Eastern people. According to Dahl, the first is based on calmness and kindness, and the second is based on the inconsistency and complexity of character. The hero of the story does not receive kindness from his fellow tribesmen. According to Dahl, the hero must pass a moral test. And such a test was to be service in the Russian army, where the hero had to meet with kind and educated people.

Going to the place of his service on the road, Asan meets a kind Russian woman and her son, who understood and supported him. Arriving at the place of



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service, he could not get into the guard because of his past. Leaving the place of service, through impenetrable forests and fields, he gets to the capital. Having met his compatriots, he did not receive support and help from them, but on the contrary, because of them, he went to prison, and there he met a believing Christian, to whom he began to confess after his confession, admitting his guilt, he again goes to the place of his former service but already spiritually reborn. Making a general conclusion, we can say that:

1. The hero of the story, Asan, is spiritually reborn thanks to real kind, caring people from another faith.
2. According to the content of the story, the hero and his entourage are only capable of cruelty and confrontation, which of course does not correspond to historical truth.
3. Dahl was still a son of his time and saw the salvation of his hero in the adoption of Christianity, the main character did just that.

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