



## Toponyms in the Organization of the Azerbaijani Folktale Space

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### Abstract

The article deals with the toponyms used in Azerbaijani folk tales. It is noted that in Azerbaijani folktales, space is based on the opposition of native and foreign, and toponyms, respectively, represent native and foreign places. As a rule, the place where the hero was born, grew up is presented as his native place in fairy tales, the place that opposes this place and threatens him with war is introduced as a foreign place. As a result, the place where the hero lives is expressed with the words such as attributes like own, native, while the foreign place is given with the attributes such as distant, alien, dangerous, enchanted. The analysis of toponyms shows that the ethnos perceives the place that owned and lived as his native place, and characterizes the states that are far away from this geography and has conflicts with them as foreign places.

**Keywords:** Toponyms, Geography, Place, Native and foreign place, Imaginary place, Mount Gaph, Gulustani-Iram.

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## **Azərbaycan Nağıl Məkanının Təşkilində Toponimlər**

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### **Xülasə**

Məqalədə Azərbaycan nağıllarında işlənən toponimlər tədqiqata cəlb olunmuşdur. Qeyd olunur ki, Azərbaycan nağıllarında məkan doğma və yad oppozisiyası üzərində qurulmuşdur, toponimlər də, buna uyğun olaraq, doğma və yad məkanları təmsil edirlər. Qəhrəmanın doğulduğu, böyüyüb boya-başa çatdığı məkan nağıllarda, bir qayda olaraq, doğma, bu məkana qarşı gələn, onu müharibə ilə hədələyən məkan isə yad məkan kimi təqdim olunur. Bunun nəticəsidir ki, qəhrəmanın yaşadığı məkan öz, vətən, doğma kimi mənsubiyyət bildirən sözlərlə ifadə olunduğu halda, yad məkan uzaq, özgə, təhlükəli, tilsimli kimi təyinlərlə verilir. Toponimlərin təhlili göstərir ki, etnos özünün sahib olduğu, yaşadığı məkanı doğma məkan kimi qavrayır, bu coğrafiyadan kənarda qalan, münaqişə içində olduğu dövlətləri isə yad məkan kimi xarakterizə edir.

**Açar sözlər:** toponim, coğrafiya, məkan, doğma və yad məkan, xəyali məkan, Qaf dağı, Gülüstanı-İrəm

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## **Топонимы В Устройстве Азербайджанского Сказочного Пространства**

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### **Резюме**

В статье рассматриваются топонимы, используемые в азербайджанских народных сказках. Отмечается, что в азербайджанских народных сказках пространство основано на противопоставлении родного и иностранного, а топонимы, соответственно, представляют родные и чужие места. Как правило, место, где герой родился, вырос, представляется в сказках как его собственное место, место, которое противостоит этому месту и угрожает ему войной, - как чужое. В результате место, где живет герой, выражается такими словами, как атрибуты, такие как собственное, родное, в то время как чужое место задается такими атрибутами, как далекое, чужое, опасное, связывающее заклинание. Анализ топонимов показывает, что этнос воспринимает место, которое владело и жил, как свое, и характеризует государства, находящиеся за пределами этой географии и конфликтующие с ними, как чужие.

**Ключевые слова:** топонимы, география, место, родное и чужое, воображаемое место, гора Гаф, Гулустани-Ирам.

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## **Introduction**

The role of fiction is irreplaceable to form and develop the national identification of each nation. It is necessary to study and promote the literary and cultural values that people owned and created. The national identification of any nation is more clearly reflected in its oral folk literature. As innumerable pieces of folklore are the most precious values created by the people, they reflect the outlooks and ideas of the people colorfully. Therefore, to study pieces of folklore is one of the main tasks of folklore researchers.

Folklore, as an ancient history of mankind, is a very rich source of information to study and search the original outlooks, beliefs, customs and traditions of the people. The problems of onomastics have always been attracted by the attention of scientists. Toponyms, distinguished by their richness among the onomastic units, allow to obtain extensive information about the history, language, ethnogenesis and thinking of each nation. From this point of view, the study of toponyms has always maintained its importance. Toponyms are historical witnesses of events that take place in any place in the society and play a special role in conveying to the reader the reality that surrounds us, in transmitting information about the life and traditions of any ethnos from generation to generation.

The sense of space is characteristic not only to humans, but also to all lifeless things. Migratory birds travel thousands of kilometers every year from cold countries to warm countries, but never lose their trajectories. Mythological ideas about space are so ingrained in our minds that they determine many of our behaviors in everyday life. We call places that are alien. Perception of space is also an integral part of our physical existence. Today, as the meaning behind these toponyms is forgotten, they subconsciously live in our memory and determine many of our actions and behaviors in our daily lives.

The study of toponyms in folk tales helps to form an opinion about the national origin of the people. To study toponyms in folk tales also allows us to determine the historical geography and find out about our distant past. Toponyms found in folk tales are one of the important means to

reflect the culture, the life of the people, their historical past, geographical location of this or that ethnos. Because toponyms help us to reflect the culture and life of the people, its historical past and geographical position of this or that ethnos more deeply.

In folk tales, space is formed on the basis of the archaic ideas of the ancient people about the world. As people's outlooks developed, their ideas about the world also changed and it gave the way to emerge new genres and epics. Genres like legends, tales, epics, sagas, etc. are namely the reflection of people's ideas about the world around them. However, each genre reflects it in accordance with its own poetic system. This difference manifests itself not only in genres, but also between the groups. In fairy tales, space is characterized by its fantastic nature and the presence of giants, fairies, changing the nature of the spatial elements gives extraordinary character to these tales. Comparing the household tales with the fairy tales, the household tales reflect the reality more accurately; no additional functions are loaded on the spatial elements, they are introduced by their ampoules in reality. Of course, such diversity adds a special richness to folk tales and made them become one of the main genres of folklore.

The cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people shows that this nation is one of the oldest nations. It has rich pieces of folklore. However, it should be noted that the Azerbaijani folklore is sufficiently studied, the study of space issues in folk tales isn't.

### **I-Body part**

Semantic toponyms reflect the culture and life of the people, its historical past and geographical position of this or that ethnos <sup>1</sup>. In this sense, it isn't right to consider the onomastic units as just a name in folk tales. "Onomastic unity is the product of socio-historical development. Proper names are real facts that preserve the traces of the past and bring them to the present time and they are live witnesses of the history". <sup>2</sup>That is why the study of folktale toponyms helps us to determine the historical geography, to get information about our ancient past.

While investigating the folktale texts, we observe no geographical places find the way to the structure of the folk tale. There are certain requirements to make the geographical places as the

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<sup>1</sup> N.İ.Repincheva, "Semantic Toponyms in the Semantic Structure of the English Folk Tale", *Philological Sciences, Questions of Theory and Practice*, Publishing House, № 12 (30), Tambov 2013, pp.175-178.

<sup>2</sup> A. Gurbanov, *Basics of Azerbaijan Onomasiology*, In two volumes, Volume I. Baku 2019, p.280.

genre of epics. When we first pay attention to folktales, we observe that only cities that played important roles in the socio-economic, political and religious life of the country can be made epics. In this sense, to make the geographical spaces as epics, the cities are required to play an important role in the life of the country, to have the status of a central city in accordance with the role they play. Places like Isfahan, Tabriz, Kandahar, which we often come across in folk tales, meet these requirements. Their epic nature was due to the fact that they were once the political center of the country, played an important role in commercial life, and formed as a political and economic center made them epic.

In folktales, space is built on its own and strange/alien polarization. Places such as Isfahan, Kandahar, Bandarpush are introduced as their own places. Own place is a place where the hero belongs to. The hero is usually born, grew and raised in these places. Egypt, India, China and Yemen are given as alien places. The hero goes to these places to look for the girl he is in love with, these places threaten the hero's city with war, the king sends the hero to those places for a difficult task and so on. Following the places that represent their own and alien spaces, it is known that the cities included in the geography of the ethnos are usually given as their own places, while the countries outside its borders and are in conflict that are introduced as alien places. It is interesting that China, India and Romania are mentioned among alien places, however Russia, that has been in this region for more than 200 years, its name is not met in any sources. There is no Russian toponyms that become epic in any of our folk tales. If we pay attention to folktale toponyms, we observe that there are medieval toponyms. This means that folktale toponyms have already been formed in the Middle Ages. As Russia included to this geography later, making this toponyms epic is not met in the Azerbaijani folk tales.

As we mentioned earlier that folktale toponomastics or toponyms reminds us medieval toponyms. Egypt, Yemen, India, China, Firang are met as city states. These places have nothing in common except the similarity of names with modern places. There is no geographical correspondence between the distance the hero traveled and the way he traveled. These places are distinguished with having hostile attitude to the hero's country and standing on the opposite pole. Anything else is the same. Even there is no language barrier. The inhabitants of that country also speak the same language as the hero does. The caravanserai, bath, tea-house, bazaar and the other

places that form the alien spaces are the same as the hero's own space. However, the places are common, there are some features that distinguish them from one another. One city is distinguished by the people that are in the guise of people during the day and the animals at night, in another city the wife is buried with her deceased husband, but another city is characterized by having its special fruit, and the other by the absence of any animal in this city. Such unusual features, customs and traditions make these places individual and distinguish them from their own places.

The space of a folk tale is an indefinite space. Therefore, the events are often not connected to a concrete place. The events take place in vague places such as "in a city", "in a village", "in a country", or in imaginary places such as "on Mammadnasir corner", "on the back of a rooster". Once upon a time there was no one, but God. There was a couple in a village.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes it is connected to an imaginary place: One day, on the corner of Mammadnasir, on the back of the blue imam, once upon a time, there was a king<sup>4</sup>.

In this sense, the onomastic units also attract great attention in folktales. As it is known, the onomastic units include anthroponyms (personal names), toponyms (place names), zoonyms (animal names), ethnonyms (names of tribes, clans, nations) and so on. In this study, the place names (toponyms) and their characteristics in folktales will be explored.

In researches on folktale toponamastics, toponyms are usually divided into two groups: 1. Real toponyms; 2. Imaginary toponyms<sup>5</sup>.

Geographical names themselves are divided into the following groups depending on the determination of the objects which they belong to:

1. Names denoting countries, islands, continents
2. Names of districts, provinces, cities
3. Oronyms
4. Hydronyms
- I. Names denoting countries, islands, continents

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<sup>3</sup> AFT, Vol.3, 2005, p.232.

<sup>4</sup> AFT, Vol.4, 2005, p.71.

<sup>5</sup> L.B. Dorovskikh, *Geographical Names in Russian Fairy Tales*, №12, Russian Toponymy and Geographical Terms, Sverdlovsky 1977, pp. 26-48.

Firang - this expression, which is also mentioned in our sagas, is found in the form of Firang, the king of Firang, etc. in folk tales. In folk tales, Firang is introduced as a province, a country, a state. Firang is usually described as a negative country, a country that demands seven years of taxes from a neighboring country and threatens it with war. One day, news came that King Firang was asking King Dashkuvar for seven years' taxes. He must either pay the tribute or be ready to fight <sup>6</sup>. The Firang king marched against the Chinese king and demanded him to marry to his daughter.<sup>7</sup>

Historically, the word Firang has referred to France, however the researchers believe that in folk tales this expression has no connection with France and they think it is used in the sense of Europe. Europe's negative position to Azerbaijan dates back to the Middle Ages - the Safavids period and even earlier. The expansion of Azerbaijan under the Safavids rule in the 15th and 16th centuries and the annexation of new territories irritated the West. And these folktales also reflect the toponymy of that period. In modern times, the role of the West in the life of Azerbaijan has changed, it attracts us as an educational center, as a place of residence, not as a rival. Therefore, in the folk tales collected in modern times, the West is introduced not as an alien place, but as an educational center, a place that attracts employees.

India - In folk tales, India is often introduced as India in one text and in another text as the country of India. It is one of the most active toponyms that is found in 14 Azerbaijan folk tales. In most cases it is often given as an alien place, only in two folk tales it is presented as a place where the hero lives. Acting as an alien place, the hero either goes to this country to pursue the girl he is in love with, either to bring ivory or to learn the art of magic. In the tale "Chantig" the hero falls in love with the daughter of the king of India. He goes to India for her<sup>8</sup>. In the fairy tale "Ahmadi Chekkash" India is presented as the homeland of an old magician and Ahmadi Chekkash goes to India to learn the secrets of the art of magic.<sup>9</sup>

Although folk tales take many toponyms from real life, they do not fully reflect the reality. Although there are some similarities between epic India and real India (the hero's trip to India to

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<sup>6</sup> AFT, Vol. 2, 2005, p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> AFT, Vol.2, *Ibid*, p.233.

<sup>8</sup> AFT, Vol. 21, *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>9</sup> AFT, Vol. 4, *Ibid*, p.191.



fetch ivory connects with the existence of elephants in this geography), it does not fully reflect the reality. In one fairy tale, India is depicted as an island in the middle of the sea, where the hero comes with the help of a magic tree that pointed by the birds.<sup>10</sup>

China- As a rule China is given as an alien place in Azerbaijan folk tales. The hero often falls in love with the daughter of the Chinese emperor and goes to China to marry her. In the tale “Let God save us from the evils of Khanpari”, the hero opens a snake wrapped around the neck of the daughter of the Chinese king, and in return the king marries his daughter to him.<sup>11</sup>

In folk tales, the objects with unusual features, helpers are associated with distant lands. Relation with a distant country individualizes those objects or creatures and helps to present them with their fantastic features. China is also used for this purpose. The hero chooses a horse, puts his hand on any horse's back, the horse's back is broken. Only a horse presented by a Chinese king can withstand the weight of the hero.<sup>12</sup> The country Firang is also used for this purpose. Only the clothes given by King Firang are worn by Becha dervish, and the horse presented by King Firang withstands his weight. The relation of such things with distant lands individualizes them, gives them fantastic features and makes them as unusual things.

Rum - In folk tales it is mentioned as Rum, Urum, Ram. The word “Roma” is used in Arabic as “Romanio”. This word was used in Arabic sources in relation to the Byzantines and the Romans. The term Urum is a modified version of the Greek word. Since the consonant “r” is not used at the beginning of the words in Turkish languages, vowels are added to the beginning of the borrowings beginning with the consonant “r”: Urustam, urza, irayon, iradio (Rustam, Rza, region, radio) and so on. The expression “Urum” was also formed as a result of adding the vowel “u” to the beginning of the word in accordance with this language law. In fairy tales, Rome is presented as a province or city: The vizier is looking for an astrologer to interpret the king's dream. He was told that there was such an astrologer in the province of Urum. He went a little and stopped a lot, he went a lot and stopped a little, in folk tales there is no distance, how long he traveled, how many apartments he went, and finally he reached the land of Urum.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> AFT, Vol. 1, 2005, p.215.

<sup>11</sup> AFT, Vol.1, *Ibid*, p. 259.

<sup>12</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>13</sup> AFT, Vol. 2, *Ibid*, p.147.

Egypt - It is mentioned as a distant place in folk tales. When describing the beauty of the girl, it is said: If you look for Egypt and Rome, you will not find such a beauty.<sup>14</sup>

Yemen - It is also given as a distant country. In the tale of the Forty Gonche Khanum, the king sends the protagonist to fetch a colorful tree growing in the Yemen desert<sup>15</sup>. In the tale of the Becha dervish, one of the girls arrested by the divinity in the cave is the daughter of the king of Yemen.<sup>16</sup>

Ajam - This name is pointed out both as a person and a place name. Once upon a time there was no one, but God, there was no God's partner. One day a man named Ibrahim, son of Ajam, arrived. The hero kidnaps the girl he is in love with to his homeland – Ajam.<sup>17</sup> “Ajam”, which means “a man speaking blatantly” in Arabic, is a name given by Arabs to people who do not belong to them. According to the Islamic encyclopedia, during the first Islamic conquests, the Arabs used this word for Iranians. Since the ninth century, this expression gained its ethnic and geographical discrimination. During the Seljuk period, the term Iraqi-Ajam was used for the centered areas like Isfahan, Hamadan and Tehran, and in later periods this name was referred to the whole Iran. The Turkish Turks's calling the Azerbaijanis “Ajam” also stems from the connection of our geography with Iran.<sup>18</sup>

There are some place names that it is impossible to determine the specific area and geography they cover. The phrase “seven climates” is one of such place names. This expression is used as a general term, it is not known what specific area it covers: I rule the lands in seven climate zones.

## **II. Names of districts, provinces, cities**

**Isfahan** - The formation of Isfahan as a political center dates back to the XVII century. During the reigns of Shah Ismail and Tahmasib, after the defeats by the Ottomans, the Safavids began to seek a safe city to move the capital and the city Isfahan was chosen for its natural and strategic position. During the reign of Shah Abbas I, the city walls began to experience the

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<sup>14</sup> AFT, Vol.2, *Ibid*, p. 40, p.259.

<sup>14</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>15</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p. 83.

<sup>16</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.129.

<sup>17</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.192.

<sup>18</sup> Adnan Karaismailoğlu, “Acem”, *Islamic Encyclopedia*, Volume 1, TDV Publications, İstanbul 1988, p. 321.

brightest days in the history of Isfahan, along with a great renovation and construction works. In folk tales the widespread development of the Isfahan toponym as an epic space began to be used only after that. In folk tales, Isfahan is usually mentioned as the political center of the country, and Shah Abbas's residence is also located in this city. The gardener takes new fresh fruits of his garden for Shah Abbas to Isfahan.<sup>19</sup>

**Shiraz** -It is located on a historic trade route that connects Isfahan, Gum, Hamadan, Rey, Yazd and the other cities. Due to its favorable position, the city was the center of the Saffarids during the Abbasids period and later the Zand dynasty. In the middle of the 15th century, the Italian traveler J. Barbaro described Shiraz as a city with two hundred thousand inhabitants and with many merchants.<sup>20</sup> When Tehran became the state capital, Shiraz began to lose its glorious days. In the tale, Shiraz is given as an alien place. Shah Abbas, who wore dervish dresses and traveled around the country, arrived in Shiraz. Knowing that he was a stranger, the cook took Shah Abbas into a barn and made him sew galloon.<sup>21</sup>

**Kandahar** is located on the main road connecting India to Kabul. Due to its strategic importance, it changed hands several times throughout the history and it was under the rule of the Saffarids(IX),the Gaznavids (X),the Elkhaniids(XIII),the Babids(XVI), the Safavids(XVII). The king of Kandahar had a son named Malik Mammad.<sup>22</sup>

**Mugan** does not act as an independent place, it simply expresses geographical possession by using in front of some objects: He sees what a nice girl she is. Indeed she is like a Mugan crane.<sup>23</sup>

**The cities Baghdad, Damascus, Bitlis and Qazvin** are also presented as distant places. In the tale of Becha dervish, the king of Damascus wants to marry with the daughter of the king of Kandahar, otherwise he threatens the country with war.<sup>24</sup>

The names of religious places are also used in folk tales, but there are some varieties in the use of these names. Fairy tales only mention the places such as Mecca, Karbala, and Khorasan, but they do not act the background of the events happened. One day there was news in the city

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<sup>19</sup> AFT, Vol. 4, *Ibid*, p.274.

<sup>20</sup> O.Q. Özgüdenli, "Şiraz", *İslam Ensiklopediyası*, Volume 39, TDV Publications, İstanbul 2010, pp.182-184.

<sup>21</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.285.

<sup>22</sup> AFT, Vol. 2, *Ibid*, p.60.

<sup>23</sup> AFT, Vol. 2, *Ibid*, p.107.

<sup>24</sup> AFT, Vol. 3, *Ibid*, p.116.

that the king's son wanted to go to Mecca.<sup>25</sup> In the tale "Haji's daughter", Haji and his wife are going to visit Karabala. When the girls hear that their father was going to visit Karabala, the eldest daughter send a melon, the middle daughter a quince, and the youngest daughter an apple to their father and say that when they ripe and turn yellow, the father will know that the girls are married.<sup>26</sup> As it is apparently seen, in no case a religious place is given as a background of the events, but it is simply described as a distant place, as a reason to leave home. Unlike fairy tales, in religious tales, such places are no longer helping means, but they are the main places, many events take place in these places, and the prophets, who are the main participants in religious tales, live and act in these places.

When paying attention to the structure of folk tales, we observe that the places like Isfahan, Kandahar, Heyderabad act as their own places, and the places like India, China, Firang are introduced as the places that oppose and are hostile to their own places. The main threat for own places comes from these places. King Firang threatens this place with war, king of India says that he will attack to this place if the riddle sent by him is not replied. When the space of a folk tale is arranged in the form of this or that world polarization, the place where the hero lives is this world and it is light world, his own place, and the opposite space is that world, it is called as dark world, alien place. The main danger for this world comes from these places: the giant steals the apples growing in the king's garden, Suleyman, wandering in the garden, kidnaps the merchant's daughter, and so on. The king who wants to kill the hero, sends him to a strange place for a difficult task. It is clear from the given descriptions that the ethnos perceives the area it owns and lives as its own place, and characterizes the areas outside this geography as an alien and a dangerous place. In this regard, the place where the hero lives is expressed with the words such as belonging to himself, his native or his homeland, while the alien place is expressed with terms such as distant, alien, dangerous and enchanting.

There is almost no rural toponym in folk tales. In the five-volume collection of "the Azerbaijani folk tales" that we analyzed, rural expression is met only in three folk tales. Unlike it, urban toponym is widely spread. The word city is found in more than 65 folk tales. the urban

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<sup>25</sup> AFT, Vol. 1, *Ibid*, p.108.

<sup>26</sup> AFT, Vol. 4, *Ibid*, p.215.

toponyms's being so active connects the folk tales with the urban environment and the events in the folk tales take place in and around the city. Tales remind us the city life a lot. The events take place in the city-states which are surrounded by high castle walls. The city gates are open during the day and closed in the evenings for the security of the city. The guards are guarding the city gates. Spatial elements such as caravanserais, markets, squares, shops which are often used in folk tales, are all characteristic for the urban environment. The activity and intensive development of spatial elements related to the urban environment show that folk tales were originated in the urban environment and therefore they reflect the urban culture.

### **III. Oronyms**

In folk tales there are few oronyms of real life. In the five-volume collection "The Azerbaijan Folk Tales" only 17% (9 names) of 56 toponyms belong to oronyms.

Mount Qaf is one of the most used mountain names in the Azerbaijan folk tales. In 10 folk tales, the name of this mountain is mentioned and it is used as "Gulleyi-Gaf, Gulzami-Gaf, Mount Gaf, Kuhgaf. It is depicted as a place where the world beings live. In the folktale "Tapdig", the eastern part of Mount Qaf is Garden Gulustani-Iram, and the western part is the world of Darkness. Mrs. Gun is the owner of Gulustani-bagi-Iram, the giant Tufan is the king of the world of darkness.<sup>27</sup> In the tale "Rehyan", this place is called Gulzami-Gaf and is described as a kingdom. The giant Ash-Ash, the son of the king of Gulzami-Qaf, kidnaps Reyhan, who goes out to collect greens to Gulzami Gaf.<sup>28</sup> Mount Gaf is also mentioned in Persian and Arabic sources, in "The Arabian Nights", "Shahnameh" and in other works.

The Islamic Encyclopedia prepared by the Turkish Religious Foundation (TRF) states that the ideas on Mount Gaf is associated with the Zoroastrians and the Jews who were exiled to the geography of Iran adopted these ideas from the Zoroastrians and brought them to the Arabian Peninsula by adding some certain features to them.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> AFT, Vol. 4, *Ibid*, p.55.

<sup>28</sup> AFT, Vol. 4, *Ibid*, p.128.

<sup>29</sup> Kursat Demirchi, "Mount Kaf", *Islamic Encyclopedia*, Volume 24, TDV Publications, Istanbul 2001, pp.144-145.

#### **IV. Hydronyms**

The number of hydronyms in Azerbaijani folk tales is also small. There are only 7 hydronyms, two of which - the Nile and the Kura - are real hydronyms, and the others are imaginary hydronyms.

River Nile - in Azerbaijani folk tales it is mentioned as in the form of River Nile, Nile tributary, Nile water, branch of the Nile, etc. The Nile is fantastically shown as a place where demonic beings live with their certain things, belongings. In the tale of the Seven Mountains's apples, the king sends the hero to bring the burning clothes in the Nile whom he wants to destroy. Two dragons guard the burning clothes under the water. The hero gets into the skin of a crane, falls into the water and takes one of the old clothes by the beak.<sup>30</sup>

River Kur- Only in two folk tales the Kur is mentioned. One of them is mentioned in the funny story text, and the other in the passage told at the beginning of the story (we flew a fly, crossed the Kur. One day, it happens so that Hillilim and Gullulum cross the Kur<sup>31</sup>. The Kur hydronym is found in the household tales because these tales present the reality more convincingly than in fairy tales, but it is impossible to concern it to fairy tales. Only in one fairy tale the toponym Kur is given, which is used not as a hydronym, but as a toponym. Once upon a time there were many helpless servants of God. One of them was old Alimardan, who lived on the banks of the Kur.<sup>32</sup>

The hydronyms related to our geography - *the Araz, the Kur, the Caspian Sea, etc. are almost none in Azerbaijani fairy tales. In contrast, the hydronyms associated with the Nile are widely spread, and its different versions are found in folk tales. Unlike the Kur and the Araz, the epic period of the Nile is due to its remoteness from this geography. Speaking about the fantastic hydronyms in English fairy tales, O.A.Plakhova writes: "In the mythological consciousness, they are located not only in the territory of the English ethnos, but also in distant, mysterious and inaccessible areas, and, consequently, in relation to the unreal world, in accordance with its alien,*

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<sup>30</sup> AFT, Vol. 2, *Ibid*, p.58.

<sup>31</sup> AFT, Vol. 5, 2005, p.177.

<sup>32</sup> AFT, Vol. 1, *Ibid*, p.21.

central-peripheral polarization”<sup>33</sup>. In fairy tales, places are depicted fantastically and are presented as unusual places, so the Kur and the Araz which everyone knows, children bathe in hot summer the water, the fishermen go fishing with fishing rods and boats can’t be described fantastically, because it reduces the credibility of the fairy tale. For this reason, in fairy tales, the name of the Nile which is far from our geography is found, but it is impossible to see the rivers that belonging to our geography.

## **V. Imaginary places**

Imaginary places in folk tales have a special weight. Imaginary places play an active role, especially in fairy tales, and take an active part in the organization of fairy tale spaces. Imaginary places in fairy tales, as a rule, represent an alien space: “Fantastic toponyms are either the nominations of “the alien kingdom” or express the border zones between it and the real world” <sup>34</sup> Imaginary places are called due to the following features:

1. According to the inhabitants living there: the city of demons, the land of fairies, the land of demons
2. According to the number of spatial elements: Seven mountains, seven hills
3. According to the physical characteristics of the place: Ruined mountain, Black mountain, Black spring, Yellow mountain, White fountain, a son of stone
4. According to the nature of the place: the land of talismans

Gulustani-Iram - The name of this place in folk tales is found as Iram garden, Gulustani-Iram, Gulustani Iram Garden. It is often presented as the prophet Suleyman’s Iram garden. It is the prophet Suleyman who points out the location of the Gulustani Irem to the hero who is looking for his lost wife. The fairies and the giants living in this place keep their promise when they swear the Prophet Suleyman. Iram garden is located on the sunny side. The city, ruled by the king of fairies, is surrounded by high walls, and the watchmen stand guard in front of the city gates. Gulustani-Iram is described like a paradise due to its beauty. “It was like a corner of paradise,” he said. The nightingales are chirping, the flowers are marvelous that one can not stand

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<sup>33</sup> O.Plakhova, *The Role of the Names of Natural and Geographical Objects in the Creation of the Toponymic Space of the Tales*, Bulletin of the Nizhny Novgorod University, Named after N.I. Lobachevsky 2012, № 2 (1), p.380.

<sup>34</sup> O.İ. Zvorygina, “ Functioning of Toponyms in the Russian Literary Tale”, *Bulletin of the Volgograd State Pedagogical University*, 2009, Issue 2, pp. 115-118.

seeing this beauty ”<sup>35</sup>. Gulustani-Iram is introduced with the features belonging to fantastic places. There is no lock on the garden door, but it opens and closes with a spell. The hero can enter the garden with the help of the spell that the giants taught him. In the garden there is a castle or palace of the king of the fairies. A brick of the castle is made of gold and a brick is made of silver, its feet are wet on the ground, its head is wet in the sky, and its brightness dazzles the eyes. In the middle of the garden, there is usually a pool made of rubies and emeralds. The garden is covered with flowers on all sides, the tops of the trees reach the highest sky, and the roses call the roses and the nightingales call the nightingales. It is no accidental that Gulustani-Irami is presented by the researchers as “an example of Muslims' ideas about paradise” .<sup>36</sup>

The Islamic encyclopedia prepared by the Turkish Religious Foundation (TRF) states that the word Iram is derived from the Hebrew word Arami and means “high country”. According to Omar Farooq Harman, Iram is mentioned in Qur'ani Kerim as a unique country inhabited by the tribes of Ad and Samud. In an inscription of the Akkad king Narams, Aram was mentioned as the name of a region around the Upper Ferat and on the clay tablets belonging to 2000s BC, this place is mentioned as the name of a city in the Lower Dejle basin. In conclusion, the author notes that the legends were widely spread that Iram was a city built by Shaddad between Hadramut and Sana in Yemen, and Islamic sources provide detailed information about the features of this city.<sup>37</sup> Based on this research, it can be said that before this name had been existed in Arab geography, later it became epic in folklore. The comparison of this place with Paradise shows that it is a “unique country” as it is stated in the holy Koran.

**Mount Erzuman** - It is given as an alien place. The hero, who was hunting on Mount Erzuman, came across a gazelle after crossing over the mountain. Following the gazelle, he got to a fortress.<sup>38</sup>

One of the features distinguishes folk toponyms from written literature is that they have variations. For example, Bandarpush is found in the form of Bandar, Bandarpushur, Rum as Urum, Ram, Mount Gaf as Gulleyi-Gaf, Gulzami-Gaf, Kuhgaf, Gulustani-Iram as Gulustani-Iram

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<sup>35</sup> AFT, Vol. 1, *Ibid*, p.80.

<sup>36</sup> J.Beydili, (Mammadov), *Dictionary of Turkish Mythology*, Elm, Baku 2003, p.418.

<sup>37</sup> Omer Faruk Harman, “İrem” *Islamic Encyclopedia*, Volume 22, TDV Publications, İstanbul 2000, p 443.

<sup>38</sup> AFT, Vol. 1, *Ibid*, p.89.



Garden, Gulustan Garden. The variations of the geographical names depend on their functionality. There are geographical names that can be found only in one or two folk tales. For example, Kandahar, Qazvin, Shiraz, Bitlis and others. As they are not widespread, they have no variations. Variation is observed in the most widely used geographical names. For example, Gaf Mountain, River Nile, Gulustani-Iram are mostly used names, so they are found in different variants. The main reason for this variation of these names is that they are recorded from the repertoires of different narrators. In folk tales, India is introduced in the form of India, the Nile-the Nile tributary, Nile water, and the place popularly known as Urum in the form of Rum, Ram. The variation manifests itself in the pronunciation of words, the structure and the form of the words which remain the same shows that such changes are due to the narrator. Therefore, the more the same geographical name is used in folk tales, the more likely it can vary.

Compound geographical names formed by combining two words are not so common in the Azerbaijani folk tales. Available geographical names consist of either a compound or postpositional attributive group merger. In general, postpositional attributive group mergers are widely used in naming the geographical places. Shahr-Gazin, Gulzami-Gaf, Gulleyi-Gaf, Gulustani-Iram, Bani-dash and others. The postpositional attributive group mergers have the advantages that they help to realize a phrase as a complex word, as a single concept. Therefore, in naming geographical places, these combinations are preferred to the other word combinations. Instead of Gazvin, Shahr-Qazvin is used, instead of Gulustan garden Gulustani-Iram is used.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, there are only 56 toponyms in 164 tales involved in the analysis and the fact shows that there are not so many place names in the Azerbaijani folk tales. The main reason is that in folk tales, place names are not often given with specific toponyms, but with indefinite formulas such as “in a city”, “in a village”, “in a district”. However, there are also concrete place names in folk tales. Expressing a concrete place “-brings reality, vitality and concreteness to the narration.”<sup>39</sup> But, as we noted, in folk tales, geographical names are characterized relatively, and there is no similarity between real geographical names and names used in folk tales. Even the situation in the country, the direction in which it is located, the way the hero goes, all these are used relatively. However, geographical names themselves are certain information delivers. Toponyms are the memory of our ancestors about the past, their view about the world around them. Geographical names give us information about the geography of our ancestors, introduce us alien and hostile places, give us an idea of our historical geography. Isfahan, Tabriz, Kandahar are presented to us as our “own” places. These places are surrounded by alien places such as Firang Egypt, Yemen, India, China. Thanks to folk tales, children understand the historical geography of their country, get to know friendly and hostile countries. In this regard, folk tales play an important role to shape children's imaginations about historical places. Tales remind us the geography of our ancestors, teach us from where this geography is threatened, who is a friend and who is an enemy.

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<sup>39</sup> O.İ. Zvorygina, *Ibid*, pp.115-118.

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