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## THE REFLECTION OF MENIPPE'S SATIRE IN THE NOVEL "LINCOLN IN THE BARD" BY GEORGE SAUNDERS

*The article discusses the novel "Lincoln in the Bardo" by American writer George Saunders. The novel is a journey into the world of spirits, highly appreciated for its form and content, and for its evocative style. The language of the novel is very smooth and beautiful. However, it is difficult to take the rhythm of the work. At first glance fluency, harmony, and unity seem weak, and one can feel the fragmentation. The events take place in the cemetery. There is an impression that the main hero of the work is not one or two, but all the participating characters have this right. Each of them is eager to talk about their lives, trying to understand and solve the reason why they came here. At first glance, this situation creates fragmentation and misunderstanding as well as the idea that the novel does not have a complete, comprehensible plot line, and suggests a lack of harmony. However, as you listen to the thoughts and words of each character, certain ideas emerge for that period, everything becomes clear, and the veil of mystery is slowly removed. Writing such a novel against the background of the American president's family tragedy seems very attractive. Thinking about such a decision and writing in an unusual style and achieving success shows that the possibilities of the novel genre have not yet been exhausted. Saunders presented the novel as an experiment. Filtering the historical facts and what happened at that time through his imagination, he added his literary fictions to the real events by adding shades of magic, realism and surrealism to it. Despite the considerable differences of opinion about the work, the novel is truly new and has an extraordinary impact. Of course, the topic of life and death is not a new topic, but Saunders updated and made additions to this topic. He was able to share his ideas, his discovery, his version about the journey of the soul after physical death. The novel is a multifaceted work. The similarities and contrasts of the system of images, the language and speech rules of the characters prompt the reader to conduct analytical analyses. You are constantly looking for unknowns, trying to solve something, and when something becomes clear, the reader feels proud, as if he had found the answer to a mathematical equation. The structure and development of the text forces it.*

**Key words:** Menippean satire, bardo, subconscious, historical novel, imagination, mystic.

**Introduction.** Menippean satire is a literary genre originating in ancient times, characterized by its fusion of philosophical ideas with parody. It differs from other forms of literature in its free-form prose and poetic style. The name of this genre is derived from the Greek writer Menippus, who is credited with its creation. Due to the lack of surviving examples of ancient Greek Menippean satire, it is challenging to determine its exact origins. The term itself was first introduced by the Roman scholar Marcus Terentius Varro, who authored 150 satirical works that blended Latin and Greek elements. Approximately 600 fragments of his writings have survived.

In Russian literature, the fantastic work "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" by Fyodor Dostoevsky, accompanied by dark irony and satirical elements, serves as a prominent example of Menippean literature. This genre is characterized by the portrayal of the protagonist in a fantastical setting. The purpose and significance of employing such a literary

technique is defined by the protagonist's departure from an ordinary, real-world, social context, for instance, their journey to heaven, descent into the underworld, or voyage to the afterlife or the land of the dead.

**The aim of the work** is to show the reflection of Menippean satire in the English novel.

**The main problem.** The tradition of writing in the satirical style of menippa has a long history. This technique allows the author to explore traditional values, familiar customs, and behaviors that have shaped our lives over the years in a freer environment. Serious issues are explored, the possibilities for satire take on a sharper, more thoughtful approach, and are presented more clearly. The characters and stereotypes in these works are not unique in their characteristics. Typically, they are portrayed as cunning, greedy individuals who can persuade others, gain their trust, and take pride in their abilities. Critics and scholars generally agree that this genre blends

elements of prose and poetry. Some experts believe that, in addition to this mixture of genres, styles and language are also blended in this type of work. Lucian, a second-century Syrian rhetorician and satirist, composed his works in the Greek language. He extensively employed sarcasm and established the genre of comic dialogue as a parody of Socratic dialogue. Lucian derided individuals who espoused belief in the supernatural and traditional narratives regarding deities, as well as various philosophical schools of thought. He was greatly influenced by the philosophers Diogenes and Menippeus. Lucian's work significantly impacted Western literature, and he did not refrain from criticizing prominent figures. Thomas More, François Rabelais, William Shakespeare, and Jonathan Swift were all influenced by his writings and produced works that were shaped by his influence [1].

Menippean literature is characterized by a tendency towards scandalous scenes, unusual behavior, and inappropriate language, which is to say, any deviation from the generally accepted course of events and established norms of conduct and ethics, including language. These scandals are dramatically different from epic events and tragic catastrophes in their artistic structure, as well as from comedic conflicts and revelations. It can be argued that menippean works are emerging as a new artistic category, completely distinct from classical epic and dramatic forms. These works reflect the need for transformation in society, when there is a desire for change but a lack of understanding of how to achieve it, leading to tragic expectations.

Historical novels in the English language have remained true to their traditional roots, but in recent years, this genre has gained significant critical acclaim and commercial success, reflecting a "craving" for historical fiction among readers [5].

Kristin Harrison and Angeliki Spyropoulos argue that, despite the diverse forms that the "historical turn" in the humanities has taken, the increased significance of history in contemporary literature is one of its most notable and significant developments [4]. As a literary genre, historical novels regularly raise questions about evidence, veracity, accuracy, and reliability. Given the current political and technological landscape, these issues are particularly relevant when considering the influence of historical fiction [7]. The "neo-historical turn" as defined by Rousselot can be differentiated from the more popular model of contemporary fiction, which has been assessed as being clearly destructive and subtly realizing its potential for radical possibilities. According to Rousselot, these

neo-historical novels are characterized by distinct paradoxes and contradictions. Several characteristics of neo-historicism may be applied to contemporary American historical fiction in the 21st century. Contemporary American authors employ a skeptical, sardonic, anti-positivist, and distrustful writing style in relation to mainstream historical narratives. Their works often have a humorous tone and carry a strong subtextual message [9].

The novel "Lincoln in the Bardo" by George Saunders, winner of the prestigious 2017 Booker Prize for Literature, is a notable example of contemporary American literature that combines both historical and fantastical elements. The work is a masterful piece of satire and fantasy, showcasing the author's exceptional talent.

The novel is based on the events surrounding the death and burial of President Abraham Lincoln, who was assassinated in 1865. After his death, his body was exhumed from its original grave and reinterred with that of his father in Springfield, Illinois, where he was born. This event served as the inspiration for the story, which explores the afterlife and the journey of the soul. In an interview, Saunders revealed that his writing was influenced by stories he heard about Lincoln's death and the visits he made to his son's grave. He described the impact of these experiences, which led him to create the novel's unique and thought-provoking narrative [6].

The author described himself as follows: "Suddenly, a memory linking Lincoln and Pieta became vivid in my mind. This memory did not bring me any solace for the next two decades. What prevented me from reaching a decision was the fact that this subject is very profound. Finally, in 2012, I realized that I was growing old and would never be young again. I did not want this to be written on my tombstone: 'He was afraid of creating a terrible work of art and waited too long to bring it to life'. I decided that I should pursue my idea as a scholarly project, without committing to specific ideas for implementation. As a result of this endeavor, the novel 'Lincoln in the Bardo' was created. Bardo, according to Tibetan Buddhism, refers to the transitional state. In Islamic tradition, Araf represents the space between paradise and hell. Saunders has successfully created a realistic historical setting in his novel, 'Lincoln in the Bardo'. Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, is depicted as being deeply saddened by the passing of his son due to illness, and is shown visiting his grave on numerous occasions. The author then moves the narrative to the Washington cemetery, where he incorporates the presence of restless spirits and crafts

an engaging storyline through the establishment of dialogue between them.

The writer is familiar with this teaching because he is engaged in Buddhist philosophy. For this reason, it raises very interesting and surprising questions. He is trying to affirm and convince these restless spirits that they can stay here for a long time, at the cost of what power and strength. Thanks to the construction of such an interesting storyline, information about ordinary people and the truths of that time comes up. As you know, the events of the novel describe the events that took place in the following days, starting with the death of William Lincoln, the son of President Abraham Lincoln, on February 20, 1862. The plot of the novel takes place in a place called the Bardo, at the point between life and death, when the soul leaves the body from the moment of death, according to Buddhist beliefs. William Lincoln arrives at the Bardo. The novel is based on lines from beginning to end. These lines can be divided into two parts. The first type of remark is that of the restless dead, who are having a dialogue with each other. They observe the grieving and grieving President Lincoln, analyzing his behavior after his son's death. According to legend, every soul has its own earthly story, and it is told over and over again, each time they come back to it over and over again. These are mostly nightmares that have been disfigured because they have not been able to fulfill their desires and dreams in their lives. They do not know that they are dead, they do not accept it and treat the Bardo as their hospital yard and the coffins as their hospital room [2].

The second type of remark is quotations from historical texts. These are fragments reflecting the diversity of Lincoln's life. Saunders skillfully used historical sources and fabricated ideas that were the product of his imagination, so that he synthesized and brought them together in such a way that in some moments it is difficult to separate historical reality from the product of imagination. With this structure and method of development, Saunders managed to create a single mosaic of the novel. It can be seen from the content and plot of the novel that before writing the novel, the writer got acquainted with a large number of historical sources, visited reliable sources of that historical period, studied and researched them. By adding fragments and examples from these sources to the novel, he managed to create an entire text. Here are thoughts and reflections of historical figures, ordinary people, excerpts from information about events written in periodicals, and quotes from books. Thus, the writer created a work that differs from the rules of the traditional novel genre. He wrote a new

novel, a new book, and created a different, original literary work.

The novel describes the political and moral atmosphere of the time in the language of dialogues, and even natural scenes are taken from the observations of the characters. Development is the individual style of each writer. The writer's language, intonation, text structure, narrative of events, and a number of unique features define this personality. In this sense, this novel by Saunders is distinguished by its originality. Such an unusual plotline of the novel and the development of events are more reminiscent of a drama than a novel. The characters telling each other their lives in the Bardo speak in the form of dialogue, with cues. In short, a novel is not a whole text, but a text created from dialogues along a chain of events. This indicates the emergence of a new genre of the novel in the image of such a talented writer as Saunders. Although the theme is not new, the structure of the novel is new [8].

The author himself is writing a diary novel based on various official documents, memoirs, diaries and other documents of Lincoln's contemporaries. He compiled this diary based on the statements of people who died and were stuck in the Bardo. It seems these people have a cleansing ritual between real life and the afterlife. The author creates a historical scene based on the death of Lincoln's son. The president is very shocked and suffering from the death of his son, he cannot come to his senses. He cannot get over this loss and repeatedly visits the cemetery and his son's grave. Saunders uses this small historical scene and expands it to build a perfect, unique storyline. The writer is trying to clarify what happened through the diaries of people who speak for and against the president, in a style not yet developed in the novel genre. Long descriptions and dialogues replace these notes and create very concise, clear images. Three of them served at the cemetery the longest: Hans Follman, Roger Bevins III and St. Everly Thomas. They feel sorry for the child who came here.

From chapter II to Chapter IX, the events focus on a party hosted by the President and his wife. The civil war continues in the country. Brief information about this is provided through historical sources and quotes from individuals, as well as what happened around Lincoln. The writer Kanan Haji in his article "The Judgment of Souls in Hell" writes about the novel by George Saunders: "A person's real face is hidden in his subconscious. The writer is a geologist engaged in subconscious excavations. In this sense, George Saunders' journey into the spirit world is amazing. Many novels and short stories about

reincarnation are written in classical literature and modern prose. There is a concept of orphism in Greek mythology. According to this worldview, real life begins after death. The Orphics also believed in the transmigration of souls from one body to another. As a personified image of time, Chronos influences the fate of all Greek gods. In the novel "Lincoln in the Bardo", Chronos is Abraham Lincoln. Although the writer makes digressions in the spirit of Dante, the form and content are completely new. Although the work "Link in the Bardo" is based on the principles of the new novel, it is based on the principles of "what a novel of the 21st century should be". He proposes a new model that uses all the elements of a modern novel. In short, Sanders' novel "Lincoln in the Bardo" solves the eternal problem of humanity, the conflict of fathers and sons, on a reincarnational level. This is a completely new, original approach" [3, p. 9].

According to many, the novel is an unusual work with a multifaceted and multi-layered deep content in the truest sense of the word. A work written by a talented writer encourages the reader to think deeply, take and leave and reap, let him wish, without neglecting anything in his earthly life, let him become perfect, based on human values, in other words, let him be able to live this benefit as a life. The characters of the novel try their best to remember their past lives, try to remember them, try to hide their sins. They're just trying to prove who they are. They all want to be listened to carefully, justified, believed and convinced that they are a pure, pious person, that they live a pure life. In chapter LXII of the novel, Lincoln's body structure, face, eyes, in short, his characteristic features are brought to the attention of various people through quotations referring to written sources. In the next chapter, the three main characters mentioned above show Lincoln's actions, behavior, and how he entered his son's tomb. They encourage the boy to get closer to his father, try to give him hope. Chapter LXVI contains conversations of other characters, residents of the Bardo, about life, their complaints, how to live, and their unhappy fate.

The LXX chapter once again reflects criticism of the president against the backdrop of the civil war of that time. There are even those who say, "The president is an idiot". Another statistic contains threatening thoughts: "If you don't resign soon, we will throw spiders in your food and laugh at you". "You will experience the real torments of hell. Abe Lincoln, you are a stupid and cursed man. Forgive me for these harsh words, but you are worse than a Negro". It is absurd to think that the work is about Lincoln and his family tragedy. This novel is about

people in the collective sense, regardless of their position in society and personal life. The funny thing about the novel is that the dead souls who gather in the Bardo try to stay there as long as possible, realizing that they will not return to life. Quotes from historical documents, personal correspondence, memoirs, mothers blaming Lincoln for the deaths of their sons, incorrect orders from commanders that led to unnecessary deaths, speculation about who started the war and why, seem somehow meaningless. Life and death are the same. There is no point in living and avoiding death. For this reason, the spirits of the cemetery try to convince themselves of the bardo. On the border of life and death, these souls are sure that they are not dead, they are still alive. They were just sick, and they were put in a box and locked in their stone houses. Each of them has a unique character. They are sure that they will return to their loved ones soon. Since each of the spirits tells the stories of their lives, remembering their dreams that will never come true, they can make a vivid impression, even being dead. In the novel, although no character claims to be the main role, there are quite vivid, contradictory, very surprising, but at the same time sad images that seem absurd.

There are also those who compare this novel by Saunders with the works of another American writer, the master of horror novels Stephen King. For this reason, a certain level of thinking and understanding, experience is required from the reader in order to fully understand the novel. Although we do not pretend to think about the level of translation of the novel into Azerbaijani, it is difficult to understand the novel as a whole, and this is not a disadvantage of translation. The novel resembles a huge iceberg. Its deep meaning lies at its core. He created a collage of quotes and riddles. Sometimes you fall into an abundance of incomprehensible, contradictory ideas. The development of events in the Bardo is described in an unimaginably confusing, unusual and uncertain way. With the language of countless (about 200) different characters in the book, the reader seems to find himself in a maze and is looking for ways out of this maze. Of course, it is clear that in these dialogues, in deep meanings, the coverage and presentation of events are hidden. As you read the work, it becomes clear that the novel actually touches on many important issues, problems that are relevant today. The writer touches on historical and theological issues, instills such human feelings as understanding and acceptance of death against the background of relationships between people and personalities. Saunders calls for appreciating every



moment of real life, conveying through the language of characters telling their fates the fact that the souls inhabiting the Bardo cannot understand physical death after the physical death of a person.

Postmodernism advocates experimentation with form. In this novel, the fictions and allusions of the author attract the reader, make him think, excite him. In the finale of his novel, a fire train is mentioned, but for the average reader it is an ordinary train.

In modern Azerbaijani prose, one can find examples of collage interpretation of the past of our history, culture and literature. Kamal Abdulla's novel "The Unfinished Manuscript" is a vivid example of the fragmentary, decentralized and distorted image of Azerbaijan's historical past in artistic thought. Another novel by the same author, *Valley of the Magicians*, contains a large number of archetypes and past and present literary and artistic texts in which they appear, creating a collage of works read in the reader's mind. The archetype of the sorcerer and its representative versions are sufficient examples in themselves. In general, this novel is a collage of different types of texts – religious, cultural, historical and literary [9, p. 291–292].

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**Conclusion.** It is the author's skill that manifests itself, and his systematization in the novel, the development of events, further deepens the topic. This creates a picture designed to convey the experience and worldview of a person, that is, the reader. The reader uses all his erudition, intelligence, and tries to turn on the light inside. In fact, this creates psychological tension and is understood as a sign that each person lives in a whole world. One of the problems that Saunders' novel suggests and hints at is that a person must leave a mark on their life. A person's life consists not only of joys and happy moments. At the same time, it is pain and sadness that shape a person as a person. Thus, the main motive in the work is the thought of the sudden loss of a loved one's life and the resulting suffering, the consequences of life after death, attachment to life is a sign of this. As a result, the idea is instilled that a person should live for today, forget what happened in the past, should not worry about the future, should not postpone today's business for tomorrow. Because life can suddenly come to an end and plans can come to naught.

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### **Халілзаде Ш. Ш. ВІДОБРАЖЕННЯ САТИРИ МЕНІПІ У РОМАНІ «ЛІНКОЛЬН У БАРДО» ДЖОРДЖА СОНДЕРСА**

У статті йдеться про роман американського письменника Джорджа Сондерса «Лінкольн у Бардо». Роман являє собою подорож у світ парфумів, високо оцінений за свою форму та зміст, а також за свій зухвалий стиль. Мова роману дуже плавна і красива. Проте важко вловити ритм твору. На погляд побіжність, гармонія і єдність здаються слабкими, і відчувається розд робленість. Події відбуваються на цвинтарі. Складається враження, що головний герой твору не один і не два, але всі персонажі, що беруть участь, мають на це право. Кожен із них прагне розповісти про своє життя, намагаючись зрозуміти і розгадати причину, через яку вони сюди прийшли. На перший погляд, ця ситуація створює фрагментацію та нерозуміння, а також ідею про те, що роман не має повної, зрозумілої сюжетної лінії та передбачає відсутність гармонії. Однак, коли ви слухаєте думки та слова кожного персонажа, виникають певні ідеї для того періоду, все стає зрозумілим, і завеса таємниці повільно знімається. Написання такого роману на тлі сімейної трагедії американського президента видається дуже привабливим. Роздуми про таке рішення та написання у незвичайному стилі та досягнення успіху показують, що можливості жанру роману ще не вичерпані. Сондерс представив роман як експеримент. Фільтруючи історичні факти і те, що відбувалося на той час, через свою уяву, він додав свої літературні вигадки до реальних подій, додавши до них відтінки магії, реалізму та сюрреалізму. Незважаючи на значні розбіжності в думках про твори, роман справді новий і має надзвичайний вплив. Звичайно, тема життя та смерті не є новою темою, але Сондерс оновив та доповнив цю тему. Він зміг поділитися своїми ідеями, відкриттям, своєю версією про подорож душі після фізичної смерті. Роман – багатогранний твір. Подібності та контрасти системи образів, мови та мовних правил персонажів спонукають читача проводити аналітичні аналізи. Постійно шукає невідоме, намагається щось вирішити, і коли щось стає зрозумілим, читач відчуває гордість, ніби знайшов відповідь на математичне рівняння. Структура та розвиток тексту змушують до цього.

**Ключові слова:** Меніпова сатира, бардо, підсвідомість, історичний роман, уява, містика.