

## AN STUDY ON COMMONALITY IN SOCIO-POLITICAL OBJECTIVES AND THE SIMILARITIES IN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE SPIRITUAL ITINERARIES INCLUDING

### (Gilgamesh, Ardavirafnameh, Plato's Er Itinerary, Seir-ol-Ebab by Sanae; and the Divine Comedy by Dante)

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**Abstract:** Confronting the death would traditionally impulse the human's sense of curiosity and fear. The questions like "What will happen to us after death?" as well as "Where do we go?" Has always been the human's mental disturbance. Imaginative itineraries to the after-death world could be a treatment and a common reply to the reasons of fear and curiosity to the death. Quite a few of such writings in different cultures and nations are found. Among all these itineraries called "the spiritual itineraries", the researcher studies five long ones to the after-death world inventories, with some laxity though, including: The Epic of Gilgamesh, Ardavirafnameh, Plato's Er, Sanae's Seir-ol-Ebad Elal-Ma,ad, and The divine comedy by Dante. In this research we mainly focus on the similarities and differences between them. All these works share similarities in term of political, social, religious philosophical and educational objectives however they are more similar regarding their structure as well as their content such as: sacred numbers, the presence of the guide, archetypes, symbols and etc. The parallelism and similarities originate from the unity of thought bases within human being also the cultural and theological interactions.

**Keywords:** Spiritual itinerary, Gilgamesh, Ardavirafname, Er Plato, Seir-ol-Ebad, Divine comedy.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the main issues traditionally raised by human beings is death and the after-death life as well as doubting whether the life ends in death or continues in another world. Of course human being was already sure that never ever one is going to return to the life and tell what he hears and sees right after his death, so with the help of imagination, he kept writing imaginary and spiritual itinerary perhaps he could partially get rid of his curiosity in this regard. In the literature of most nations and cultures some relevant stances are found. For example Gilgamesh travels to the underworld to meet his friend Enkidu, Odysseus travels to the world of the dead to meet her mother's soul, Aradviraf's travels to his relatives' heaven and Limbo, Dante's travels to Limbo, paradise and hell, Er's itinerary by Plato, Sanae's Seirolebad etc.

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The writers of these itineraries have had various objectives, besides being curious about the after death world, some other objectives are as follow; criticizing the status of the current society, refining and cultivating people, helping to promote a certain religion, objectivity in the mind, stating philosophical and mystic thoughts, praising friends and using satire on foes etc. Besides comparative comparisons, this research highlights the content and structural similarities between the writers' objectives. The summary to each itinerary story are presented and then objective subscription and characteristic similarities are compared in two parts.

### **The Objectives of Spiritual Itinerary**

The authors of spiritual itineraries in creating such works have had various purposes; their curiosity of the immaterial world and the after death world, preventing weakening age people's believes, proof world of abstractions and objectifying the minds, reminding the consequences of atheism and committing sins, criticizing the current society conditions through itinerary. Stating philosophical, mystic and literary thoughts are some of the most important objectives. In this research we deal with just socio-politic and philosophical objectives.

### **Characteristics of Spiritual Itineraries**

These spiritual itineraries share some features like; possessing archetypes, having a guide, applying the symbolic language and symbolic symbol, and having sacred numbers.

## **THE SUMMARY OF FIVE SPIRITUAL ITINERARIES**

### **Epic of Gilgamesh**

Epic of Gilgamesh is human's oldest epic in print- which encounters death. It is written in twelve which includes two parts: The first part explains about Enkidu and Gilgamesh's boldness and the status of the Uruk city. The residents of the Uruk city are dead beat by Gilgamesh's tyranny so they beg The Lord to create a rival for Gilgamesh and so does he by creating a man named Enkidu. Enkidu enters the city of Uruk and has a showdown with Gilgamesh is defeated by Gilgamesh but they make friends. Having shown championship behaviors they seized God's wrath and Enkidu becomes ill and dies afterwards. Enkidu's death encounters Gilgamesh with the facts of life and death and the latter part of the epic, an itinerary toward immortality starts. To be eternal and to be immortal and having gone through an ordeal, Gilgamesh consults Utnapishtim to learn how to be eternal. After a revelatory seven -day asleep Gilgamesh fails. With the help and companionship of Urshanabi, the Napishism's canoeist, goes to explore the rejuvenating plant deep in the sea, and so does he. When he gets to the beach a snake finds and eats the plant, it molts. Hopeless Gilgamesh goes back to the priests in Uruk and begs the

magicians to conjugate Enkidu's soul to look over the underworld. Having done some preparations, Gilgamesh enters the hell and meets Enkidu's shadow and learns about the after death world. Right after returning from this revelatory trip, Gilgamesh lies down and dies and the trip and the epic end.

### **The Summary of Ardavirafname**

Ardavirafname explains about the excursion of a saint called "Viraf" which occurs after The Alexander's attack and at the same time with Sassanid dynasty. Religion commanders and the great men plan to learn about the after-death world as well as about the reward and punishment. For this purpose they choose seven saint persons among whom a person named "Viraf" is chosen to travel to the after-death world. Then he washes and puts on his best clothes and wears scent. Then the religion commanders give Viraf three bowls filled with wine and Goshtaspian Mang. One contains pure thought, the other bowl contains pure talk, and the third one is filled with pure actions. He drinks the wine and the Mang and prays consciously and goes to bed and begins his seven-day trip to the hereafter world. Raven Viraff gets to a place called 'Chekad Daiti -a mountain which is believed to be at the center of the earth based on Zoroastrian\* cosmology- and also to Chinvad bridge. At the first night which his soul departs from his body, two gods named "Soroush Ahloo" and God of Azar welcome him. Viraf crosses the Chinvad Bridge companied by Soroush Ahloo and Azar god. And goes to heaven fraught with gifts and joys and he also goes to hell fraught with darkness, suffering and diseases and torments. Before getting to hell and heaven, Vireff sees a place named Hamistkan(limbo) which is the place of those whose number of oblations and sins are the same. Then he goes to visit the hell and the paradise under the guidance of Soroush Ahlo and Azar. Having watched different punishments he returns back to Amshaspadan and Ahoora Mazda companied by Soroush Ahloo and Izad Azar. Ahoura welcomes him and order him to be back to the world and tell people what he said then he reborns and explains what he has exactly seen and a knowledgeable writer writes his words.

### **The Summary of Plato's story named "Er"**

This is a story about a man named 'Er', from Pamphilia, who is killed in a battle field. They were gathering corpse but surprisingly one of the corpse was fresh after twelve days whereas all other corpses were about to rotten, they took the corpse to his home to burn in fire, he woke up and told what he had seen in the hereafter world he quoted 'When my soul departed my body, I, accompanied by a group of ghosts, bound to a very strange place which has never been visited by human being before. There were two connected openings which ran to the depth of the earth and the two holes faced two other openings which ran to the sky. Some adjudicators were

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\* Proto-Iranian religion

sitting at the threshold gate who judged the dead people's actions and they would write the verdict to each group separately. The righteous verdict written on a board was fixed on their chest and they were sent to the right to advance to heaven while the unrighteous' verdict card, for wrong actions they had done, was fixed on their back and were bound to the left rout to go to the depth of the earth. When it was my turn, the adjudicators told me to be back to the world and explain exactly what I saw. Accompanied by other ghosts, Er comes to such a point that he is obliged to decide to reborn. Going through some adventures Er and his companion's returns back to the world.

### **The Summary of Seir-ol-ebad by Sanaee**

This spiritual itinerary depicts the creation of mankind and the mind and the heart through allegory and proposes the man's travel from earthy world to the heaven. This spiritual treatment includes; Journey in man, four elements, nine heavens and familiarity with related heinous qualities and finally would achieve the Logos and doomed in it. This behavior in fact shows the seven stages in mysticism at which the human being is assimilated into the Lord. Wisdom is Sanaee's guide in this trip which appears as a kind and luminary old man which helps the person's soul to go through the unrighteous moral characteristics. Accompanied by the old man when setting off to heaven, the superego concerned with human natures each which represents a part of hell and the features which warrants the owner to wrench. When overcoming these natures which are to the four nature's imbalance, the humanity features come in and at the end, accomplishment and unification with the Lord happens.

### **The Summary of Divine Comedy**

Poet's dreams and imagines challenge him to a dark jungle. The poet meets Vergilius's, The Rome heroic, soul and at that perplexity state Vergilius invites him to go to Limbo and hell and then to the paradise together, Dante is in dilemma but Vergilius promises him that he is going to visit Beatrice's soul so he agrees.

### ***The Summary of "The Hell" Book***

Hell is a very deep, cold, round and dark abysmal, the deeper you go, the colder and the darker it is. The nine horrible floors of hell are around the abysmal and they are separated from each other. The introductory floor is for the opportunists and the weaklings, those who were neither bad nor good. The first floor, in which Vergilius lives, is like purgatory and it is for the great men from the primitive era. The second floor which is so called the main Limbo is the place for the voluptuary. The third floor is for the gluttonous. The fourth floor is for the extravagant and the stingy. The furious ones go to the fifth floor. The sixth floor is for the disbelievers. The

seventh floor is for the rapists, suicide, blasphemers, pederasts and the vampire, and the crafty the procurer, the thieves and the dealer of the sacred positions, the fortune tellers, the augur, the dishonest dealers, the tortuous, the insidious counselors, the divisive and the alchemists are harassed in the eighths floor. The ninth floor is for the traitorous to the close relatives and the home country and the guest killers. And Evil is at the bottom of the hell. Dante and Vergilius get out of the other side of the earth and get to the cone shaped mountain of the Limbo.

### ***The Summary of the Limbo Book***

Unlike what happens in the hell where the more the passenger goes the more tired and burnout he gets, Dante and his guide go from the horrible darkness of the hell toward the light and happiness. The more frontward one goes the more agile one feels and this shows how pure and free of impurities and sins the person is. Some people are the inhabitant of the limbo who are wrath of the Lord but they are not supposed to be ceaselessly, punished, like other inhabitants, by the Lord. The limbo is composed of seven floors and the earth paradise is situated. The first floor is the place of the proud, the second floor is the place of the envy and the third floor is the place where the enraged ones are kept. The lazy people are kept at the fourth floor. The extravagant are settled at the fifth floor while gluttonous are at the sixth floor and the sensual are the inhabitants of the seventh floor. At the end Dante and Vergilius get to the world paradise and Vergilius, who is the symbol of wisdom, says goodbye to him and leaves him. Then Dante drinks some water from Eunoe, conceptual sense, is pure and gets ready to go to heaven.

### ***The Summary of Paradise Book***

Dante initiate his journey at the world paradise but doesn't know the exact time it ends. This is the third stage and it is much longer than two previous parts since the first one passes through the ground and the latter one passes through the limbo but the third stage continues within the heavens. His guide is Beatrice who is the symbol of love. Dante's heaven is formed based on Ptolemaic astronomy, which believes that heaven consists of nine crystalline hollow planets. Dante paves nine heavens to get to the supreme divine throne.

## **OBJECTIVE COMMONALITIES**

### **Socio-Polical Objectives**

#### ***Gilgamesh***

Facing Gilgamesh with death and visiting the underworld and its description by Enkidu make him understand that he is definitely mortal and reminds him and all other defiant governors, that they will definitely face death even for Gilgamesh

whose two third of the body is the God. This part is much more noticeable specially in describing limbo. In a part he says' The kingdom crown is pulled off from your heads and those who were governors years ago all incline. (Gilgamesh, 2004:38)

### *Ardavirafname*

One of the political functions of this spiritual itinerary is showing the position of the righteous governor's ant that of the unrighteous governors in the hell. (Afifi, 2013: 31-32) also as a punishment to the cruel governors (ibid, 28th chapter)

Myth of Er: When Plato talks about the horrible fate of the cruel king Ardianous in the hell and as he describing the one of the ghost's rigorous grief and his regret about his life choice as a cruel governor, in fact, these all show a political direction. Hassan Fathi states that' 'the most frequent conversation allocated to justice is the republication". Plato wrote one book out of ten in this regard and discussed about the justice definition and ends it in the tenth book about a conscientious man called "Er" to depict clearly what plunders or punishments the righteous and the unrighteous will face in the next world.(Fathi,2010:5)

### *Sanaee's Work Named Seir-ol-ebad*

There are some smart and hidden critics about some classes of the society. For instance one of the best, most precision and the artiest instance is criticizing and lampooning presumptuous judges and scientists of the age. While describing Jupiter as presumptuous despite the old belief that Jupiter was the symbol of justice among the stars in fact Sana'ee criticizes the attribution of pride and audaciousness among the scientists of the age. Sana'ee calls them" innately-bright- and innately -dark-essence" and he says' 'I found some people there who had bright appearances and dark inside like candles, they extremely falsified and counterfeited. (Sana'ee, 1982:239). Other examples to exemplify as a social goal from Seir-ol ebad is that like what Plato said in his legend, named Er, Sanaa'ee considers both social justice and the justice as moderation in every individual's life. Moderation in temperament and in all elements within the human leads to the continuation of life while deviating from moderation would lead to death. He believes that prosperity is the consequence of justice like spring which is the consequent of the justice. (Ibid: 217)

### *Divine Comedy*

Like other authors of the spiritual itineraries, Dante the politicians and the kings in the hell and on rare occasions in limbo, strongly criticizes the wrong, hypocritically unjustly and tyrannically way of politician leaders and the governors in the best way. For example in hell twelfth writing by him we read "Accompanied by a reliable guard while walking beside a red river we saw some people who were in water up to their eyelashes and they were caterwauling and then the great Chentaouri introduced them

and said these people used to be the cruel governors who infringed others' rights and they are crying for their crime and tyranny, and that head with such black hair is Atsolino and the blond hair is Obtodasty's. (Hell, the twelfth song 249).

### **Philosophical Objectives**

All these spiritual itineraries share the philosophical considerations of course differently. From here onward we are studying the most important philosophical issues in each itinerary.

#### ***Gilgamesh***

Gilgamesh's philosophical orientation is based on nihilism and consequently on worldly and temporarily self-indulgence. as Shakib-al khori, The Iraqi director assigns Gilgamesh as an existentialists and finally gets to the point that human efforts against death are all abortive". (Sattari 2006:11). Based Babylonians and Sumerians' point of view about life and death, John says "Unlike Egyptians, Babylonians expect nothing except suffering and failure and believed that we may achieve a complete prosperity in this world. (Noss, John, 2002 :74) for this reason both Sidori sabito and UtNapishtim advise Gilgamesh to return back to the world and enjoy his short term life, since the hereafter world is replete with suffering and affliction and the only thing that people are fed with is the soil and furthermore the God's garden is farfetched so encouraging people to pleasure seeking and enjoying the short-term opportunity known as Epicuric life-style is recommended and could be another objective of this old text. Johan Gray also talks about the philosophical richness of Gilgamesh "We might believe that Gilgamesh is more profound than Odysseus and regarding human needs and requirements and his physical limitations it is richer, philosophically. Gilgamesh has a better literal unity and this feature has made it an Epical-philosophical story. (Gary, 2000: 63)

#### ***Ardavirafname***

Some descriptions in Ardavirafname could be considered as having philosophical messages or at least a philosophical message can be inferred. For example the hell is described like this" There are as many unrighteous people as the number of hairs all over a horse's body but they can never see nor hear each other and all think that they are alone. (Afifi, 2013:55). The last description that is, infernals' feeling lonely, is a part which looks like philosophic one. Their feeling lonely is due to two reasons, first the human deeds appear to receive one in the form of weather a pretty girl or an ugly hag and in fact they are the visualization of person's thoughts, talks and deeds so everybody's punishment is in accordance with what he did in one's life. And since each individual has his/her own deeds so the punishments are different. Another reason is the individual dread of what they are going to face and

consequently one ignore others. This part of the hell description is astonishingly philosophic and shows a figuring out the torture of loneliness and the fear. In fact they are all facts about the hell. Of course darkness could be one more reason.

### *Er legend by Plato*

As a philosopher Plato would definitely propose his own ideas through the Er legend. This legend accommodates Plato to talk about some of the main philosophical issues such as; determinism and free will, the ultimate prosperity, the value of philosophy and science etc.

### *Fatalism and Liberty*

One of the most important issues in philosophy is, a very complicated issue which seems almost impossible to explain. In this legend Plato tries to explain this issue and define the extent of each of fatalism and liberty. Plato deals with these two issues precisely and under some certain conditions, he assigned them fatal and restrictive. Drawing is made to set your priorities for your next life, a choice among he suggested ones and not making a free choice represents a fatal situation but one can make a choice among the limited offered selections. In other one can choose one just out of the suggested choices. And he is never allowed to suggest a choice. Marina Berzins says "Er legend focuses on three kinds of human limits including; knowledge limitation, mortality limitation meaning having a limited period of time, and the limitation of external obligations which force him to do some external actions, life span, the death time, how to die for example be sudden or expected one, (Berzins, 2012:134) Kenet Dorter believes that there is a vicious fatalism circle in the Er legend. Because life choice is under the domain of choosing a person but our next life fully dependant to our present choice of life and this matter creates a vicious circle which looks fatalism. (Dorter, 2003:131). Some believe that Plato believes in fatalism rather than liberty and criticize him and say if we were obliged to make a choice on our own so we can't have a choice and consequently punishment and rewarding makes no sense. (Ibid: 132). As a response we can say that; As Plato talks about fatalism, in fact he makes us decide and says that human beings are at the exposure of a limited choice and they have to have a choice Kenet dorter had already confessed that "Metals myth, The five Hesiod metal ages, emphasizes on our freedom in making a choice while Er myth emphasizes on our freedom though limited. (ibid 140).the very writer believes that Er legend is an exact reflection of how responsible we are for our actions. Despite the trivial authority we have for our previous and present life choice.(ibid 132). Stephen Holly wool explains different parts of the Er story and says" Er story includes three main parts; the weighing up and judgment of hereafter world, universe indicating obligation, and reincarnation. (Halliwell, 2013:446)



***The Ultimate Real Prosperity***

Plato believes that achieving the real perfect prosperity is solely reachable in caring about philosophy as well as caring about science. Philosophy and science modify the fatalism as well as having liberty. Stephan Halliwell believes that "The reason why our ancestors wanted to be back from the heaven to the world and to be reincarnated was that they lacked the element of philosophy in their life. (Halliwell, 2013:451). He believes that Er legend, at the end of the Republic book, shows the Plato's recommending everyone to choose philosophy in their next life to achieve prosperity. (ibid:452).

***Sana'ee's Seir-ol ebad***

Sana'ee talks about four elements and their consequent tempers. He frequently enjoyed the old cosmologic and astrology theories known as "Ptolemaic" and also enjoyed philosophers' ideas, especially Avicenna's in successive wits. As Mahdi Salmani says "Sanae's information about the physics of the elements and about the classic psychology, to describe the soul of plants, animals and human, are seen in the text and also we can see Ptolemaic and the theory of 'successive wits" (Salmani, 2010:79).

***Divine Comedy***

In his book, Dante solely does not define the hell, limbo and the heaven. Along with these issues he mentions about his philosophical, religious and morale theories most of which are based on Bible Scripture and Plato and Aristotle instructions. Shoji-e-ddin Shafa also emphasizes that "Dante's Paradise is a combination of philosophical principles of the Greece from one hand and figurative principals of the Bible on the other hand". (Shafa, 2000: 1033). We will discuss them briefly in the following parts:

***Fatalism and Liberty***

An issue which has always been challenging to many philosophers and theologians is fatalism and liberty as Dante deals with in his sixteenth and eighteenth anthem of the Limbo and also in his fifth anthem of paradise. On the behalf of an infernal Dante says: "You are free but you are under the domain of another super natural power." (Limbo, The sixteenth anthem: 785). These points of view will automatically remind us of Plato's ideas in Er legend which is presented in philosophical objectives part of this research. Another infernal tells Dante: "You, the alive, relate everything to the heaven as if it had got everything within it by force, if so you would lose your liberty then it would not be just to be joyful for being righteous or to suffer for what you did wrong. (ibid: 784). In heaven part and on the behalf of Beatrice he says: "The best gift which Allah bestowed us due to his continued generosity is the gift

which is most of all compatible with his mercy and God himself cherishes it, most of all, is the liberty” (Heaven the fifth anthem 1179).

### *Love and Wisdom*

By choosing Vergilius-symbol of wisdom- as a guide to cross the hell and the limbo and choosing Beatrice-the symbol of love-Dante implies that wise can only help us cross the hell of slight sins and the limbo of the abominables and slighter ins but it is unable to help us reach the one God and reaching the one God and achieving the real prosperity is possible only with the help of love.

## **SIMILARITIES IN SOME FEATURES**

### **The Archetypes**

Since these archetypes originate from the profound wisdom of the mass and from unconscious, they appear in all intellectual and literal works. According to Jung, the original form is unconscious and when it gets conscious and is understood changes and turns its color to the same color as the person at whom it occurs has. (Jung, 2000:14).Some of these features are studied in five itineraries.

### *Gilgamesh*

**The archetype of passing an assay:** In this trip Gilgamesh gets through many trials, the protagonist’s –the passenger’s- passing from ordeals is one *of the elderly-symbols. Gilgamesh passes through mountains, deserts, and the deadly sea.* He has to pass another secret trial at the presence of Utnapishtim, not sleeping for six days and nights, he fails in the last trial though.

**The archetype of water:** In this Epic-the second chapter of Gilgamesh-we see crossing the archetype of water and washing in the spring. Mircea Eliade believes that water is the elixir of immortality and elongates the life span. He also says” Floating in water is the key to recidivism and a new reviving since each floating equals vanishing the previous face and renewing an indefinite face which is an introduction to innovation and leaving water means is the repetition of manifestation of a new face, creating cosmos and having connection with water guarantees the renewal of the existence. Water is a new life through mystifying ceremonies. With the help of a magic ceremonies held for the dead, it is balmy and causes resurrection after death.(Eliade, 2015:189-190)

**The archetype of holy stones:** In Gilgamesh trip when he gets to the God’s garden (Paradise) he describes the paradise like this; trees bearing fruits from ruby, lazuli and a carpet out of emerald under the trees. (Gilgamesh, 2004:75-77). In fact the existence of the holy stones in the paradise is an elderly- symbol for immortality and strength. Eliade explains about the holy stones like this” Opal is a precious stone

and it is the symbol of power and kingdom in social organizations. In medicine there is an elixir which renews the body power when used. (Loofer page296) it is also known as soul food. Taoist's believe that it can cause immortality. (Eliade, 2015:410).

### *Ardavirafnameh*

The archetype for crossing an ordeal which is in the form of crossing Chinvad bridge and two angels named, Anima and animus who welcome the righteous men.

### *Er Legend*

In this legend the elder-symbols is seen while crossing Lethe (Lete) river and drinking from it which is the symbol of reborning.

### *Sanaee's Seir-ol-ebad*

**The old intellectual man elderly-symbol:** this elderly-symbol appears in form of a very bright and affectionate old man. The old intellectual is a person who knows the solution to every problem and no problem is unsolvable by his discemment.

**The archetype of training mysteries:** According to Jung: "Training rite is basically a process which starts with surrendering, it is followed by abstinence and ends in redemptive rite. After crossing these stages one can accord his opposite characteristics with each other and get perfect and self-controlled." (Jung, 2000:244). In Seir-ol-ebad by Sana'ee this stage starts with sanaee's surrendering against the bright, intellectual and affectionate old man and it is followed by abstinence of committing sins and ends in Getting rid of all world's shackles, defects, getting Free and perfect.

It seems that, talking about the four elements, earth, air, fire and water is based on a type of universal elder-symbol. Sanaee assigns the soul as a stage in four elements and their traits and natures which based on elder-symbols. It can be considered as the mother of the earth and birth.

### *Divine Comedy*

**The archetype of passing ordeal:** In his book named "Hero of the thousand faces", Joseph Campbell believes that the sentences written at the entrance door of the hell refer to the universal symbol of crossing ordeals (Campbell, 2011:32).

**The archetype of ordeal transmitter:** Charon as the boatman of the hell river is one of the elder-symbols of the spiritual itineraries. John Noss says: "From time immemorial the Egyptians believed that the God of the heaven called-nut-used to carry the soul of the prosper and the adored, like kings, to the land of the stars-the place at which two poles of the universe turns-and they get secured from mortality and decadence. (Noss, 2002:60)

### **The Existence of Sacred Numbers**

In many cultures and nations some numbers are sacred and magic. We frequently come across with these figures. Such as Three, Seven, Eight, Twelve, Thirty three and etc.

#### ***Gilgamesh***

The figure Seven is frequently used in Gilgamesh legend, seven coverlets of Xumbaba's cop, A Seven-year drought due to the attack of the heaven's bull, Gilgamesh's seven costumes while entering seven floors of the hell, the burial of Enkidu in the seventh day after his death, Cooking seven loaves of bread by Utnapishtim's wife, are all instances of the sacred figures, particularly the figure Seven.

#### ***Ardavirafnameh***

The figure "Three" which is one of the sacred figures is one of the ever existing figures. At the beginning the priests offer Ardviraf three bowls of Goshtaspian wine and Mang intending to have good thought, good talk and good behavior. The three-staged travel –hell, heaven hamistkan (limbo), and also stages of the paradise, star based, moon based and sun based. The figure Seven is applied too. Ardaviraf's travel to the hereafter world lasts seven days.

#### ***Er Legend***

In this itinerary like other spiritual itineraries we see the traces of the sacred figures. The movement of the souls towards the spindle of the necessity.

#### ***Sanaee's Seir-ol Ebad***

Sanaee mentions the nine heavens and his emphasis and more care on these four elements is a kind of confirmation.

#### ***Divine Comedy***

The figures Three and thirty three are the most frequent figures used in Dante's work. Regarding this we can say that; First of all the divine comedy includes three parts as; hell, limbo and paradise, secondly all poems in Divine comedy come in three-verses and thirdly the three books, Hell, Limbo and, Paradise include thirty three anthems each, Limbo includes thirty four anthems, though, because it contains a part preceding hell in which one enters. Figure "Three" is a figure to which the Christians trust strongly, father, son and Holy Ghost. Wilfred Guerin and some other ones believe that there is a strong belief that the figure "Three" is holy and represents acquaintance, unity and light and in the Christian literature it is a symbol

of triplication of father son and the Holy Ghost. (Marandi, 2007:157). however figure “Three” in Divine comedy exceeds. For instance, the Polaris –the symbol of triplet excellences of, belief, hope and benefaction- residing in limbo mount for three nights, three steps in limbo include; penance and regret, confession and enthusiasm for doing orders, are all based on three. Three paces as long as the sum of

Three people height, also triplet epigraphs in thirty first up to ninety stanzas in the tenth anthem about limbo, three sorts of conceit- about birth, talent or worldly conceit- the eleventh anthem of Limbo. About the figure ‘Thirty three’ we can say that the Christians believe that Christ’s Ascent occurred when he was thirty-three and unsurprisingly Dante applies this figure in his spiritual itinerary.

### **Emblem**

Applying symbols in spiritual itineraries is inevitable since we are describing intangible and immaterial world.

#### ***Emblem in Gilgamesh***

In some cases there is no boarder line between elderly-symbol and the emblem. In fact majority of the elderly-symbols are emblems. In this epic there are some emblems like; spring, holy plant, Snake, The Moon, the Sun etc.

#### ***Emblem in Ardavirafname***

Rarely do we face emblems in Ardavirafname. It seems that that is because the organizers of these spiritual itineraries believe that it is a real itinerary and seek to maintain its real, that is why they do not give emblems and symbols which are used to describe immaterial and phantasm circumstances.

#### ***Er by Plato***

For the symbolic and simile way of description Aristotle names Plato’s legend of Er’ “An honest lie”. It is noble and precious because it explains an important fact, on the other hand it is a lie since it uses simile and metaphoric language to describe a real issue and despite their individual differences to the fate he assign people irresponsible for their actions. (Dorter, 2013:130)

#### ***We Meet the First Emblem***

“The chosen name of Er for the hero of this epic” who is believed to be the motif of the work. Kenet Dorter believes that Er legend explains about the essence of “Love”. (Dorter, 2013:131).based on a belief that Eros is in Greek mythology is the goddess of eroticism and love, Dorter believes that the title Er, the hero of the Plato’s story derives from Eros.

*Lethe Plain*

These spinners are probably the gods of breeding but in theoretical thought they rose to the position of manikin of fate. (Eliade, 2015:182)

*Sanaee's Seir-ol-ebad*

The presence of emblem is Seir-olebad is studied in two aspects. First the whole work is symbolic, a symbol and a simile about moving the wayfarer to integrate with the origin of the creation, and for many of the human's bad behaviors we have got emblems like pig, Dog, and viper. In this passage dog is the emblems of 'anger'. Pig is the symbol of avarice and gluttony and as Chevalier believes that pig is the emblem of dirt and gluttony all over the world. (Chevalier, 2010:133/3).

*The Divine Comedy by Dante*

According to what Jorge Luis Borges, some emblems while entering the heaven are: (1) twenty four old men an emblem of twenty elder books, (2) animals having six wings are the writers of the bible. (3) Six wings are six laws. (4) The caravan of the cosmopolitan. (5) The griffin is the Christ or the unity of the god's soul with the human nature. (6) The women dancing on the right are the human virtues and (7) The women dancing on the left are the main virtues. (8) The three-eyed is an emblem of contrivance who foresees the past, present and the future. (Borges, 1999:88-90)

**CONCLUSION**

The spiritual itineraries as a response to many of the human's terrifying questions about death and the hereafter world are in many cultures and languages. Besides responding human beings' curiosity, they found it an opportunity to pose some philosophical theories and also socio political criticism in this way. In the five chosen spiritual itineraries among many other ones, regardless of the posing, the kind view point they have many commonalties in political, social and philosophical issues. The commonalties originate from common thought motifs of the mankind and the cultural and religious interactions. These spiritual itineraries share characteristics which are common in these passages among which we could mention the symbolic language, the presence of the elder-symbols, applying sacred number and enjoying a guide during the move. These commonalties and similarities show that spiritual itineraries can be a universal language for the human being. At the time when different name of something is covering the same fact of the humanity, such studies are an attempt to remove the ignorance the secret of the names. The ignorance which caused so many quarrels, fights and aggression in the world, As Maolavi (Rumi) says" The useless fight between four people speaking in different first languages- Turkish, Persian, Arab and Roman- due to misunderstanding, since they did not understand

each others' languages they quarreled while they had the same purposes and if someone were there who knew the languages of them all, he could have pacified them and made them understood each other".

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