

ENLIGHTENMENT MOVEMENT IN AZERBAIJANE

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Abstract

In the nineteenth century in Azerbaijan literature new intellectual atmosphere was emerged. The emergence of new creative literary forces reflected in itself the synthesis of traditional Islamic and contemporary Russian-European culture as a social and cultural phenomenon. Azerbaijani culture is a unique culture that combines cultures of Caucasian peoples, Turkic-Muslim peoples, European peoples, and has emerged at the junction of the related religions and ideologies of great civilizations like the East and the West, small and numerous nations of the world. That is, "Caucasian, Russian, European, and Persian cultural values are united in Azerbaijani culture" (Dashdamirov 1996: 11). The complex approach, logical-historicism, the principles of comparative approach, systematic analysis methods constitute theoretical-methodological basis of the article. The author has referred to the works of European, French, Russian and Azerbaijani literary scholars while working on the research.

Keywords: *enlightenment, religion, intellectual-enlightened atmosphere, East and West, natural rights, natural human.*

The philosophy and ideology of enlightenment, formed in the 18th century in the West - England, France, Germany, and other countries, became a special stage in the history of universal philosophical and socio-political thought. This philosophy and ideology characterized with the legalities of transition to bourgeois social system from feudalism, encompassed new qualitative features according to secular and practical interests of the developing bourgeois, set up goals for the solution of great and honorary missions such as cleaning the consciousness from metaphysical thoughts and religious prejudice and its provision with support of science and practice, accelerating its development by overcoming the challenges in the way of social development, achievement human freedom and equity of rights. (Aliyeva 2011: 104).

For these reasons, enlightenment ideas began to emerge in Azerbaijan at the end of the eighteenth and early of nineteenth centuries. The emergence of enlightenment ideas in Azerbaijan later than Western countries and Russia was due to the socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions of modern Azerbaijan. Hence, the necessary material and scientific-cultural conditions for the emergence and development of the philosophy of enlightenment in the West

and Russia in the eighteenth century were completely developed, but at that time necessary conditions for intellectual-enlightened atmosphere in Azerbaijan were at their initial state. In the 19th century, and especially in the latter part, the bourgeois social affairs developed and it started to remove the feudal rules. In addition, the necessary scientific knowledge for the emergence and development of intellectual-enlightened atmosphere was appeared. The cultural and moral rise in the country was also of interest during this period. All of these show that Azerbaijani enlightenment didn't emerge "groundless". At the same time, it is not the phenomenon that was copied to Azerbaijan from the West and Russia. Because, if it was so, it would be just a copy of Western and Russian enlightenment. The essence, main principles, goals and objectives of the philosophy and ideology of enlightenment are mainly the same despite of where and when it has been emerged. Along with this, it is also necessary to state that as the enlightenment in Azerbaijan was emerged in social environment and encompassed not only Western and Russian but also Eastern progressive ideas and philosophy, it was characterized by specific features and had its own original way. That is why the enlightenment ideas of Azerbaijan have had a profound impact on the national renaissance and cultural progress of the Azerbaijani people. Azerbaijani enlightenment occupies an important place in the history of social and philosophical thought of our nation. The study of this enlightenment that is rich with literary-artistic, moral-philosophical values was never left behind attention. Numerous scientific articles and monographies on conceptual issues and literary-scientific and scientific-philosophical activities of outstanding representatives of Azerbaijani enlightenment have been published. Truly speaking, the outstanding philosopher Anvar Ahmadov's book "The philosophy of Azerbaijan enlightenment" (1983) involves attention specifically by its analyse of conceptual issues of Azerbaijani enlightenment. The issues such as the essence of Azerbaijani enlightenment and its emergence reasons, specific features of enlightenment philosophy, the role that enlightenment ideas play in cultural-moral life of the nation, the development stages of Azerbaijani enlightenment philosophy and ideology were highlighted broadly in the book and some valuable views were stated.

As it is known, Azerbaijani literary-artistic thought and culture are synthesis of valuable and moral values of the East and West. As an Eastern country encompassing Islamic cultural-moral values Northern Azerbaijan under Russian Empire was in relation with new cultural-moral values, via Russia gained leading social-political, literary-artistic and enlightenment ideas of Europe, and unified in itself the system of values of the East and West. Most Azerbaijan intelligents who lived and created in the 19th century were played a role of bridge between East and West civilizations. So, "the enlightenment as a national ideological movement"

implemented its great historical-typological function in Near and Middle East and at the same time in Azerbaijan. And in Azerbaijan at only enlightenment stage of social and artistic thought the independent national type of antifeudal ideas and realistic method was founded. And only at this time – from the middle of the 19th century the process of foundation of universal literary language was over, democracy was shaped as ideology, the relations with Russian and Western cultures were developed, literary-esthetical traditions for development of "new period" literature by Vagif, Zakir, Vazeh and Bakikhanov and classical poetry played their historical transition and ground role.

It is interesting that the emergence of literary thought from leaving the general system (platform of regions and literary districts) of both independent and authentic national realistic thought culture was in the second half of the 19th century.

The historical mission of true enlightenment performing always everywhere-the pride of citizenship and nurturing a sense of freedom are emerging more vibrantly in the condemned and dependent East of the 19th century and enlightenment in Azerbaijan is becoming to a training of being saved from not only fatalism, religious and secular ignorance but also the national one (Gasimzadeh 1962: 160).

The enlightenment was in its time the theoretical expression of the practice of struggle for new, happy life, social progress, and against religion and absolutism. Therefore, the researchers noted that “enlightenment” was used in narrow and broad meanings. The enlightenment in a broad meaning is the enlightenment of the nation, the share of culture, science, and art among people, and release the nation's consciousness from religious and other abstract views. But the notion of “enlightenment” has the other meaning too. The enlightenment can be understood as a struggle against serfdom, feudalism and its social-economical norms, ideology. This is a collection of views and system conducted by the leading figures of the society. It sets up goal for implementing system of reforms in the society. The enlightened people, especially Azerbaijani enlightened persons set up goals for developing the nation at the level of European nations development through ways of reforms and providing the social-political, scientific-moral progress of the nation.

The educators were struggling against the negative outcomes in the economical, political and legal fields of the existed regime and desired Europeanization and modernization of social life and defended the interests of the nation.

“The enlightenment deeply stimulated the development of science and culture, philosophy, social-political thought, scientific fields. The educators who were armed with the ideas of individual freedom, social equity, humanism expressed the interests of the most broad

nations. The enlightenment has influenced the national consciousness, the development of national language and culture. The enlightened persons considered the science and knowledge as a main criterion of social progress” (Tagiyev, Mustafayev and Balayev 1994: 59).

It is known that moral culture, as well as literature are reflecting the ongoing quality changes in the society. The culture of new period as well as literature have been emerged as a need of social-economical life in the result of social development.

“The struggle against the depression in moral life, fanaticism, obscurantism, religious-mystical thought, and fight for secular education, science and culture of new period, national language, aiming the literature and art, social-political and philosophical thought to the need of the existed period are the main concepts of this process” (Kocharli 1999: 7).

Academician Feyzulla Gasimzadeh has noted highlighting the 19th century as contradictory period in the history of economical and cultural development of Azerbaijani nation: “In this period on the one hand old feudal remains were existed in the ideology and cultural fields, on the other hand the leading Russian and European culture, democratic views, ideas of freedom started to spread out. After being under Russia Empire in Azerbaijan due to new circumstances modernization tendencies in science and culture, social-philosophical thought and literature were strenghtening, the relations with life and nation started to increase. New characteristic works appeared in litearture and diffrent fields of science...New realistic democratic direction in Azerbaijani literature was created and started to develop” (Mammadov 1978: 5). At the end of 19th century the influence of national idea to intellectual-cultural environment was deepening and this process became the struggle for national freedom and independence. J. Mammadguluzadeh, M. A. Sabir, Y. Chamanzaminli, A. Gamkusar, U. Hajibayov, M. S. Ordubadi, N. Narimanov, as well as A. Huseynzadeh, A. Agaoglu, A. Topchubashov, M. A. Rasulzadeh were great successors of realistic-enlightening ideas that were conducted and developed by A. Bakikhanov, I. Gutgashinli, G. Zakir, M. Sh. Vazeh, H. Zardabi, S. A. Shirvani, N. Vazirov, A. Hagverdiyev, M. Shahtakhtli. The press agencies of that period, especially “Hayat” newspaper, “Molla Nasraddin”, and “Fuyuzat” journals have played a significant role in shaping the ideas of nationalism, independence, freedom, azerbaijanism, modernization, westernization, easternization among people as a system.

It is known that the ideas of enlightenment, nationalism and statehood, democracy and azerbaijanism, unified Azerbaijani patriotism were later played a role in foundation and deleopment of Azerbaijan national idea.

The role of materialistic philosophy in foundation of enlightenment philosophy is great and undeniable. At the same time, it is also undeniable that along with materialists, in

foundation of this philosophy idealists, pantheists, deist philosophers, naturalists were also active. For example, in England in preparation of enlightenment philosophy and ideology along with materialists J. Lокк and J. Toland, deist A. Collins, deist A. Sheftsbery, idealist D. Yum, in France – along with materialists D. Didro and P. Holbakh, deist F. Volter and deist J. J. Russo, in Germany – tending to materialism H. Lessing, pantheist L. Herder, tending to materialism I. Goethe also played an important role. Even in literatures such fact is emphasized specifically that above all as a result of efforts of Volter then french enlightened persons Lокк philosophy and Newton mechanics started to spread out.

In preparation of the ground for Azerbaijani enlightenment idea the scientific, literary, philosophical activities of A. Bakikhanov, I. Gutgashinli, Mirza Kazimbey and other representatives of science and culture played an important role. Actually they were not in fact materialist philosophers. Generally, the enlightenment was not homogeneous by nature anywhere. This case is coming from inner nature of enlightenment philosophy and ideology and characteristics of its goals. The enlightenment is such phenomenon that either in its foundation and development or in propaganda diversity of philosophical beliefs played a decisive role.

With the initiative of being armed and enlightened with new national outlook, national and universal tendencies, leading scientific, social-philosophical, cultural-moral, literary-artistic values found out by M. F. Akhundzadeh and choosing the Europe-the West, Russian democratic thought as a main direction was becoming reality. In the 19th century, especially in latter half of it, the enlightenment experience functioning as literary-cultural movement harmonizing with activities of those educators got the revolutionary-democratic content. And above all, it was reflected as a collection of enlightening realism and its literary genres such as drama, narration, as well as poetry and prose and in a true meaning as direction, tendency. The enlightenment and enlightening realism on this regard become the method of one person - Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh, in a broad way of group of writers. On the basis of experience of unique universal literary figure such as M. F. Akhundzadeh advanced literary representatives, literary platforms and esthetical systems started to appear. Dramatics, publishing, criticism, philosophy, publicism, writing –that were once represented with only Akhundzadeh, found out its professional successors at the end of 19th century and especially at the beginning of 20th century. In general, national progressive press and theatre, school and pedagogical thought, translation, criticism and esthetics became the active front place of ideological and organizational work of struggle for enlightenment, renaissance and realism. With the influence of the demand of renewal and modernization with regard of social-historical environment, new

world prism, of course, Orthodox literary institutions existing since the Middle Ages were disappearing.

The famous literary critic Nadir Mammadov wrote: “M. F. Akhundov's apply to dramatics was closely related with formation of his outlook as educator, his life, talent, and dedication his infinite energy to propaganda of ideas on enlightenment in Azerbaijan” (Gasimzadeh 1966: 68).

It is known that the outstanding representatives of enlightenment movement and literature of Western Europe and Russia Volter, Didro, Bomarshe, Filding, Lessing, Goethe, Galdoni, Fonvizin, Griboyedov for spreading out the enlightenment ideas in their countries considered the dramatics and theatre as a pretty way, social tribune, sharp and effective arm and used dramatics in their literary activities broadly, and showed unexampled contribution in the history of development of the world dramatics and theatre.

As his great predecessors M. F. Akhundov for spreading out the enlightenment ideas among the groups of nation saw in its time that dramatics is favorable way, pretty ideological struggle tool, and as an educator when he started his intensive literary-social activities firstly applied to dramatics and paid specific attention to the propaganda of dramatic works in his literary-critical articles (Mammadov 1978: 68).

M. F. Akhundzadeh started to his literary activity with writing poems. Among his poetry “Eastern poem on the death of A. S. Pushkin” (1837) occupies specific place. This work was evaluated as one of the best works on the death of poet. But his dramatic works raised him up to literary-artistic peak. In 1850-1855 M. F. Akhundzadeh with his comedies such as “Hekayati-Molla Ibrahimkhalil kimyagar” (1850), “Hekayati-khirs guldurban” (1851), “Sarguzashti-vaziri Khani-Lankaran” (1851) and the others set up foundation of realistic dramatics in Azerbaijan and Near East literature. In 1857 by writing his narration “Aldanmish kavakib” M. F. Akhundzadeh created the first sample of new Azerbaijan prose. That Akhundzadeh is an outstanding philosopher who has improved his thoughts and opinions both on materialism and religious criticism for the first time in the history of Azerbaijan. Islamic Radicalism, Oriental despotism (absolute power), the oppression of free thought and severe Eastern feudalism violating people's rights are criticized in his thoughts. Akhundzadeh states that the religion and science can not coexist, and depicts the conflict between religion and science. And also, he portrays the ignorance of the Eastern countries and Asian people, the conformance between their religious views and redundant traditions up to that time. It is also emphasized in the article that M. F. Akhundzadeh does not support merely

atheism, irreligiousness. He encourages people to carry out reforms and establish Islam on the basis of wisdom, profundity and manifested himself as a libertarian-democrat educator.

The works of M. F. Akhundzadeh played an important role in the cultural development of the East and his suggestions on replacement of arabic alphabet with new one for enlightenment of the nation massively renowned him not only in Azerbaijan but also in the East as an outstanding educator.

Great educator M. F. Akhundzadeh's activity is characterized not only with literary heritage but also rich philosophical heritage. He is the author of famous philosophical treatise "Kemaluddovle mektublari" that he worked on it for 15 years, "Hekimi-ingilis Yuma cavab", "Yek kelme" and other philosophical works. With these works M. F. Akhundzadeh renowned himself as a professional philosopher and raised up the enlightenment philosophy to the peak in Azerbaijan.

Orientalist Fransua Jorjon, professor of Sorbonne University did not introduce him as atheist when he commentated on entire activity of Akhundzadeh in his article "Notes on modernism in Azerbaijan at the turn of the century". He introduced him as a thinker eliminating the conflict between sects, as a person who had put great effort to create a single Muslim spirit, who speeded up dissemination of knowledge among people and prepared transition project to Latin script. F. Jorjon appreciated the reality that the Azerbaijani scholars wrote their works in Azerbaijani language and actively used the language in social life during that period and characterized this process as "Literary Renaissance". He stated that the debuts of literary renaissance were reflected in the works of Akhundzadeh (Georgeon 1996: 97-106).

The level of political, social and economical development of the existed period, and country defines the concrete features of the enlightenment that was emerged in England and had its advanced level in France. It is known that Azerbaijani educators via Russian educators had relations with European, especially French educators. The enlightenment in Azerbaijan where the development level was lower than France, couldn't encompass all the features of this ideology.

In the East it was also characteristic feature for enlightenment to put forward the education, Europeanization. The enlightenment intended not only cultural development but also the development of the society.

The ideas such as struggle of French educators against the feudalism, change the society with intelligence, "natural right" training, individual freedom, the role of the condition and atmosphere in formation of human morality, the enlightened ruler, etc. were reflected in the activities of Azerbaijani educators at the endings of 19th century - beginning of 20th century.

The missions that were implemented by French educators with their philosophical-literary works, in Azerbaijan fiction, publicity, theatre performed these missions.

The ideas such as “natural right”, “natural human” put forward by French educators were also reflected in the literary activities of Azerbaijani educators. The essence of this theory was individual freedom, inequality of the groups, the happiness of the human in the society, and struggle against feudalism escaping from the religious views and gain freedom. “Azerbaijani educators like French educators first of all expressed their views from “natural rights” point of view as J. J. Russo did, wanted to solve the issues of human and his place in the society, at the same time considered this as a main mission of realistic art. The educators considered “natural human” as owning the characteristics that could perform his natural living rights, but when they stated “artificial human” considered him as owning the characteristics that could live by the rules without natural basis created in certain period of the society development” (Mammadov 1987: 42).

The thinker has put forward the ideas such as natural rights, freedom and equality in his work “Social agreement”: “The human is born free, but he is in captivity everywhere” (Russo 1969: 152).

In 1985 Tzvetan Todorov the French thinker of Bulgarian origin, researcher-encyclopedist, literary theorist and historian of ideas, author of numerous works on literature, history and philosophy, published an interesting book entitled “Fragile Happiness: An Essay on Russo”. In this essay he touched the issues of patriotism, cosmopolitanism and humanism. He focused on Rousseau’s ideas about achieving human happiness and living in “modern” times. In his book “Lettres ecrites de la montagne” Rousseau points out that cosmopolitanism and humanism are two incompatible concepts especially to the same people (Todorov 1985: 36). A citizen should be brought up in a passionate love for the fatherland, it should become his dominant feeling. First a citizen must recognize himself as a Pole, a Frenchman, etc. and only after - as a person. (Todorov 1985: 37). However such love should mean disrespect even contempt for others. A similar situation could be observed in ideal ancient city-states. The Romans showing humanism to their own resorted to violence against foreigners (Todorov 1985: 37). Calling themselves democrats at home they become colonizers outside the homeland: here is the logic of patriotism, this paradox is inevitable: the main is to be kind towards your neighbor – writes Rousseau in his novel “Emil or about education” (“Emil ou de l’education”). Todorov’s attention was attracted by the key moments of historical changes and problems of their collective memory. Todorov called himself a humanist without illusions and a citizen of the world. Creation of Tzvetan Todorov is constantly intersected by moral matters.

He declares his choice of the humanism of Montaigne or Russo and an exceptional scale of good is a man.

In 2006 Todorov published a book “The Spirit of Enlightenment” (Todorov 2007). The main idea of the book is a question about building new intellectual and moral basis of our common life while the ending of the era of the utopia. There is only thing that matter for Tzvetan Todorov - the humanistic side of the Enlightenment. This large essay is not only a clear statement of the main directions of this thought: it puts it before the tragic events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Based on that Todorov emphasizes the relevance of the Enlightenment to the challenges of our time. The main ideas of enlightenment - freedom, cosmopolitanism and happiness were the basis of the culture of enlightenment. These ideas are always relevant, effective and valuable.

He defended “enlightened, smart, virtuous ruler” and monarchical structure for big states in his new enlightened idea. Unlike Monteskyo and Volter, Russo considered the will of the people above of all things, and stated the possibility of gaining freedom for citizens and get out all the functions of rulers in the society based on social agreement, in his work “Letter to d’Alamber” expressed his esthetical views and appreciated the enlightened role of the theatres.

The ideas put forward by French educators of the 18th century and had influence in the world liberal thought had impacts on Azerbaijani literary-theoretical thought beginning from the 19th century, and the system of ideas encompassing national interests of Azerbaijan, universal and national features in itself developed as national ideas of our people, stimulated to the movement of national freedom and independence and gave a reason for foundation of the first democratic state in the East.

The formation of Azerbaijan enlightenment with its own national peculiarities and the influence of French and Russian enlightenment ideas should be accepted as a logical result of natural-historical process.

At this period the nation began to be formed, science, technology, technics, social-economical, cultural-moral changes came out, liberal democratic, Turkic, Islamic ideas and tendencies emerged, movement of national independence sprang out, political organizations that were carriers of democratic press, liberalism and socialism ideas were created, and with their political activities developed the nation in the direction of the West-East. The intelligents of this period with their progressive ideas on the basis of “Akhundzadeh's traditions”, “Ekinchi” ideas, Azerbaijani and Iran enlightenment, as well as under influence of Westernization and modernization developed as enlightened democratics and criticized the religious fanaticism.

At the beginning of the 20th century new genres of realistic-literary traditions were characterized with finding out the highlighted expression of enlightenment massively in fiction encompassing all the fields of social thought.

The beginnings of the 20th century were considered as national-spiritual renaissance of Azerbaijan people, national freedom movement, return to national roots, and the peak of new, national thought in the history of enlightenment and statehood.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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ДВИЖЕНИЕТО ЗА ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЕ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАН

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Резюме

През XIX век в азербайджанската литература се създава нова интелектуална атмосфера. Появата на нови творчески литературни сили отразява синтеза на традиционната ислямска и съвременна руско-европейска култура като социален и културен феномен. Азербайджанската култура е уникална култура, която съчетава културите на кавказките народи, тюркско-мюсюлманските народи, европейските народи и се е появила на кръстопътя на сродните религии и идеологии на велики цивилизации като Изтока и Запада и на малките и многобройнинароди и нации по света. „Кавказките, руските, европейските и персийските културни ценности са обединени в културата на Азербайджан“ (Даидамиров 1996: 11).

Комплексният подход, логико-историческият подход, принципите на сравнителния подход, методите на систематичния анализ са теоретико-методологичната основа на статията. В своята работа авторът се е опирал на трудовете на европейски, френски, руски и азербайджански литературоведи.

Ключови думи: Просвещение, религия, интелектуална атмосфера на Просвещението, Изток и Запад, природни/естествени права, естествен човек.

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