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DEVELOPMENT OF THE AZERBAIJANI LITERARY LANGUAGE IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY IN THE WORK OF TOFIG HAJIYEV

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Abstract. The article studies the development of the Azerbaijani literary language in the early 20th century in the work of Tofig Hajiyev. Speaking about the leading branch of the artistic style of the early 20th century, Tofig Hajiyev notes that the satirical movement, especially the magazine “Molla Nasreddin”, played an exceptional role in expanding the semantic possibilities of the Azerbaijani literary language and increasing the figurative quality of artistic speech at the beginning of the 20th century, and notes that this literary school brought the rich means of expression in the living spoken language of the people to the center of the literary language, demonstrating the functional capabilities of all layers of the language. Tofig Hajiyev systematized the formation of the state language policy in the country with a broader historical chronology, dividing it into stages. In the first stage, covering the years 1918-1920, the acquisition of state status of the language and the restoration of national identity during the period of the Azerbaijan Popular Front and the work done in this direction were examined. The second stage, covering the years 1920-1991, characterized the development and limitations of the Azerbaijani language under Soviet rule, and the transition of language policy to a new level in the Independent Republic of Azerbaijan after 1991.

Key words: language, formation, Turkic, roots, formation of language, unified communication.

Introduction. In the twentieth century, the Azerbaijani literary language entered a fundamentally new stage of development, primarily because Azerbaijan gained its first national independence during this period. Although the existence of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was chronologically brief, its strategic significance in the centuries-long history of the Azerbaijani people remains invaluable. The most distinctive feature of this period was that the reforms implemented by the ADR within a very short time were comparable in scale and importance to transformations that normally require centuries. The ADR entered history not only as the first parliamentary and democratic republic of Azerbaijan, but also as the first democratic republic in the entire Eastern world. The principal symbols of an independent state – including the national flag, anthem, coat of arms, and state language – were officially institutionalized precisely during this period.

Within the scholarly legacy of Tofig Hajiyev, the ADR period occupies a special place in the context of linguistic research. The scholar divides the developmental dynamics of the twentieth-century Azerbaijani literary language into two fundamental stages:

- the literary language of the Republican period;
- the literary language during the Soviet era.

Tofig Hajiyev systematized the formation of state language policy in Azerbaijan within a broader historical chronology and proposed the following stages:

1. The first stage, covering the years 1918–1920, was characterized by the elevation of the Azerbaijani language to the status of a state language during the ADR period and by the restoration of national identity.

2. The second stage, encompassing the years 1920–1991, was marked by both the development and the restrictions of the Azerbaijani language under Soviet rule.

3. The third stage, beginning after 1991, is characterized by the transition of language policy to a new level in the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to the scholar, the language policy implemented during the ADR period played the role of a national and spiritual foundation for subsequent historical periods. The declaration of the mother tongue as the state language during the short period of sovereignty established the ideological basis for Azerbaijan's future language strategy (Ahmadova, 2010, p. 7).

Discussion.

The Development of the Literary Language at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

In the history of Azerbaijani philological thought, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are regarded as a decisive stage in the formation and development of the literary language. In the studies of Tofiq Hajiyeu, the linguistic landscape of this period is presented as an extremely complex and multidimensional process. The sharp contradictions observed in the economic, political, and legal spheres of society during that historical period naturally manifested themselves in culture, art, and particularly in attitudes toward language.

Tofiq Hajiyeu devoted a special study to this important transitional period and classified the significant changes that occurred in the structure of the literary language. According to the scholar's scientific conclusions, the principal achievements of this period can be summarized as follows:

1. The functional styles of the Azerbaijani literary language, including publicistic, artistic, scientific, and other styles, entered a stage of full formation precisely during this period.
2. Compared with previous centuries, national language norms acquired a more stable and consolidated character.
3. Although the general level of illiteracy remained high at that time, the literary language, due to its multifunctional nature, gradually began to penetrate broader social strata.

According to Hajiyeu, it would be incorrect to imagine this developmental process as entirely smooth and flawless. The evolution of the language took place within the specific historical and cultural conditions of Azerbaijan and was accompanied by its own unique complexities and contradictions (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 6).

The scholar justifiably notes that the emergence and development of capitalism played a significant role in the formation of the national literary language. Economic growth and the expansion of capitalist relations stimulated the advancement of science and education while simultaneously creating favorable conditions for their development. During this period, the network of schools expanded considerably. In connection with this process, textbooks in the mother tongue were prepared and educational materials were published. The Azerbaijani language began to be systematically taught, and books devoted to its phonetic and grammatical structure were written. Although not always consistent or systematic, newspapers and journals intended for school-age readers – such as *Dabistan*, *Rahbar*, *Maktab*, and *Gunash* – were published, and literary anthologies were compiled. All these measures were essential for the development of the Azerbaijani literary language, as well as for the refinement and standardization of its norms (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 8).

The development of the press, the professionalization of Azerbaijani theatrical art, and the advancement of political thought became the most influential factors shaping the national literary language during this period. According to the scholar, at the beginning of the twentieth century the Azerbaijani national literary language already possessed the following functional styles: artistic style, scientific style, publicistic style, religious (Sharia) style, and official-epistolary style (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 10).

According to Tofiq Hajiyeu, the language of the textbooks published during this period was nourished by various linguistic sources while simultaneously preserving a certain degree of autonomy. The scholar even suggests that, due to the independent grouping of these speech patterns, it would be possible to distinguish a separate "textbook style" within the literary language. Hajiyeu particularly draws attention to the Arabic and Persian loanwords published in the journal *Maktab* together with their national Azerbaijani equivalents. Referring to examples presented in the first issue of the journal in 1911, the scholar emphasizes that even a number of words which had already gained

full acceptance and “citizenship rights” in the Azerbaijani language were nevertheless translated and explained for readers. Among such examples are *tabassum* – “silent laughter,” *tahluka* – “fear,” *hiddat* – “anger,” and *hayat* – “life, vitality.”

After analyzing the language of the textbooks published at the beginning of the twentieth century, the scholar concluded that despite their distinctive linguistic characteristics, it would not be scientifically justified from a linguistic and stylistic perspective to consider the language of these sources as an entirely independent functional style. According to Hajiyeu, this stylistic tendency gradually dissolved within the spheres of children’s literature on the one hand and scientific style on the other (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 16).

According to the scholar, as in previous historical periods, the artistic style remained the leading branch of the literary language at the beginning of the twentieth century. Both in terms of volume and practical application, the artistic style fully deserved this avant-garde position. At the same time, almost all debates concerning language in public life found their real and practical manifestation precisely within artistic language (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 17).

Hajiyeu further notes that one of the most significant features of the artistic style of this period was the further development and expansion of the realist prose language established by Mirza Fatali Akhundov. During this period, prose achieved such a scale and level of development that it gradually displaced poetry from its former hegemonic role as the dominant medium of artistic expression. Consequently, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the language of prose and the language of poetry had become equal components within the artistic style.

According to Tofiq Hajiyeu, linguistic materials in artistic expression were approached differently depending on aesthetic concepts, literary trends, and ideological positions. As a result, internal microsystems or subsystems began to emerge within the structure of artistic language. The scholar identifies these stylistic subdivisions of artistic style as follows: satirical language, romantic language, realist-romantic language, the language of children’s literature, and folkloric language (Hajiyeu, 1991, p. 17).

The scholar justifiably points out that during this period there also existed a branch of artistic style that continued the language traditions of classical poetic genres. However, representatives of this branch were unable to keep pace with the modern environment either ideologically or linguistically, and they merely repeated outdated expressions, stereotypical constructions, and aging poetic images. Since they were unable to exert any serious influence on the developmental tendencies of the national literary language, the scholar does not devote extensive attention to them. Among such representatives he includes writers such as Mirza Hasib Qudsi, Chaker Nakhchivani, Jannati, Mushkat, and others.

Discussing the leading branch of the artistic style of the early twentieth century, Tofiq Hajiyeu emphasizes the exceptional role played by the satirical literary movement, particularly the Molla Nasraddin magazine, in expanding the semantic possibilities of the Azerbaijani literary language and increasing the figurative richness of artistic speech. According to the scholar, this literary school brought the rich expressive means of the living spoken language of the people into the center of literary language and demonstrated the functional potential of all layers of the language system.

According to Tofiq Hajiyeu, the language system of the Molla Nasraddin writers and the satirical literature of that period was characterized by several fundamental stylistic features:

1. Preference for simplicity and even colloquial expressiveness in vocabulary and syntactic structure made speech understandable for the broad masses.
2. Everyday words and expressions acquired new socio-political meanings and developed polysemantic nuances within satirical contexts.
3. The inner world of characters was revealed through their own speech, while the object of criticism was conveyed to the reader through irony and sarcasm.

4. By drawing upon the rich potential of the living folk language, linguistic material necessary for every functional style was introduced into literary circulation (Hajiyev, 1991, p. 18).

The scholar correctly concludes that simplicity, clarity, linguistic purity, close adherence to the core lexical fund of the language, and the conciseness of sentences constituted the principal normative system of textbooks and children's journals of that period. Certainly, when analyzed separately, examples from other functional styles could also demonstrate a comparable level of clarity and simplicity. However, no other style as a whole consistently maintained such a level across all its texts, nor was it expected to do so. In textbook language, by contrast, examples belonging to different styles were synthetically unified at the same level. A single dominant principle – the principle of comprehensibility – was strictly preserved. In this sense, the language of textbooks created harmony among various functional styles (Hajiyev, 1991, p. 15).

The Azerbaijani satirical thought of the early twentieth century possessed a distinctive linguistic structure and became an integral part not only of the nation's artistic taste but also of its broader intellectual and spiritual history. The language of satire during this period represented one of the decisive stages in the evolution of the Azerbaijani language as a form of national consciousness and expression.

The satirical style introduced numerous innovations into the written literary language. First of all, the sharp exposing elements, humorous shades, and thought-provoking forms of expression characteristic of oral folk satire entered the structure of written literary language and enriched it considerably. On the other hand, the newly emerging satirical language enhanced society's analytical thinking abilities and fostered a more critical and sensitive attitude toward surrounding social realities. Satirical discourse thus became not merely a means of entertainment or laughter, but an important linguistic instrument awakening the intellectual potential of the people and encouraging them to comprehend social realities more deeply (Hajiyev, 1991, p. 18).

During this period, Azerbaijani poets writing in the satirical genre rendered exceptional services to the development and enrichment of the Azerbaijani language. They were among the first to introduce the vocabulary of the living folk language into literary language on a mass scale. At the same time, they actively created new words and expressions, many of which were rapidly accepted by the public. Because these lexical innovations often possessed idiomatic, phraseological, and aphoristic qualities, they easily entered popular consciousness and remained memorable for broad audiences. Their dissemination resembled the traditional mechanisms of folklore transmission: they spread from mouth to mouth, from village to village; some were read in newspapers, others heard on stage, and eventually transmitted into hundreds of minds. Consequently, these new expressions not only enriched the linguistic treasury of the people but also contributed to the popularization of the literary language itself. Over time, although the creators of these expressions were originally known, such linguistic formations gradually distanced themselves from their authors and became anonymized, much like authentic folklore elements. Nevertheless, because they were preserved in written form, readers familiar with the sources could still identify their creators. These widely used metaphors, expressions, and phraseological units functioning both in everyday speech and within professional circles remain enduring linguistic legacies gifted to the Azerbaijani language by the satirists of the twentieth century (Hajiyev, 1991, p. 18).

Emphasizing the importance of word formation for the creators of the satirical style, Tofiq Hajiyev argues that Mirza Alakbar Sabir and Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, who shaped the revolutionary satirical style, paid particular attention to lexical selection, ensuring that no detail or "small mechanism" of expression was overlooked. They clearly understood that tradition alone, regardless of its richness, was insufficient for the formation of a new literary and ideological style. Although classical poetry possessed an extensive and sophisticated lexical reservoir, this vocabulary could not adequately serve the newly emerging revolutionary satirical discourse in its original form. Therefore, it became

necessary to “break apart” the traditional lexicon, to “destroy” established conventions, and to renew the poetic vocabulary. Reliance solely on conventional poetic words and expressions was no longer possible. The new satirical style required the identification of “unfamiliar” vocabulary within poetic language – individual lexical units and phraseological expressions previously considered unconventional – and the legitimization of this new vocabulary within the literary language, ultimately transforming it into an accepted linguistic norm (Hajiyev, 1983, p. 6).

The researcher justifiably emphasizes that Azerbaijani-language satirical poetry possesses deep historical roots and that this genre reached its highest stage of development precisely in the creative personality of Mirza Alakbar Sabir. In Sabir’s literary activity, satire transcended the boundaries of simple ridicule and individual lampooning, gradually acquiring a broader social, intellectual, and aesthetic significance. Satire was transformed into an instrument of public criticism, national awakening, and social consciousness.

According to Tofiq Hajiyev, the widespread popularity, influence, and success of folk satire were preceded by a long process of linguistic and cultural preparation. Long before this satirical language reached the broader socio-aesthetic masses, it had already existed at the “cellular” and “atomic” levels of popular consciousness. Before becoming a powerful and explosive social force, this satirical discourse survived in the form of separate linguistic and cultural “atoms.” The satirical traditions associated with figures such as Molla Nasraddin and Bahlul Dananda existed first as sparks before eventually transforming into the powerful satirical flame embodied in Sabir’s language (Hajiyev, 2005, p. 3).

One of the most interesting aspects of Tofiq Hajiyev’s approach is his comparative analysis of Mirza Alakbar Sabir and Muhammad Fuzuli. According to the scholar, these two monumental figures of Azerbaijani literary thought – the greatest lyrical poet and the sharpest satirist – may be compared to different yet complementary poles within the same magnetic field. From this perspective, the relationship between lyrical and satirical principles resembles a force of attraction governed by the laws of physics. Although they appear externally as opposite poles, analogous to positive and negative charges, the internal connection and mutual influence between them remain constant and inseparable (Hajiyev, 2005, p. 19).

The scholar further notes that Sabir’s creative relationship with Fuzuli developed through three distinct stages. During the first stage, Sabir functioned as a representative and follower of the Fuzuli school. For a long period, he imitated his great predecessor and remained deeply influenced by the literary traditions of that school. At this stage, Sabir was simultaneously both a reader and a “captive” of the Fuzuli tradition; while learning from it, he increasingly aspired toward innovation, independence, and creative freedom, yet remained unable to fully liberate himself from its influence. Sabir spent nearly thirty years as a disciple of this literary school. However, his true artistic triumph became fully visible only after he transcended and distanced himself from it. On his independent creative path, he successfully utilized the knowledge and artistic experience acquired from the Fuzuli tradition while simultaneously creating an entirely original satirical style of his own.

In representatives of the Fuzuli literary school, the romantic veil of Muhammad Fuzuli created a kind of mist between the poet and real life. Through this haze, the realities of life appeared blurred and indistinct, and objects could no longer be perceived in their true colors. However, this veil was transparent in Fuzuli himself and revealed reality clearly from the other side. Those who later identified themselves as “followers of Fuzuli,” dazzled by the brilliance of Fuzuli’s imagery, perceived life and truth only dimly and obscurely. Sabir was initially among them. Fascinated and deeply inspired by the universal beauty of Fuzuli’s poetic images, Mirza Alakbar Sabir attempted to create works similar to those of his predecessor. At times, he was even successful in doing so. In some of his early poems, one can observe images capable of deeply affecting human emotions, while traces of Fuzuli’s sincerity and characteristic laconic style become clearly visible.

In the later stage of his development, however, Sabir gradually distanced himself from Fuzuli – sometimes in terms of form, sometimes in terms of content, and occasionally in both form and content simultaneously. This period coincided with the beginning of the twentieth century and covered the stage preceding both the Molla Nasraddin movement and Sabir's mature satirical творчество (Hajiyev, 1966, p. 44).

The scholar notes that relatively few poems belong to this transitional period, explaining that Sabir was less productive during these years than either in his earlier or later creative stages. Although this phase represented a period of awakening for Sabir's individual style, it simultaneously constituted a crisis period within his overall literary development. According to memoirs of contemporaries, Sabir wrote sharp and witty satirical pieces during this time, yet even this was interpreted as a sign of his creative crisis and internal artistic uncertainty.

Conclusion. According to Tofiq Hajiyev, Sabir was gradually leaving the Fuzuli school behind; however, bidding farewell to the literary master who had long dominated his artistic consciousness generated serious creative hesitations and intellectual turmoil within him. Apparently, these internal contradictions sometimes resulted in periods of stagnation and silence in Sabir's creative thought.

The scholar considers the poem "Beynalmilal" ("The International") to be the most complete embodiment of the transitional stage in Sabir's style, both ideologically and stylistically. At the same time, this poem prepared the foundation for the third stage of Sabir's creative evolution.

"Beynalmilal" demonstrated that revolutionary pathos had already begun to permeate Sabir's literary style. According to Hajiyev, this pathos was generated directly by the revolutionary atmosphere itself. Nevertheless, this did not yet mean that Sabir had fully adopted a consistently militant revolutionary position. The waves of revolution struck Sabir, shook his inner world, and compelled him to speak out – for revolution itself is a force of coercive transformation. At times, these revolutionary waves entirely carried him away and involved him in the mission of "revealing truth to the people and eliminating ignorance." These revolutionary currents ultimately liberated Sabir from the spell of Fuzuli and distanced him from the overpowering influence of the classical tradition. However, Sabir was still unable to free himself completely from that enchantment. At the same time, the thunder of revolutionary upheaval clarified his thoughts and dispersed the mystical fog created by the dominance of the old literary tradition.

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