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## AZERBAIJANI ENLIGHTENMENT-REALIST POETRY IN THE CONTEXT OF ARTISTIC STYLE SEARCHES

### POESÍA ILUSTRADA-REALISTA DE AZERBAIYÁN EN EL CONTEXTO DE LA BÚSQUEDA DE ESTILOS ARTÍSTICOS

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#### ABSTRACT

In this work it is discussed issues of artistic style in Azerbaijani enlightenment-realist poetry in the early 20th century, highlighting the artistic heritage of prominent poets of the time such as Abbas Sahhat, Alabbas Muznib, and Abdulla Shaig. Information is provided on the main features and trends of Azerbaijani poetry at the beginning of the 20th century, stylistic trends, attention to heterogeneity and diversity of approaches to classical heritage, tradition as a whole and innovation. The role of sociopolitical and literary-cultural factors in the formation of enlightenment-realist poetry is also highlighted, as well as the factors that characterize the didactic nature of the artistic style.

#### Keywords:

Artistic style, Azerbaijani poetry, enlightenment-realism, tradition and innovation.

#### RESUMEN

En este trabajo se tratan temas de estilo artístico en la poesía realista ilustrada de Azerbaiyán a principios del siglo XX, destacando la herencia artística de poetas prominentes de la época como Abbas Sahhat, Alabbas Muznib y Abdulla Shaig. Se proporciona información sobre las principales características y tendencias de la poesía azerbaiyana a principios del siglo XX, tendencias estilísticas, atención a la heterogeneidad y diversidad de enfoques del patrimonio clásico, la tradición en su conjunto y la innovación. También se destaca el papel de los factores sociopolíticos y literario-culturales en la formación de la poesía ilustrada-realista, así como los factores que caracterizan el carácter didáctico del estilo artístico.

#### Palabras clave:

Estilo artístico, poesía azerbaiyana, iluminación-realismo, tradición e innovación.

## INTRODUCTION

Azerbaijani literature has never been away from the influences of existing changes and tendencies of the world's philosophic and literary envision and constantly displayed inclination for adopting the innovative ideas. Undoubtedly, the ideology of Azerbaijani literature has been influenced by modern literary movements and tendencies. They mostly are based on emerging innovative fluctuations aimed at comprehending the world and human being as well as elicit secrets of life and also to explore new method of expressions for realizing the major missions of literature (Atamoglan, 2015).

Then, the transformation of stylistic issues into the object of analysis in Azerbaijani poetry at the beginning of the last century should be understood in the sense of a systematic assessment of the artistic and aesthetic features of poetry acquired in those years. This is because the artistic style is one of the most important aspects of literary creativity and aesthetic thinking and characterizes the problem of style. It is difficult to comprehend the true nature of art in all its aspects, however, it should be noted that there is a lack of research in the theoretical and aesthetic thought of modern Azerbaijan, and because of this there is a one-sided approach to the problem.

As it is known, in the theoretical and aesthetic thinking of the world and Azerbaijan there are different (even in some cases contradictory) ideas, opinions and conclusions about the artistic style. Thus, the head of ANAS, in the dictionary of terms "Literary Studies" compiled by Mirahmadov (1998), establish the terminological meaning of style as follows: The range of plots and characters he creates, the means of artistic description typical language. As can be seen, the general principles of artistic style are characteristic of the literary scholar's conclusions. However, no definitive explanation of the term has been given. Thus, in other studies on style, the failure to assess all aspects of the problem has led to erroneous or one-sided judgments.

Stressing that insufficient attention is paid to the issue of artistic style in Azerbaijani literary criticism, Doctor of Philology, Abdullazadeh (1984), summarizes his views in his monograph "Poets and Ways": *"As a rule, a special place is given to the "language and style features" of the writer ... In such endings, which complete the monographs, it is enough to talk in general about the language, means of expression and description of the works of the creative personality, specific features of his work, stylistic*

*essence, role in the general literary process. participation with individual characteristics, etc. issues are almost not touched upon"*. (p. 4)

The prevalence of different views and conclusions in scientific-theoretical thought (both in theoretical research and in the study of the history of literature) on the issue of artistic style at several points has undoubtedly led to certain misunderstandings from time to time. These types of considerations have been repeated from research to research, deepened, and prevented the formation of accurate scientific conclusions about style. And of course, in relation to the artistic style, its evaluation in the general literary process, or on an individual level, stems from this.

Taking the above into consideration, the objective of this article is to analyze the characteristics and tendencies of the enlightenment-realist poetry of Azerbaijan of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a research method, the analysis of documents was used mainly, as well as the interpretation of poetic works of some of the most relevant exponents of this genre in the period.

## DEVELOPMENT

According to Hazioglu (2006), *"the change of style systems from anonymous to normative-individual, and even more individual style occurs not only in the immanent-aesthetic laws of literature, but also and mainly because at a certain stage of development of social life many complex and important problems accumulate and aesthetic potentials are exhausted, and the old-style system cannot reflect them in all their diversity, hue and complexity. It is at this point in literary development that the old system of artistic values collapses and a new one emerges"*. (p. 83)

Recall that the study of the works of individual authors representing Azerbaijani poetry in the early twentieth century, in stylistic issues of the poetry found a certain scientific-theoretical analysis. As it is known, this kind of research is carried out with reference to the creative pursuits of a particular author, but in a sense, it is important in terms of studying the problem, because it revives the general picture of the existing literary age. Therefore, this type of research has been used in the analysis processes. Then, according to the corresponding member of ANAS, Yaşar (1963), in the beginning of the twentieth century in Azerbaijani poetry was usual *"creative cooperation between romantics and realists, especially the use of realism by romantics"* (p. 67) played an important role in the intersection of artistic styles. Then, as it is known, *"the language of the work - as a plot, architecture, harmony, rhythm - is an integral part of the artistic form, literary style"* (Sabir, 2019, p. 64). In this sense, it is possible to come to

the right conclusion only by characterizing the problem of style in such a comprehensive context.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the means of expression of the artistic style in the Azerbaijani enlightenment-realist poetry were realized on a unique poetic level. Undoubtedly, the theme, ideas and problems of enlightenment-realist poetry play a decisive role here, and its enlightenment mission should not be forgotten. In general, enlightenment-realist poets, along with many other issues of literary creation, were close to each other in relation to the problem of artistic style and *“enriched our national literary treasury in terms of theme, idea, genre and form, image, character”* (Ahmadov, 2009, p. 116). They did their best to bring literature closer to the people, to gain social content and essence.

It is interesting that enlightenment-realist literature was one of the most active and intensive stages in the artistic word and thought memory of Azerbaijan in the process of mastering the aesthetic culture of modernity, its most progressive and perspective ideological-philosophical and structural stylistic tendencies (Asadova, 2005). From this point of view, the characterization of enlightenment-realist poetry is conditioned by the discovery of the achievements of national literature in the sociological and aesthetic directions, in contrast to romantic poetry, in which *“many ideas are conveyed through symbols”* (Kamran, 2013).

In general, the most important poetic features inherent in enlightenment-realist literature are the simplicity of language, intelligibility, and clarity of style in the works written, regardless of the subject, problem, and genre. This aspect undoubtedly stems from the historical mission of the existing literary direction. It is natural for enlightener-realists, who consider fiction to be an important means of enlightening and educating the people and awakening their socio-political consciousness in the broadest sense of the word, to worship this ideology. Also, the open tendency was so characteristic of the enlighteners' creativity that religious means served to convey the main idea of the artist in a prominent way (Kheyrolla, 1978).

The influence and shades of romantic poetry can be felt in the works of Abdulla Shaig, one of the prominent representatives of twentieth-century Azerbaijani poetry which wrote in a more enlightened-realist style. As Doctor of Philology, Professor Teymur Ahmadov rightly observed, in the first stage of Abdulla Shaig's work, romanticism and realism existed in parallel, in unity, and in later periods, *“realism was strengthened in the poet's poetry”* (Ahmadov, 2009, p. 14). Undoubtedly, the main reason for its transition to the realist front was the influence of socio-political processes in society. In general, this aspect should not be

overlooked when describing Abdulla Shaig's artistic style. In other words, the poet's earlier writing in a more romantic and realistic style had a profound effect on the writing style of his later enlightened-realist-style works. The poet did not shy away from the presence of romantic shades in his works written in a realistic style, and perhaps deliberately paid attention to the fact that his writings were tuned to a certain feed. In this sense, as a talented poet and a patriotic writer, *“skillfully used all the opportunities of time to educate the young generation in the national spirit, to raise children as true citizens”*. (Shaig, 2016, p. 20)

Abdulla Shaig's first poems are dominated by complaints about the social environment and the current era. However, the poet's complaint is not individual, but more general. However, in the first works of the author, social motives are more romantic than real facts, because they are based on abstract thinking. Sometimes the poet tries to revive his meetings in the balance of romantic and realistic thinking. In Abdulla Shaig's enlightenment-realist poetry, simplicity and popularism manifest themselves as artistic merits that attract theorists at first sight. At the same time, his poems sound convincing because they come from deep life observations and easily find their way into the heart of the reader. Children's poems, which are a branch of the author's work, attract more attention in this sense.

In describing Abdulla Shaig's style, it is noticeably his writings are based on the absence of pessimism, despair, optimism of the writer's dreams and ideals for the future. The poem “The Great Figure” (1907) written on the occasion of the death of Hasan bey Zardabi can be considered as a clear example of this. Thus, the writer does not get pessimistic when talking about the death of Hasan Bey, whom he loved very much and admired his selflessness for the prosperity of Azerbaijan, and tries to reflect his poetic thoughts for the future with optimistic notes:

Open your eyes longing for a moment, O glorious mujahid!

Thousands of these schoolchildren witnessed it.

Yordu that weak body toil and hardship,

Enter the bosom of your homeland, be more comfortable (Shaig, 2004, p. 15).

The same mood can be clearly felt in the poet's poem “Remember” (1908), which is accompanied by romantic tones. Despite the meaninglessness of life, the difficulties of the time in which he lives, the poet does not succumb to pessimism and despair, on the contrary, opposes to live with pessimistic feelings does not suit a person's life. One of the stylistic features of Abdulla Shaig's “Remember Me” is that the romantic mood in the first verses is left to the realist lines towards the end of the poem. This feature is felt

not only in the poem “Remember”, but also in other poetic works written by the author in the early days of his career. Of course, it must not be forgotten that this change, or rather the shift away from romantic feelings to realistic thinking, stems from the realities of life. Thus, the desires of a person living with great desires and ideals, which are extinguished, destroyed and forgotten over the years, lead him to reconcile with the cruel, ruthless realities of the world in which he lives. The well-known feedback in Abdullah Shaikh’s writings also stems from these factors.

Ideologically and ethically based on the Enlightenment ideology, but written in a romantic style, in the poem “We are all particles of the same sun”, the poet accuses the imperialist powers that provoke bloody wars; he urges people to be vigilant and not to forget humanist values:

Is a pleasant bloody life coming to you?

Forgotten humanity, awesome!

Here’s a look at the history!

Bring strife, oppression, discord!

We are all in the nest!

We are all particles of the same sun! (Shaig, 2004, p. 37)

Abdulla Shaig, like all enlightened-realist artists, attached great importance to the simplicity of his works in terms of language and style, their comprehensibility for a wide range of readers, and tried to follow this as much as possible in his writings. Although in some cases in his poems *“there are foreign expressions, artificial expressions and words”* (Jalal & Huseynov, 2018, p. 354). In general, the language of these works is notable for its simplicity, clarity and comprehensibility. Undoubtedly, the literary credo of an artist, who was directly connected with school, education, and the upbringing of the younger generation, and who constantly promoted enlightenment in his writings, could not have been otherwise.

Although it seems somewhat controversial, *“enlightenment artists did not move from a realistic description of the material of life to an idea, but from a ready idea to a material of life”* (Aircraft, 2009, p. 124). Although this aspect is felt in the works of A. Shaig and other artists who wrote in the enlightenment-realist style, it is not true that it applies to the enlightenment of literature as a whole. It is also possible to observe this reasoning in the works of poets who wrote in one way or another in the style of romanticism.

Poems written in the enlightenment-realist style by Abbas Sahhat, who belongs to a more romantic literary genre with the general content and poetic harmony of his works, play an important role in Azerbaijani poetry. As it is known,

Abbas Sahhat together with M.Mahmudbeyov wrote the textbook “New school (Third year)” and even engaged in teaching activities for some time (Ahmadov, 2009, p. 199). Thus, in one of the poems of that period, the poet expressed his indifference to the Turkish language at school with heartache:

... No one wants to know their own language,

There is no one who loves the country and the nation

Turkish is a beautiful, sweet language,

Make sure you study it.

Doesn’t affect anyone’s words,

I’m eager for an hour a day (Abbas, 2005, p. 152)

The works of the poet, who attach great importance to the awakening, literacy and formation of the national-political consciousness of the people, are in the true sense of the word enlightened. The poet worships such an ideology mainly because he thinks about the fate of his homeland.

Wake up, O people of the deceased, wake up,

Wake up, O oppressed nation, wake up.

Wake up, nightingale-flower-homeland,

Be awake homeland with song (Abbas, 2005, p. 37)

The poet takes a romantic approach to the ignorance and backwardness that is the main target of criticism of realist poetry, which instills in his writing style a unique, unique poetic tone and harmony. Abbas Sahhat’s poems about the homeland are the most perfect examples of the poet’s poetic work. He is one of the powerful artists who brought the ideology of citizenship to our national poetry, sanctified the image of the Motherland, and revived the true value of his homeland with unique artistic expressions. The poet’s lyrical heroes always think about the fate of the Motherland, longing for its free and happy days:

Beloved of my heart,

My homeland, my homeland, my homeland!

... My homeland gave me bread,

What do you think it means to forget the homeland? (Abbas, 2005, p. 48).

According to the author, it is impossible to love the Motherland with artificial, false, insincere feelings, because this love is a divine feeling that flows from the heart, existence and depths of each person’s soul. In the depths of the poet’s love for the Motherland, at the same time, stands the idea of selflessness and self-sacrifice. He also values patriotism as an irreplaceable, gratuitous moral

debt. The poet's view of the homeland as "the refuge of our ancestors", "the abode of our children" determines his citizenship.

Homeland is the refuge of our ancestors,

Homeland is the home of our children.

There will be no one who does not love the country,

However, he has no conscience (Abbas, 2005, p. 48).

In general, the poem "Vatan", on which Abbas Sahhat is based, is "*the poetic platform of the rock of citizenship*" of the poet's public ideology (Badirkhan, 2011, p. 203), and this aspect should not be overlooked when turning his work into an object of analysis. According to academician Kamal Talibzadeh, although Abbas Sahhat was spiritually attached to the "Molla Nasreddin" literary school, he did not show a serious tendency to write works in a critical realist, satirical style. His satirical poems did not bring him much success and did not reach the top in this field. According to the literary scholar, the main reason for this should be found in Abbas Sahhat's "birth as a romantic" (Kamal, 1991). Academician Kamal Talibzadeh also points out that Abbas Sahhat, unlike other romantic poets of the early twentieth century, especially Muhammad Hadi and Hussein Javid, did not have an "ideal world" but a "real world" (Kamal, 1991, p. 268).

Doctor of Philology, Badirkhan (2011), correctly describes Abbas Sahhat's individual creative style as follows: it was not convex, it was able to determine the path of creativity at the junction. It is interesting that Badirkhan Ahmadov sometimes evaluates Abbas Sahhat as an "enlightening-romantic" poet (Badirkhan, 2011, p. 201). Undoubtedly, this approach to the poet's creative style is new, quite different from the traditional approach, but it is no secret that there are certain controversial points in the assessment.

The prominent poet Alabbas Muznib also had a special contribution to the development of enlightenment-realist poetry in Azerbaijani literature in the early twentieth century. His successively published books include "Smoking" (1911), "Gazi Anvar Pasha" (1912), "Siberian Letters" (1913), "Condolences" (1916), "The Basis of Life" (1916), "The Adventures of Ashraf" (1916) and other books are mainly didactic-enlightenment-realist works. In particular, the poems included in the author's book "Siberian Letters" are typical in this regard. It should be noted that the author wrote this work under the influence of a letter he received from his son Hussein during his years in exile in Siberia. Poems such as "Science", "Literature", "School", "Teacher", "Fatherland", "Soldier", "Morality" are written in the book in the style of our advice. Addressing the poems to Hussein, his native son, was conceived as an artistic

reception. In fact, the poet meant not only his son, but the young children of the homeland as a whole. In the poem "Politeness", the author lists the merits of being polite, polite and moral for everyone:

Work, be professional in the world,

That is the reason for humanity.

If the people are polite,

It can be remembered by the mercy of a serious person (Alabas, 2007, p. 40).

In the poem "Teacher" the author characterizes the qualities of this honorable profession in an instructive style:

That is the teaching that gives people,

That is what science provides.

He is the one who acts morally,

This is the persecution that makes the mind (Alabas, 2007, p. 44).

It should be noted that the most notable poems written by Alabbas Muznib with an appeal to his beloved son Hussein are "Vatan" and "Asgar". In these poems, the writer emphasizes that the homeland is above all for everyone and advises his son to protect the homeland inherited from our ancestors as the apple of his eye.

O my beloved more than my soul,

My angel, my love, my eyes, my baby.

Spend while you are alive, be generous,

Serve the motherland and the nation (Alabas, 2007, p. 47).

At the end of the poem, the author summarizes his poetic conclusions about the Motherland and completes them as follows:

Almighty God, Motherland, Motherland,

Our beloved king's homeland, homeland (Alabas, 2007, p. 48).

Prominent literary critic Firidun bey Kocharli, in his article "Letter on our literature", expresses his views on the poetry of the time and makes interesting remarks on the idea of enlightenment: "We have no doubt that the subject of the tabs, the ideas are beautiful, the intentions are acceptable and specific. ... they do. For example, "science". In this case, there is no one who can deny the virtue and benefit of science and its necessity in a sentence. If there is a question in my mind that the science of a thing is good, or it will say that it is ignorant, stupid and doubtful, scientifically good. In this case, what is the need to praise science and wisdom in long poems?"(Firudin, 1963).

Also, the poems written by Mammad Said Ordubadi in the combination of realist and romantic styles are also noteworthy. At the beginning of the century, his books of poems "Ignorance" (1906) and "Homeland and Freedom" (1907) were published in Tbilisi (Georgia). The poetic examples collected in both books can be considered as a product of the enlightening worldview in general. According to academician Isa Habibbayli, M. S. Ordubadi's book "Motherland and Freedom" as a whole is "*the anthem of homeland and freedom*" (Habibbayli, 2012, p. 37).

## CONCLUSIONS

In general, the search for style in enlightenment-realist poetry in the early twentieth century played an important role in the enrichment of Azerbaijani poetry in terms of artistic mastery. During this period, along with the development of social motives, enlightenment and critical realist thinking in Azerbaijani poetry as a whole, there is also a richness of genre and style. Poems written by prominent poets such as Abbas Sahhat, Abdulla Shaig, Alabbas Muznib in the enlightenment-realist style are characteristic in terms of revealing different manifestations of the search for artistic style.

It is no secret that the style, which is considered to be the most unique in literary creation, has points of intersection with other artistic styles that existed in a certain period of literature. In other words, the idea of enlightenment is embodied not only in realist poetry, but also in non-realist fiction. The same can be said of satirical poetry. It is also noteworthy that a significant number of artists who wrote in a romantic style in Azerbaijani poetry in the early twentieth century have satirical artistic examples in their work.

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