

## THE AZERBAIJANI MODEL OF THE MULTICULTURALISM AND THE ROLE OF THE LITERARY THOUGHT IN ITS FORMATION

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**Abstract.** The cultural pluralism and its development in the modern period is perceived as one of the ways of salvation of the humanity. There is formed suitable conditions to secure the preventing of any type of social injustice, religious and ethnic discrimination in the multicultural society based on the liberal values such as the freedom, equality and friendship and the integration of various cultures, their coexistence in the environment of mutual respect and mutual enrichment that preserving the people's ethnic identity causes the formation of the future cultural unity of human kinds. The state and the people pursuing the multicultural policy, supporting the tolerance have to appreciate firstly its own national values and to achieve studying of the main features of the national identity to awaken the genetic memory of the nation. The historical roots, the features mastered in the various stages of the historical development, researching the different forms of the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism, arousing interest all over the world presently and discussed vividly are amongst the actual matters.

**Keywords:** multiculturalism; tolerance; pluralism; culture; literature; literary relations.

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**Actuality of the topic.** The analysis of the world outlook and the thought of the multiculturalism in the contemporary society, its history's literary and social roots are amongst the topical problems from the standpoint of dissemination of the tolerant feeling in times to come. Despite the "multiculturalism" is a relatively new concept, it has many rich traditions in the world' social and philosophical thought. You can see a touch and feeling of coexistence of the diverse cultures in the ancient literary texts. It is to be noted that in the Middle Ages,

the cultures were approaching one to other by expanding of a trade and literary-cultural relations in the global level. Especially, in the countries located on the ancient Silk Way, including in Azerbaijan the peaceful coexistence of various cultures and enriching based on their own sources changed into traditions. This tendency, turned into the people's way of life and passing on the daily welfare is penetrating in due course to its thought and thinking mode, as a result of which is embodied in the literature.

In the modern time, the cultural pluralism and its development level is perceived as one of ways of salvation of mankind. The respect to each citizen's rights and freedoms is estimated as a condition of stability and power of the concrete state by the democratic thought and scientists regardless of their ethnic, racial and religious diversity. The reason is that the state pursuing a policy based on the multicultural thought and tolerant outlook is not supported only by its own political elite and its own national stratum, but also by the ethnic and religious minorities having equal rights to develop in this society their culture, language, traditions, ethnic and religious values, to have schools in their mother tongue, to publish newspapers and magazines.

In the multicultural society referring to the liberal values, such as the freedom, equality and friendship, there is a fertile ground to prevent any kind of social injustice, religious and ethnic discrimination and to provide coexistence of various cultures in the environment of their integration, in parallel, mutual respect and mutual enrichment that protecting the ethnic identity of people creates a basis for the formation of humankind's future cultural union and cultural diversity, in short, the international cultural values. As the policy of multiculturalism is aiming at preventing of the ethnic minorities' assimilation secures the interests of the multinational states that characterizes the multiculturalism "as a positive appearance and the positive event securing the society's development as a result" [4].

In general terms, the multiculturalism is a positive social appearance. So, preventing the ethnic conflicts, strengthening the reliability of people and nations one to other create an abundant foundations for the society's development.

**Layer of development of the subject.** Despite the history of the multicultural traditions and the tolerant outlook is related closely to the distant past in the Azerbaijani literature, the targeted study of this phenomenon from the scientific standpoint has been started newly. More specifically, the announcement of 2016 as a year of multiculturalism by the President of Azerbaijan Republic was a direct reason for getting a wide scope of this activity. From this point of view, we can note the works prepared by Kamal Abdulla, Etibar Najafov, Roida Rzayeva, Rahman Salmanli and many other specialists. As to the problem related to the multicultural traditions in the Azerbaijani literature, its historical roots and development directions, they were not studied in detail and in this article we will do our best to research it.

**Goal and task.** The key goal of the research is to demonstrate the development profiles of this world outlook simultaneously with proving the fact that multiculturalism is a natural mode of living for the Azerbaijani people, related directly to its genealogy that was thoroughly reflected in the related poetic samples.

**Methods.** While research we have used the historical-comparative method. In connection with the research, we have profited the knowledge

achieved by the humanities, especially historical and literary studies.

**If we have a look to the history of formation of the multicultural society in Azerbaijan,** we can say that this progressive idea and tradition dates back to the depth of the history. There are interesting ideas in this connection: “The Jewish settlers obliged to leave the Judea kingdom plundered because of occupation of Jerusalem by Nabû-kudurri-usur II, the king of Babylon (in the year 586 BC) have taken refuge in the Azerbaijani lands. In the middle of the first century AD, the first followers of Christianity have found refuge in Azerbaijan and later laid the foundation for the Albanian autocephalous church. The religious tolerance traditions were strengthened with time by the advent of the Islam in Azerbaijan” [2].

The motley diversity in the multinational environment of Azerbaijan during the Middle Ages is increased. It was naturally related firstly to the fact of going forward of the trade (caravan trade) in this period. “In 12–14-th centuries Azerbaijan kept trade relations with China, India, Iraq, Egypt, Georgia, Dagestan, Russia and European countries” [1, p. 62]. It is to be noted that appearance of the trade relations in such a scope has created favorable conditions for increasing of interests of the foreign travelers and businessmen to our country, its nature and wealth, as well as its national culture and spiritual values, as a result of which, as in the field of trade and economy, there were formed the mutual relations in the literary and cultural field that in its turn meant the people’s and nations’ live communication. “The caravan

route connecting China with near East, Black Sea, Caspian Sea and Mediterranean Sea through the Central Asia was known from the ancient times under the name of the Silk Way. The importance of this route was not restricted only with the international trade. The Silk Way connecting Asia with the Europe has played a crucial role of the development in the political-diplomatic and cultural relations. And Azerbaijan was a bridge between the Orient and the West” [1, p. 64].

The memories and works written by the various Middle Ages’ travelers and historians contain many notes proving the fact of pleasant and friendly attitude demonstrated for the representatives of the various nations and people in Azerbaijan. The Venetian Marco Polo (13-th century), the Arab traveler Ibn Battuta (XIV), the German traveler and writer Schiltberger (XV), the Venetian traveler Kontarini (XV), the English merchant and traveler Jenkinson (16-th century), the Spanish traveler Klavicho (XV), the French monk Jordan Catalani de Severak (XIV), the Russian traveler Afanasi Nikitin (XV), the Italian traveler Odorik de Pordenon (XIV), the English traveler and merchant Cartwright (XVI), the French traveler Jean Batiste Tavernier (XVII), the Holland traveler Yan Streys (XVII), the German traveler Adam O’Leary (XVII), the French traveler Charden (XVII), Cempfer (XVII), the French traveler Tavernier (XVII), Corneli de Bruyin, the French traveler Dubois de Montero (XIX), the English traveler J. Hanvey (XVIII), the German traveler I. Lerx (XVIII), the Russian traveler, academician S. Gmelin (XVIII), Marcehal fon

Biberstein, the traveler Avril Philip, the traveler V. Dittel, the English traveler E. Bel and other travelers visited Azerbaijan within the various centuries, even the writers and poets in their works written later have dealt with the tolerant attitudes witnessed by them besides our country's history, economy, national character and traditions. All these facts prove once again that the multicultural attitude of the ordinary Azerbaijanis towards humankind belonging to the different nations and ethnic groups was a daily lifestyle. Even "the main aspect of akhi\* (\* akhi – means "my friend" in Arab language, one of the Sufi organization in Islam) concept spread out in Iran, Central Asia, Anatolia and in Azerbaijan during the early Middle Ages was the worship to the hospitality". The humanist ideas of akhism, its sincere inclination for assistance to the poor men and travelers was estimated highly in "Isgandername" by Nizami and in the notes of Ibn Batuta (14-th century), the Arab traveler and scientist [1, p. 60].

The academician Akif Alizade relates the formation of the stable multinational environment in our country perceived in the modern sense to the fact of increase of economic and strategic importance of Baku beginning from the 19-th century, especially to the flow of the workforce from Iran, Russia, even from Europe. The academician, analyzing this process from the mutual relations' standpoint writes: "...The reverse process of the flow of the workforces to Azerbaijan from the neighboring countries resulted in the acquaintance of our people with the

western culture. As a result, its scientific ideas were enriched with the European science's achievements. The synthesis of the cultures of the West and the Orient was manifested more in the further development of the national art... Unlike the attitude of the modern western world towards the migrants, our people has received the people in need in their natural conditions and created any favorable conditions to protect their religions, languages and cultures in the different environment. The praying houses built within the mentioned period in Baku, Ganja, Shamkir and Khachmaz and preserved by the state are obvious examples for this fact. All these facts prove that the common sense cannot be created artificially, the significance of any event has to be looking for in the mentality of the people" [3; 2].

As it seen, unlike many states, the multicultural society and the tolerant morality was not established forcibly based on the official decrees and against the will of the people. Quite contrary, this process has been taken place in the opposite direction and namely nourishing of the people's lifestyle, mentality and its spiritual qualities, reached the today's highest level and supported by the state thinking of the comprehensive development and the future of the nation. "This rare experience accumulated by our nation within the history has created favorable conditions for Heydar Aliyev, our national leader to accept the tolerance and the multiculturalism as the state strategy of Azerbaijan obtained its independency in the end of the 20-th century and this policy is carrying out

with great success by Ilham Aliyev, the president declaring 2016 as a year of multiculturalism” [3; 1].

**The Azerbaijani model of the multiculturalism.** One of the multiculturalism models rousing interest all over the world for many disputable aspects is its Azerbaijani model. If we take into account the historical way passed by our people possessing the ancient and the rich past, even under the conditions of the most complicated social-cultural changes taken place on these lands, we don't observe any problems arisen with the nations speaking the different language and possessing different cultures by the local people. Turning over the pages of our history, we are witness of the fact that the genetics of the Azerbaijani people don't contain any ugly intentions as malice and intent; it has taken the people in its arms, which were turned traitor against our lands and culture at one time.

The state and the people pursuing the policy of multiculturalism and supporting the tolerance have firstly to estimate its own national values and strive for study and propaganda of its identity and the main qualities. The reason is that we has to take care of preserving of the balance and on the other hand if we fail to study profoundly our culture looking for the ways to contact with other cultures under the rapid globalization conditions, having intention to be in dialogue with the different cultures and to propagandize its achievements all over the world, we cannot participate as an active side in the mutual enrichment process. It is not by chance that the core motive of the majority of the

Azerbaijani literary examples created within the last years, especially during the independence were consisted mainly of the specific aspects of the national identity, propaganda of ideas aiming at awakening of national consciousness and other issues.

The multicultural policy has firstly to achieve the improvement and democratization of the available environment and to secure the creation of the conditions favorable for the cultural pluralism and the free mutual relations. To achieve this goal, each individual has possess the high level of the internal culture, this tolerant mood and morality have to rest on the steady traditions, the existent social and cultural environment has to be formed and shaped in the spirit of understanding the different cultures and religions and to reach the stabilized tendency level that in case of implementation by the state could find support amongst the people and not to meet with the opposite attitude. To our mind, it is one of the reasons of the undeniable victory of the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism in this period. Securing any favorable conditions for the representatives of the religious and national minority, the citizens of Azerbaijan entering the third millennium as a sovereign state not being isolated from their environment to study, propagandize and develop all values of their own cultures are amongst the features to be demonstrated as examples for the world.

“Despite the establishment of various models of multiculturalism, differing from one another by different nuances, arisen as an alternative policy to suppress the protest of the society

against the cultural diversity” [4], they have common and leading aspects connecting them all together. The undeniable fact is that the multicultural values and ideas achieve successes only in a society, in which the state has interests for and support them systematically. In this sense, the Azerbaijani society and the independent Azerbaijani state may be taken as an example for the world.

Each culture in the Azerbaijani society preserving its personal dignity and its own values is outside the atmosphere of conflict with other cultures and carries out its activity under mutual relations with them.

In general, taking into account the broad social views, the multiculturalism securing the many-coloredness for the life of the society means the acquaintance with the different cultures, avoiding the isolation, striving for dialogue, as a final result, making efforts for living in peace of all mankind.

One of the characteristic features of the multiculturalism’s Azerbaijani model is that it was perceived as a lifestyle before entering this term in the social environment as a term. If we express this idea by the words of Mr. Ilham Aliyev, our President, “The multicultural traditions, a new word in our lexicon existed in our life within the centuries. It was named in other terms, but its essence was not changed” [3; 1]. Therefore, the decree of the head of our state “on declaring 2016 as a year of multiculturalism” as a decent response to the complicated event arisen all over the world and the confrontations driven and prompted intentionally on a religious, racial and

ethnic background or unintentionally (as a form of manifestation of ignorance and chauvinism) was met by the people with great satisfaction and sympathy and supported thoroughly.

One of the features of the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism is that it is rested namely upon the principles of Azerbaijani ideology based on the tolerant values. The leading European states faced presently with the wave of immigrants, “melting” the minorities in the common “pot of culture” referring to the liberal democratic principles assimilate them; but, the young Azerbaijani state choosing a different path in this process, approving its more civil and democratic political course in the practical activity has proved its faithfulness to the tolerant morality even under more complicated situations for all over the world. One of the most specific features of the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism is that it rests upon the Azerbaijani ideology principles, the main idea of the Azerbaijani state. Today, each Azerbaijani citizen understands that “the aforementioned Azerbaijani ideology is not geographical, but a political definition” [5, p. 69].

The Azerbaijani people, obliged to be faced with various social problems occurred as a result of giving a particular preference to the Turkic ideology or other religious and Islamic tendencies within the different historical periods and tortured with the negative consequences hereof (especially, violation of national integration) has chosen today the way of Azerbaijani ideology together its integral parts as Turkism, Islam, modernity and nation-

al diversity, not giving special preference to any one of these parts and accepting all them in unity for the sake of national interests. The main provisions of the modern Azerbaijani ideology are as follows:

The cultural diversity – the Azerbaijani society accepts the national and cultural diversity as a cultural richness, and the Azerbaijani state is interesting in development and preserving of this diversity in the country. Therefore supports it comprehensively. Certainly, despite the preserving of the national identity is one of the very important issues in the modern globalization circumstances, the emergence of extreme cases in this field creates danger for the cultures of various minorities, as a result of which we lost the traditions, the cultures with poor traditions remain beyond the development process or sometimes disappear completely. Therefore, understanding the value and importance of the cultural diversity and cooperation with the people all over the world, which is the fertile conditions for the mutual enrichment process has to be a first step to be undertaken in this way.

The quality of tolerance, as it was mentioned above is that Azerbaijani – our country was a unique space for peaceful living of the peoples possessing the different identity and religious belief within the centuries. There are independent national, cultural and religious relations in our country resting upon the mutual confidence and respect since ancient times. Today we are witnesses of the high support given by the state to the tolerant attitude. The President Ilham Aliyev meets regularly with the representatives and leaders

of the religious communities and is interesting in their needs and problems. Namely as a result of the policy pursued by the state in this direction, the quality of patience for the intra-religions relations is manifested highly in today's Azerbaijani society.

The Azerbaijani ideology's preferential aspects include the principles to give great importance to the dialogue between the cultures in resolution of territorial conflicts, to improve the mutual understanding and cooperation between the representatives of the various people and cultures.

**The artistic thought has special role in shaping of the Azerbaijani ideology in the Azerbaijani society.** The Azerbaijani literature, as a treasure of wisdom and knowledge was standing in the position of humanity for all ages, has been a promoter of humanism, justice and herald of ideas of unity.

Certainly, the reason of such a wide scope of the multicultural ideas in the Azerbaijani society and its perception very easily was the tolerant world outlook and progressive views, which was its very distinguishing feature taking root in the nation's genetic memory. The Azerbaijani people besides estimating its values highly, has always treated the other people's cultural and religious samples with due respect and has given preference to live in the conditions of the mutual understanding within all periods of the history. It means that the multiculturalism appearing presently as a priority political course of the Azerbaijani state is a form of expression of thinking mode having profound traces in the people's mentality.

And the most obvious evidence of all these facts is the literary and artistic heritage of our people dripping out of the depth of ages. The tolerant frame of mind and the multicultural world view appeared and contained in the literary samples in very different forms being turned really into our people's ethical qualities were transferred to the present generation together with the values being indices of our national identity. The humanist ideas formed and shaped in the classical literature are extended today by the modern masters of literature and is one of the political directions of our independent state. The tolerant views reflected and taken deep roots in the works such as the "Book of Dada Gorgud", appeared regularly in the works of Nizami Ganjavi, Imadaddin Nassimi, Shah Ismatyil Khatai, Mahammad Fuzuli, Molla Panah Vagif, Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov, Mirza Shafi Vazeh, Mirza Fatali Akhundzade, Ashig Alasgar, Mirza Alakbar Sabir, Jalil Mammadguluzade, Nariman Narimanov, Abbas Sahhat, Huseyn Javid, Jafar Jabbarli, Samad Vurgun, Suleyman Rustam, Rasul Rza and other poets with the most colorful shades are extended with success by the creative activity of our modern writers – Anar, Elchin, Ramiz Rovshan, Agil Abbas, Mustafa Chamanli, Elchin Huseynbayli and other writers and poets.

**Conclusion.** As each country takes care of protection of its energy, economic and national security, it has to secure its multicultural security as well. The common essence of the multicultural security includes the protec-

tion of the cultural values of all people not depending their ethnic, religious, racial and cultural belonging. "Establishing the mechanism of equal sharing of the political attitude towards the various confessions inside the country, the state care aimed at protection of the national diversity in the country, providing a support for all people and ethnic groups living in the country to protect their cultural values is the main principle of the multiculturalism" [3; 4] and the modern Azerbaijani state and the society have chosen them as the priority issue in their activity.

The application of the multicultural mode of Azerbaijan all over the world would give good results for establishing the peace and the public quiet.

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