

M.F. AXUNDZADƏNİN ƏSƏRLƏRİNDƏ DİNİ MƏSƏLƏLƏR**Zöhrə Əliyeva**

f.ü.f doktoru, dosent, Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyası
Fəlsəfə və Sosiologiya İnstitutunun Beynəlxalq münasibətlər şöbəsinin müdiri
zohraliyeva@rambler.ru

Xülasə. XIX əsrdə Azərbaycan ədəbiyyatında yeni ziyalı ab-havası yarandı. Yeni yaradıcı ədəbi qüvvələrin yaranması sosial-mədəni hadisə kimi ənənəvi islam və müasir rus-avropa mədəniyyətlərinin sintezini özündə əks etdirdi. Şərq və Qərb kimi böyük sivilizasiyaların, eləcə də dünyanın kiçik və çoxsaylı xalqlarının qohum dinlərin və ideologiyaların qovşağında mövcud olan Azərbaycan mədəniyyəti Qafqaz xalqlarının, türk-müsəlman xalqlarının mədəniyyətlərini birləşdirən unikal mədəniyyətdir. Avropa xalqlarının, yəni “Azərbaycan mədəniyyətində Qafqaz, Rus, Avropa və Fars mədəni dəyərləri vəhdət təşkil edir” [1,11].

Bu məqalədə Azərbaycan maarifçiliyinin banisi Mirzə Fətəli Axundzadənin dinə münasibəti təhlil edilir. Axundzadənin fəlsəfə, ədəbiyyat və incəsənətlə bağlı fikir və mülahizələri daha çox onun “Kamal üd-Dövlənin məktubları” adlı fəlsəfi traktatında öz əksini tapmışdır. Bu məqalədə müəllif qeyd edir ki, Axundzadə Azərbaycan tarixində ilk dəfə olaraq həm materializm, həm də dini tənqid haqqında öz düşüncə və mülahizələrini təkmilləşdirmiş görkəmli filosofdur. Müəllif daha sonra Axundzadənin fikirlərində islam radikalizminin, şərq despotizminin (mütləq hakimiyyət), azad fikrin sıxışdırılmasının və xalqın hüquqlarını pozan kəskin Şərq feodalizminin tənqid olunduğunu göstərir. Bundan əlavə, müəllif Axundzadənin dinlə elmin bir arada mövcud ola bilməyəcəyi fikrini vurğulayır, Axundzadənin dinlə elm arasındakı ziddiyyəti təsvir edərək şərq ölkələrinin və Asiya xalqlarının cəhalətini, onların dini baxışları ilə köhnəlmiş adət-ənənələrin uyğunluğunu göstərir.

Məqalədə həmçinin o da vurğulanır ki, M.F.Axundzadə liberal-demokratik baxışlara sadıq qalaraq insanları hikmət və dərinlik əsasında islahat etməyə, islamı bərqərar etməyə çağırır.

Açar sözlər: Din, islam, Quran, “Kamal-ud-Dövlənin məktubları”, islam protestantlığı, təbii və insan hüquqları.

RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN THE WORKS OF**M.F. AKHUNDZADEH****Zohra Aliyeva**

Ph.D assoc. prof. The head of the International
Relations department of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences
zohraliyeva@rambler.ru

Abstract. In the nineteenth century, a new intellectual atmosphere emerged in Azerbaijan literature. The emergence of new creative literary forces reflected the synthesis of traditional Islamic and contemporary Russian-European cultures as a social and cultural phenomenon. Azerbaijani culture, which has transpired at the junction of related religions and ideologies of great civilizations like the East and the West, as well as small and numerous nations of the world, is a unique culture that combines cultures of Caucasian people, Turkic-Muslim people, as well as those of European people, i.e. "Caucasian, Russian, European, and Persian cultural values are united in Azerbaijani culture" [1,11].

This article analyzes the attitude of Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh, the founder of the Azerbaijani Enlightenment, toward religion.

Akhundzadeh's thoughts and considerations on philosophy, literature and art are mainly reflected in his philosophical treatise, called “Kamal ud-Dovle's Letters”. In this article, the author states

that Akhundzadeh is an outstanding philosopher who, for the first time in the history of Azerbaijan, improved his thoughts and opinions, both on materialism and religious criticism. The author further outlines the fact that Islamic radicalism, oriental despotism (absolute power), the oppression of free thought and severe Eastern feudalism violating people's rights are criticized in Akhundzadeh's thoughts.

Besides, the author highlights Akhundzadeh's statement that religion and science cannot coexist, and the fact whereby Akhundzadeh depicts the conflict between religion and science and portrays the ignorance of the oriental countries and Asian people, the conformance between their religious views and outdated traditions of that time.

The article also emphasizes that M.F.Akhundzadeh adheres to liberal-democratic views and calls people to reform and establish Islam based on wisdom and depth.

Key words: Religion, Islam, Koran, "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters", Islamic Protestantism, natural and human rights.

Methodology: The theoretical and methodological basis of the article consists of the complex approach, logical and historical method, the principles of comparative approach and systematic analysis methods. Working over research, the author has referred to the works of European, French, Russian and Azerbaijan literary scholars.

РЕЛИГИОЗНАЯ ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА В ТВОРЧЕСТВЕ М.Ф.АХУНДЗАДЕ

Зохра Алиева

PhD, доцент.

заведующим отдела международных отношений

Национальная академия наук Азербайджана

zohraliyeva@rambler.ru

Аннотация. В XIX веке в азербайджанской литературе сложился новый интеллектуальный климат. Появление новых творческих литературных сил отразило синтез традиционной исламской и современной русско-европейской культур как социокультурного феномена. Культура Азербайджана, существующая на стыке великих цивилизаций, таких как Восток и Запад, а также малых и многочисленных народов мира, родственных им религий и идеологий, является уникальной культурой, объединяющей культуры кавказских и тюрко-мусульманских, а также европейских народов, т.е. «кавказские, русские, европейские и персидские культурные ценности образуют единство в азербайджанской культуре» [1,11].

В данной статье анализируется отношение основоположника азербайджанского просвещения Мирзы Фатали Ахундазе к религии.

Мысли и взгляды Ахундзаде на философию, литературу и искусство в наибольшей степени отражены в его философском трактате «Письма Камал уд-Довле». В этой статье автор отмечает, что Ахундзаде является выдающимся философом, который впервые в истории Азербайджана применил свои мысли и взгляды как на материализм, так и на религиозную критику. Далее автор показывает, что взгляды Ахундзаде критикуют исламский радикализм, восточную деспотию (абсолютную власть), подавление свободомыслия и жесткий восточный феодализм, нарушающий права людей.

Кроме того, автор акцентирует на мнении Ахундзаде, что религия и наука не могут сосуществовать, Ахундзаде описывает противоречие между религией и наукой, показывает невежество восточных стран и народов Азии, совместимость их религиозных взглядов с устаревшими традициями.

Ключевые слова: религия, ислам, Коран, «Письма Камаль-уд-Довле», исламский протестантизм, естественные права человека.

Introduction

The scientific, literary, philosophical activity of A.Bakikhanov, I.Gutgashinli, Mirza Kazimbey and other representatives of science and culture played an important role in preparation of the basis for Azerbaijan enlightenment ideas. Actually they were not philosophers materialists. In generally, the enlightenment was not homogeneous by nature. This case is originating from inner nature of enlightenment philosophy and ideology and features of its goals. The enlightenment is such the phenomenon that either in its foundation and development or in propaganda diversity of philosophical beliefs, which played a decisive role.

The initiative of being armed with the new national outlook, national and universal tendencies, leading scientific, social, philosophical, cultural, moral, literary and artistic values found out by M.F.Akhundzadeh and choosing Western Europe and Russian democratic thought as a main direction was becoming reality. In the 19-th century, especially in the second part of it, the enlightenment experience functioning as literary and cultural movement harmonizing with activities of those educators got the revolutionary-democratic content. Besides it was reflected as the tendency and collection of enlightening realism in literary genres such as drama, narration, as well as poetry and prose. The enlightenment and enlightening realism in this regard became the method of Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh and a group of writers. On the basis of experience of M.F.Akhundzadeh, which is the unique universal literary figure, literary platforms and esthetical systems appeared. Dramatics, criticism, philosophy, publicism which was once represented by Akhundzadeh, found out its professional successors at the end of 19-th century and especially in the beginning of 20-th century. Generally, national progressive press and theatre, school and pedagogical thought, translation, criticism and esthetics became the active front place of ideological and organizational work in fight for enlightenment, renaissance and realism. With the influence of the demand of renewal and modernization with regard of social and historical environment, new world

prism, the Orthodox literary institutions existing since the Middle Ages disappeared.

Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh (1812-1878) has outstanding merits in the history of inclusivity of Azerbaijan literature to society. The experienced scientists gained his glory not only in the literary and philosophical thinking of Azerbaijan, but also as a leading representative of the Near East enlightenment philosophy materialism movement. [2]

There are a lot of objective reasons for the global importance of enlightenment of Akhundzadeh. First of all, historical significance of the works of the thinker is that Akhundzadeh refers to the achievements of Western European and Russian culture, fights against despotism, medieval slavery for the enlightenment and happiness of the nations. The struggle of M.F. Akhundzadeh for a new alphabet constitutes the basis of his enlightenment activity.[3]

Akhundov understood that a new alphabet would play a special role in the enlightenment and elimination of illiteracy, so he had spent nearly 30 years on its implementation. Akhundov spared no effort to accomplish the new alphabet as he travelled to Iran and Turkey, sent letters to Russia and Europe, corresponded with friends and partners, and did his best to find ways to spread usage of the new alphabet among new generation. [4,6].

Unlike Soviet scientists, Orientalist Fransua Jorjon, professor of Sorbonne University commenting entire activity of Akhunzadeh in his article - "Notes on modernism in Azerbaijan at the turn of the century", did not introduce him as the atheis. He introduced him as a thinker eliminating the conflict between different religious 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 thinkers wrote their works in Azerbaijani language and actively used this language in social life during that period and characterized this process as the "Literary Renaissance". He stated that in the works of Akhunzadeh [97-

106] the debuts of literary renaissance were reflected.

An American turkologist Tadeush Svyatovskiy indicated on the specific place of Akhundzadeh among the scholars of the 19-th century in his "Russia and Azerbaijan" works chapter - "From enlightenment movement to political programs". His ideas were as following:

"In the middle of the 19-th century Azerbaijan intellectual circles reached unprecedented scope afterwards their predecessors have created their own local Azeri "westerners" and the "populists" (Narodniki) groups. Akhundzadeh, which was called by Vorontsov as "Azeri Moliere", wrote several comedies successively in the middle of XIX century. He demonstrated the variety of problems and shortcomings that arose from ignorance and superstition.[6.37]

Main part

The major philosophical and social-political work of M.F.Akhundzadeh is "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" which were written in 1865. He is considered a founder of modernism, namely, democratic and liberal traditions in all Muslim East and in the history of philosophical thoughts of Azerbaijan nation. The reason is that M.F. Akhundzadeh was the person who introduced such notions like "liberalism", "democracy", "parliament", "civilization", "patriot", "revolution" and others that peculiar to the western societies, culture and philosophy, as well as he advocated the necessity of enforcement of European values in Islamic countries for the first time among Muslim philosophers.

The research of religious phenomena, especially analysis of Islam the origin of religious consciousness, its content and essence, its role in the personal and public life of people, the difference between religion and science (progress) and other issues were highlighted in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters".

M.F.Akhundzadeh compares religion with the science (in some measure with philosophy) in an effort to uncover the content and essence of religion. He has come to the conclusion that science refers to the real events and facts of the world where we live, derives its allegations from researches on real things, cross-checks it,

puts it to proof, however, religion is mostly based on blind faith.

M.F. Akhundzadeh declares the contradiction of science and religion as a universal principle and does not distinguish them, in other words, according to him all religions, as well as Islam are convictions having no wisdom and consciousness (7,99). Besides, M.F.Akhundzadeh values Islam above all other pagan religions and even Zoroastrianism which was widespread in Azerbaijan at that time. He states that religion and faith are absolutely in contradiction to science and wisdom and they can never come together. A person having the religion and faith cannot be considered a scholar or thinker and also, the person having knowledge and wisdom can not be believer. Adorers of religion and faith can not concern to science and education, and also followers of science and enlightenment should abdicate religion and faith. [8]

It should be noted that it would not be right to justify all ideas and considerations of M.F.Akhundzadeh on the relation of science and religion. Surely, science and religion are different types of mental activity, and they differ from each other in many respects. At the same time, it is a fact that there is an interaction between them. In fact, this relation and interaction effects are not merely negative and are not oriented on the complete destruction of each other.

Therefore, these types of mental activities can coexist together, although there are certain rivalry and conflicts between science and religion, even sometimes it become more acute in certain periods of history. This indicates the stand point that the distinction between religion and science cannot be overstated to that extent, to prove religion as deficiency and reject it as an enemy of science. Taking these matters into consideration, it is quite logical to come to the conclusion that people of religion and faith may also be engaged in science.

Generally speaking, one may engage in both science and religion. Numerous real facts support it.

The author of "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" also pays particular attention to the analysis of Koran, the holy book of Islam to make strong impression about the essence and content of Is-

lam on readers. It will be appropriate to make some remarks on conclusions of the analysis of author made from the materialist point of view. First and foremost, it should be stated that Koran, the holy book of Islam is appraised in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" as a delicate, effective, inspirational work of prose. According to him, the true author of Koran is the prophet Muhammed. Koran occurred entirely in his (the Prophet Muhammad See.) dreams. The author wrote without any doubt to prophet's capability to do this: "He was an extraordinary person with clear and meaningful way of speaking, intelligence and foresight". The prophet is also being proud of his abilities. He said: "I am a member of Quraysh tribe, and I am fluent in making speech among people speaking with the letter" [9, 118].

M.F.Akhunzadeh considered that the thoughts on the prophet being illiterate was incorrect. On the ground of logical evidence he insisted that the prophet was literate and was able to read and write in Arabic... [10,118].

Relatively stating the personal qualities of prophet, the author focused basically on the critical analysis of the content and essence of Islam in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters". Because of its atheistic standpoint, many consider this analysis to be completely unilateral, extremely denial and biased. In our opinion, this idea is unilateral too. It is true that the analysis of the content and essence of Islam, its rituals in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" mainly concentrated on uncovering negative aspects. More specifically, there is highlighted question dealing with existence of God evincing comprehensive logical arguments on the denial of it [11,184]. Stating the myths about heaven and hell, Judgment Day and the manifestation of the 12-th Imam Mahdi as nonsense and fake, author criticizes cognitive and social aspects of them [12,39]. In this work, the author adverted to the role of prayer and fasting in strengthening convictions about God in mind and sole of people, and also to its negative impacts on effective work of people [13,184]; Charity is mentioned several times as vivid demonstration of the humanistic essence of Islam and its purport is revealed like this: "One of the famous philosophers states that nothing cause beggarliness and laziness to make money for

own life more than almsgiving. It is possible to give alms to orphans, widowers otherwise it may be considered as a crime" [14, 66].

The history of the emergence of Sunni and Shia denominations is also stated in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" with a real description of the conflicts that has resulted with bloodshed. The author expresses the spiritual and moral injury of the Shia religionists in detail naming the ceremonies of Muḥarram as "vainrituals" [1,120]. The author comments on the hijab verse of Koran in "Letters" as well. He concurs with the opinions of European philosophers who have strongly criticized the prophet Mohammed for "hijab" and polygamy. Later, he analyses the consequences of polygamy.

The thoughts on the main principles of religion dealing with the analysis of Koran are also interesting and involving in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters". The author states that every religion build on three different principles: belief, worship and morality. To him, the fundamental purpose of establishment of each religion is the third principle. Belief and worship are assisting purposes [16, 123]. The author stated that the morality is an event connected with a real being, but belief and worship is established in connection with the God which is the imaginary being.

The author points out in "Letters" that except killing human and amputate (cut) parts of body and other rights, which Islam gives people, can be preserved. The author also emphasizes on a virtue of Islam as follows: "The prohibition of wine is really one of the unique laws of Islam" [17, 100]. This statement approves quite clear that the author has never tried to ignore positive sides of Islam. In our view, this can be evaluated as brilliant indicators of adherence to the principles of scientific objectivity. The activity of Muslim clerics is one of the issues, which the author pays special attention and makes critical analysis on it in "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters". The characteristics of Shia clerics is exposed in the nineteenth-century Iran, especially in Tabriz in "Letters" the author depicts their social and moral portraits.

M.F.Akhundzadeh does not privilege any of the existing religions, approaches all religions with the same attitude. He considers neither of

them useful for the people, nation or society. Nevertheless, the last sentence of this quote makes us to think deeper. On one hand the author considers the religion to be vain, on the other hand he states as follows:

"I could be in favour of a religion by means of which mankind could live freely and happily in this world." [18, p.11]

Surely, it is undeniable fact that there is significant difference between the meanings of these expressions. However, taking into consideration this it would not be appropriate to reproach M.F. Akhundzadeh for being inconsistent with regards to his beliefs. Because M.F. Akhundzadeh knew that to create a new religion enabling mankind to live freely and happily was impossible.

For having clear and complete understanding of the peculiarities and specificity of atheism of M.F. Akhundzadeh we should pay close attention to the following phrase declared by Kamal-ud-Dovle: "The author of Kamal-ud-Dovle does not want people to be irreligious and faithless" [19, 8].

There is a strange fact here: the person who is atheist himself does not want the people to be atheists. The content and meaning of this statement are also important, because some investigators of literary heritage of M.F. Akhundzadeh referring to this statement keep M.F. Akhundzadeh away from an atheistic belief.

In our opinion, this confusion arises from the fact that the investigators do not take into account the idea related to specific historical conditions. It should be stated that in the historical period when "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" and the responses were written Islam was widespread in Iran, and also in Azerbaijan and had power over individual and public consciousness. At that time, religious fanaticism was growing and becoming stronger. Sophisticated connoisseur M.F. Akhundzadeh having a refined knowledge of Islam was aware that no matter what methods were used in that historical environment, it would not be possible to estrange mass of people from religious beliefs. Therefore for that time it could be a dream to take over such an assignment. Also, the desire to make people an atheist and irreligious in such

circumstances would make them extremely angry and it would harm to get together for the enlightenment. Consequently, M.F. Akhundzadeh did not set the goal to estrange people from religion and provoke them to be atheist.

We do not rebuke beliefs and actions of philosopher, but rather we reaffirm his wise approach to the matter.

At the same time, referring to the judgments of thinker it would not be right to express the conclusion that Akhundzadeh withdrew himself from solving the problems related with Islam. As explicitly stated in the "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters", the author, who did not want to provoke people to be atheist, had not ceased his activities in the field of religion, he put all his effort on solving a significant matter. Outstanding thinker emphasized that Islam in its current state is harmful and dangerous for science, culture and social progress. Therefore, it is necessary to weaken the harmful and dangerous effects of Islam and to make it relevant to the requirements of contemporary life. He wrote: "In accordance with the demands of the era Islam needs Protestantism. "Considering the progressive consequences in some European countries, in England, France and in the "New World" (America), the author stated that passing to Protestantism in Islam could also enable obtaining many valuable social consequences. The outstanding philosopher deemed it correct to analyze everything in terms of requirements of intellectual and logical laws. He insisted that a conviction that was not based on intelligence and wisdom cannot be trusted. Therefore, Islam can be a healthy belief in that case it have been set on intelligence and wisdom. In connection with this, the author of "Letters" wrote: "Islam can continue to exist only if people understand the essence of religion on the basis of consciousness and enlightenment". After that, in order to differ from other nations it is possible to remain in Islam formally. Besides, killing person and cut the body part and other laws dealing with human rights can not be maintained. Many points in Islam should be changed, some of them should be completely removed and all the hardships that were presented under the "God's rights" should be rejected. Like English, Americans, and several other European nations, they are genuinely protestant even despite being

outwardly Christian. In other words, they adhere wisdom and logic [19,100].

In this excerpt from the "Kamal-ud-Dovle's letters" the author stated that Islam could not be preserved in current version. Therefore, it should be renewed and the parts, which were not appropriate for the contemporary life should be removed.

As mentioned above, the author did not merely conclude his thoughts stating that Islam was in need of Protestantism but also he exposed the specific characteristics of Protestantism in Islam and he attempted to determine the points where it would be useful.

It should be noted that, although some of M.F. Akhundzadeh's thoughts on radical changes and reform of rituals and ceremonies in Islam were delusional, saying "Islam is in need of the Protestantism" he had displayed the worthy courage to express it.

Conclusion

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

The great educator M.F.Akhundzadeh's acti-

vity is characterized not only with literary heritage but also with a rich philosophical heritage. He is the author of a famous philosophical «Kema-luddovle mektublari», the treatise that he worked on for 1 years, «Hekimi-ingilis Yuma cavab», «Yek kelme» and other philosophical works. These works made M.F.Akhundzadeh renowned as a professional philosopher and raised the enlightenment philosophy in Azerbaijan to the peak.

M.F. Akhundzade was an outstanding author who contributed to the culture of Azerbaijan and the whole world. When he was alive he drew the attention of European researchers and writers around the world. The main purpose of enlightenment standpoints of M.F. Akhundzadeh was to struggle against ignorance, superstition and fanaticism, and put an effort on science and education. M.F.Akhundzadeh' stating the slogan "Islam is in need of Protestantism" did not have an intention and purpose to perpetuate Islam. M.F. Akhundzadeh was convinced that Islam would exist for a long time in the current state. Therefore, he considered it a very important task to make certain changes in order to eliminate significantly the harmful effects of Islam. He asserted that if this was realized, many problems of progress and freedom in Muslim countries would be resolved.

REFERENCES

1. Dashdamirov A.F. National idea and ethnicity: Moscow, 1996, p.90
2. <http://manera.az/tribuna/300-mirze-feteli-axundzade-maarifchi-realizmin-banisi-kimi.html>, 2017
3. <http://www.kultura.az/news/20120614092409373>, 2012.
4. Rafiq Yusifoghlu, "2th" Newspaper- 2012.- June.- p.6.
5. Georgeon F. « Note sur le modernisme en Azerbaïdjan au tournant du siècle » dans « Le réformisme musulman en Asie Centrale, du « premier renouveau à la soviétisation, 1788-1937 », numéro spécial des cahiers du Monde Russe, XXXVII/1-2, janvier – juin 1996, p.97-106.
6. Tadeusz Swietochowski, Russia and Azerbaijan : A Borderland in Transition (New York : Columbia University Press), 199,37
7. Axundzadə.M.F.Əsərləri : Üç cild. . 2 - ci cild : Kəmalüddövlə məktubları: fəlsəfi, ədəbi - tənqidi və tarixi məqalələr. - Bakı: "Şərq – Qərb", 200,376s.
8. Works of M.F. Akhundzadeh in three volumes. Volume 2. Baku: "East - West", 200,376 p. (in Azerbaijanian)
- 9-16. Ibid.
17. Mirza Fatali Akhundov - 200. Baku, 2012.
- 18-19. Works of M.F. Akhundzadeh in three volumes. Volume 2. Baku: "East - West", 200, 376p. (in Azerbaijanian).

Rəyçi:
Göndərilib: 19.10.2022

fəl.üzrə fəl.dok Samirə Dadaşova
Qəbul edilib: 31.10.2022