THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

ARTISTIC REFLECTION OF ISLAMIC VALUES IN
MIRZA ALAKBAR SABIR’S ACTIVITY

Speciality:  5716.01 – Azerbaijani literature
Field of science:  Philology
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Baku–2021
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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

**Topicality and degree of using of the theme.** The Islamic religion, one of the most widespread heavenly religions in the world, began to penetrate into the life, national and spiritual values of Turkic peoples, including Azerbaijani Turks since the 7th century and “towards the beginning of the 8th century it became a dominant religion in Azerbaijan”.

The Islamic religion and the Islamic world had a great influence on our centuries-old literary and philosophical heritage, this influence was reflected clearly in every period of our oral folk literature until the written literature of the beginning of the 20th century, unique literary pearls of religious literature, sect literature and elegy literature were written by outstanding representatives of our literature.

Though the ruthless struggle of the ideological system of the Soviet empire, the destruction of many mosques and religious schools, their use in an abusive manner, the severe repression of prominent religious figures, the expulsion of young people from religious education and knowledge, and their exposure to the system of education based on the materialist, atheist outlook as a whole were irrefutable strokes, it could not remove Islamic values from the mind, heart and soul of the Azerbaijani people.

The return of our people to our national-spiritual and religious values with the acquisition of our state independence entered the highest stage under the leadership of national leader Heydar Aliyev. The great leader, who turned Azerbaijan, which was inhabited by different nationalities, ethnos and representatives of different faiths as a result of its policy based on humanism and internationalism, as an example of religious tolerance and endurance, has treated Islam with great love and respect. Thanks to the leadership the special attention and worthy followers of this wise personality, our mosques and religious monuments have been restored at a high level and the construction of new mosques, the establishment of higher religious educational institutions have been given to the use of the people.

Telling “Our spiritual and Islamic values have passed from generation to generation, lived and reached these days. Today these are the

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greatest spiritual wealth of our people and nation”\textsuperscript{2} - the national leader highly appreciated the return of the Azerbaijani people to Islamic values and expressed this opinion so: “The return to progressive Islamic values, the revival of national and religious traditions are among the factors that play an unprecedented role in the ethical-spiritual development of our society, the integrity and unity of our people”\textsuperscript{3}.

The involvement of prominent representatives of the Azerbaijani literary and philosophical heritage, including the great satirist poet Mirza Alakbar Sabir in the study of the issues of the manifestation of Islamic religion, Islamic philosophy and Islamic values should also be regarded as a clear expression of the return of our people to national and religious values.

As it is known, the works written in the spirit of devotion to the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan and their authors in religious and national ideologies contrary to the Soviet ideology were severe negative attitude in the Azerbaijani Soviet literature-study, which brought out valuable research works that elucidated our literature history, and they were criticized from the opposite side ruthlessly. The rise of the works and their authors, which correspond to the Soviet ideology or written in this ideology, to artificial and slippery “peaks”, at the same time, to try to explain the compatibility of works that are too valuable, irrevocable or inconspicuous with Soviet ideology, the attempts of the authors of these works to write as an atheist, materialist worldview in accordance with this ideology were also one of the regrettable characteristics of Soviet period of our literature-study.

Religious literature, elegy literature which is not involved in any fundamental research in Azerbaijan Soviet literature-study and presented as reactionary literature, in most cases, atheism, materialism, the sect literature, which is trying to dress up today, is one of the necessary issues need to be seriously investigated in our literature-study. From this point of view, the theme of “The artistic reflection of the Islamic values in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity” still keeps its urgency and its research needs the scientific significance.

Though dozens of monographs and hundreds of scientific articles

\begin{footnotes}
\item[3] The same, – p. 199.
\end{footnotes}
devoted to the life and activity of Mirza Alakbar Sabir, the issue of the attitude to Islam religion and Islamic values in his life, outlook, activity and struggle was not involved in the research or misinterpreted in the Azerbaijan Soviet literature-study. The theme of “Sabir and Islam religion” was touched upon in a number of monographs and research works devoted to the life and activity of the poet, some authors devoted a special place or a separate article to this theme. In general, in Azerbaijan Soviet literature-study some researchers such as A.Nazim, M.Alakbarli, J.Khandan, A.Mirahmadov, M.Aghamirov and others tried to show Sabir as an “atheist”, “fighting against religion”, “denying God and religion”, “materialist” satirical poet.

It is also important to mention that such approaches should be regarded as a clear manifestation of the scientific environment of the Soviet ideological system under its influence.

Approaching with unbiased attitude some outstanding researchers such as Abdulvahab Yurdsever, Professor Aziz Sharif, academician Isa Habibbayli, academician Bakir Nabiyev, Professor Alkhan Bayramoglu, writer Sona Khayal made fundamental considerations to the theme “Sabir and Islam religion”.

In the dissertation work research and considerations about the theme are analyzed in details, the incorrectness in conclusions are substantiated.

The object and subject of research. The book “Hophopname” by Mirza Alakbar Sabir, the scientific research works written about the poet, as well as literary, publicistic, historical, religious, socio-political and other works, internet resources, Quran and Hadith books form the object of the research work.

The scientific explanation of the ideas-spiritual and artistic reflection issues of the Islamic religion in Sabir’s artistic activity, including the high human qualities, taking the base from the holy book of Islam- the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, humanism, kindness, solidarity, honesty, justice, moral beauty, protection of family values, etc. Islamic values are also the subject of the research.

The aim and objectives of the research. The main aim of the research is to investigate the theme “The artistic reflection of the Islamic values in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity” by revealing the essence and purpose of Islamic values and to bring its actuality and importance to notice. In order to fulfill this aim the following tasks have been set:
– To investigate the research history of the theme “Mirza Alakbar Sabir and Islam religion”;
– To analyze the issue of Sabir’s attitude to Islam in his personal life on the basis of sources;
– To investigate the artistic reflection issues of the Islamic outlook, Islamic values and Islamic prohibitions in Sabir’s activity, to reveal the spiritual-ethical, educational features in these works;
– To explain Sabir’s attitude to Sufism and his poems reflecting philosophy of mysticism;
– To determine the directions of struggle for the integrity and progress of the Islamic religion in the poet’s activity;
– To analyze Sabir’s elegy activity;
– To substantiate the idea that the struggle against superstition and prejudice in Sabir’s activity serve the progress of Islam.

Research methods. The research work is based on the historical-comparative analysis method.

The main theses. In order to investigate and cover the theme “The artistic reflection of the Islamic values in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity” the following theses are intended to be studied:
– Analysis of misconceptions, contradictions and non-objective considerations, as well as objective approaches in the researches about the theme;
– Substantiating the thought about Sabir as being a Muslim, a religious poet, a knowledgeable teacher of Shariat [principles of Moslem religion] on the base of the neat arguments gathered about his life;
– Expression and explanation of propagation of Islamic values widely reflected its artistic reflection with respect in Sabir’s activity;
– Analysis of the negative attitude in Sabir’s life and activity forbidden in the religion of Islam, acts and behaviors accepted as sin;
– Explanation of Sabir’s works, which manifest the philosophy of Sufism, written with Sufi symbols, expressions and phrases on the basis of Quran verses skillfully;
– Elimination of sectarian disputes among Muslims of Azerbaijan, justification of the poet’s struggle with determination for the integrity and progress of Islam;
– Involvement of Sabir’s elegy activity and his attitude to the mourning ceremony during the month Muharram in a broad analysis;
To substantiate the thought which is one of the main directions of the idea in Sabir’s activity i.e. to fight against superstition and prejudice serving to reveal the purity of Islam.

The scientific innovation of the research. As the main scientific innovation of the research the following can be introduced:

- The research work on the theme “The artistic reflection of the Islamic values in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity” is the first comprehensive study dedicated to this topic in Azerbaijani literature-study;
- In the dissertation work the theme is approached beyond the point of view of materialism and idealism, from the prism of scientific character and objectivity, Islamic values are involved in the analysis as an integral part of the national-spiritual values system of the Azerbaijani people;
- In the Soviet era Sabir was presented as an atheist thinker by researchers, but here it is justified that he has not an anti-Islamic worldview, on contrary, he is a poet who is deeply aware of Islamic philosophy, strictly adhering to the principles of Islam in his personal life;
- The meaning and significance of Islamic values reflected in Sabir’s activity, explaining the important role in the life of the society, praising and promoting these values with respect, at the same time forbidden and accepted sin by shariat in Islam the educational features of poet’s poetic attitude for the first time are revealed in this dissertation;
- Sabir’s attitude to Sufism, his works reflecting the Sufi thoughts are widely analyzed for the first time from a religious-philosophical point of view;
- For the first time, the elegy works written about the Karbala tragedy and the death of some prominent personalities by Sabir are analyzed systematically in this dissertation;
- The idea that the struggle against prejudice and superstition in Sabir’s activity is not directed against Islam, but rather serves to reveal the purity of Islam and its progress is based on a great analysis.

These scientific innovations are the main features that distinguish the dissertation from other studies.

The theoretical and practical significance of the research. The researchers studying Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity, scientific-theoretical
heritage, literary-social activity, the students and post graduate masters, teachers at the humanitarian-qualified faculties of higher schools and higher religious schools can use the research work. The research work can also be used in special courses in some faculties of higher schools.

**Approbation and application of the research.** The theme of the research work was approved by the Scientific Council of Azerbaijan University and the main results of the dissertation work were discussed at the department of “Azerbaijani language and literature” of Azerbaijan University. The main theses of the research are reflected in the published scientific articles, as well as in the materials of the reports made at the national and international scientific conferences.

**Name of the organization in which the dissertation work is performed.** Department of Azerbaijani language and literature of Azerbaijan University.

**Structure and total volume of the dissertation:** Structure consists of the research work [266531 signs], introduction [11534 signs], three parts [part I-82294 signs, part II-76590 signs, part III-84044 signs], conclusion [12069 signs], list of used literature.

**THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION**

In the part “**Introduction**” of the dissertation the information about subject’s actuality, the level of its research, the object and scientific resources of the work, as well as the main aim of the research and the proposed tasks, theoretical-methodological bases of the research, scientific innovation, practical significance of the work, as well as the structure of the study is given.

The first part of the dissertation “**Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s attitude to Islam: researches and sources**” consists of three chapters. In the first chapter called “**Islam religion and Azerbaijan**” it is said about the formation and essence of Islam religion, the development process from the entry into the lives of Turkic peoples, especially Azerbaijani Turks and important historical events.

In the second chapter named “**The theme “Mirza Alakbar Sabir and the Islamic religion” in the researches**” the research works, monographs and articles about sabir-study were studied extensively and systematically in Azerbaijan Soviet literature-study, as well as in the
As a manifestation of a sharp, uncompromising attitude to the works and authors written in the religious spirit in connection with the assimilation of atheism as an ideology in the USSR, in most cases in the Azerbaijan Soviet literature-study the sect literature was tried to be dressed in atheism and materialism form, religious and elegy literature, which was not involved in the objective and substantive research, was named as “reactionary literature” and had always been a target of criticism. Even it often conveyed meaning of a purposeful stigma campaign often out of criticism.

On the eve of such a socio-political and scientific background the theme of “Sabir and Islam religion”, which began to be “studied”, also get “its destiny” by researchers and “sabir-learners”. In the first days “some people reprimanded Sabir in incompleteness, not to give up religion in its full meaning, even based on it, they began to deny him”.\(^4\) However, Sabir is such a great genius that it was impossible to deny him completely and to dislodge him from the eyes of the people. The serious researchers of that period, who were aware of that, therefore, considered it more expedient not to accept the contradictory aspects of the Soviet ideology in Sabir’s activity, but to deny those aspects and to show them with other forms and began to work with serious effort.

As a result of such researches Sabir was introduced as a poet of “casting religion”\(^5\), “struggling with religion”\(^6\), “who rejects prayer”\(^7\), “who does not believe in religion, who criticizes and exposes it from the materialist front as an atheist”\(^8\), “approaching atheism,

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\(^5\) The same, – p. 7-11.


\(^8\) Khandan, J. Sabir against prejudice and ignorance // Revolution and culture, – 1954, 9 October. – p.2.
“whipping religious mentality”⁹, “he was able to raise the level of atheism, godlessness in his views on religion”¹⁰, “who criticized sharply religious rituals such as prayer, fasting, urging the people to give up these apostasy religious customs”¹¹.

However, the great influence of Soviet ideology, scientific-political environment and ruthless pressure on researchers is undeniable. Because, in some cases under the dictation of real facts the researchers also wrote the contradictory opinions that disprove the above-mentioned conclusions.

It should be noted that there were also influential researchers who put forward objective considerations to the issue of role of Islam in Sabir’s personality, outlook, activity and a special place was also given to those considerations in the dissertation.

The research history of the theme was investigated in details and the results of the research work were reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “The theme “Mirza Alakbar Sabir and Islam religion” in the scientific researches”¹².

In the third chapter named “Belief to Islam in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s life: what do the sources say?” of the first part the place and role of Islam in Sabir’s life, the information given by the poet about himself, the memoirs and articles devoted to him by his relatives and contemporaries are investigated on the base of the research materials and the following conclusions are reached:

– Sabir, who was born in a religious family and environment, studied the religious education at an early age, prayed, fasted, fulfilled the important terms of Islam till the end of his life;
– The great satirist also approached the forbidden in Islam by shariat resolutely, had never drunk wine and alcoholic drinks;

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¹¹ Huseynov, M. Critical of Islamic religious morality in Sabir’ s activity // Scientific works of ASU named after Kirov, History and philosophy series, 1971. №6, – p. 36-43.
– The poet visited Karbala and Mashhad pilgrims which were respected by Muslims belonging to Shia sect, and lived in Mashhad [Khorasan] for two years. In this sense, at the end of his letter “My Master!” he also mentioned his signature in the form of “Mashadi Alakbar Sabir Tahirzade Shirvani”13;  

– Sabir taught Shariat classes along with other subjects in the schools he taught during his pedagogical activity, where he was engaged in great enthusiasm and love, and the level of education was appreciated by the educated intelligentsia.

The results obtained in this chapter have been reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Sources about Sabir’s attitude to Islam religion”14.

The second part of the dissertation is named “The manifestation of Islamic philosophy in Sabir’s activity” and consists of three chapters. In the first chapter named “The artistic reflection of Islamic outlook and Islamic values in Sabir’s activity” it is shown that speaking about Islamic values, first of all, trust and respect for Allah, the Creator of the worlds, His last prophet Muhammad and the Quran, which is a treasure of divine wisdom, important Islamic rites such as prayer, fasting, sacrifice, moral beauty, honesty, help, respect for parents, relatives, neighbors, Muslims, as well as all people through the Quran and other high human qualities are meant.

In Sabir’s activity the infinite love, respect and esteem to the Great Creator are clearly visible. The known poem “A shirvanlilar” [“Hey, people from Shirvan”] written by Sabir, which was studied by sabir-study researchers silently, begins with the word expression “Eshedu billahi eliyyul ezim”15 [“I witness the greatness and magnificence of God”] and such beginning is also characteristic for a religious poet as a confirmation of the greatness of God and a clear example of His glorification.

Sabir, who was trying to tan Islamic values along with national, spiritual-ethical values in his students during his teaching period wrote in his poems such as “Ona inananlarin dostu” [“Friend to His believers”],

“Iskender ve fegir” [“Iskandar and poor”] that everyone must ask for help only Allah Who is the helper of mankind:

Ey oghul, hajeti Khudaye dile,
Derdini zati-kibriyaye dile.
Jumlenin derdinin devasi Odur,
Ajizin, gadirin Khudasi Odur\(^ {16}\).

[Translation: Hey, my son, ask for help only Allah, ask for your grief. All humanities remedy depends on Him, He is the Almighty]

Great Islam Prophet Muhammad, with his high moral-ethical qualities, deep intelligence and simplicity was respected not only by Muslims, but also by representatives of other true religions, is remembered in Sabir’s activity and is recalled with some word combinations such as “Allah’s favorite friend”, “the famous Prophet”, “the man showing the right way” with enthusiastically. The poem being influenced from Fuzuli and written in honor of the Prophet Muhammad named “Eydi-movludi-Nebi” [“Happy birth of the messenger”] was written by the poet with the touching expressions. In the research process, 82 verses from the Quran and Prophet Muhammad’s 7 exact hadiths were used and a comparative and comprehensive analysis was carried out. In the Holy Quran people are invited to the most important ritual of Islam pray and in his activity Sabir also invited the people with the following couplet from his poem:

Gerchi sevab emr-ibadetdedir,
Efzeli-feyz ehmezi-taetdedir\(^ {17}\).

[Translation: Of course, the reward is in worship, the most beautiful delight is in Prophet’s invitation], but on the other side the poet mentioned the following: Yokhdur nemaze sidg ile iman eden, jojug!\(^ {18}\)
[Translation: Nobody prays with confidence, hey, child!] and the poet expressed his regret that the prayer, which was prescribed to Muslims as


\(^{18}\) The same, – p. 166.
an important worship, was performed in many cases with dry, false and for the sake of the image.

As in Islamic philosophy, the concept of “patience” is of great importance in Sabir’s worldview. The poet who took the pseudonym “Sabir” which means “patient” and in this sense in his poem saying “patience is my motto” he expressed his great value to this training:

Sabirem, sebr shiarimdi, genaet tajim,
Nefsime padshehem, sahibi-fermanem men\textsuperscript{19}.

[Translation: I am Sabir, patience is my motto and thrift is my crown, I can rule my passion, I am the owner of the decrees]

One of the most important issues in the religion of Islam is calling people to justice. In the ayah Al-Isra [17/35] of Holy Quran there is a call to Muslims: “Give in full when you measure, and weigh with an even balance. That is fairest and best in the end”\textsuperscript{20}.

In Sabir’s activity this issue also draws attention, the poet invites the people “to weigh exactly”, but with his own style of satire:

Her ne cheksen, chek, berader, chekme duz mizanini,
Chekme sen millet gemin, chekme, chek oz gelyanini\textsuperscript{21}.

[Translation: Whatever you weigh, weigh correctly, except your measure, Don’t pay attention to people’s grief, smoke your pipe]

As in the national-moral values of the Turks, respect and obedience to parents are considered one of the most important and divine issues in Islamic religious values. The call to respect parents as a part of Islamic values has been repeatedly reflected in the Quran. For example, in the ayah al-Isra [17/23] it is said: “For your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And honor your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them even “ugh”, nor yell at

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{20} The meaning translation of Holy Quran into the Azerbaijani language / Translators: Z.Bunyadov, V.Mammadaliyev. – Baku: Sharg-Garb, – 2012. – p. 205.
\end{itemize}
them. Rather, address them respectfully!”

Citing the famous hadith from Prophet Muhammed “Paradise lies under the feet of your mother” in his poem “A gift to school children” Sabir invited the children to constantly maintain the respect of their parents, to stand in their obedience:

“Payi altindadir behisht ananin
Bu hedisi sherifdir, inanin!
Bize lazimsa Hegge gul olalim,
Valideyne muti oghul olalim.

[Translation: Paradise lies under the feet of your mother, it is a hadith, believe! If we need to be a slave to God, we must be an obedient child to our parents]

In this poem the poet draws attention to the fact that “being a slave to the God” – the path of Islam, an example of faith, worship and deeds, passes through obedience, respect and care to parents.

In the Quran, which is a collection of divine wisdom and admonitions, and in the precious hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad there is mercy, justice, honesty, help, etc. a clear manifestation of the call to such important Islamic values and sincere propaganda have been reflected repeatedly in the pages of the “Hophopname”.

Some of the results obtained in the investigation of this part have been reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Respect for Prophet Muhammad in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity”.

The second chapter of the second part is named “Forbidden in Islam in Sabir’s activity”. The religion Islam invites the people to good morals, honesty, kindness, help, in short, to Islamic values, as well as make them avoid from actions and behaviors that are harmful to themselves and society. Some actions such as to give bribes, to capture

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the property of orphans, to play cards or gambling, to drink alcohol, to eat pork, usuriousness, etc. are forbidden in Islam.

Sabir, who knows the essence and purpose of the rulings that are forbidden in Islam, criticized the men who were busy with such bad actions such as telling that “bribe is forbidden”, but at the same time accepts it, “the property of the orphan child is a fire”, but “captures it”, unmasks the dishonest religious persons, the knavish mullahs with his satirical fury:

\[ \text{Rushvet haramdir, dedin, aldin, utanmadin!} \]
\[ \text{Mali-yetime – od – deye uddun da yanmadin!}^{26} \]

[Translation: You told that “bribe is forbidden”, but took it insolently! Telling “Let’s give the property to the orphan” but captured it impudently]

The sharp fight against wine and alcohol, which is considered forbidden in Islam, is also reflected in Sabir’s activity. In his satire named “Shirvan” Sabir expressed his “indifference” attitude to the mournful form of the religious school-mosques and “reading-halls”, instead of current of Muslims to tea-makers and “winemakers”:

\[ \text{Evvelen, umdevi-metleb bu ki, shehr ehli temam} \]
\[ \text{Tenbelu kahilu bihimmetu nadan, mene ne}?! \]
\[ \text{Mehfilu mejlisimiz, medresevu mesjidimiz,} \]
\[ \text{Hem giraetkhanemiz bagli, perishan, mene ne}?! \]
\[ \text{Evezinde bularin chaychi, chakhirchi dukani} \]
\[ \text{Geje-gunduz doludur jumle muselman, mene ne}?!^{27} \]

[Translation: First of all, the main point is that the people of the city have become very lazy, it doesn’t concern me?! All our libraries, religious schools and mosques are closed, but it doesn’t concern me?! But instead of it only tea-cafes, wine shops are full of with Muslim people, it doesn’t concern me?!]

The poet addresses to those people who did not understand the great spiritual-ethical, educational significance, reward and benefit of this

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27 The same, – p. 162.
religious judgment with the lines:

\[
\text{Meykhanede votga vurariz, kam aliriz biz,} \\
\text{Gafgazlilariz, mest olariz, nam aliriz biz!}^{28}
\]

[Translation: In the drinking houses we drink alcohol and become happy, we are from Caucasian, we are drunk and become popular]

In his satire named “To wrestlers from Baku” the poet writes the following couplet:

\[
\text{Dushdun lotulug meshgine, islame uyushima,} \\
\text{Oldur nerede olsa muselmanini gorjek.} \\
\text{Mest ol geje-gunduz, ne bilim, yat nerelerde,} \\
\text{Yum gozlerini khaneyi-viranini gorjek}^{29}.
\]

[Translation: You began to carouse, don’t harmonize with Islam, Seeing Muslim kill him anywhere, Enjoy greatly during night and day and sleep everywhere, Close your eyes when see your house]

The great satirist Mirza Alakbar Sabir, who works hard for the enlightenment and progress of the people, the protection of national, spiritual and religious values, the respectful reflection of these values and their propagation to future generations, also tried to dissuade people from actions and behaviors that were detrimental to their moral values, disrespected, forbidden in Islam and accepted as sinful.

The results obtained in the investigation of this part have been reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “The prohibitions of Islam in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity”.^{30}

In the third chapter named \textit{The manifestation of Sufi philosophy in Sabir’s lyric} of the second part of the dissertation the issue of Sabir’s attitude to Sufism and mystic philosophy was studied widely for the first time. On the basis of the fundamental materials it was found out that the great satirist poet, who had a deep respect for Sufism, continued this great and rich tradition in our literature and wrote valuable lyrical-philosophical

\begin{thebibliography}{9}

\bibitem{29} The same, – p. 69.
\end{thebibliography}
works reflecting the philosophy, symbols and terms of Sufism. These poems were analyzed on the basis of Sufism and Islamic philosophy in details in connection with verses from the Quran. The following poem of Sabir is typical from this point of view:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Elhezer, goy\text{ma}
\text{ bakh\text{a}}
\text{ eksim\text{e} zahid ki, onun}} \\
\text{Nuri-heg
dideyi-xud\text{binine} zul\text{met} gorunur,} \\
\text{Qoy bu ay\text{in}eye ol paknezer bakh\text{sin} ki,} \\
\text{Butun es\text{hy}ade ona nuri-heg\text{i}get gorunur}\text{\textsuperscript{31}.}
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: \textit{Let it be far, don’t let the hermit look at my reflection, his selfish eyes see Allah’s light very dark, Let that person look at this mirror who can see Allah’s light in everything}]

As it is known, Sufis explained the Quran from the mystic point of view and tried to justify their teachings according to those interpretations. The verses from Quran “\textit{Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...}”\textsuperscript{32} and “\textit{...so wherever you turn you are facing “towards” Allah}”\textsuperscript{33} have become a serious reference point for Sufism in this regard. According to mysticism based on such verses as Sabir said “the honest Sufi” can see Allah’s light everywhere.

The material world, which in Sufism is believed to be deceptive and provocative does not matter to a Sufi who is on the path to truth. In the ghazal [a kind of eastern poem] “Eylerem” the poet expresses his thoughts so:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Vesle ummid olsa, hijrinde bu chari unsuru,} \\
\text{Eshki-cheshmim seylinin movjunde khashak eylerem}\text{\textsuperscript{34}}.
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: If I have a hope to join Allah, I am ready to leave “four elements” [fire, water, earth and air] - the material world, the world and the body as all kinds of brushwood in waves of my tears]

This couplet by the poet is the manifestation of the mystic philosophy

\textsuperscript{33} The same, – p. 16.
and carries the meaning “If I have a hope to join Allah, I am ready to leave “four elements” [fire, water, earth and air] - the material world, the world and the body as all kinds of brushwood in waves of my tears”. In another couplet Sabir again uses its own interesting symbols and expressions:

\[ Ta\ ki,\ gordum\ sagherti-sehbade\ eksi-suretin, \\
Omurlerdir\ kim,\ jehanda\ khidmeti-tak\ eylerem. \]

[Translation: From seeing the reflection of your image in a glass filled with drink, I serve the grapevine in the world]

The external meaning of the couplet is as following: “From seeing the reflection of your image in a glass filled with drink, I serve the grapevine [grape vine] in the world”. But the meaning here, as it is known, is absolutely symbolic. As in the Sufi-sect literature, in this couplet by Sabir, wine is a means for the Sufi to be aware of all the spiritual rays, a science, and in the expression “tak” – “grapevine” the factor that forms the wine means the reason of having a way to attain enlightenment. The expression “omurlerdir” in this couplet is not used accidentally, it is a delicate sign of Sabir to the belief in the rebirth of the soul in various human bodies in Sufism. In the ghazal “Geldim” by Sayid Azim Shirvani who was the poet’s favorite master and worthy follower of Fuzuli school, that belief is expressed as following:

\[ Sayyid,\ neche\ yol\ gelmish\ idim\ mulki-jehane, \\
Sed\ shukr\ tapib\ surety-insan,\ gene\ geldim. \]

[Translation: Sayyid, I came many times to the world, being satisfied as a human again I came]

The results obtained in the investigation of this part have been reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Manifestation of Sufism philosophy in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity”.

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The third part of the research is named “The fight for Islam in Sabir’s activity” and consists of three chapters. The first chapter is named “Integrity of Islam and the progress issue in Sabir’s activity”.

One of the important issues in Sabir’s artistic heritage is the unity and integrity of Muslims making worship in the religion of Islam. The poet speaking about the division of Sunni-Shiite sects among the Turkic peoples, including the Azerbaijani people, contradictions and conflicts among them fought resolutely together with his contemporary friends for the elimination of these conflicts and for a united Muslim society.

Reflecting a number of great mistakes of the Turks, one of the greatest victorious nations in the world, with regret and furiously along the history, in his famous poem “Fakhriyya” Sabir also spoke about the division into Sunni-Shiite sects among the Turkic peoples with a heavy heart:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Bir vagt Shah Ismayilu Sultani Selime} \\
\text{Meftun olarag eyledik islami dunime,} \\
\text{Goydug iki taze adi bir dini-gedime,} \\
\text{Saldi bu tesheyyo, bu tesennun bizi bime...} \\
\text{Galdigja bu haletle sezayi-esefiz biz!} \\
\text{Oz dinimizin bashina engelkelefiz biz!}\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: Once upon a time admiring Shah Ismayil and Soltan Selim, we divided the religion Islam and gave two new names to the ancient religion, those sects terrified us… Being in this situation we deserve grief! We are obstacle for our religion!]

As it is known, “the battle of Chaldiran battle” took place in 1514 between the two great Turkish rulers-Shah Ismail I and Sultan Selim and was also called “Sunni-Shiite strike”. In his poem, which we mentioned above, M.A.Sabir pointed to this issue and named such acts as “obstacles in our religion”, the poet cried out in another work the suffering from these disagreements so:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Akhir bu ne tefrigu tekhellufdur, ey ummet?!} \\
\text{Elden gediyor, dinlemezirizmi bu millet?!}\end{align*}
\]

Ta key bu tekhelluf, bu teferrug, bu edavet
Bir din, bir islamu bir iman arasinda?!

[Translation: Hey Ummah, why do we have such division, contradiction? This nation is perishing, do not you listen?! Enough to have such contradiction, division and enmity between one religion, one Islam and one faith?!

It is obvious that these lines are a true religious poet’s thoughts full of pity, suffering and questioning from his pure heart. Knowing the inevitability and importance of fragmentation, conflict and hostility among Muslims, Sabir called the people to the unity with the order of the Quran and Prophet with his poems which are expression of his feelings:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dinmez ejeba meniyi-Qurani bilenler,} \\
\text{Islami bele tefrigede khar gorenler,} \\
\text{Aya, okhunazlar ne uchun dini bolenler,} \\
\text{[Kanu shiyeen] remzini Quran arasinda!}^{40}
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: I wonder, why the persons who know the meaning of Quran and see the Islam in such divergence, Why don’t they read the Holy Book!]

The word expression in this couplet is from the 159th verse of “al-Anam” ayah of Quran and it is said: “Indeed, you [O Prophet] are not responsible whatsoever for those who have divided their faith and split into sects. Their judgment rests only with Allah. And He will inform them of what they used to do!”

Sabir applauded the struggle of a number of progressive-minded personalities and the intellectuals of his period for Islamic unity and gave great support to this struggle with his valuable poems.

The scientific considerations obtained from the poet’s struggle for the integrity of Islam have been reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Mirza Alakper Sabir for the integrity of Islam”

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40 The same, – p. 57.
Sabir was one of the most active thinkers of his period, who fought with determination for the progress of the people. The poet, who could not stand the suffocation of his dear people in the grip of ignorance, the inertia, decline, suffering and backwardness of the “Islamic world” wrote so:

\[ \text{Alemi-islamde bunja etalet ta bekey?} \\
\text{Bu tedenni, bu tenezzul, bu kesalet ta bekey?}^{43} \]

[Translation: Why is there so much sloth in the Islamic world? Who needs such humiliation, recession and regress, how long will it last?]

The great poet sees ignorance as one of the main causes of all backwardness, divisions and social disasters and cursed “Lenet sene, ey jehl, ne bidad ediyorsan!”^{44} [“Damn you! Hey, ignorant, why are you crying?”] Sabir expressed that the greatest and most powerful weapon against ignorance was proper education. The poet supports new scientific achievements and discoveries in the world as enlightened intellectuals, who were friends of thought and belief; he was against the “old” method of education, teaching incomplete religion, “falagga” regime and described it in his following couplet so:

\[ \text{Islam ushagi yatsin ayaginda felegga,} \\
\text{Vursun bularin bashina hem mirze teregga}^{45}. \]

[Translation: Let the Islamic child lie his feet in the grip, The mullah will also give a drop of sense]

The poet was a supporter of a new method education, in which the teaching of secular sciences was studied.

Sabir, who saw the progress of the nation and Islam as his adherents, first of all, in the liberation of the people from ignorance shackle, mastering a new method of education and science, called the nation with the hadith “Even if science is in China, be in search. It is obligatory for every Muslim to be in search of science. Allah loves those who love

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44 The same, – p. 7.
“science”\textsuperscript{46} by Prophet Muhammad, who gave great importance to science and education in Islam religion:

\begin{align*}
Elm \text{ ile olur husuli-izzet},
\quad
Elm \text{ ile olur nufuzi millet}.
\quad
Elme chagirir butun evami,
\quad
“El-elmu ferizetun” kelami\textsuperscript{47}.
\end{align*}

[Translation: To be strong becomes with science, the prestige of the nation comes with science. The saying “Science is important to learn” invites all uneducated men to science]

However, Sabir considering the most important condition for the teaching of native language and religious knowledge at the foundation of this education, especially, he was deeply concerned that young people, who were the future of the nation and studied in “foreign countries” could not be aware of their religious beliefs, along with their native language in their education.

In 1908 in the newspaper “Taze heyat” [“New life”] the article “Zaman ne isteyir? Bes biz …” [“What does the time want? But we…”] written by Sabir the development of the national thinking and the role of youth in the national awakening were written: “... It is pity that majority of our youth are now aware of their native language, the religion their ancestors belong enough. ... The fault is in ours, because we have no education.... If we have numerous schools organized in a new way, then our children, who were afraid of the life-wasting method of old schools, who did not know the native language yet, who were not aware of their religious beliefs, our children who hoped for independence were given to foreign schools, did not believe in the works written by Russian scientists”\textsuperscript{48}.

The poet noted that if there were new schools instead of the old style schools, our children and young people would not be thrown into the tears of alien cultures and alien beliefs. Sabir called the establishment of new schools of native language, national and religious beliefs in every corner of the country the only way out: “Do you know our remedy? Yes, our

\textsuperscript{46} Samples from Prophet Muhammad’s wisdom treasure / Compiler M.Gambarli – Baku: East-West, – 2012. – p. 60.
\textsuperscript{48} The same, – p. 205.
remedy is school, our biggest remedy is school. School, again School! In this case, in every city and in every village schools should be opened willingly and together; Islamic schools should be also opened; after enlightening the pure hearts of those innocent children with the light of Islam, it is necessary to teach foreign languages, to teach children the love, culture, to develop along with Islam, the foreign development is not Islam progress, Islam must be progressive and we must try for it!”

As it is seen, the great satirist did not see the possession of religious orders and convictions as an obstacle to the development of young people, on the contrary, he considered it as important as the native language. During his pedagogical activity period Sabir wrote some poems for children such as “Ushag ve buz” [“Child and ice”], “Yaz gunleri” [“Spring days”], “Garga ve tulku” [“Crow and fox”], “Jutchu” [“Farmer”], etc., and till nowadays they protect worthy place in the textbooks of primary classes, writing those poems in the pure Azerbaijani Turkish, he made a very important appeal to both his contemporaries and his successors that “to elucidate the pure hearts of those innocent children with Islam light” is as important as the native language.

The results of the analysis of Sabir’s struggle for the progress of Islam were reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Shariat teacher Sabir Tahirzade”.

In the second chapter named “Mourning of Muharram and elegies in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity” the poet’s known elegies are systematized and analyzed extensively.

Most of the works included in the book “Hophopname” and known to the world of science, are samples of creativity written by Sabir during 1903-1911 years. But the fate of his nearly 30-year activity works is still unknown. As shown by a number of researchers of Sabir’s life and literary heritage, the poet wrote in the same “30-year-old activity” mainly ghazals, ode and elegy.

From his young ages Alakbar was “the dear person of his father and other people who asked him to sing elegies during the months of

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At the end of the 19th century Sabir was known as master of elegy and ghazal in Shamakhi, he was often invited to mosques and read his elegies in Muharram mourning. The prominent literary critic Salman Mumtaz wrote about it: “... In the month of Muharram Alakbar used to make soap during day times and in the evenings he had to read his elegies in the mosque belonging to Shamakhi region. Because the old people of the city made him to do it.”

Sabir’s certain elegies were about Imam Hussein, his relatives and associates killed during Karbala tragedy, different influential persons and in the research work they have been systematized in two groups and have been explained in details.

Continuing our ancient elegy-traditions Sabir had written valuable elegies, though some of them are known, according to their mastership peculiarities they are obvious case of the poet’s long-term practice:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Giryeyi-zarim etmedi alemi gergi-eshki-ter,} \\
\text{Jani-jehani tutmadi ateshe, odlandi jiyer,} \\
\text{Bashla feghane bari, ey bulbulu-tebi-novheger,} \\
\text{Senle belali Sabirin bashi belali gorsenir!}
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: My cry did not drown the world in tears, It did not fire the world of the murderers, but it hurt my heart, Cry for help, the wounded nightingale, Sabir also shares your grief]

For the first time in the elegy published on the 30th of January in №25 of the newspaper “Taze heyat” [“New life”] Sabir described the approach of the Karbala tragedy, his throbbing in order “to prevent” it, his cry with emotional expressions.

Sabir dedicated another famous elegy to the Karbala tragedy, in which Imam Hussein and his son Aliakbar were killed tragically in the Karbala desert. In this elegy the poet expressed the barbarian death of Aliakbar by the army of Yazid, his mother Leyla’s bitter tears and groaning scream touchingly. At the end of the elegy Sabir expresses his attitude to the tragically death of Imam Hussein and other Karbala

martyrs sincerely and invited the nation to remember them with that way:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sabira, her il eza sakhla Eliekbere sen,} \\
\text{Kerbelade gedib agla o shehi-davere sen,} \\
\text{Gel giyametde bu je mile sefi-mehshere sen,} \\
\text{Galma hesret iki dunyade bu Movla uzune}^{54}.
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: \textit{Sabir, be in mourning for Aliakbar every year, Go and cry for} that martyr in Karbala, \textit{Come with that group of martyrs on the day of resurrection, Do not have desirable for Allah’s face in both worlds}]

In the research work the poet’s famous elegies dedicated to the tragedy of Karbala are involved in a wide analysis. Along with elegies Sabir expressed his great respect and love for Imam Hussein in a number of other poems and estimated him as the greatest martyr for the restoration of truth, justice and Islam.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Khaki-payimdi veren dideyi-khurshide ziya} \\
\text{Ki, Huseyn nokerim, aleme sultanem men}^{55}.
\end{align*}
\]

[Translation: \textit{The dust of my feet is the light that illuminates the eyes of the Sun, because I am a slave of Hussein and the Sultan of the world}]

In this poem the poet expressed his great respect to Imam Hussein in the form of “The dust of my feet is the light that illuminates the eyes of the Sun, because I am a slave of Hussein and the Sultan of the world”.

However we would like to emphasize one issue that Sabir, who was carrying uncompromising struggle against ignorance, fanaticism and superstition, always reproached the unconscious, ignorant actions in the ceremonies taken part under the leadership of fanatical, hypocritical mullahs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Oghru, ejamir dolusha mesjide,} \\
\text{Zeng vura, toy chala, shakhsey gede,} \\
\text{Bash-gulagin ganina geltan ede,} \\
\text{Dinme, danishma, bu da, yahu, kecher!}^{56}
\end{align*}
\]

\[^{56}\text{The same, – p. 9.}\]
[Translation: A thief, a pilferer will enter the mosque, they will give a logging, they will covered with their own blood, don’t talk, don’t speak, it will also end]

Other works written by Sabir in the genre of elegy are about Haji Abdulmejid Efendi, who was minister of religion in Shamakhi region, Iran Shah Muzaffaraddin Shah Gajar [1853-1907], who made several steps on the way of Islam and nation, Hasanbay Zardabi, who was the great Azerbaijani intelligentsia and educator, publisher of newspaper “Ekinchi”.

In contrast to attempts by a number of Soviet researchers to limit Sabir’s elegy activity to the period until 1903, in this chapter it is substantiated that his valuable elegy works formed in all periods of his life.

The scientific results obtained from the works written in the genre of elegy by Sabir were reflected in the researcher’s scientific article named “Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s elegy works”.57

The third chapter of the third part is called “The true essence of Sabir’s struggle against superstition and prejudice”. Here atheism and its essence, the absurdity of attempts to show the poet as an atheist, the true intentions behind these attempts are explained in details.

At the same time, in this chapter the fact that superstition and prejudice are one of the factors that have caused the greatest damage to the authority of Islam and the fight against prejudice and superstition serve the purification and progress of Islam in real truth, Sabir’s struggle in this direction is based on solid arguments.

It has been mentioned that generally, the narrations that are inconsistent with truth and logic have damaged the reputation of religion and have also led people to turn away from religion gradually.

According to Sabir’s thought one of the superstitions is to perform the following ritual: during the drought the people perform certain rites such as wishing to have rain and asking Allah for it. The poet did not believe in these facts and tried to distance the ignorant people from these illogical, ridiculous “beliefs”. However, these superstitions have not any connection with the religion of Islam at all. Such superstition elements

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have entered the life of Muslim nations, including the Azerbaijani people a result of the influence of different belief systems much earlier than Islam despite of its contradictions with Islam, it has even reached the present day. In his poem “Bakida bir kendde muhavire” [“A talk in a village in Baku”] Sabir demonstrated skillfully that such superstitions were spread and propagated by hypocritical mullahs and akhunds who often used them as a source of profit. Condemning the Quran ayahs as “I do not take it with fire-irons either” the mullah asks “the villager”, who tried to prove that Islam invites people to science, to read “the works written by that mullah”. In the poem the villager says:

\[
O\text{ yazib: yer okuzun buyuzu ustunde durur,} \\
Biz gerekdir inanag ki, kishi boyle buyurur?!^{58}
\]

[Translation: \textit{He has written: the Earth in on the horn of the ox, Must we believe in him}?!]

But the villager’s answer makes the hypocritical mullah angry and he curses the villager. That were not the product of Sabir’s imagination, but it was masterfully reflected manifestation of one of the bitter truths of his time in his satire.

It should be noted that moving away from Islam and its foundations, their misrepresentation leads to prejudice and superstition, which serves to harm Islam and undermine its reputation. In the research work it is shown that Mirza Alakbar Sabir was one of our thinker poets who fought hard and uncompromising against misrepresentation of the foundations of Islam and its values. National leader Heydar Aliyev, who approached the misrepresentation of Islamic values from the same perspective, also called it a “sin”: “\textit{We accept Islamic culture and Islamic moral values as in our Holy Book-the Holy Quran. Their distortion, if we say in the religion language, is a sin}”^{59}.

In the part “Conclusion” of the dissertation the main scientific-theoretical results obtained in the research process are summarized as followings:

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
The place and role of Islamic religion and its values in the belief and national-moral values system of the Azerbaijani people are investigated, the importance and necessity of protection of these values are brought to the attention;

In the dissertation it is shown that the great satirist poet of Azerbaijan Mirza Alakbar Sabir was declared as one of the main targets of criticism as “bidin”, “kafir” [“unbeliever”] by “religious figures” – hypocritical mullahs, in the Soviet period “sabir-study” he was also introduced as “atheism”, “a person fighting against religion”, his satires, which were criticized by superstitions and elements that undermined Islam, those were not strictly related to atheism, were presented on the front pages of atheist literary collections as works aimed the criticism of Islam;

The investigation history of the theme “Sabir and Islam religion” has been studied, non-objective, absurd conclusions told under ideological influences in the Soviet period in sabir-study, at the same time the objective considerations about the theme are systematized;

On the basis of the fundamental facts it was concluded that Sabir lived a religious Muslim life from an early age to the end of his life;

Based on the facts, it was concluded that Sabir lived a devout Muslim life from an early age until the end of his life – did religious rituals such as prayer, fasting, visited Karbala and Mashhad sanctuary, he never used wine and alcoholic drinks that were forbidden in Islam and taught shariat classes along with other subjects in schools where he was engaged in pedagogical activity, the level of teaching of those classes was appreciated highly and greeted by the poet’s intellectual contemporaries who were in favor of the new method;

Great respect to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad in Mirza Alakbar Sabir’s activity, invitation to be patient, grateful, kind, humane, thrifty, helpful, beautiful behavior and lifestyle is reflected widely in the light of Quran verses and hadiths, Islamic values are praised with love;

The actions such as considered forbidden by shariat in Islam – to waste, to bribe, to capture orphan goods, to gamble, to drink alcohol, etc. were also criticized in Sabir’s activity;

Sabir’s most valuable works, imbued with great sympathy for Sufi philosophy, reflect the philosophy of Sufism, transmitted by the ancient and rich sectarian literature of Azerbaijan, artfully intertwined
with mystic symbols, expressions and phrases, the relations of Sufism with Islam reflected in these works are analyzed on the basis of Quran verses in details;

- Mirza Alakbar Sabir was one of the thinkers who fought consistently and resolutely for the elimination of sectarian conflicts among Muslims of Azerbaijan and the whole Muslim society;

- Sabir’s works written on the occasion of the tragedy of Karbala and devoted to the death of prominent and valuable personalities of his time, contributed to the elegy literature of Azerbaijan, are systematized and analyzed in details;

- Sabir who was one of the most irreversible fighters for the liberation of his people from the flames of ignorance, for their enlightenment, he had consistently taken an irreconcilable stance against the hypocritical mullahs, “religious figures” who “robbed in the skin of a lamb” the ignorant community, using prejudices and superstitions unrelated to the Islamic religion, but undermining its authority, as well as religion as a “robber’s rifle”, trying to awaken the ignorant community;

- One can say with certainty that Sabir has not written a line against the religion of Islam and Islamic values. One of his main targets of criticism, the hypocrite mullahs calling him “bidin”, “kafir” [“unbeliever”] and Soviet researchers naming him “atheists” are equally unfounded, illogical and slanderous;

- The need and importance of scientific study of Islamic values, which are the integral part of the national and spiritual values of the Azerbaijani people and valuable works reflecting these values artificially, are also substantiated in the dissertation.
The main theses of the dissertation are reflected in the following scientific articles, materials of national and international conferences:


The defense will be held on “27” may 2021 at 13.30 at the meeting of the Dissertation council ED–1.05 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at the Institute of Literature named after Nizami Ganjavi Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences

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Dissertation is accessible at the Library of the Institute of Literature named after Nizami Ganjavi

Electronic versions of dissertation and its abstract are available on the official website of the Institute of Literature named after Nizami Ganjavi

Abstract was sent to the required addresses on “23” april 2021.
Signed for print: 15.04.2021

Paper format: A5

Volume: 43930

Number of hard copies: 20