

## PROMOTION OF TURKISH LITERATURE IN THE “MAKTAB” (“SCHOOL”) COLLECTION (1911–1920)

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### Summary

The purpose of the research is to determine the issue of publishing and promoting the example of Ottoman literature in the Azerbaijani children's press at the beginning of the 20th century, to analyze the degree of relevance of the selected works and their role in the formation of children. Historical-comparative and typological methods were used in the article, and analysis-synthesis methods were used during the analysis of practical examples. Deductive and inductive methods were also used during the analysis of artistic material and the explanation of a number of scientific and theoretical ideas. In the period from the second half of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, Azerbaijan-Turkey literary relations, the attitude to the problems of Turkish literature in Azerbaijan's literary and cultural environment, both theoretically and factually, are quite broad and comprehensive. It is especially important to study the literary and cultural relations of the two peoples at all stages. In this article, the promotion and presentation of Turkish literature in the Azerbaijani press of the beginning of the 20th century is reflected, and the scientific novelty of the research is related to this. The main result obtained is that among the literary products published in the mentioned magazine, priority was given to works on national self-awareness, patriotism, freedom, nature, science, education, etc.

**Key words:** "Maktab" magazine, Azerbaijani literature, literary and cultural environment, Turkish literature, prose, poetry.

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### 1. Introduction

In the literary and cultural environment of Azerbaijan in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, we are faced with an interesting, rich and comprehensive picture of the attitude towards Turkish literature and its numerous products, Turkish literary and cultural environment and movement in the press, textbooks, individual books and so on. Of course, the press was more flexible and dynamic than the means of knowledge, information and propaganda. Because while textbooks and independent books were published once or twice, the press had a continuous character and could react more flexibly to individual literary processes and events, innovations. Let us also add that in the period we are talking about, we find interesting information and knowledge not only related to Turkish literature, but also related to social, political, historical, cultural, economic, scientific, pedagogical, etc. issues that happened in the Ottoman Empire. However, since our topic is literary phenomena, we mainly focus on this problem.

## 2. Main text

At the beginning of the 20th century, we see examples and representatives of Turkish literature being promoted in Azerbaijan not only in "adult" media, books, and various sources, but also in "children" media, books, textbooks, and sources. Children's press attracts more attention among those sources of reading and spiritual food intended for "little ones" (*Rasulova, 2018*). At that time, we had three media outlets that were printed directly for children. These are "Dabistan", "Rahbar" and "Maktab" magazines. The publisher and editor of "Dabistan" were Muhammadhasan Efendizade (1886-1918) and Aliskandar Jafarzade (1875–1941). The magazine was published from April 16, 1906 to January 1908, about 27 issues were printed. It was also our first national children's press. The life of "Rahbar" magazine, the editor of which was the outstanding educator Mahmudbey Mahmudbeyov (1863-19230), was very short, after only 5 issues were published, it was closed due to financial difficulties. The collective functioned from September 24, 1906 to January 17, 1907. At that time, "Maktab" magazine was the longest-lived children's press in Azerbaijan. The collection started its activity on November 29, 1911, continued its life with various interruptions for 9 years, that is, until the Bolshevik occupation on April 28, 1920, about 98 issues were published. The publisher and editors of this press were well-known educators Gafur Rashad Mirzazade (1884–1843) and his professional friend Abdurrahman Efendizade (1884–1918).

We do not come across examples of Turkish literature in "Rahbar" magazine, which has only 5 issues. However, two other children's magazines paid special attention to Turkish literature. On the pages of these collections, the children of the nation were presented with a large number of artistic thought products of various peoples, including the Ottoman Turks, and information was given about the life and creativity of a number of Turkish artists.

"Maktab" magazine showed a warm and caring attitude towards Turkish literature, and did remarkable work in the field of its promotion. Since the "Maktab" is more permanent, the scale and weight of the work it does in the direction we mentioned is also comprehensive. The collection played an important role in introducing a number of literary figures of the Turkish literary field and examples of vocabulary to Azerbaijani children.

The magazine had a separate section called "Biography". This column included the life and work of a number of classics of world literature, examples of their works. The goal was to familiarize young Azerbaijani readers with the achievements of world literature and outstanding classics. From time to time, the biographies of the great thinkers of the Turkic peoples were covered in that section. Examples of this type of posts include: Muallim Suleyman –“Ulug baya yadigar” (1911, № 1); “İbn Sina” (author not indicated – 1915, № 1); Qafur Rashad –“Shahabaddin Marjani” (1915, № 2); Qafur Rashad –“Farabi hazratlari” (1915, № 3); “Alishir Navai” (author not indicated – 1915, № 12); “Muallim Naci” (author not indicated – 1915, № 14); “Ziya Pasha” (author not indicated-1915, № 15); “Jalaluddin Rumi” (author not indicated – 1916, № 6), etc. As can be seen from the names here, "Maktab" focused not only on the thinking personalities of the Ottoman Turks, but also on the thinking personalities of all the Turkic peoples, and aimed to introduce them to the readers. For example, Shahabaddin Marjani, whose biography was given, was one of the Tatar Turks in the Volga region. He was born in Kazan in 1815, received a high education, lived and worked in Bukhara and Kazan. The editor of the magazine Gafur Rashad Mirzazade wrote a separate autobiographical article on the occasion of the centenary of his birth and published it in the magazine together with the photo of the Tatar thinker Sh. Marjani.

In the scientific article "Jalaladdin Rumi", this great thinker is spoken with sympathy. Although the article is concise, a certain idea is created about J. Rumi's life, outlook, beliefs, sheikhdom, friendship with Shams Tabrizi, and his creativity. It is said about him: "Jalaluddin Rumi is one of the most famous poets in the Islamic world. He was originally from Khorasan and was born in the city of Balkh on document 604. He attracted the attention of the community through his scientific and virtuous, poetry and literature power. The famous "Masnavi" style poem divan is considered one of the most favorite works among the people. He moved to the city of Konya on the invitation and request of Sultan Alaeddin Seljuqi and lived there (*Jalaluddin Rumi, 1916, p. 83*). As you can see, the information is concise, accurate and specific.

Like "Dabistan", "Maktab" also provided a separate biography material in order to introduce Muallim Naji to the readers. After the article, his poem "Qalandar" was delivered to the audience as an example of the poet's creativity. This small-volume work reminds of a poetic monologue spoken by the sect and the path of truth. He declares that he is a servant free from self, free from worldly desires and desires, living only with the love of God:

*Külfəti-iqbalidən azadəyəm,  
Rütbəşünasi-rəvişi sadəyəm.  
...Mən nə məsihi, məsihadəməm,  
Zövqü həqiqətdə arar adəməm (Muallim Naji. 1915, p. 21)*

Qalandar, who does not accept religious differences created by people, is a devotee of God who seeks "pleasure in truth" above all religions.

The article "Ziya Pasha" provides concise and valuable information about the literary personality of this outstanding poet, and then gives examples of his works. These are basically wise verses of the poet that benefit the moral and spiritual education of children. For example:

*Asudə olum dərsən əgər, gəlmə cəhanə,  
Meydanə düşən qurtulamaz səngi-qəzadan.  
...Dünya ilə et söhbəti, ya guşənişin ol,  
Nadanlar ilə müxtəlat olmaq nə bəladır (Ziya Pasha, 1915, p. 22)*

In addition to the artists we talked about, on the pages of the "Maktab" magazine, we also come across poems by Tofiq Fikret, Ziya Goyalp, Ismayil Safa, Ali Ulvi, Nazim Khurram, Ismayil Hagqi, Abdulrahman Ruhi, Rza Sabit, Abdulla Covdet, etc. Nazim Khurram is the artist with the most number of poems published in the collection. About six of his poems were published in different issues of this press. Those poetic examples are: "Be a merchant, my brother" (1914, № 12); "Lamb" (1915, № 4); "Winter's Plea" (1915, № 7); "Spring" (1915, № 9); "Poor Nightingale" (1916, № 6); "I'm Turkish" (1920, № 1), etc. Two of these poems are related to the animal world, and two are related to the praise of nature. In the early 1920s, during the ADR period, the poem "I am a Turk" presented to Azerbaijani children is about national-ethnic self-awareness:

*Bir vaxtilər Avropaya şan verən,  
Fatehlərin, Yavuzların oğluyum.  
Yurdu üçün sevinərək can verən  
Muradların, midhətlərin oğluyum.  
Düşmən, düşmən! Titrə bəndən, bən türküüm.  
Kin, intiqam! İştə gözəl bir türküüm.  
Utan bəndən, bəni təhqir eyləmə,  
Sıxıl bəndən, bana bir laf söyləmə.  
Səni bir gün ayağımla əzərəm,  
Yurdunuzda arslan kibi gəzərəm,*

*Türkün qəlbi zalımlara zalımdır,  
Türkün ruhu öldürənə ölümdür*

The end of this poem, which consists of four stanzas, ends with an appeal to God for the independence and future of the motherland:

*Tanrım! Tanrım! Yüzümüzü qarartma!  
Sən bir daha bizə vətən aratma! (Khurram, 1920, p. 2)*

It was no coincidence that such a high-ideal poetic sample was printed in the collection at that time. The publisher pursued the goal of instilling those higher feelings in Azerbaijani children with artistic works that restore such historical memory, build the nation, and instill the spirit of patriotism.

Ziya Goyalp's poems "İlahi" (1918, No. 3) and Tofiq Fikret's "We are always brothers" (1920, No. 1) were also published in "Maktab" magazine during the ADR period. Both examples of poems written for children are in the spirit of patriotism. Z. Goyalp's "İlahi" with the note "for children" was written in the language of children as an address to God. In the poem, it is said from the language of the children that, oh God, we are Turks. We came to pray to you for the homeland. We ask you for the salvation of our country. Accept our prayer. Shine on us. Let the old blood of Turkishness and Islam boil in our veins. Increase our glory, give us a bright religion, a fiery faith, protect our homeland. T. Fikret's small poem "We are always brothers" is said in the language of Turkish school children:

*Beşiyimiz bir toprağdır,  
Yaprağımız bir yaprağdır.  
Əyrilik bizdən uzaqdır,  
Fərqimiz yox, biriz, eşiz,  
Həp türkləriz, həp qardaşız (Fikret, 1920, p. 7)*

Here, Turkish children are called to unity. The language of the three-stanza poetic example written in syllabic weight is simple and flowing. This merit also manifests itself in Z. Goyalp's poem.

Four poetic examples from Ali Ulvi's work were presented to the readers of "Maktab": "I will try" (1911, № 1); "Pen" (1912, № 18); "Progress" (1912, № 20); "Wheat" (1913, № 12); "My Mother" (1914, № 19). Each of these children's poems was dedicated to different topics. In the poem "I will try" ("Çalışalım") written with an appeal to school children, children are called to hard work, diligence, studiousness. The benefit of labor is the main rock of the work. The poem "Progress" states that now is the time of progress and advancement. Everyone, every child of the motherland should join this progress and show effort and skill for its happy future. Pupils should learn science, acquire knowledge, and in this way show skills. The poem is written in the genre of a march, has a harmonious tone, a spirit of challenge:

*Arş irəli, arş irəli!  
İstəyimiz irəliləmək!  
Arş irəli, həp irəli!  
Geri qalan ölmüş demək...  
Oxuyalım, hünər və elm  
Sayəsində yüksələlim (Ali, 1912, p. 3)*

A short story by A. Ulvi called "Pen" (1912, No. 18) was also published in the magazine. Here, the usefulness of the pen as a science tool is explained to young readers.

The pages of the "Maktab" include Ismayil Safa's "Good Son" (1911, № 3), Abdulrahman Ruhi's "Our World" (1913, № 15), Rza Sabit's "Spring" (1914, № 6), Ismail Haggi's "Sly Cat" (1914, № 17), and Abdulla Covdat's "A Continent" (1916, № 4). While the other three

poetic examples are lyrical, I. Haggi's work "Sly Cat" is a verse story. In this story with a compact plot, a story similar to the story of Abdulla Shaig's verse story "The Fox Goes on a Pilgrimage" is told. One day, the cat gathers mice head by trick. Says that it will go to Hajj and will not hurt them after that. As the mice gathered around it, the cat took the opportunity to kill them all and eat them. Here, the author wants to instill such an educational idea to young readers that one should not trust the enemy, be deceived by its tricks, and believe every fat promise. Every time a person takes a step, he should act with thought and reason. At the end of the story, the artist conveys the idea he wants to convey to the readers in a clear, advisory manner:

*Ay qardaşlar, heç bir sözə  
Aldanmayın düşünmədən.  
Başlamayın siz bir işə  
Axırını kəşf etmədən (İsmayıl, 1914, p. 6)*

In "Maktab", we also find examples of prose quoted from various collections and anthologies published in Turkey. Mirzaga Aliyev's stories "Gift Day" (1912, № 8), "Badimjanburun Mamish" (1912, № 10), and Rza Sabit's "The Merciful Girl" (1914, № 13) were quoted from "Khazineyi-Qiraat". The works "Tobacco" (1913, № 1), "Poor Child" (1913, № 2), "A Belly Conversation with a Child" (1913, № 3), and "Humanity" (1914, № 3–4), whose authors are not specified, were taken from the "Atfal" collection. The folk tale "Tale il Qadir" (1913, № 17), as well as Laman Asim's "Agilli Bir Qabila Sheikh" (1914, № 1), and Muhammad Mehieddin's "Walking" (1914, № 6) were taken from the collection "The World of Cojug". Among these examples, "Tobacco" was a scientific article. The harmful aspects of tobacco were discussed here. Other works were short stories and fairy tales. Ali Fahmi also translated the story "Tuti and Sahib" (1913, № 8) from J. Rumi's "Masnavi" into prose and presented it to the readers of the magazine. It was an instructive story with a moral and didactic theme. Ahmad Midhat's scientific and journalistic writing entitled "Fishes" (1916, № 1) was included among the examples of journalistic prose. In that article, given in the rubric "Historical-natural", scientific information was given about the animal world, more specifically about fish.

In the collection we are talking about, there were also rubrics called "Memorized pieces" and "Great words". Wise words of world thinkers were given in these columns. Among those personalities, there were Turkish thinkers such as Namiq Kemal, Abdulhaq Hamid, Muhammad Jalal, Ziya Pasha, Muallim Naji, etc.

### 3. Conclusions

At the beginning of the 20th century, the children's press was one of the important propaganda channels of Turkish literature in the literary and cultural reality of Azerbaijan. Those media outlets were "Dabistan" and "Maktab" magazines, which were the first swallows of our children's press. On their pages, a large number of examples belonging to the treasure of Turkish artistic thought were presented to young readers in the national environment. Such a mission was significant enough both to meet the reading needs of the growing generation and to bring the two brotherly nations closer together and introduce each other. Taking into account that the readership is small, the publishers paid special attention to the volume, genre, language and style features of the examples printed in those magazines, relevance of ideas and topics, and moral and educational content. That is, those materials were mostly examples of children's literature. In this sense, those works served as an example for creativity for our children's writers. There were many examples of poetry among the published materials. However, examples of prose, journalism and translation belonging to the Turkish literary and cultural treasure were

also published in magazines. Literary products include national self-awareness, patriotism, freedom, nature, science, education, etc. priority was given to thematic works. During the studied period, "Dabistan" and "Maktab" collections played an important role in the development of Turkish-Azerbaijani literary relations.

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