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The Formation of a New Soviet Education System in Azerbaijan SSR

Aynur Aliyeva*

Abstract. This paper addresses the development of the education system during the Soviet period, with particular attention given to the role of intellectuals in the growth of education. The establishment of the new Soviet education system in Azerbaijan faced significant challenges, such as the lack of qualified teaching staff. It was necessary to prepare educators, introduce new teaching materials and programs, and apply progressive teaching methods. In response, the Soviet government of Azerbaijan issued a series of decrees and orders in 1920 to guide the development of public education. These aspects are given special attention in this article. Azerbaijani intellectuals endeavored to create all possible opportunities for the advancement of education. The 20th century holds a special place as a productive period in the enrichment of Azerbaijani culture, which is an integral part of human civilization. This period of history is distinguished by its unique characteristics, historical and social conditions, all of which left a profound impact on the fields of culture and art. The 20th century is remembered as a time of social and political revolutions and changes in the history of the Azerbaijani people. Although the social, historical, and political changes had a significant impact on national culture and art, this period can generally be characterized as a productive stage of development. At the beginning of the century, the efforts of national enlightened forces in cultural development, their initiatives, and their work in organizing and forming various cultural and artistic fields provided a major impetus for the revival of culture in Azerbaijan. It was necessary to create a new system of public education, develop a wide network of cultural and educational institutions, lay the foundations of scientific knowledge, familiarize the working class with artistic resources, free women from patriarchal oppression, eliminate harmful customs and ceremonies, and pave the way for the cultural and spiritual development of individuals.

Keywords: Education, Azerbaijan, Soviet Union, public education, school systems.

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Формирование новой советской системы образования в Азербайджанской ССР

Айнур Алиева*

Абстракт. В данной статье затрагиваются вопросы развития системы образования в советский период. Основное внимание уделялось роли интеллигенции в развитии образования. Создание новой советской системы образования в Азербайджане столкнулось с такой серьезной проблемой, как нехватка преподавательских кадров. Требовалось подготовить преподавательский состав, применить новые учебные материалы и программы, прогрессивные методы обучения. Поэтому в 1920 году советское правительство Азербайджана издало ряд декретов и распоряжений, направляющих новое развитие народного образования. Всем этим в данной статье уделено особое внимание. Азербайджанская интеллигенция старалась создать все возможности для развития образования. XX век занял особое место как продуктивный этап в обогащении азербайджанской культуры, являющейся неотъемлемой частью человеческой цивилизации. Поскольку этот период истории отличается своими особенностями, историческими и социальными условиями, все эти особенности неизбежно оставили свой глубокий след в области культуры и искусства. XX век запомнился как период социальных и политических революций и перемен в истории азербайджанского народа. Хотя произошедшие общественно-исторические и политические изменения оказали свое влияние на национальную культуру и искусство, в целом с точки зрения развития этот период можно охарактеризовать как продуктивный этап. В начале века поддерживающая деятельность национальных просветительских сил по развитию культуры, реализованные ими меры, работа по организации и формированию отдельных областей культуры и искусства дали крупный толчок возрождению культуры в Азербайджане. Необходимо было создать новую систему народного образования, развить широкую сеть культурно-просветительских учреждений, заложить основы научных знаний, приучить трудящихся к художественным средствам, освободить женщин от патриархального рабства, искоренить вредные обычаи и церемоний, а также проложить новый путь для культурного и духовного развития личности.

Ключевые слова: Образование, Азербайджан, Советский Союз, народное образование, школьная система

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Azərbaycan SSR-də Yeni Sovet Təhsil Sisteminin Formalaşması

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Abstrakt. Məqalədə Sovet dövründə təhsil sisteminin inkişafı məsələlərinə toxunulur. Əsas diqqət təhsilin yüksəlişində ziyalıların oynadığı rola yönəldilmişdir. Azərbaycanda yeni sovet təhsil sisteminin qurulması pedaqoji kadr çatışmazlığı kimi mühüm problemlə üzləşmişdi. Pedaqoji kadrların hazırlanması, yeni tədris materiallarının və proqramlarının, mütərəqqi tədris metodlarının tətbiqi tələb olunurdu. Buna görə də 1920-ci ildə Azərbaycan Sovet hökuməti xalq maarifinin yeni inkişafına istiqamət verən bir sıra fərman və sərəncamlar verdi. Məqalədə bu məsələlərə xüsusi diqqət yetirilir. Azərbaycan ziyalıları təhsilin inkişafı üçün bütün imkanları yaratmağa çalışırdılar. 20-ci əsr bəşər sivilizasiyasının tərkib hissəsi olan Azərbaycan mədəniyyətinin zənginləşməsində məhsuldar mərhələ kimi xüsusi yer tutmuşdur. Tarixin bu dövrü öz xüsusiyyətləri, tarixi-ictimai şəraiti ilə seçildiyindən bütün bu xüsusiyyətlər istər-istəməz mədəniyyət və incəsənət sahəsində öz dərin izlərini qoyub. 20-ci əsr Azərbaycan xalqının tarixində ictimai-siyasi inqilablar və dəyişikliklər dövrü kimi yadda qaldı. Baş verən ictimai-tarixi və siyasi dəyişikliklər milli mədəniyyət və incəsənətə öz təsirini göstərsə də, ümumilikdə, inkişaf baxımından bu dövrü məhsuldar mərhələ kimi səciyyələndirmək olardı. Əsrin əvvəllərində milli maarifçi qüvvələrin mədəni inkişafa dəstək fəaliyyəti, həyata keçirdikləri tədbirlər, mədəniyyət və incəsənətin ayrı-ayrı sahələrinin təşkili və formalaşması istiqamətində görülən işlər Azərbaycanda mədəniyyətin dirçəlişinə böyük təkan verdi. Yeni xalq maarif sistemini yaratmaq, mədəni-maarif müəssisələrinin geniş şəbəkəsini inkişaf etdirmək, elmi biliklərin əsaslarını qoymaq, zəhmətkeşləri bədii vasitələrə öyrətmək, qadınları patriarxal əsarətdən azad etmək, zərərli adət-ənənələrin kökünü kəsmək, mərasimlər, eləcə də şəxsiyyətin mədəni və mənəvi inkişafı üçün yeni yol açmaq lazım idi.

Açar sözlər: Təhsil, Azərbaycan, Sovet İttifaqı, xalq təhsili, məktəb sistemləri

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1.Introduction

The Soviet government started cultural changes in Azerbaijan guided by the "communist ideology" and actually commenced with revolutionary methods from the Center. Its activity in the field of democratizing social life and raising the cultural level of the people had a clearly expressed partisan character. None of key cultural issues was solved without "party leadership". The main duty of the party was to turn culture into the wealth of the people in the spirit of its "ideology", to involve the industrious masses in cultural-historical building in this direction. However, in fact, the "major goal" was to establish a dictatorship of this party, to form proletariat dictatorship "fighters" among the masses. V.I. Lenin admitted: *"Yes, the dictatorship of one party. We are standing on this and we cannot fall from this prop."* Thus, the criterion of approaching everything only in the interests of the proletariat class and its party instilled an authoritarian consciousness in the masses. The republican government and party organization were mainly guided by the above principle while building the foundation of a new, socialist culture in Azerbaijan. As in the socio-economic and socio-political life of Azerbaijan, the establishment of a new type of culture was conducted by party directives, its decisions and instructions. In the early years of Soviet power, the authority to manage all cultural and educational affairs was concentrated in the hands of the People's Commissariat of Education. The primary areas of the spiritual life of the newly established society - education, science, literature and art - were actually under the control of the party and state leadership, and during the entire course of the "cultural revolution" the "communist ideology" was to be implemented and became the basic aim of the Soviet government. Building the socialist culture faced great difficulties in the peculiar conditions of the former national outposts.

2.Analysis of the latest research and publications

Many works have been devoted to this problem [4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; etc]. We mainly relied on the works of Azerbaijani authors. During the research, materials from the National Library of Azerbaijan were used, conclusions based on their analysis.

The main goal is to show and analyze cultural construction in the Azerbaijan SSR in a historical context.

3.The main material

First of all, the task was to liberate public education from the old, colonial management method, to found a new school based on the abolition of the foundations of privileged, clerical schools, and to fundamentally change the education system on the basis of modern principles. It was demanded to modernize the training process in educational institutions, to make efforts to

widely involve the intellectuals of the old period in cooperation with the Soviet authorities in the educational network, to prepare national teaching staff, to apply new teaching materials and programs, and progressive teaching methods. Therefore, in 1920, the Soviet government of Azerbaijan issued numerous decrees and orders directing the new development of public education. The former administrative office of the Ministry of Education was abolished, bodies of the People's Commissariat of Education in the new structure were put into operation, and education departments were established under the uezd (county) revolutionary committees [8; 9]. On May 10, 1920, a decree was issued on the organization of free compulsory polytechnic schools, where classes were held in the native language, signed by the first public education commissioner Dadash Bunyadzade. In August of the same year, the founders of the new society established the Technical Vocational Education Committee on the basis of the decree of the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee under the signature of N. Narimanov to train professional workforce [25, p.184]. The democratization of the types of unified labor schools and educational institutions on the example of the new public education system in Azerbaijan, and giving the right to all nationalities and peoples living in the republic to create their own schools and cultural institutions were announced. In accordance with the "Uniform Labor School Regulation of the Azerbaijan SSR" (May 26, 1920), the school was divided into two stages - the first stage was a five-year course, the second stage was a four-year course. Principles of self-management of unified labor schools were defined in the "Regulation" [35, p.3]. There was also a special decision "on the joint education of children in a labor school". However, taking into account the specifics of the local situation, separate classes for boys and girls were temporarily suspended in the educational institutions and groups attended by Azerbaijani students. According to the decree of the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee on freedom of conscience in May 1920, it was forbidden to study religious teachings and hold any religious ceremonies in all public schools under the People's Education Commissariat. The Ministry of Religion was terminated [38, p.49]. According to the special order of the People's Education Commissariat, persons of religious rank holding or performing the position of chairman of educational institutions and school councils were dismissed from their positions –[11]. The state and school were completely separated from the church and mosque. On September 19, 1920, the first congress of Azerbaijani cultural and educational workers was opened in Baku. The head of the government of Azerbaijan, Nariman Narimanov, announced at the congress: "With the abolition of the old system, the school should also be renewed. Teaching and education methods should be new."

[30, p.301]. In December 1920, by the decree of the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee, it was confirmed that the native language of the students is the language of teaching in schools of the first and second stages [5; 6]. Due to the lack of Azerbaijani teachers with higher education in second-stage schools providing secondary education, national school building had serious challenges. In 1920, only three percent of all teachers had higher education, and the rest had secondary, lower and home education [5; 6]. There were only 2,000 teachers in the republic on the eve of the establishment of Soviet power, but approximately 40,000 teachers were required for the normal functioning of the existing schools [34]. Therefore, since 1920, three-month courses for training teachers began to be organized in different districts of Azerbaijan. Already at the first stage, more than a thousand people were involved in these courses. During 1920-1922, teachers' seminars were opened in Baku, Nukha, Shusha, Ganja, Gazakh and Nakhchivan. Pedagogical technical schools played a necessary role in mass training of school teachers, and in 1925-1926, 16 such technical schools were operating in Azerbaijan, where up to two thousand students were educated. The majority of the students of these technical schools were composed of village children. The government took measures to improve the financial situation of rural teachers, to supply schools with fuel and other resources. In September 1922, the Council of People's Commissars decided to allocate 10 percent of the food tax to the local budgets of the People's Commissariat of Education in uyezds in order to improve the financial situation of the public education system and regulate the provision of children with food [23]. There were not enough school buildings in Azerbaijan, especially in the uyezds, and there were no constructions suitable for school buildings in the villages. Despite the serious financial difficulties of the republic, thanks to the persistent and selfless activity of public education workers, with the help of the government, the party and public educational organizations expanded the construction of new schools in cities and uyezds, and restored buildings suitable for schools. Already in 1923, new school buildings were built in ten villages of Zagatala uezd. In the same year, four new schools were opened in Agdash uezd, in 1924, two in Ganja uezd, and five in Gazakh uezd. In the academic year 1924-25, 34 new schools began operating in Azerbaijan and the construction of 13 was completed. However, at the beginning of 1926, schools were meeting only 35 percent of the needs of the population of the republic [18; 19]. It was difficult to involve girls from the local population in schools due to the lack of female teachers and personnel. By eliminating the challenges related to the specific characteristics of the situation of women, the public education bodies managed to increase the number of Azerbaijani

girls in first-stage schools from 6,148 in the 1920/21 academic year to 14,189 people in the 1926/27 academic year. 12. The Soviet school in Azerbaijan primarily had to serve the tasks of training the personnel who are the defenders of the new society, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the spirit of "communist ideology". This principle was the basis for the development of new textbooks, curriculum and programs. To this end, in 1920, a special commission for the preparation of textbooks was founded in the People's Education Commissariat, which later was turned into a department for compiling and publishing textbooks. Experienced pedagogical personnel - Mahmud Bey Mahmudbayov, Abdulla Shaig, Farhad Aghayev and others - were involved in the compilation of new textbooks in the native language [15; 16; 17]. Since December 1923, the Scientific-Methodical Council was operating in the People's Education Commissariat, which was in charge of the methodical work of all unified labor schools. In fact, a unified education system was created in Azerbaijan under state and party control. In this system, the curriculum and programs were based on the topics of labor, society and nature. A special commission under the Council of People's Commissars of the Azerbaijan SSR was managing the production of the most necessary educational materials and equipment for republican schools [2]. Starting from June 1921, handicraft workshops operating under the Council of People's Commissars were preparing visual teaching materials. In order to organize education among the national minorities in Azerbaijan, a special department with Persian, Armenian-Georgian, Jewish, Kurdish, Lezgi and Tatar sections operating under the People's Commissariat of Education. In the academic year of 1925/26, there were 1057 Azerbaijani of I stage, 190 Armenian, 132 Russian, 5 Georgian, 7 German, 2 Jewish, 2 Greek, 1 Aysor, 4 Tatar and 40 mixed schools in the republic. Pedagogical courses were opened for them, where attempts were made to publish the alphabet in their native language. Azerbaijani teachers took part in the activity of the All-Union Teachers' Congress, which was opened in Moscow on January 12, 1925. After that, on May 25, 1925, the first congress of Azerbaijani teachers was held in Baku. At the congress, the first achievements in the field of building a new school in the republic were concluded. Azerbaijani educators F. Aghayev, A. Amirov, O. Jalilbayova, A. Huseynov, F. Rzabeyli, Ğ.Ğsayev, J. Juvarlinski actively participated in the building of new school system. S. Akhundov (Aghdam), G. Musayev (Guba), A. Eyvazov (Fuzuli) and others were doing great work in the field of public education in the regions. The number of teachers in the republic rose from 2,611 in the 1920/21 academic year to 5,232 in the 1925/26 academic year due to the great work done in the field of training of pedagogical personnel and

improving their financial situation. The number of schools and children studying there was growing. The number of 937 schools of I stage in the 1920/21 academic year surged to 1420 in the 1926/27 academic year, and the number of their students increased from 74,922 to 150,625. 15. In 1926/27 academic year, 66,528 students were studying in all schools of the republic compared to 48,076 in 1918/19 academic year. Thus, in the 20s, the foundation of new Azerbaijani schools was laid, conditions were created for the mass involvement of workers in education.

4.The struggle for the abolition of illiteracy

Eliminating illiteracy of the population was considered to be the crucial and primary task of public education in Azerbaijan. In 1917, only 9.3 percent [29] of the entire population in Azerbaijan was literate, and the number of educated rural residents and women was less. Eradication of illiteracy was carried out in September 1920 in all urban uezd centers and villages under the leadership of the specially organized Central Commission under the Azerbaijan People's Commissariat of Education according to the uniform plan [26]. On July 14, 1921, in a special decision of the Council of People's Commissars, the elimination of illiteracy was announced as a primary and urgent task of the Central General Political-Education Establishment, which was organized at the beginning of the year [1]. Schools and courses for the elimination of illiteracy, covering all classes of the population, began to be opened in the republic. As well as teachers, all educated people actively participated in the struggle for eliminating the illiteracy. All staff and board members of the People's Education Commissariat were completely freed from performing other duties and tasks in local revolutionary committees and other organizations, and were involved in the organization of public education in uezds. 18. The 4th congress of the Azerbaijan Communist Party (February 1922) considered it important to approach the fight against illiteracy among the population of Azerbaijan as the vital task of the year. In the 1922/23 academic year, 257 literacy schools attended by 7,517 people were operating in Baku and its surrounding mining districts, while it was possible to organize only 189 schools in all uezds of Azerbaijan, covering only 3,852 people [31, p.235]. In 1922, 20 special mobile groups were organized in Baku and its mining regions in order to attract shift workers to the literacy school. Similar mobile literacy schools were also established in the uezds. They involved the backward class of peasants in getting education. In the 1922/23 academic year, 14,336 people were employed in courses and schools eliminating illiteracy throughout Azerbaijan [10, p.123]. 6,954 of them were Azerbaijanis, including 492 women. In the following academic year, voluntary organizations and societies were formed in the field of

illiteracy eradication. In order to centralize the work of eliminating illiteracy in a uniform body, in December 1923, the "Committee to struggle against illiteracy" was founded under the leadership of G. Musabayov, the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. In the decision of the Council of People's Commissars and Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR dated March 18, 1924 "On the elimination of illiteracy among the population of the Azerbaijan SSR", acquiring literacy was assigned to all the population aged 15-25 who could not read or write [32, p.68]. For this purpose, the right to use empty rooms in factories, plants and offices, clubs, public houses and schools was given. Maintaining the salary, the 8-hour working day of workers studying in literacy schools was reduced by 2 hours during the entire education period [13]. On July 17, 1924, the society "Abolish illiteracy" was founded in Azerbaijan. People's Internal Affairs Commissioner H. Sultanov became the chairman of the society's management board [10]. Branches of the Society State Political Parties of Azerbaijan SSR were opened in Baku and uezds. Special authorized representatives of district party committees directly participated in their activities. Meetings, special campaigns, "weeks" and "days" were held under the slogan "*Abolition of illiteracy*" with the active participation of workers and peasants. During these campaigns, new literacy centers were established, and voluntary allocations were transferred to the illiteracy eradication fund. In 1925, 16 branches with ten thousand members of the "Abolish illiteracy" society were functioning in Baku and the uezds. The party, the organization of the youth and professionals were especially active in the fight against illiteracy among their members. Only in the academic year 1924/25, the illiteracy of 1113 party members and candidates, 3234 Komsomol members and 11418 trade union members was eliminated [31, p.68]. The trade union of land and forest workers assisted to organize courses and schools to eliminate illiteracy among rural workers. Only in 1925, this union organized 24 illiteracy elimination centers and 22 literacy schools for farmhands in clubs and red corners [7]. People's interest in education was increasing year by year. This enthusiasm was particularly strong among the Azerbaijani peasants. In many cases, literacy centers served 40-45 people instead of 20-25. In some uezds - in Guba, Gazakh and others, conflicts between villagers were arising for occupying a place at illiteracy elimination centers [13]. In Jabrayil, Tovuz and Guba uezds, night courses on the elimination of illiteracy were opened at the request of the villagers, along with the divisions of the General Political Education Establishment. The number of people involved in illiteracy elimination centers increased steadily. In the 1924/25 academic year, 31,755 people studied in 1,233 illiteracy elimination centers [28, p.303-304]. Despite the weakness of the material

base, the lack of personnel and necessary buildings, and the large number of illiterates, the first successful steps were taken in the field of illiteracy elimination in the republic. Thus, from the academic year 1921/22 to the academic year 1926/27, 102,370 people only learned the alphabet in the illiteracy elimination centers. 63,607 of them were Azerbaijanis, including 3,466 Azerbaijani women [20, p.44]. One of the significant tasks of cultural building in Azerbaijan – proving the majority of the population with education and raising it to a high level - still required a lot of hard work. Alphabet problems. In the course of cultural building in Azerbaijan, the issue of the alphabet came up. Until the establishment of Soviet power, the Arabic alphabet was utilized in Azerbaijan. Prominent enlighteners of Azerbaijan were engaged in the issue of alphabet reform. Mirza Fatali Akhundov, the outstanding Azerbaijani writer and philosopher of the 19th century, a fierce struggler for public education, was one of the initiators of creating the Azerbaijani alphabet by changing the Arabic alphabet [28, p.303-304].

5. Alphabet reform

From the first days of the establishment of the Soviet power, the issue of the development of printing and publishing in the Azerbaijani language was the crucial one standing before. The solution to this necessary problem of cultural building absolutely required the adoption of a new, easier alphabet. Its importance for the education of the masses of workers and peasants of Azerbaijan was also confirmed by the progressive part of the public of the republic. Thus, in November 1920, a commission on alphabet reform was established under the People's Commissariat of Education of the Azerbaijan SSR [3]. The decision adopted by the Board of the Commissariat on January 5, 1921 stated: "On the one hand, taking into account the great shortcomings of the old Muslim font (and on the other hand) the need to facilitate the learning of the Muslim (Azerbaijani- responsible ed.) language for the masses ... a) to replace the old Muslim font with a new one; b) to focus on the more perfect Latin font [24, p.370]. State, party and public figures and others justified the significance of switching to a new alphabet by speaking in the press. On December 26, 1921, S. Aghamalioghlu wrote in the article "Proletarian education and the Turkish alphabet" in the "News of Azerbaijan" newspaper: "The main tool of education is the alphabet, but the alphabet which is easy for the mass of the working population so that the latter could acquire much more idea and knowledge by spending less time". On March 6, 1922, the plenum of the Azerbaijan Communist Party formed a special commission headed by S.Aghamalioghlu to switch the Azerbaijani alphabet to the Latin script [24, p.370]. On the basis of this commission, in May 1922, the Permanent Committee of the New Turkish Alphabet (NTA) was

established, which carried out the Latinization of the alphabet [22, p.161]. The committee opened its branches in all uezds, with the help of the government (the Supreme Economic Council allocated a currency fund in the amount of three billion manats for the needs of the committee), a new typeface, and the necessary technical equipment for publishing literature, newspapers and magazines in the new alphabet were purchased, specialists were trained, and a wide range of explanation campaign among people was launched. Chairman of the Committee of the New Turkish Alphabet (NTA) S.Agamalioglu, as the chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR, sent the project of the new alphabet to the People's Commissariats of Education of the Republics of Turkestan, Tatar, Khiva and Crimea and asked them to express "their views and opinions on both the project of the new alphabet and the idea of replacing the Arabic alphabet with Latin" [27, p.30]. The new alphabet was applied not suddenly, but gradually, after the principal opinion of the public was revealed, a series of essential measures and extensive discussions were held. The replacement of the Arabic alphabet with the Latin one caused a great splash in the countries of the Muslim world and neighboring countries. M. Gorky appreciated the movement for the new alphabet "The great historical service of the Azerbaijanis who bravely stood on the front line [21, p.113]. Back in August 1922, when V. I. Lenin received S. Agamalioglu, the chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR, he informed Lenin about launching the process of switching to the Latin alphabet in the republic. Later, in December 1926, S. Agamalioglu especially noted in his speech at the 10th All-Baku Party conference that V.I.Lenin, who listened to his adress on the new alphabet, said: "This is a revolution in the East." [14]. Agamalioglu said at the first plenum of the All-Union New Turkish Alphabet Central Committee held in 1927: "This revolutionary measure that I personally presented in 1922 was approved by Comrade Lenin." It is no coincidence that on September 25, 1922, even the Central Committee of Russian Communist Party discussed the issue of applying the Latin alphabet and decided to accept the initiative of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR and offered all possible assistance to the All-Union Central Executive Committee. Of course, meantime, the center's political interest aimed to separate the Soviet eastern peoples from the Muslim world cannot be overlooked. There were those who resisted the application of the Latin alphabet among religious figures, some privileged public figures, intellectuals with strong nationalist sentiments, conservative party and Soviet workers. Taking into account the importance of introducing the Latin font for the rapid elimination of illiteracy among the masses and the facilitation of printing and publishing activities in

their native language, the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR legalized the application of the new alphabet in workers' faculties and second-stage schools at the beginning of 1923 [39, p.442]. On May 19, the People's Education Commissariat recommended the Baku public education department to switch the teaching in all schools to the new alphabet. On October 20, 1923, in accordance with the decree "On the recognition of the New Azerbaijani alphabet as the state alphabet" adopted by the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan SSR, all departments and organizations were instructed to conduct clerical work in both the old and the new alphabet. In March 1925, the 4th All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets adopted a number of directives to implement the new alphabet. The Congress allowed the transition to the new Azerbaijani alphabet in schools of all stages, decided to complete the transition to the new alphabet in all 1st and 2nd stage schools within eight years, i.e., until the 1932/33 academic year, and to conduct teaching in the old alphabet in the groups that did not switch to the new alphabet at that time [12, p.2]. In order to spread the alphabet among the workers, "illiteracy elimination centers" were opened for oil workers, as well as soldiers and servants in the mines in Gara and Agh Sheher in Baku. Azerbaijani villagers showed a great interest to the new alphabet. Hundreds of Azerbaijani villagers eagerly acquired the new alphabet in literacy centers, night courses and study groups. Only in 1924, 1,320 study groups of the illiteracy elimination were opened to teach the new alphabet [36, p.52]. Alphabets with the new alphabet font, materials on the rules of writing and reading in the Azerbaijani language and other resources were published in large circulation. By October 1925, 32,774 people had learned the new alphabet and become literate. "Yeni yol" newspaper, published with the new alphabet, played an important role in the dispute between the supporters of the new alphabet and its opponents. "Yeni Yol" newspaper was distributed among thousands of workers and peasants, and promoted the necessity of switching to the new alphabet among a wide readership. The activities of the Committee of the New Turkish Alphabet and the successes achieved in the field of eliminating illiteracy aroused interest among other peoples of the Soviet Union who used the Arabic alphabet. To discuss the alphabet issue, the need to convene a congress of Turkic-speaking peoples appeared. The Committee of the New Turkish Alphabet together with the Society of Investigation and Study of Azerbaijan decided to convene a Turkological congress. The government allocated up to 100,000 manats for its holding [33, p.386]. The congress was opened in February 1926 in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, which was the first in the East to try to replace the Arabic alphabet with Latin script. The First All-Union Turkological Congress, which

played a major role in the cultural life of Turkic-speaking peoples, was a great event. 131 representatives (93 of them Turkic-speaking) participated in the congress, which lasted from February 26 to March 5 [36, p.386]. Most of the Turkic-speaking peoples living in the Soviet Union were represented. The representatives of Azerbaijan were Samadagha Aghamalioghlu, Mustafa Guliyev, Ahmed Pepinov, Bakir Chobanzade, Ruhulla Akhundov, Panah Gasimov, Hanafi Zeynalli, Ali Bey Huseynzade, Farhad Aghayev, Jalil Mammadguluzade, Jabbar Mammadzade, teacher Ayna. Sultanova et al. The congress discussed the reform of the Arabic alphabet and the adoption of the Latin alphabet, the formation of national terminology and the literary language for Turkic-speaking peoples, the teaching methodology of the native language, country studies, and the orthography of Turkic languages. The majority of the speakers emphasized the importance of switching to the Latin alphabet as one of the possible ways to quickly eliminate illiteracy in the Turkic-speaking peoples and to accustom them to the new culture. On March 7, 1926, the Committee of the New Turkish Alphabet of Azerbaijan held a meeting with the representatives of the republics and provinces that had adopted the new alphabet. At the meeting, it was recommended to establish a uniform center to regulate this work at the union level. In June 1927, a special commission composed of S.Aghamalioghlu (chairman), F.Khojajev, M.A.Aytakov and others organized the founding plenum of the New Turkish Alphabet All-Union Central Committee in Baku. That plenum adopted the "Regulation on the All-Union Committee for the Implementation of the New Turkish Alphabet" and defined its rights and powers, goals and duties. S. Aghamalioghlu, T. Huseynov, M. Guliyev, R. Akhundov and H. Jabiyev were nominated from Azerbaijan to the All-Union Committee [37, p.370]. The "Regulation on the All-Union Committee on the Implementation of the New Alphabet" defining the rights and powers, goals and duties of the committee was adopted at the plenum []. S. Aghamalioghlu was elected the chairman of the New Turkish Alphabet All-Union Central Committee, and his deputies were B. Gulbesheroev and D. Korkmasov. At the plenum, a unified, new, improved alphabet was adopted, which was mandatory for all peoples of the Soviet Union who had no writing before or used the Arabic alphabet. In these years, the activities carried out in the field of applying a new alphabet in Azerbaijan accelerated the solution to the problem of eliminating illiteracy. During 1920-1927, 53,957 out of 65,607 Azerbaijanis who eliminated their illiteracy became educated by learning the new alphabet and 11,650 by acquiring the old alphabet.

6. Conclusion

The 20th century took a special place as a productive stage in the enrichment of Azerbaijani culture, which is an integral part of human culture. Since this period of history is distinguished by its characteristics, historical and social conditions, all of these are inevitably culture and left deep mark in the field of art. The 20th century was remembered as a period of social and political revolutions and changes in the history of the Azerbaijani people. Although the social-historical and political changes that have taken place have their influence on national culture and art, in general, the point of development. This period can be characterized as a productive stage of national Enlightenment at the turn of the century.

The militant activities of the forces for the sake of cultural development, the events they implemented, the work on the organization and formation of separate fields of culture and art in Azerbaijan gave a very serious impetus to its revival.

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