

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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**AZERBAIJAN AND TURKEY COOPERATION IN THE
FIELD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

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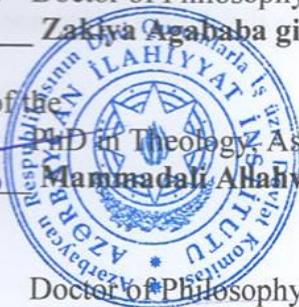
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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY

The relevance and degree of development of the research.

After regaining its independence, Azerbaijan has had the opportunity to develop its national culture and morality and effectively use the progressive values of Islam in this work. In his speech at the International Conference “Modernity and Religious-Moral Values” held in Baku in 1998, our national leader Heydar Aliyev emphasized the role of our religious values in the development of our moral values: “Effective use of religious and spiritual values in the modern world is important for every country, every people, and every religion”.¹

Religious policy in the Republic of Azerbaijan is based on the principles of the secular characteristics of the state and its tolerance. There is a tolerant and equal activity of all religions in Azerbaijan and the state’s wish to develop fruitful and constructive cooperation with religion. The most important point is that there is a multinational society developing in Azerbaijan. After the independence of the country in the field of religion, during the development of our republic, positive changes in public policy led to fundamental changes in the field of education. As a result, it is possible to address a wide range of issues related to the improvement of the religious education system in Azerbaijan.

Today it is very relevant to monitor and analyze the state policy of the Republic of Turkey in relation to religion and religious education, as well as to scientifically study the main parameters of cooperation with Turkey in this field after gaining national independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The appeal to the historical experience of Turkey in the field of religion and religious education, as well as cooperation between Turkey and our country in the field of religious education is also relevant since the experience of the Republic of Turkey in the field of religious education, training of religious leaders and protection of Islam from nontraditional religious influences may be useful for Azerbaijan, which has taken a

¹ Əliyev H. Dinimiz xalqımızın mənəvi sərvətidir. Bakı: Qanun, 1999, 219 s.

new step on the path. In this regard, the study of “Azerbaijan and Turkey cooperation in the field of religious education” can be considered important.

The relevance of the dissertation topic is related to a number of factors. First of all, it is noteworthy that education, which is a very complex social institution from the point of its essence, structure, activity and development, determines the personal qualities, skills and abilities, habits and competencies, worldviews, rules of conduct and, consequently, the socio-economic and spiritual potential of society and directs to the future. The field of education is constantly undergoing a unique evolutionary process, adapting to the changing needs of the external environment and at the same time actively influencing them. Confessing the strategically important role of education in society means accepting that it is an exceptional and superior factor in the development of civilizations, individual states, societies and every individual.

As a biocultural being, man has the constitutional right to education, which enables him/her to become a cultural member of the society in which he/she lives. Education is not only a set of knowledge, but also one of the important factors that form the basis of the student’s thinking, the worldview and attitude to the environment. While the secular education system forms the cultural foundation of a person, religious education fills its spiritual emptiness.

Thus, the main place in the educational process is occupied by religious education, which creates the spiritual foundation of each person’s personality. The subject of religious education is one of the most studied legal, historical, philosophical, sociological and other aspects in the world today and is one of the priority areas in the policy of every state, especially the secular state.

Research shows that although a number of issues arising in different countries, especially in secular countries, have been studied to some extent in the research of some scientists, its socio-philosophical problems in our country have not been sufficiently studied in the context of modern realities. From this point of view, the presented research work can be considered as a definite step

towards the analysis of these problems.

The relevance of the issue can also be explained by the fact that the Republic of Turkey, as the successor of Turkey, which has a strong tradition of statehood and led the Islamic world for more than five hundred years, pursues a policy of secularism that recognizes the separation of religion from the state. At the same time, considering the importance of the role of religion in the life of society, it pays great attention to religion and religious education in its policy. Most crucially, the Republic of Turkey is a friend of the Republic of Azerbaijan, cooperating with Azerbaijan in the field of religion, as in many areas of life. Therefore, the study of the historical experience of the Republic of Turkey in the field of religious education and the use of this experience contributes to the quantitative and qualitative improvement and enhancement of religious education in Azerbaijan.

Both Azerbaijani and Turkish societies are secular states, while Muslim societies belong to Islamic culture. The peoples of Azerbaijan and Turkey have close historical, ethnic, linguistic and religious ties. Since both countries are located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, they are trying to open the way to Europe through modernization and westernization, as well as to promote and preserve Islamic values in accordance with modern requirements, taking into account the people's commitment to Islam and the culture brought by this religion.

Different aspects of the problem we are considering are studied by many scientists (J. Dew, J. Kneller, B. Levinger, R. Kabisch, A. Hasenclever, L.Y.Nikolayeva, I.V.Metlik, T.Vlasova, N.G.Kireyev, P.Salih, M.Tutuncu, S.Jebeji, B.Bilgin, A.Tashtan, T.Gunduz, M.Sh.Aydın, H.Ayhan, I.Yenen , M. Mutaharri, etc.²)

² John Dewey. Democracy and Education. Introduction to the Philosophy of Education. Free Press: NY, 1997, p.435.; George F. Kneller. Introduction to the Philosophy of Education. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971. P. 118.; Levinger B. Critical Transitions: Human Capacity Development Across the Lifespan. Education Development Center, 1996; Николаева Л.Ю. Философия образования. Часть 1. Учебное пособие - М.: Мир науки, 2014. - 92 с.; Mehmet Tütüncü. "Türk-İslam eğitimcisi Zernuci", İzmir, "Anadolu Matbaacılık", 1991, 185 səh.; Suat Cebeci, Din eğitimi bilimi ve Türkiyede din eğitimi, Ankara, 2005, 280 s.; Метлик И. В. Изучение религии в системе образования // Педагогика.

from foreign countries (Europe, USA, Russia, Turkey, Iran, etc.). Some of them are of significant importance in terms of the subject of research. These studies emphasize the role of education, religion, religious education, religious enlightenment in the socialization of the individual, the dynamics of the social structure.

Azerbaijani scientists (theologians, philosophers, sociologists, historians, pedagogues, etc.) have also made a significant contribution to the analysis of national and spiritual values, including various aspects of religious education. From this point of view, the work of A.Pashazade, S.Hasanli, A.Gurbanov, S.Huseynov, E.Hasanova, R.Mehdiyev, S.Khalilov, I.Mammadzade, R.Aliyev, A.Hasanli, E.Samadov, S.Hasanov, J.Iskanderli, F.Huseynova, N.Guliyeva and others³ should be specially noted. The range of

– 2003. – № 7. – С. 71 – 78.; Richard Kabisch, Gerd Bockwoldt. Wie lehren wir Religion? 1988 – 177.; Beyza Bilgin, Mualla Selçuk. Din Öğretimi Özel Öğretim Yöntemleri Kavramlar.1.Baskı, Ankara, 208 s.; Власова, Т. Духовно ориентированная парадигма воспитания в отечественной педагогике // Педагогика. – 2006. – №10. 37; Киреев Н. Г. История этатизма в Турции. – М.: Наука, 1991. – 340 с.; Hasenclever A. Geteilte Werte – Gemeinsamer Frieden? Überlegungen zur zivilisierenden Kraft von Religionen und Glaubensgemeinschaften // Friedenspolitik: ethische Grundlagen internationaler Beziehungen / Eds. H. Kung & D. Senghaas. München: Piper, 2003. S. 288-318.; A.Таştan. Azərbaycan'da Sosyo-Kültürel Değişme, Din ve Dinsel Canlanma. Bilig Dergisi, Ankara, (25) 2003, s. 1-39. ; Мураххари М. Образование и воспитание в исламе. – М.: ООО «Садра», 2013. С.368; Полат Салих. Процесс развития светского государства в Турции // Религия и право. – 2001, № 2. – С. 122–167; Turgay Gündüz, Türkiyede Cumhuriyet dönemi din eğitimi ve öğretimi kronolojisi, 1923-1998 Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Sayı:7 Cilt 7, 1998; M. Şevki Aydın. Cumhuriyet döneminde din eğitimi öğretmeni, İstanbul 2005, s. 367; Halis Ayhan. Türkiyede din eğitimi (1920-1998). İstanbul 1999, s. 622.; İbrahim Yenen. “Türkiye Azerbaycan ilişkilerinde din eğitimi ve hizmetlerinin yeri”, Milletlerarası Türkiye-Azerbaycan Münasibetleri Sempozyumu. Kastamonu-2016, 827.

³ Əliyev H. Dinimiz xalqımızın mənəvi sərvətidir. Bakı: Qanun, 1999, 219 s.; Paşazadə A.Ş. Qafqazda İslam. Bakı: Azənəşr, 1991, 352 s.; Həsənli H.S. İslam mədəniyyətində elm. Bakı: Elm və həyat, 1998, 284 s.; Qurbanov Ə. İslamda ümumbəşəri və milli-mənəvi dəyərlər: onların elmi, metodoloji təhlili (problemlər, mülahizələr). Dövlət və Din - № 7 (36) İYUL 2015, 123 (106-116); Hüseynov S. Azərbaycanca dini tolerantlıq mədəniyyəti: tarix və müasirlik. Bakı, Təknur, 2012; 176.Xəlilov S.S. Təhsil, təlim, tərbiyə. Bakı, “Azərbaycan Universiteti” nəşriyyatı,

issues raised in the works of these researchers is very wide: religious, national, cultural and spiritual values, religion-state relations, etc. These scientific studies are very important, they express the serious interest of our society, intellectuals, and scientists in the problems of national-spiritual and religious values, religion and religious education. However, it should be noted that the specifics of religious education, especially cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey in this area have not been studied from a socio-philosophical point of view, and a systematic analysis of this problem has not been conducted. However, there is a very consequential need for it now.

The object and subject of research. The object of research is the cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the field of religious education from the historical, theoretical and methodological point of view. The study of religious education is of crucial importance in modern times, and it is of great importance to all states. The subject of the research is to substantiate the main role in the educational process from the historical, philosophical and sociological point of view of religious education, which creates the spiritual foundation of each person's personality, to determine the

2005 - 650 səh.; Мамедзаде И. «Опыт интерпретации морали» Баку: Муаллим, 2006, 168 с.; Əliyev R.Y. İslam və Azərbaycan mədəniyyəti. Bakı: Əbilov, Zeynalov və oğulları, 1998, 364 s.; Həsənli A. “Müasir şəraitdə Azərbaycanda dini-mədəni dəyərlərin inkişaf xüsusiyyətləri”, Bakı, «Nur Art» nəşriyyatı, 2014, 144 səh.; Гасанова Э. Ю. Идеология буржуазного национализма в Турции. – Баку, 1966.; Козырев Ф. Гуманитарное религиозное образование. Издательство Русской Христианской гуманитарной академии. М. 2010, стр. 392; Əliyev H. «İslam sivilizasiyası Qafqazda» mövzusunda Beynəlxalq simpoziumda nitqi. «Azərbaycan» qəzeti, 10 dekabr 1998-ci il; Səmədov E. Azərbaycanda din-dövlət münasibətləri və dini təhsilin formalaşması. Bakı: Təknur, 2009, 169.; İskəndərli C. Azərbaycanda qeyri-ənənəvi dinlər və təriqətlər / - Bakı :, 2008. - 96 s.; Mehdiyev R. XXI əsrdə Azərbaycan ideyası kreativ millət kontekstində.

http://azertag.az/xeber/XXI_esrde_Azərbaycan_ideyası_kreativ_millət_kontekstin_de-177059/25.06.2012/; Hüseynova F. Azərbaycan – Türkiyə mədəni əlaqələrində siyasi amillərin roluna dair. “Mədəniyyət dünyası”, elmi-nəzəri məcmuə, XII buraxılış, Bakı, ADMİU, 2006, 87-92.; Гулиева, Н.Я. Исламское образование в северном Азербайджане в XX веке: 5503.02 /Нушаба Гулиева; БГУ.- Баку, 2015.- 31 с.

specific features of religious education, its role and important functions in society, to gradually investigate Turkey's assistance to Azerbaijan in this field.

The aim and objectives of the research. The main purpose of the study is to identify and study the socio-philosophical problems of religious education in Azerbaijan. In accordance with this purpose, the following specific tasks are determined in the dissertation:

- to follow the formation and evolution of the idea of the concept of religious education, to provide its historical and philosophical analysis;

- to consider the transformation of the concept of religious education in the context of social processes in the modern world;

- to analyze the place, important components, directions of activity of religious education in the education system, which is a social institution, from the socio-philosophical point of view;

- to follow the historical path of religious education and enlightenment in Azerbaijan, to determine its main stages of evolution, to use the experience of the Republic of Turkey in this field and to assess the problem from a philosophical point of view;

- to try to forecast the main development prospects in the context of reforms in the field of religious education in our republic.

The methods of the research. The research conducted by scientists of our republic and foreign countries on the problem studied in the dissertation is used as a theoretical and methodological basis. Depending on the objectives of the study, methods such as abstraction, generalization, idealization, concrete rise from the abstract, historical-comparative and systematic approach, analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction are used. In the formation of the theoretical and methodological basis of the dissertation, serious consideration is paid to the provisions reflected in the speeches and orders of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev and our President Ilham Aliyev. Moreover, a number of documents and materials prepared by international organizations, legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, protocols and documents signed between the two countries, the legacy of ideas of prominent native and foreign representatives of philosophical and public opinion

history are addressed in the research .

The main provisions for the defense. The main provisions of this dissertation cover the issues of Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation in the field of religious education - the study of religious education from the historical, philosophical and sociological point of view, the identification of specific features of religious education in secular states and its role and important functions in society, gradual study of religion-state relations, Turkey's assistance to Azerbaijan in this field..

Scientific novelty of research. The points of scientific novelty of the research arise from its goals and objectives and specifically consist of the following:

- The thesis clarifies the concept of religious education, distinguishes its limited and wide range of meanings, considers it as a complex system with a unique structure, subject to various pressures and influences;

- The research analyzes the historical evolution of the idea of the concept of religious education in the context of the study of national and spiritual values, reveals its characteristics;

- The efforts are made to reveal the mechanism of interaction and influence of the transformation of the concept of religious education with the social processes took place in our republic and in the world;

- For the first time in the study, the cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the field of religious education and religious enlightenment, the assistance provided by the brotherly country in this direction is widely studied.

The theoretical and practical significance of the research is closely related to its scientific novelty. The materials of the research can be used in future scientific researches, especially in the study of the problem of optimization of religious education. The results of the dissertation, the theoretical provisions substantiated can help to improve the content and structure of religious education and conduct scientific research on various issues in this field. The direction of the analysis, the main goals and objectives of the research determine the practical significance of its materials and results. The issues studied,

the results obtained, the recommendations made are of particular importance in the following areas:

- in the teaching of philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, religion in higher education institutions of the republic;
- in the development of special courses on the problem;
- in writing the monographs, textbooks, teaching aids in the above areas in the future;
- in the preparation and implementation of specific projects;
- in the preparation of special programs of the media on the problems of religious education.

Approbation and application of the research. The dissertation was carried out at the Department of the History of Religion and Public Opinion of the Institute of Oriental Studies named after acad. Z.Bunyadov of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. The content of the work and the main provisions of the dissertation are published in the Scientific Bulletin of BSU Faculty of Theology, SCWRA “State and Religion” journal of the Republic of Azerbaijan, “Scientific works” journal of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of ANAS, Vestnik journal of Kazakh National Pedagogical University (Kazakhstan) named after Abay, “Virtus” Scientific journal (Canada), “Islamovedenie” (Russia) scientific journals, in the ANAS and CMB proceedings of the international scientific conference “Islamic enlightenment and modern period”, proceedings of the II International Scientific Conference on “Human development. Integration into the World” dedicated to the 96th anniversary of national leader Heydar Aliyev by Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, proceedings of the International Scientific Conference “Development of mutual relations of different fields of science in modern conditions” (Russia).

Name of the organization where the dissertation work is performed. Department of “History of religion and public opinion” of the Institute of Oriental Studies named after acad. Z.M.Bunyadov of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

The total volume of the dissertation with the characters with the volume of structural units of the dissertation separately:

Introduction consists of 12131; Chapter I - 92051; Chapter II - 54857; Chapter III - 103,234 characters. The total volume of the dissertation is 284805 characters.

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

In the introduction of the dissertation prepared by Elchin Abbas oglu Hasanli, the relevance of the topic and the novelty of the research are substantiated in all its details. Briefly, in the introductory part of the dissertation the aim and objectives are defined by indicating the object of the work, its sources are defined, the level of study of the subject is studied, the theoretical and practical significance is substantiated and the approbation and structure of the dissertation is interpreted.

The first chapter of the dissertation is called **“Philosophical and methodological bases of the study of religious education”** and the first chapter consists of three subchapters.

The first subchapter is called **“The socio-philosophical essence of religious education”** and examines the strategically important role of education, including religious education in society, its main content and socio-philosophical essence. In addition, the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of education, a number of international legal documents are interpreted here. This subchapter analyzes the views of a number of scholars conducting research in the field of religious education related to the importance of religious knowledge in the formation of the human worldview and the healthy development of society.

The second subchapter of the first chapter is called **“Specific features of religious education in a secular state”** and it deals with the place, specific characteristics, socio-philosophical and legal aspects of the relationship between religious and secular education in a secular state on the example of various European countries, the United States, Turkey and Azerbaijan. The main points of the state policy in the field of religious education in secular societies are also analyzed.

The last third subchapter of the first chapter is called **“The role**

and important functions of religious education in society". In this subchapter, the sociological analysis of religion, its interaction with other social institutions of society, the main functions of religion in society are investigated in detail, the role of religious education in the formation of national-spiritual worldview of human being as a believer, moral person in family and society is studied philosophically and sociologically.

The second chapter of the dissertation is entitled **"Development trends of religious education in modern Azerbaijan: philosophical analysis"** and consists of two subchapters. The first half of the second chapter is entitled **"The state of religious education in Azerbaijan in the first stage of independence"**. Both the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan have experienced similar fates at some points in history in relation to religion and religious education. Thus, religious education was banned in Azerbaijan in 1920-1989 and certain restrictions were imposed on the teaching of religion in the Republic of Turkey in 1932-1949.

Religious educational institutions in the USSR operated only in Central Asia - Uzbekistan during the Soviet period. Those who wanted to receive religious education from all the republics were admitted to the Bukhara Mir Arab Islamic Madrasa and the Tashkent Islamic Institute. Every year, one or two people from Azerbaijan were sent to these educational institutions to receive religious education. Eventually, it did not meet the needs of our republic for religious personnel.

After a long break and great challenges in the training of religious personnel, the Baku Islamic Madrasa was allowed to open under the Caucasian Muslims' Board, the first religious educational institution in Azerbaijan according to the Protocol No. 2 of the Council of Religious Affairs under the USSR Council of Ministers dated January 17, 1989.

After the Azerbaijani people gained their national independence, the tendency to return to its cultural heritage and religious values intensified. People's wish to learn Islam and pass it on to the younger generation has increased. As interest in Islam

grew, there was a great need for extensive religious enlightenment in the country.

In the early 1990s, madrasas (madaris) were allowed to open in various regions, including Sheki, Agdash, Khachmaz, Lankaran, Jalilabad, Goychay, Zagatala, and various districts of Baku. Quran courses have started operating at mosques.

Thus, there was almost no theologians to teach religious subjects in the opened educational institutions (madrasas, Quran courses), religious literature and textbooks in the Azerbaijani language for religious enlightenment.

In 1991, the Baku Islamic Institute was established on the basis of the Baku Islamic Madrasa, and since 1996 it has been operating as the Baku Islamic University (BIU). The university has more than four thousand graduates since it was established.

This subchapter examines the difficulties caused by the lack of national staff to teach religious lessons and religious enlightenment in the first years of our independence, religious literature in the Azerbaijani language, as well as the role and activities of the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs and various foundations in the solution of these problems.

The second half of the second chapter is called **“Religion-state relations in the Republic of Azerbaijan”**. After Azerbaijan gained independence, important laws and decisions were adopted to regulate religion-state relations. The most important of these are the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Freedom of Religion (August 20, 1992) and the establishment of the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations (SCWRA) by Presidential Decree No. 512 of June 21, 2001.

The principal decisions have been made in Azerbaijan to implement the teaching of religion under state control. The activities of “higher religious and religious secondary educational institutions” were added to the Resolution approved by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 14.08.2009 No. 143 “List of types of activities requiring special permission (license) and amounts of state duty paid for issuance of special permission (license) for those

activities” on making amendments to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 782 dated 02.09.2002 “On improving the rules for issuing special permits (licenses) for certain types of activities”. The licensing of this activity is entrusted to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In accordance with the decree, the issue of licensing of the university was considered at the request of BIU and a license was issued for its activities on August 26, 2009. After the license is issued, the teaching process at the university is carried out under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Despite the addition of a clause on “religious secondary education institutions” to the list of activities in the decree, their licensing has not been carried out as the status of this category of institutions has not yet been fully determined. However, in accordance with this decree and on the recommendation of President Ilham Aliyev, religious secondary schools and colleges were established in the regions. These religious educational institutions were registered with the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations (SCWRA) on March 6, 2017 and were issued relevant certificates.

According to the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated October 10, 2017, the Foundation for Propagation of Moral Values, and according to the Order dated February 9, 2018, the Azerbaijan Institute of Theology was established under the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations. The purpose of the Foundation is to protect and develop moral values in the country, to implement social projects in this field, as well as to support the implementation of freedom of religion. The purpose of the Institute is to ensure the preservation and development of a high religious and spiritual environment based on the historical traditions of the Azerbaijani people and the logical result of state policy, the training of highly qualified personnel in the organization of religious activities. Against the background of all this, the religious policy, founded by the great leader Heydar Aliyev and continued by Mr. President Ilham Aliyev, has been studied in detail in the dissertation in the context of religion-state relations.

This subchapter also analyzes a number of international

documents in the field of legal regulation of relations between the state and religious associations and ensuring freedom of religion.

The third chapter, which forms the basis of the dissertation, is called **“The main directions of cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the field of religious education”**, and this chapter consists of three subchapters. The first half of this chapter is entitled **“Azerbaijani-Turkish cooperation in the field of training qualified, professional theologians”**. The most important document giving legal status to cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the field of religious education was signed on February 28, 2003 in Baku between the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the Protocol signed on March 14, 2003 in Ankara. This protocol envisages the invitation of religious men, teachers and other personnel from the Republic of Turkey to work in the field of religious education with the consent of the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations. Authorized persons appointed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs to develop programs for the education of religious men who are citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan, organize seminars and courses, and implement other activities are allowed to work in the Republic of Azerbaijan with the consent of the SCWRA.

The dissertation explains many articles of the Protocol in detail, especially those related to religious education, and analyzes the parameters of cooperation between the two brotherly countries in the field of religious education. In this subchapter, the decisions made on religion and religious education in the Republic of Turkey, as well as in the Republic of Turkey, are considered and analyzed in historical sequence.

In 1992, the Turkish Diyanet Foundation signed an agreement with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Baku State University to open the Faculty of Theology at BSU. Graduates of the faculty are given two specialties: theologian, Arabic language teacher. Graduates work in government agencies, educational and religious institutions. Some of them are engaged in

scientific research.⁴

In addition to local teachers, invited teachers from a number of theological faculties in Turkey also taught at the faculty. Over time, Turkish teachers were replaced by local staff who had graduated from the faculty and had experience in Turkey.

At the same time, the activity of the Youth Assistance Foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of religious education should be especially noted. It is funded by businessmen from Turkey. The Foundation that established in November 1992 in different regions of the country provided all kinds of material and moral assistance for the activity of Khosrov (Agdash district) Islamic madrasah (currently non-functioning), Aliabad (Zagatala district) Islamic madrasah, Sheki Quran memorizers and Islamic sciences madrasah, Baku “Shabnam” madrasah. By the decision of the SCWRA dated March 15, 2017, Aliabad Islamic Madrasa, Sheki (Hafizlik) College and Shabnam (Girls) College were established and registered on the basis of Aliabad Islamic madrasah, Sheki (Hafizlik) Islamic Course, Shabnam (Girls) Islamic Course and their activities were allowed.

This subchapter also analyzes the decisions made in the field of religious education after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey.

The second half of this chapter is entitled **“Turkey’s role in the development of religious education in Azerbaijan and the improvement of religious enlightenment”**. In this chapter, Turkey's assistance to Azerbaijan in training highly qualified theologians from the first years of independence, opening of religious educational institutions, construction of new mosques for worship and enlightenment, bringing religious literature to the republic, meeting the need for theologians and teachers are investigated in the following way.

Islam is one of the most important factors uniting the two brotherly states and their peoples. Islam continues to exert a certain influence on the formation of mass consciousness in Azerbaijan. This

⁴ İsmayılov G. Azərbaycanca dini məsələ: təhdidlər və hədəflər ideoloji, milli, ictimai təhlükəsizlik müstəvisində. Bakı. Nəşriyyat XXI MMC-nin mətbəəsi. Bakı-2016, s. 291.(16)

should be taken into account when implementing social and political projects. The place of religion in society is determined by both historical and socio-political factors. The processes taking place in the world, the one-sided globalization further strengthens the role of the Islamic factor in the life of Muslims, allows for the strengthening and expansion of solidarity in Islamic culture.

The close involvement of the Turkey Diyanet Foundation and various foundations in the development of religious educational institutions in Azerbaijan should be noted. Examples of this are the activities of the faculties of “National Morality and Islamic Studies” established at the Shamakhi Cultural and Educational College and the Sheki Pedagogical College. Classes at both colleges were taught by Azerbaijani and Turkish teachers. Azerbaijani history, Azerbaijani language, English language, etc. lessons were also taught along with the Holy Quran, Islamic law, Islamic morality, Islamic history, Sufism, Islamic philosophy, Tafsir, Hadith, Arabic language, Kalam, Aqid here.

The reason for the establishment of the faculty “National Morality and Islamic Studies” was to train qualified religious men with religious knowledge in the region and to meet the religious needs of society in solving problems in the field of religion. At present, the faculty of “National Ethics and Islamic Studies” has been suspended in both colleges.

This subchapter examines the activities of Turkish lyceums operating in Azerbaijan, as well as madrasas and student dormitories in Azerbaijan in the field of religious education. At the same time, the sermons of well-known Turkish theologians on religious topics on various Turkish channels played a great role in the religious enlightenment of the Azerbaijani audience.

At present, the Turkey Diyanet Foundation, Baku Turkish Lyceum and Baku Turkish Anatolian Lyceum continue their activities. The subject “Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge” is among the compulsory subjects at the Baku Turkish Anatolian Lyceum.

Today, mosques are one of the centers that meet the needs of religious people in Azerbaijan. Religious education in mosques is

taught by imams and teachers of Quranic courses. In addition to praying, the imams preach to the people on Fridays, blessed days and nights, and answer the questions of the people.

The sermons held in the mosques built by the Turkey Diyanet Foundation and Turkish businessmen in our republic have played a great role in religious enlightenment. The Qur'anic courses opened at these mosques have played an exceptional role in increasing the religious knowledge of the people living in the regions.

Preaching and sermons (talks) on various religious topics delivered by akhunds and imams during daily prayers in mosques built by Turkey in Azerbaijan, as well as on Fridays during prayers, are aimed at religious enlightenment. After the prayers, the imams and akhunds answer the religious questions of the worshippers, celebrate religious holidays and ceremonies together.

Turkey has been closely involved in the training of religious personnel with higher education in Azerbaijan and in meeting the needs of the people for religious literature. It should be noted that the literature received from Turkey is far from superstition and radical ideas, and promotes religious knowledge within the framework of scientific views.

Cooperation with Turkey in the field of religious enlightenment helps to fight against the influence of non-traditional religions and denominations in Azerbaijan, including Islamic sects. As people's knowledge of religion grows, they are less attuned to foreign beliefs, religious ideas that do not correspond to the national and spiritual values of Azerbaijan, and are able to freely determine their religious relations on the basis of knowledge.

The third subchapter of this chapter is entitled **“The role of cooperation with Turkey in the field of religious enlightenment in Azerbaijan and the protection of Islam from non-traditional religious influences”**. The activity of foreign humanitarian organizations coming to Azerbaijan from both Muslim and European countries in the first years of our independence is also noteworthy. Unfortunately, the propaganda carried out by these organizations in the guise of religious enlightenment later brought about the emergence of non-traditional sects and currents of Islam in

Azerbaijan. Some organizations have been banned from operating in Azerbaijan due to their propaganda in madrasas and Quran courses in accordance with the political interests of their countries, and these organizations have been expelled from the country.

Three external influences played a major role in the formation of the current religious situation in Azerbaijan. Thus, after Azerbaijan gained its independence, organizations and individuals from Turkey, Iran and Arab countries, who came to our republic to provide humanitarian assistance, also carried out various activities in the religious sphere. These organizations and individuals implement various humanitarian activities, build new mosques and repair old ones, organize madrasas, a number of educational courses such as the Koran, help young people to study in different countries, provide mosques, madrasas and Quran courses with qualified religious personnel through the importation of various religious literature.

Turkey's close participation should be especially noted here. Thus, there are madrasas and student dormitories in Azerbaijan for societies belonging to different communities operating in Turkey. Suleimanism, which is widespread in Turkey, has been promoted in Azerbaijan, mainly since 2000.⁵

In Baku, Absheron (Khirdalan), Sumgayit, Gazakh, Agdash, Sheki, Shamakhi and Khachmaz, both girls and boys live and receive religious education in dwellings of Suleimanism. Young people living here are provided with food and accommodation, as in other dwellings. The main expenses of the dwellings are covered by Turkish and Azerbaijani businessmen. In some countries, students pay very little. Rooms (mosques) are organized for the worship of the people living in those houses (dormitories).

The Turkish state has made great contributions to the protection and promotion of unity in Islam, as well as the protection of Islam from non-traditional religious influences along with the enlightenment work based on sound religious knowledge in our republic.

The Zagatala branch of Baku Islamic University was

⁵ İsgəndərov A. Cümhuriyyətin və sovet dövrünün Şeyxülislamı: Şeyxülislam Ağə Əlizadə haqqında. - Bakı: Elm və təhsil, 2011.- 183 s.(56)

established with the financial support of the Youth Assistance Foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the order of the Chairman of the Caucasian Muslims' Board No. 121 dated August 26, 1998 to consider the complexity of the religious situation in the northern part of the republic and the need for the religious men with higher education, as well as to prevent the targeted influx of young people to foreign countries for religious education.⁶

This branch has played an important role in preventing non-traditional sects of Islam, especially Wahhabism, in the northern regions of Azerbaijan. Earlier, young people from this region went to the North Caucasus Republics, Dagestan and various Arab countries to receive religious education. The qualified religious personnel was met after the opening of the branch, the need of the region, as well as our compatriots living in Georgia. Most of the teachers of the branch, especially those who teach religious subjects, were invited from Turkey. Over time, Turkish teachers graduated from the branch and were replaced by Azerbaijani staff that got the experience in Turkey. Educational buildings, a mosque complex and a dormitory for students have been built here. A rich library for use has been created for students.

Cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in the field of religious education and mosque construction was also the subject of discussion at official meetings. Thus, when the late President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev received a delegation led by the Minister of Religious Affairs of Turkey, Mehmet Nuri Yilmaz on April 26, 2000, the main topic of the meeting was the teaching of religion in mosques and schools built by Turkey in Azerbaijan.

From this point of view, the moral gap created by the religious illiteracy of the young generation is filled by a large number of harmful habits that are alien to our national and spiritual values. Religious knowledge can play an important role in shaping the national and spiritual worldview of young people. The teaching of religion creates a wide range of opportunities for the development of young people who are far from arrogance, who are patient with what

⁶ Qafarov V. Türkiyə-Rusiya münasibətlərində Azərbaycan məsələsi (1917-1922). Bakı: "RS Poliqraf", 2011.

is happening around them, who respect the elders and show mercy to the younger ones.

Conclusion. The conclusions of the study can be summarized as follows:

- Religious education is one of the important factors in the formation of a person's worldview and the healthy development of society;

- The implementation of religious policy and the development of religious education and enlightenment are among the priority issues in every state, especially in secular states;

- As people's knowledge of religion increases, they become less attentive to foreign beliefs, religious ideas that do not correspond to national and spiritual values, and are able to freely determine their attitude to religion on the basis of knowledge. For this reason, it is more appropriate to start religious education of children and youth at an early age;

- Providing the basics of religious education in Azerbaijan by highly qualified, professional theologians will prevent all forms of sectarianism and religious discrimination;

- It is necessary to prevent the ideological propaganda of religious radicalism, fanaticism, extremism, separatist movements that create civil strife, and to study the methods of preventing such movements in the context of the experience of the Republic of Turkey;

- It is expedient to develop the organization of exchange of experience of teachers and students of religious higher education institutions of Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as imams, akhunds and preachers;

- The study of the historical path and state policy of the Republic of Turkey in the field of religious education will create a basis for a more complete improvement of the concept of religious education in our country.

Therefore, the dissertation examines the historical experience of Turkey in the field of religious education and cooperation between the two brotherly countries in the field of religious education and concludes that religious education in Azerbaijan should be provided

only under the state care and control. Thus, religious lessons can be included in school curricula for young people to receive proper, adequate religious education in schools. It is more relevant to prepare textbooks with the involvement of specialists from the Ministry of Education, the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Organizations, the Caucasian Muslims' Board, Baku Islamic University, Azerbaijan Institute of Theology and relevant institutes of ANAS to determine the main topics in the curriculum. These topics should be free from all forms of sectarianism and bigotry, and great attention should be paid to the personal qualities of the teachers who will teach the lessons. Therefore, a teacher in the field of religion teaches the students not only knowledge, but also morality.

The main content of the dissertation is reflected in the following articles published by the author in the country and abroad and in the reports at national and international scientific-theoretical conferences:

1. “Azərbaycanda dini maarifçilik və islamın qeyri-ənənəvi təriqətlərdən qorunmasında Türkiyə ilə əməkdaşlığın rolu” // AMEA və QMI “İslam maarifçiliyi və müasir dövr” Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları, Bakı, 16-17 aprel 2015. 486-492 s
2. “Azərbaycanda ixtisaslı ilahiyyatçıların hazırlanması və dini təhsil sahəsində Türkiyə-Azərbaycan əməkdaşlığı” // Bakı Dövlət Universiteti İlahiyyat Fakültəsinin Elmi Məcmuəsi № 23, iyun (Haziran) 2015. 263- 282 s.
3. “Azərbaycanda dini maarifçilik və müstəqillik dövründə dini təhsil sisteminin yenidən qurulması” // Azərbaycan Respublikası DQİDK “Dövlət və din” jurnalı, №01(42) yanvar 2016. 37- 47 s.
4. “Azərbaycan təhsil sistemində dinin tədrisi və bu sahədə Türkiyə təcrübəsi” // Bakı Dövlət Universiteti İlahiyyat Fakültəsinin Elmi Məcmuəsi, № 25, iyun (Haziran) 2016. 155-168 s.

5. “Dini təhsil sahəsində Türkiyə-Azərbaycan əməkdaşlığı” // Azərbaycan Respublikası DQİDK “Dövlət və din” jurnalı, №06(47) noyabr-dekabr 2016. 63- 69 s.
6. “Azərbaycanda dini təhsil sisteminin inkişaf mərhələləri”// Qafqaz Müsəlmanları İdarəsi Bakı İslam Universiteti “Elmi axtarışlar” Elmi məqalələr toplusu, I buraxılış, Bakı, 2017. 180-184 s.
7. “Одно из направлений Турецко- Азербайджанского сотрудничества в области религиозного образования: Религиозные учреждения (мечети) и их просветительская функция” // Abay adına Qazax Milli Pədoqoji Universiteti, VESTNİK jurnalı, “Tarix və sosial-siyasi elmlər” bölməsi, № 4(55), 2017, Qazaxıstan. 63-69 s.
8. ”Religious education: socio-philosophical and political aspect” // Virtus, Scientific journal, №22, 2018, Canada. 34-38 s.
9. “Dini təhsilin sosial – fəlsəfi mahiyyəti” // Qafqaz Müsəlmanları İdarəsi Bakı İslam Universiteti “Elmi axtarışlar” Elmi məqalələr toplusu, II buraxılış, Bakı, 2018. 147-155 s.
10. “Türkiyə və Azərbaycan nümunəsində dünyəvi dövlətdə dini təhsilin problemləri” // AMEA Fəlsəfə İnstitutu, “Elmi əsərlər”, Beynəlxalq elmi-nəzəri jurnal, № 2 (31), Bakı, 2018. 225-235 s.
11. ”Dini təhsilin sosial-fəlsəfi mahiyyəti və cəmiyyətin inkişafında rolu. Dini təhsil sahəsində Türkiyə-Azərbaycan əməkdaşlığı” // Azərbaycan Respublikası DQİDK “Dövlət və din” jurnalı, № 05 (58) 2018. Bakı, 74-81 s.
12. “Dini təhsil və onun aktual problemləri” // Azərbaycan Memarlıq və İnşaat Universiteti Ümummillî lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 96-cı ildönümünə həsr edilmiş “İnsan inkişafı. Dünyaya inteqrasiya” mövzusunda II beynəlxalq elmi konfrans, Bakı-2019, səh. 74-79.
13. “Religious educational policy in a secular state” // Агентство Международных Исследований, Развитие взаимоотношений различных отраслей науки в современных условиях: Сборник статей по итогам Международной научно-практической конференции

(Россия, Омск, 02 сентября 2019 г)- Стерлитамак: АМИ, 2019, -99с.

14. "Состояние религиозного образования в Азербайджане в XX веке и в наши дни" // Журнал «Исламоведение», Россия, Москва. 2020. Т. 11, № 3. стр.24-33. DOI: 10.21779/2077-8155-2020-11-3-24-33.

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