

## REFLECTION OF SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND LITERARY-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT IN AZERBAIJANI MEMOIR LITERATURE

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**Key words:** *memoirist relies, memoirs differ, memoir literature, Azerbaijan memoir literature, reflection of the environment in memoirs.*

**The purpose of the research** is to review the works of Azerbaijani writers who wrote in the memoir genre, to identify and analyze the elements that reflect the socio-historical and literary-cultural environment in the memoirs of each author we study. The basis of the memoirs involved in the article is the reflection of events through memory. Our goal is to present this reflection not as a completely identical reproduction of the past, but as a practical activity and creativity of the memoirist.

**Discussion.** In the works of Azerbaijani memoir writers analyze and identify:  
– elements of memoiristics reflecting the socio-historical environment;  
– elements of the literary and cultural environment;  
– the reflection of events through memory in the analyzed works;  
– the connection between memory and history in the analyzed works.

**The methods and methodology of the research.** The study used the method of analysis of documentary materials related to the historical methodology, as well as the historical and historical-comparative method. The works of well-known figures of literature and culture in Azerbaijani, Russian and world literature, as well as travelers and journalistic memuarists: road records, memoirs were taken as a theoretical base and comparative-welcoming method was used in this process.

**The novelty of the research.** The article examines the memoirs of writers living in exile, both in Azerbaijan and abroad, as the texts belonging to the autobiographical and biographical type of fiction, emphasize imagination and subjectivity in the works, containing reality.

**Conclusions.** The article examines the works of Azerbaijani writers in the memoir genre, analyzes the memoirs of each author we study, revealing elements that reflect the socio-historical and literary-cultural environment. In the works we researched in the article, the basis of memoirs is the reflection of events through memory.

Analyzing the works of Azerbaijani writers in the memoir genre, we have come to the conclusion that the memories have acquired a new meaning along with the continuation and development of past traditions, enriched by the results of each author's personal creative initiative. Memoir literature plays an important role in the more accurate and detailed study of the memoirs of Azerbaijani writers, their lives and activities, as well as in the documentary coverage of the socio-historical and literary-cultural situation of the period.

## ВІДОБРАЖЕННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНО-ІСТОРИЧНОГО ТА ЛІТЕРАТУРНО-КУЛЬТУРНОГО СЕРЕДОВИЩА В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСЬКІЙ МЕМУАРНІЙ ЛІТЕРАТУРІ

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**Ключові слова:** мемуаристи, мемуари, мемуарна література, азербайджанська мемуарна література, відображення середовища у мемуарах.

**Мета дослідження** – розглянути твори азербайджанських письменників, які писали в мемуарному жанрі, виявити та проаналізувати елементи, що відображають соціально-історичне та літературно-культурне середовище в мемуарах кожного автора, що вивчається нами. В основі спогадів, задіяних у статті, є відображення подій через пам'ять. Наша мета – уявити це відображення не як абсолютно тотожне відтворення минулого, а як практичну діяльність та творчість мемуариста.

**Обговорення.** У творах азербайджанських мемуаристів варто проаналізувати та виявити:

- елементи мемуаризму, що відображають суспільно-історичне середовище;
- елементи літературно-культурного середовища;
- відображення подій через пам'ять в аналізованих творах;
- зв'язок пам'яті та історії в аналізованих творах.

**Методи та методологія дослідження.** У дослідженні використовувався метод аналізу документальних матеріалів, що належать до історичної методології, а також історичний та історико-порівняльний метод. За теоретичну базу були взяті твори відомих діячів літератури та культури в азербайджанській, російській та світовій літературі, а також мандрівників та публіцистичних мемуаристів: дорожні записи, мемуари. У цьому процесі був використаний порівняльно-вітальний метод.

**Новизна дослідження.** У статті розглядаються мемуари письменників, які живуть в еміграції, як в Азербайджані, так і за кордоном, оскільки тексти, що стосуються автобіографічного та біографічного типу белетристики, підкреслюють фантазію та суб'єктивізм у творах, що містять реальність.

**Висновки.** У статті розглядаються твори азербайджанських письменників у мемуарному жанрі, аналізуються мемуари кожного автора, що вивчається, виявляються елементи, що відображають соціально-історичне та літературно-культурне середовище. У досліджених нами у статті творах основа мемуарів є відображенням подій через пам'ять.

Аналізуючи твори азербайджанських письменників у мемуарному жанрі, ми дійшли висновку, що спогади набули нового сенсу поряд із продовженням та розвитком минулих традицій, збагачених результатами особистої творчої ініціативи кожного автора. Мемуарна література відіграє важливу роль у більш точному та докладному вивченні спогадів азербайджанських письменників, їхньому житті та діяльності, а також у документальному висвітленні суспільно-історичної та літературно-культурної ситуації того періоду.

**Introduction.** Recently, interest in memoir literature has increased. Memories, diaries, autobiographies of those who witnessed the turning points in culture, politics and history attract special attention. The assessment of the difficult time by those who were directly involved in what was happening, like, perhaps, nothing else clearly illuminates the true course of events. Such a turning point in Russian history and culture was the end of the 19th – the first two decades of the 20th century. As soon as the ideological obstacles were removed, attention to the heroes of art and the new culture of the Silver Age increased, and this time of manifestation of the genius of Russian culture and thought came before us in all its fullness and diversity. And although over the past twenty years there has been steady research interest in the culture of the Silver Age, many “white pages” in the history of the artistic life of that time remain unfilled, which makes the appeal to the declared topic scientifically relevant.

**Review of literature on this topic.** Esat Jamal Paker in his book “In our political history, forty years of foreign memories” and Eyup Durukan in a book “A lifetime in the diaries” depicted in small details both the political and spiritual characteristics of the period they lived [1; 2].

Craig Howes wrote an interesting article about the memory, emphasizing that it has a wide range: “Since 1990, “life writing” has become a frequently used covering term for the familiar genres of biography, autobiography, memoir, diaries, letters, and many other forms of life narrative. Initially adopted as a critical intervention informed by post-structuralist, postmodernist, postcolonial, and especially feminist theory of the 1970s and 1980s, the term also refers to the study of life representation beyond the traditional literary and historical focus on verbal texts, encompassing not only other media-film, graphic narratives, online technologies, performance, but also research in other disciplines-psychology, anthropology, ethnic and Indigenous studies, political science, sociology, education, medicine, and any other field that records, observes, or evaluates lives” [3].

In Anton Pervushin’s book “Cosmic mythology. From the Martian Atlanteans to the lunar conspiracy” we read: “Have I managed to implement “all my projects?” Not yet. Fear God, I’m still a relatively young man! You can say that I have just started my literary career, and it’s not a fact that in a couple of years I will be writing about the same things that I am writing about today” [4, p. 4].

Many memoirs of the leaders of the Silver Age were published, written by them already in exile. These publications provide an additional opportunity to study the culture of not only the Silver Age, but also the Russian Diaspora, building a holistic picture of the history of Russian culture [9, p. 130].

“Despite the fact that the biographical genre is always popular with the reader, nevertheless it remains undeservedly bypassed in the research literature: there are no developments where, from the standpoint of modern achievements of philosophy and methodology of humanitarian knowledge, the features of biographical narration would be highlighted (reliability criteria, specificity of biographical tradition letters, the interdisciplinary nature of biographical knowledge)” [10, p. 32] ... It is difficult to disagree with this thesis of one of the theorists of memoiristics. Of course, the development of a biographical method in the history and theory of culture, which expands the boundaries of scientific research in cultural studies, is urgent.

Memoiristics is the experience of dialogue at various levels: the dialogue of cultures, times, mentalities, etc. Modern theory and history of culture cannot ignore such important sources as memoirs, since they reveal new aspects of cultural studies. Memoiristics are always dialogical: dialogue with oneself, dialogue with an unknown reader, dialogue with a descendant. “If we are not given an exhaustive understanding of the past and the present, then we can realize our inseparable unity with them. This feeling grows from penetration into great historical events to the same extent as from empathy for the small and smallest aspects of life ... The history reflected in one person, in his life, everyday life, gesture, is isomorphic to the history of mankind. They are reflected in each other and are cognized through each other” [11, p. 389]. If we want to know the history of the culture of our Motherland, such an important stage as the Silver Age, which determined so much in the further development of not only the culture and art of Russia, but also the subsequent historical paradigms, we must inevitably turn to the study of memoir literature, voicing the voices of the creators of Russian culture ...

The study of the memoir literature of the Silver Age as a cultural phenomenon involves solving a number of problems. First of all, it is necessary to identify the uniqueness of the conditions in which, from the standpoint of cultural and historical trends, the very phenomenon of memoiristics develops, and also to determine the theoretical foundations of various forms of memoiristics through the prism of the author’s texts of the Silver Age. In addition, it seems important to analyze the phenomenon of memoiristics as a specific way of existence of self-reflection of culture, to investigate its main narrative features. Finally, the task of determining the informative possibilities of memoirs for the study of the cultural heritage of the Silver Age is urgent. Memoir literature does not often become the subject of cultural analysis, which has its own distinctive characteristics in comparison with historical or literary methods. “Thus, disputes

that are important for literary scholars about the principles of intra-genre classification, formal features of “types”, “genre varieties” of memoir literature, and even the presence or absence of an aesthetic principle in it in cultural research acquire a secondary meaning. Its problem field includes the entire body of literature based on such an important cultural category as “social memory”: these are artistic, philosophical and journalistic works written in the genre of personal diaries, letters or travel notes, and actually memoirs, autobiography, confessions, diaries, correspondence, literary portraits and documentary sketches” [12, p. 14] ... In working with such complex sources as memoirs, complicated by social, ideological, psychological and other factors, in cultural research, in our opinion, it was possible to rely on the experience of historical source study. In addition, the restoration of the historical development of ideas and theories is impossible without the use of the method of retrospective modeling of the directions of the development of the culture of the Silver Age, which was realized through a specific historical and comparative historical analysis of the texts of cultural figures of this period. Taking into account the specifics of the topic, we also found it necessary to refer to the biographical facts of poets, writers, artists of this period.

Memoir literature can be grouped according to the principles of genre stratification.

1. Encyclopedic memoirs are usually various kinds of reference books, dictionaries, personal encyclopedias, chronicles. A characteristic feature of such texts is a scrupulous presentation of the material, but at the same time it remains important that autobiography and memoirs as such are reconstructions of the history of personal individuality, and this makes such memoirs interesting, and not boring formal presentation of material, facts, figures. In Daniel Defoe’s book “The Diary of the Plague Year” we read: “It was the beginning of September 1664, when I, like my neighbors, learned from idle conversations that the plague had returned to Holland again. Some claimed that they brought it there from Italy, others that it came from the Levant along with goods that arrived on Turkish ship” [13, p. 6]. As you can see, memoir literature also plays the role of an encyclopedia of famous historical events.

2. Historical (or historical-scientific) memoirs. Essays of this kind are characterized by an orientation towards the scientific presentation of the material, documentary confirmation of the conclusions. In this case (as, incidentally, in other genres of memoirs, but in this case most of all) the author is faced with the problem of biographical reconstruction, which can be represented as a series of the following stages: 1) an act and a situation; 2) biographical fact;

3) biographical explanation; 4) ethical obligations; 5) narrative visualization.

The expedition of the Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl, undertaken in 1047, still remains an example of bold scientific daring and magnificent memoirs. The author in his book “Journey on “Kon-Tiki” writes: “After the war, I became interested in the interaction of cultures, which occurred due to the migration of peoples. To prove my own theory that native Americans could settle the islands of Polynesia, I went on a trip” [14, p. 72].

3. A portrait memoir is a story about specific figures, for example, culture. The main purpose of such memoirs is to give a spiritual portrait of the character. In this case, the author of memoirs takes the position of a biographer and faces a problem that is always relevant for a biographer – where is the line between science and art in biography? Moreover, in most cases, the situation is complicated by the fact that in relation to the described personalities the author of the memoir’s experiences (or felt that he also does not remain without a trace) certain feelings. Fiction memoirs are fictional. This group of memoirs requires a special reservation. In the history of Silver Age memoirs, memoirs combining reality and fiction were very popular. An example of this is the works of Andrei Bely [9, p. 72].

Gloria Marie Steinem created her portrait in her memoirs. The recognized leader of the feminist movement of the 60–70-s G. M. Steinem mixes travel notes and memoristics in her memoirs. An example of this is her work “My life on the Road”. She writes in her memoirs: “I have dedicated my life to the struggle so that every woman can free herself from the clutches of gender attitudes and rules. This is the essence of real feminist: to evaluate a person by his abilities, achievements and aspirations, and not based on gender” [15, p. 43].

Another example of portrait memoirism: in just a few weeks, the book “Castle of Glass” turned a young journalist Janet Walls into one of America’s most popular authors. She writes in her memoirs: “For many years I hid my past until I realized that only by freeing myself and move on” [16, p. 33].

The issues of memoirism were widely discussed in the introductions and reports of the International Scientific Conference held in Yekaterinburg. It was noted that the traditions of memoirism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries continued in the post-Soviet periods in the work of the intelligentsia of Russia [5].

Questions are also considered in the works of F. E. Ismailov, which describes two types of female author’s consciousness in Russian poetry of the Silver Age in the space of world culture [6].

An interesting approach is observed in S. V. Kovyreshina, where the author notes that philosophical autobiography as a product of spiritual

creativity, as a special genre of discourse and narration of the Silver Age era [7].

In her analytical work, M. L. Lebedeva, where she describes the archetypes of Russian and world culture from V. V. Rozanov's book "The Apocalypse of Our Time", notes the importance of memoir literature in the development of the world cultural environment [8].

In the work of G. V. Efendiyeva "Deceptively uncomplicated" dedicated to the poetic world of the poetess Larisa Andersen, where the author describes the memoir literary environment of Russian Harbin [26].

**The methods and methodology of the research.** The study used the method of analysis of documentary materials related to the historical methodology, as well as the historical and historical-comparative method. The works of well-known figures of literature and culture in Azerbaijani, Russian and world literature, as well as travelers and journalistic memoirists: road records, memoirs were taken as a theoretical base and comparative-welcoming method was used in this process.

**Result.** Memoir literature is one of the main genres of art. Examples of this genre are based on the memory of individuals. Memoirs differ from other written sources in the way they reflect the past. It is with the help of memory that important historical facts are reflected through the description of the details of the memoirist's daily activities and the people around him. Memoirs differ from the chronicles of modern events in the way that the author's image comes to the fore with his dreams and personality. Covering the entire life of the author, often important events, and sometimes many periods, memoirs belong to people who have played a prominent role in history. There may be many things that do not find their place in official work that can be observed by contemporaries and passed on to future generations in the writings of contemporaries and witnesses. Often a small sign sheds light on the main motive and intention of a big event.

Thus, memoir literature is an author's written work about the past in one form or another. Memoirs, which approach fiction, especially family chronicles and various types of historical fiction, are distinguished by their exact reflection of the truth. A memoir is a person, whose participant's memory reflects the events and facts of the past individually, in a subjective way. Making notes can be done both in the course of events and after a certain period of time. The memoirist relies mainly on his own memory, reflecting the events as he remembers them. He does not set out to study historical facts. In rare cases, some of the first meetings are lost from memory, the logical connection between the facts is lost. In this regard, the memoirist has to use other sources.

Memoirs differ from other works in that the author's personality is highlighted by his inner world. The most common form of memoir literature is diaries. Diaries are notes about the author's personal life. Biographies of memoir literature reflect important events and changing moments in a person's life. Identity is taken as the main object for biographies. Memoirs are a relatively complex form of memoir literature. Here the author has the opportunity to cover more areas. Memories enrich the history of literature, especially the genre of memoirs, with one or another valuable selected material, and thus have a special significance.

Memoirs can often be in the form of business documents. Typically, official documents created on the author's own initiative have the character of a memoir, in which they hold a certain position, look at their past service, justify themselves at a high level, and finally give a certain social, political, military, or any other condition that arises interest. However, in all these coincidences, the specialization of working documents as memoirs is possible only when the author's past life and events are covered with his participation. The tool set by the author as an experimental goal is of great importance for the department that created the document as a result of his request. One of the main features is that most parts of these documents are rich with memoir texts.

The role of memoirs in revealing the character of this or that historical figure is great. The memoirs of literary figures show the way of literary development. Unrevealed feelings and thoughts are reflected in such works. All memoirs show a vivid, comprehensive picture of public life, shed light on the mental and spiritual role of society, and clarify the attitude of public opinion to the described events. Memoirs are a clear document of the social struggle. Most of them are a valuable source for revealing important events.

In addition to fiction, memoirs contain a degree of generalization, typification, and psychological penetration into a person's inner world. Memoirs that are foreign to any fantasy are valued for their honest and accurate presentation of real events. The inclusion of fiction in them violates the basics of the memoir genre, fundamentally distorts its important qualities. If there are fictions in memoirs, then they belong to other literary genres.

The main features of the genre are the author's desire to direct the realities of the memoir, to revive the landscape of the past in a more perfect way. If the memoirs focus on the author's personality, image, his character, the opening and expansion of the plot, they are considered as a category of aesthetic concepts.

Memoirs are found not only in traditional memoir stories, but also in a wide variety of other relevant writings, as well as in a real multitude of memories from a particular period. Memoirs can be found in

official documents, biographies, obituaries, critical articles, journalistic works, satires, etc.

At a time when diaries were considered the first form of memoir literature in historical source studies, they repeatedly tried to bridge important differences between them, claiming that they had the same purpose and function. Memoirs and diaries are close to each other in terms of personal sources. Diaries have completely special cognitive qualities, a special system of reflection of existence, which excludes the possibility of identifying memoirs with them and distinguishes them as an independent source.

**Presentation of the main material.** The history of the authors giving various information about themselves, their period and contemporaries in their works is ancient. The time past and interest in these issues grew. From this point of view, autobiographical information attracts more attention in the works of XIX century authors. Autobiographical information is given more space in the works of many prominent representatives of Azerbaijani literature of this period. One of them is a well-known figure of the literature of that period, Abbasgulu aga Bakikhanov (1794–1847) a person with encyclopedic knowledge. The author's work "Flight of Dreams" is especially noteworthy. Bakikhanov wrote that he traveled here from Russia to Poland and stayed in Warsaw for several months. He says that he is helpless in describing the beautiful Warsaw and that it is impossible to describe the city in words and recommends seeing it visually. The work lights a certain period of the poet's life and describes the days spent by the author in Warsaw, the banquets he attended, and the customs and traditions there. The work was written in the spirit of patriotism. Thus, in the author's opinion, his village Amsar is much more superior to large cities, and this is especially emphasized at the end of the poem.

A. Bakikhanov gave the reason for writing many of his works in that work itself. For example, he explains the reason for writing Qanuni-Qudsi: "During my travels, I met different peoples, increased my knowledge, and saw in myself the talent to write in the Persian language. I wanted to make a copy as a service to the homeland and the youth" [18, p. 143].

A. Bakikhanov gave his full biography at the end of his work "Gulustani-Iram". The author pointed out that he was born on June 10, 1794, began studying at the age of 7, learned Arabic and other subjects for 10 years in Guba, was appointed to public office at the invitation of General Yermolov, learning Russian in Tbilisi (Tbilisi) he was able to get acquainted with various sciences and peoples. A. Bakikhanov writes that "While in Tiflis, I took up the study of the Russian language and through it I got acquainted with European education. Always staying with the chiefs, I examined Shirvan, Armenia, Dagestan, Circassia, Georgia, Anatolia and Azerbaijan. Everywhere I got

to know the area and scientists. During the Turkish and Persian wars, as well as at the conclusion of peace, I had the honor to be with the Holiest Prince Paskevich. In 1833, I travelled along the Caucasian line, Don land, Little Russia, Great Russia, Livonia, Lithuania and Poland. I got acquainted with government officials and people known in the field of science or art. I saw many things interesting for the heart and mind and tried to make use of them" [18, p. 206].

A. Bakikhanov and A. S. Griboyedov had friendly relations. In his "Road Notes" he noted that A. Bakikhanov acquainted him with many cultural monuments. Griboyedov, who visited many parts of Azerbaijan, gave interesting information about Azerbaijan and its people in his memoirs and letters, noting that he was more interested in the cultural monuments of Nakhchivan. Griboyedov's interest in the East, its poetry and language, also influenced Kuchelbecker, and this acquaintance was made through Bakikhanov.

During his trip to the Caucasus, Count Suzanneni was accompanied from Guba to Baku by Bakikhanov, who introduced the historical monuments to the count. He praised the author of "Gulustani-Iram" as a prominent scholar in the field of history in his book "Travel Memories", which criticized Russia's colonial policy in the Caucasus.

According to Bestujev-Marlinsky's diaries, he was in Guba in early April 1834, but since Bakikhanov was in St. Petersburg at that time, their meeting took place in 1837 in Tbilisi (Georgia). F. Bodenstedt also praised A. Bakikhanov as a poet, scientist and expert in his work in "A Thousand and One Days in the East".

The works of Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh (1812–1878), another prominent representative of the 19th century Azerbaijani literature, are also rich in interesting information that illuminates his time, life and work. There is a biography of his writing written in Persian and Russian languages at the Institute of Manuscripts named after Mohammad Fuzuli of National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan (NASA). In "Memories of Istanbul", M. F. Akhundzadeh talks about the interview he conducted with statesmen on his way to Istanbul for the new alphabet and shows to whom he presented "Tamsilat" and booklets on the new alphabet. "In his memoirs, the author described his meeting with a number of statesmen during his victory in Istanbul and his interview with a Greek named Alexander, one of the participants in the discussion of the new alphabet" [17, p. 218]. In another biography of M. F. Akhundzadeh, the main points of his life and activity are covered, and efforts are made to create a new alphabet. The writer enumerates the beautiful features of Mirza Yusif khan, consul of the Iranian state in Tbilissi (Georgia),

son of Fatali Shah Gajar, prince Jalaleddin Mirza and Agha Alakbar of Tabriz and concludes his biography with the following words: “Apart from these three people, I have many friends and like-minded people. If I count, the subject will be extended” [17, p. 220].

Ismayil bey Gutgashinli (1809–1861), one of the founders of the 19th century Azerbaijani realist-enlightenment literature, went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1852 with his wife Bika. A year and a half of travel led to the publication of “Safarname”. The work is written in diary form. A “Safarname” is a travel note written during a trip, or more precisely, a travelogue. This work also reveals interesting information about the customs and traditions and life of various Eastern peoples. The work is written in the language of the author himself, i. e. the first person. Here the author gives valuable information about the cities, villages, their nature, history, occupation of the population, as well as his grandfather Haji Sharif Sultan. I. Gutgashinli describes how they entered Shami-Sharif on the 16th day of the month of Safar as follows: “There are many things in the world that people want, and their goals are different. Therefore, under the burning day of the inner Hijaz, we longed for fog, clouds, and rain, and we longed for the burning sand and dust to be moist. They all succeeded. At two o’clock in the morning, in such a place, we demanded the openness of the air and the dryness of the road, so that we could enter Shami-Sharif, which we reached with enthusiasm. The truth is that it rained for an hour in Gadangah, made our clothes wet through and the road muddy and left us wandering” [21, p. 224].

Jalil Mammadguluzadeh’s (1869–1932) work “Xatiratim” (“My Memory”) is one of the interesting examples of Azerbaijani memoir literature. The manuscript of the work is kept in the private archive fund of the Institute of Manuscripts. Written in an independent line some words, sentences, and sometimes an entire paragraph are abbreviated in the manuscript. The memoir is written in purple ink on a white, gold office notebook in the Arabic alphabet in the Azerbaijani language. The notebook is unbounded. The words “My memories from childhood to the magazine “Molla Nasreddin” written in Russian are marked on the first page with Mirza Jalil’s own handwriting and signature. The memoirs preserved in the writer’s personal fund under the title “Biography” are a continuation of the memoir “Xatiratim” (“My Memory”). The title of this copy – “Biography” was later written in blue pencil and separated from the first part – “My Memory”. The palaeographic features of both parts are the same and one is a continuation of the other.

The essence of the work “My Memory” is the author’s struggle against the dark world. “The dark world” has destroyed many of Jalil Mammadguluzadeh’s younger contemporaries in

his terrible bosom. They could not overcome the dark environment. Jalil Mammadguluzadeh fought a consistent and courageous battle with the dark world and defeated it.

Each literary figure grows on a certain historical background. J. Mammadguluzadeh’s legacy was created and developed on the basis of M. F. Akhundzadeh literary school. Before J. Mammadguluzadeh, democratic ideas were highly expressed in Azerbaijani literature in the image of M. F. Akhundzadeh. Based on these ideas, A. Hagverdiyev and N. Vazirov brought literature closer to the life of the people. After M. F. Akhundzadeh, the greatest democrat was J. Mammadguluzadeh (Molla Nasraddin), the great exponent of the new quality of democracy in the field of literature.

The work “Xatiratim” (“My Memory”) consists of two parts: the first part describes the writer’s childhood, and the second part describes his youth. The first part itself consists of sections entitled “Darkness”, “Namaz” (“Prayer”), “Dead Bouquet”, “Joy Prayer”, “Night Prayers”, and “Fasting”. The author of the memoir knew the names of the prayers, how many parts they were divided into, which prayer should be performed before, and which prayer should be performed after. While studying at Mullah Bagir’s school little Jalil was one of the favorite students of his teacher. In his memoirs, Mirza Jalil made a great generalization by creating an image of his uncle Haji, and in this type he summed up the characteristics of the believers of the time – mullahs and clerics.

In the second part of the memoir, we see that the writer passed from childhood to adolescence. Coming to Tbilisi (Georgia) in December 1903, Jalil became a resident of this city. No force can separate him from this environment anymore. The main reason for Mammadguluzadeh’s stay in Tbilisi is probably related to the “Mailbox” story. As the editor of “Sharqi-Rus” newspaper Mohammad agha Shakhtakhtli liked Novruzali’s funny and sad life very much. J. Mammadguluzadeh wrote about it in his memoirs: “While reading “Mailbox”, Mohammad agha started laughing with such a shout that it attracted the attention of non-bread eaters. I was watching the colorful fish floating in the nearby pool. And I remember very well that when Muhammad agha laughed, the fish jumped into the water so that it seemed that even those small animals laughed at Novruzali’s simplicity and foolishness” [22, p. 52].

Thus, at M. Shakhtakhtli’s suggestion, J. Mammadguluzadeh remained in Tbilisi (Georgia) and began working in the “Sherqi-Rus (Eastern-Russian)” newspaper. He speaks enthusiastically about the newspaper and with great gratitude to its publisher M. Shakhtakhtli. So, it is this newspaper that takes him to the world of journalism. Thanks to

this newspaper, J. Mammadguluzadeh learned the techniques of publishing, gained great experience and it helped him in the future.

Finally, an event that surprised J. Mammadguluzadeh took place, and he wrote about it with surprise, joy and envy. This is due to the fact that a rooster was photographed in an issue of the Russian-language magazine “Kukureku”. The head of the rooster was the head of Nicholas. His throat and body were rooster. What surprised Mirza Jalil was that it was not possible to ridicule the ruler of the time. The writer did not believe that this was a dream or the truth. It was gratifying to see that the freedom of the pen had reached such a point. His jealousy was mixed with sadness. Mammadguluzadeh envied other nations. Because they painted the ruler of the time, resembled him to a rooster. Mirza Jalil was sad. Because he and his pen pals were not even allowed to criticize the tricks of a dervish, the lamentation of a mourner.

Along with the beginning of his editorial career in the memoir “My Memory”, Mammadguluzadeh talked about the history of the “Molla Nasreddin” collection and the difficulties encountered in this way. The first issue of the magazine was his future work program. M. Jalil attached great importance to this issue and commented on his materials in detail in his memoirs.

J. Mammadguluzadeh’s work “My memory” is a classic example of Azerbaijani memoir literature. The memoir reflects the writer’s childhood and youth, on the one hand, and the emergence of the “Molla Nasreddin” collection, on the other, with exact relation to the artist. This memoir is of great importance in the study of the history of twentieth-century Azerbaijani literature, the press and public opinion in general. “My Memory” was a guide to all the memoirs written after it.

The memoir heritage of Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli (1887–1943), who tried his hand at all types of memoir genres, wrote “Diary” and “Biography”, “20 years of my life” and “My life”, is also connected with his public, literary and journalistic activity. As well as being a very valuable historical source.

While reading the memoir “20 years of my life” by Y. V. Chamanzaminli, who had a rich archive, it is impossible not to admire the author’s writing culture and outlook. It tells about the history of Shusha, where Y. V. Chamanzaminli was born, wedding customs, geographical structure, national composition, economic situation, Novruz holiday, musicologists, writers. It is known from the memoirs that Ahmad bey Agaoglu, Hashim bey Vazirov, Abdurrahim bey Hagverdiyev, enlightened intellectuals of the time, visited Yusif Vazir’s father Mirbaba, who knew Oriental mugam very well, and listened to his conversations with great admiration.

In general, in addition to his life, environment and creativity, Y. V. Chamanzaminli’s memoirs provide us with interesting information about writers, poets, prose writers, statesmen of the XIX–XX centuries, as well as other people belonging to different strata of Azerbaijan – mullahs, gazis, mourners, teachers, doctors and others. The author’s memoirs are the most valuable source in terms of studying his epistolary heritage and artistic activity. In the memoirs, we come across interesting information about Yusif Vazir’s elder brother Abulhasan Vazirov. Born in 1880, he received an excellent education for that time, and in addition to his native language, he knew Russian, Turkish, Persian, German, and French. Many intellectuals of Shusha learned Russian from him. While studying at the Shusha Realni school, Abulhasan focused on the education of his younger brother Yusif. His first teacher of Russian was his brother Abulhasan. His father, Mirbaba, paid them every week to encourage them to study. Yusif Vazir writes about this in his memoirs: “...My brother’s salary was increased to an abbot. At the end of the year, my brother would put the money in a special box hanging on the wall and subscribed to several Russian magazines. I also followed his path” [25, p. 391].

We come across many articles about Abulhasan who played a certain role in Yusif Vazir’s education, had an in-depth guide to literature, especially Russian literature, a rich library, literary activity and so on. The memoirs about Yusif Vazir’s personal collection includes some of Abu al-Hasan’s writings and an autograph of a 24-page play entitled “Haji Kazim the Merchant”.

In the memoirs of Y. V. Chamanzaminli, “Diaries” attract more attention. The author’s personal archive preserves two diaries written in the Azerbaijani and Russian languages. The first diary covers the events of 1907 in Baku, Shusha, Ashgabat, and the second covers the events of 1908–1909 in Baku, Ashgabat and St. Petersburg. His diary, written in a sentimental spirit in 1908 when he was in the 6th grade at the Baku Real School, is dominated by grievances about life. According to him, the closer happiness is to him, the greater his suffering. Happiness never smiled on his face. He writes that I have been living this life for 22 years, but I have never found peace of mind. Wherever I go, misery overwhelms me. Neither the government nor public affairs provided anything for Yusif Vaziri. In his diary of January 7, 1908, Yusif Vazir, who felt the talent to write in spite of the difficult circumstances, showed that he was interested in literature, wanted to study European classics and was surrounded by valuable sources. He also drew pictures in black and green on some pages of the notebook. His diary reflects the interesting views on women, upbringing, morals, beauty, and education. Here women, their infidelity, men, their

often degrading in women's way, the destruction of the inner world of man by wealth, and the vital examples of such issues are discussed. While writing about women and love, Y. Vazir gave examples from Lev Tolstoy.

One of the perfect examples of XX century Azerbaijani memoir literature is Mammad Said Ordubadi's (1872–1950) work "My life and environment". The memoir "My Life and Environment" is of great importance in preserving socio-historical, literary and cultural events and transmitting them to future generations. At the same time, these memoirs are a valuable source for studying the extent to which the events reflected in the author's works resonate with real events, the basic rules and period he used, as well as the identities of the people with whom he communicated.

One of M. S. Ordubadi's biographical documents kept in his personal archive fund was written in the Azerbaijani language, in the Latin alphabet, and the other in Russian for submission to an unknown department. M. S. Ordubadi writes in his memoirs: "There is a feature of my writing that I am accustomed to from my youth to the present day, which is not to be stuck on one topic. Because working on a topic for years deprives the writer of the opportunity to work on new topics that our lives require. That is why, when I started writing the novel "Foggy Tabriz" in 1927, I was working on novels "Secret Baku" and so on. In the first half of 1940, when I finished the last fourth book of the novel "Foggy Tabriz" and gave it to Azerneshr, I was also continuing a large-scale historical novel that I started in the 30s. This novel covers the period, life and literary activity of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami" [23].

In connection with the novel "Sword and Pen" M. S. Ordubadi reviewed and studied many sources, wrote articles about N. Genjevi's period, life and work, his environment and other issues.

M. S. Ordubadi's work "My life and environment" kept in the personal archive fund has an important position in the history of XX century Azerbaijani memoir literature. In his memoirs, the memoirist talks about his difficult childhood, his difficult and deprived youth, and the difficult years he spent in prison. "My life and environment" reflect the socio-political and economic situation of the city of Ordubad, where the writer was born in the late XIX – early XX centuries, and other cities where he lived. An interesting and valuable feature of such memoirs is that the author's life and work, as well as information about his period and environment are collected here as a reliable source.

In his memoirs, M. S. Ordubadi mentions the names of schools, mosques, city officials, dervishes, shepherds and murderers, Ordubad seyids, comedians and jokers, mourners, individual districts, female's and male's nicknames, and the price of food.

"My life and environment" is a valuable source in the study of the revolutionary, literary and social activities of M. S. Ordubadi. First of all, the memoir, along with the study of the author's revolutionary activity, lightens certain pages in the history of the revolutionary movement in Azerbaijan, especially in the south of this country.

The memoir "My Life and Environment" reflects the gravity of the socio-economic and political situation in Nakhchivan and Ordubad in the 19th century with real facts: "Beginning in 1838, great confusion began not only in Ordubad, but in Nakhchivan in general. Firstly, sectarian and religion struggles intensified, and secondly, the change of Iranian law to the new invading Russian law caused the people to disperse and flee to Iran and fall into poverty. Even those years, the economic and social situation was completely ruined due to the resettlement of Armenians from Iran to the Caucasus, especially the placement of 266 houses brought from Maragha and Tabriz in sparsely populated areas such as Ordubad" [24, p. 15].

We learn from the memoirs that at that time 12.000 people in Ordubad were in a difficult situation.

The memoirs of Ummulbanu Asadullayeva (1905–1992), nicknamed Banin, one of the brightest representatives of the Azerbaijani emigration literature of the XX century, are also an integral part of the Azerbaijani memoir literature. Ban is the granddaughter of Baku millionaires Musa Nagiyev and Shamsi Asadullayev. She lost her mother as a baby and grew up with her sisters under the care of a German woman, Anna. Having received an excellent education as a child and learning several languages, Ummulbanu moved to Turkey and then to France in 1924 after the Sovietization of Azerbaijan.

Life in Paris, especially the literary environment of the 1920s and 1930s, had a profound effect on Ummulbanu, encouraging her to write. Banin's first novel, Nami, was published in 1943. Ummulbanu, the author of a number of works of art written in French, wrote in her memoir "Caucasian Days" about her childhood, family events, her father's arrest in 1920, her influential meeting with him in prison, love, forced marriage, as well as feelings of love, about her dreams and aspirations, her heartbeat and her strange habits. The work is very sincere. She wrote down all the feelings that she had in her heart. As one reads the work, one experiences those events together with the author. The memoir provides interesting information about the history, traditions and culture of Azerbaijan. The author's language is so vivid, so interesting that the memoir gives the impression of a novel. That is why it is called an autobiographical novel. The work is the best example of the memoir genre.

The depictions in the memoirs, especially the depictions of nature, made the work even more

beautiful. For example, the writer described her approach to Paris as follows: “The warm air brought the smell of fields to us. Browning by the rising sun, crossed by even rows of trees, the surroundings, wooded hills, lakes and rivers were awakening in the transparent morning light. Motionless clouds seemed to be waiting for the sunrise to start moving in the sky. ... Yes, it was the best part of my life. Now, as I approached the wonderful city, where endless possibilities awaited me, I rejected my earthly past, I threw it off, as if embarrassing uncomfortable vestments. I walked towards my life – new, free, open to everything; and from this “once” I took with me only the most beautiful part of it, what happened in the clouds” [19, p. 270].

Nadezhda Golubtsova in the story “The Former”, as Banin, gives detailed information about the events that took place. The story contains frank and poignant memories of the writer’s childhood. In her story she writes: “Throughout history, the children of the post-war generation have been living with difficulties” [20, p. 29].

Banin’s “Caucasian Days” consists of two parts. Part I ends with the overthrow of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, part II ends with the author’s visit to Paris. The writer’s days in Paris are written in her memoirs “Paris Days”. It depicts the author working as a mannequin in a Parisian fashion house, living alone in a small room, the freedom she has dreamed of for years, the improvement of her financial situation, and her heartbeat.

The memoir contains lines about Russian writers who emigrated to Paris, their thoughts on emigration, occupations, as well as Caucasian emigrants. “A dozen members of the Tolstoy family also lived in Paris, and at first they were so desperately poor that when a film based on the novel “Anna Karenina” was shown in Paris in the twenties, the writer’s daughter Tatyana Tolstaya-Sukhotina could not see it, she had nothing to buy ticket” [19, p. 386].

There are many aspects of the memoir genre in the literature that define it in different ways and at different levels. However, the most important and undisputed in this definition is the story of the past, based on the author’s personal experience and personal memory. Banin’s memoirs reflect her days in the Caucasus and Paris. However, the author sometimes wrote such details in her memoirs that it was as if these events took place yesterday. In fact, there is a time interval of fifty years or even more between the time the events took place and the time they were recorded. And when she remembers some of her actions fifty years later, the author is horrified and writes: “I asked myself, what is the use of my youth and Parisian elegance, and most importantly, of the freedom I finally won? Why was there nothing in me other than this endless change of mental states, except for the confusion of

feelings, conflicting impulses. As if on a mountain route, I flew to the bottom of the deepest abyss, then ascended to the peaks; alternately experiencing either joy or aversion to everything. It is tiresome to lead the life of a chip that is worn by restless sea waves, and never, even in the distance, the shore of serenity will appear” [19, p. 451].

The novel “Caucasian Days” brings to life the artistic landscape of the history of Azerbaijan until the 20th century. The plot line of the autobiographical work is based on facts and details about the writer’s biography. The novel is written in a very sincere language, and the events and stories described are enriched with sad, fragile shades brought by the lyrical style. For example: “When I turn back, everything strikes me. This semi-eastern, semi-German, late-Russian childhood was exactly mine. Dreamy, secretive, and rather, an evil girl – this is me. Here it is and it amazes me. All these memories that pop up in my memory seem to me borrowed; I work hard to believe that they were mine. I walk among them, as a tourist, not as though they are mine. Baku seems to me a far-fetched dream, a family-product of my imagination. I return there sometimes with pleasure, but for the most part with fear. If I was happy, about a decade ago, then I stopped being like that” [19, p. 77].

In other words: “A horrible childhood! I know that any childhood seems far-fetched. At the same time, in the strength of the full geographical and social gap, it seems to me even more unreal. Nothing more is connected with me: no religion, from which I departed, no language, because today I write and think in French, no nationality, which I have changed, no lost millions. Nobody and nothing! The past is presented to me as preparation for the real life” [19, p. 79].

These are the writer’s astonishing confessions that made the novel “Caucasian days” sincere and loved by the readers. Thus, Banin describes the events of the period she witnessed naked, unadorned, and does not hide anything from the reader.

“Caucasian Days” realistically revives the atmosphere in Baku and the way of life of both aristocratic and lower strata of this environment, including the early twentieth century, the republican period, the first years of the overthrow of the republic, as well as the historical and political events in Azerbaijan.

In “Caucasian Days”, Banin is proud to be Eastern, Asian, Azerbaijani, and prefers ethnographic details and details to acquaint Western readers with her homeland, Azerbaijan. The writer longed for her homeland throughout all her life. In an interview with “Literaturnaya Gazeta”, one of Russia’s most popular newspapers, Banin said she always followed the current events in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, and in addition to the second edition of “Caucasian Days”

she added that she regretted not being able to come to Azerbaijan during the years of emigration.

**Conclusions.** The article examines the works of Azerbaijani writers in the memoir genre, analyzes the memoirs of each author we study, revealing elements that reflect the socio-historical and literary-cultural environment. In the works we researched in the article, the basis of memoirs is the reflection of events through memory.

Analyzing the works of Azerbaijani writers in the memoir genre, we have come to the conclusion that the memories have acquired a new meaning along with the continuation and development of past traditions, enriched by the results of each author's personal creative initiative. Memoir literature plays an important role in the more accurate and detailed study of the memoirs of Azerbaijani writers, their lives and activities, as well as in the documentary coverage of the socio-historical and literary-cultural situation of the period.

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