

Why Burn Books? (a little history of the book genocide)

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Abstract

The "book" has played an extremely important role in the cultural evolution of the world. At the same time, the attitude to the book at different times manifested itself in different ways. In the studies of a number of specialists, an aggressive attitude towards a book was called "book genocide", "biblioclasm", "libricide", these concepts were identified, and the essence and causes of such behavior were often not analyzed.

However, historical experience shows that aggressive behavior towards the book arose for various reasons and was suppressed mainly for ideological reasons. The repression of religious institutions, political organizations and government officials against the book cannot be identified with the "book genocide" as a continuation of the national genocide. In history there are cases of "book genocide" as a continuation of the national genocide, and it is wrong to identify this with any cases of book repression and censorship.

The burning of books on ethnic grounds and its implementation as an expression of "ethnic hatred" should be studied and singled out by researchers. The books burned by the ancient Chinese ruler and the books burned by the German Nazis do not appear as national cultural heritage of other peoples. However, there are such events in history as the repression of peoples because of their nationality and the demonstrative burning of their book heritage, as well as the prohibition of the national language as a continuation of the genocide, and the mass deportation of people, and it is wrong to identify such events. Here we tried to conduct a comparative analysis of historical events and find out the essence of the events of the "book burning".

The article compares and analyzes historical examples that distinguish the phenomenon of "book genocide" from other book repressions, and historical facts are confirmed by reliable documents. It is important to base the fact of the "book genocide" on reliable historical documents, and not on legends.

Keywords: books burned, book genocide, biblioclasm, libricide, national repressions

Чому спалюють книги? (трохи історії геноциду книг)

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Анотація

«Книга» відіграла надзвичайно важливу роль у культурній еволюції світу. При цьому ставлення до книги в різні часи проявлялося по-різному. У дослідженнях ряду спеціалістів агресивне ставлення до книги називали «книжковим геноцидом», «бібліоклазмом», «лібрицидом», ці поняття ототожнювали, а сутність і причини такої поведінки часто не аналізували.

Проте історичний досвід показує, що агресивна поведінка щодо книги виникала з різних причин і придушувалася переважно з ідеологічних причин. Репресії релігійних інституцій, політичних організацій та представників влади проти книги не можна ототожнювати з «книжковим геноцидом» як продовженням національного геноциду. В історії є випадки «книжного геноциду» як продовження національного геноциду, і неправильно ототожнювати це з будь-якими випадками книжкових репресій і цензури.

Спалення книг за національною ознакою та його реалізація як прояву «національної ворожнечі» має бути досліджена та виокремлена дослідниками. Книги, спалені давньокитайським правителем, і книги, спалені німецькими нацистами, не є національною культурною спадщиною інших народів. Проте в історії є такі події, як репресії народів за національну приналежність і демонстративне спалення їх книжкової спадщини, і заборона національної мови як продовження геноциду, і масова депортація людей, і неправильно ідентифікувати такі події. Тут ми спробували провести порівняльний аналіз історичних подій та з'ясувати суть подій «спалення книг».

У статті порівнюються та аналізуються історичні приклади, які відрізняють феномен «книжкового геноциду» від інших книжкових репресій, а історичні факти підтверджуються достовірними документами. Факт «книжкового геноциду» важливо базувати на достовірних історичних документах, а не на легендах.

Ключові слова: спалені книги, книжковий геноцид, бібліоклостство, лібрицид, національні репресії

Introduction.

The cultural genocide that took place in Azerbaijan (historical southern Azerbaijan on the territory of Iran) on December 17, 1946 (the 26th day of the month Azar 1325) is known as the Day of Burnt Books. There is a need to analyze this event, which is rarely mentioned in the world scientific information circulation, as well as in social and cultural circles.

The people, fed up with the pressure and incompetence of the Iranian royal regime (Pahlavi dynasty), established a national government and began to build their lives within the framework of national values. A nation hoping for further democratization following World War II was attacked militarily by the regime of the Shah of Iran in 1946, thousands of people were killed, tens of thousands emigrated from the country, and tens of thousands were exiled. There is a lot of information about this in historical documents. However, on December 17, 1946, 4 days after the collapse of the democratic state system in Azerbaijan, the Iranian official circles began mass book burning. All kinds of books in the Azerbaijani language, fiction, school textbooks, samples of the press, any paper and documents written in the Azerbaijani language were burned. This work is not only carried out secretly by official state bodies, but even mass events are held, small children are forced to bring books in school in their native language and burned at mass ceremonies at school. We met with this information on the pages of the official press of Iran, in the memoirs of an outstanding figure in science and culture of Azerbaijan.

In 1947-1949, the centers of political power in the world were busy carving out a new "map of the world", so the events of South Azerbaijan were little covered in the international press.

The newspaper "Azerbadekan" (Iran), published in Tabriz, writes in its main article dated August 13: "The situation of the villagers is very difficult, the whole of Azerbaijan is engulfed in begging and poverty ... Every day and every hour, hordes of the poor and hungry come from the villages to the city (Tabriz). Naked and sick men, women, children and young people come. This increases the number of unemployed and poor people. The genocide directed against the national book was the result of a purposeful action by the state.

On February 3, 1949, an article by Abbas Jafari titled "Azerbaijan is the front line of the struggle of our people" in the newspaper "Mardom", the organ of the Central Committee of the Iranian People's Party (Hizbi Tudeh), says: "On the battlefield against the bloody rule of the Abbasid caliphs, Qajar we have seen Azerbaijan on the stage of the battle against tyranny, always at the forefront of the struggle against the hated rule of the exploiters. Babek, Sattarkhan and Dr. Arani are glorious sons of Azerbaijan." This assessment, given in the political press, worries the regime of the "Kingdom of Iran". The Iranian regime is expanding its activities in order to break the national will (Ustad Mohammad Ali Farzana's memorial book).

On October 16, 1949, Y. Kursanov and A. Efendiev wrote in the "Communist" newspaper about the state of the population (Azerbaijan), the article says: "Long live Peshavari!" the calls are getting louder and louder. This means that in a short period of time in South Azerbaijan, the victorious people's democracy showed the way to salvation for the entire country. The current rulers of this country will not be able to banish from the minds of the poor the idea that the only way to escape from a terrible future is by embarking on the path of democracy (Kursanov, & Efendiyev, 1949).

The Ittilaat newspaper report published in Tehran about the burning of books in the Firdowsi gymnasium in Tabriz says: "A telegram from our special representative from Tabriz: "Books in Turkish have been burned. At Firdousi Gymnasium, students and residents of Tabriz thanked Rezaye's "hero" Colonel Zangen and expressed their "feelings". Yesterday, people burned Turkish books in front of the city hall." (Ittilaat newspaper).

The newspaper Atash reports on the burning of books on the square of the Tabriz municipality: "Today, students held a "holiday" on the square in front of the municipality with the participation of many residents, correspondents of the capital press, army officers and government officials. a large fire was lit in the middle of the square, and the notorious "Democrat" wanted to forcibly teach children a large number of classical Turkish books printed by the party. They burned all the books with exclamations and slogans "Long live the king" and "Long live Mr. Ashraf Qavam al-Saltani" and "Destroy the enemies of Azerbaijan" and "Destroy the traitors of Iran", and then burned the photographs of notorious treacherous leaders and mercenaries. Then the reporters spoke and Mr. Ahmed Share recited poetry, and the "holiday" of the students of Tabriz ended at one o'clock." (Atesh newspaper).

A participant in the events writes in his memoirs: "A week has passed since 21 Azerbaijanis went to school. I saw that the name of the school, which was 21 azer, was again changed to 15 bahman. A new director has arrived. The children said they had taken Mr. Rafat away. The opponents were defeated, Pishevar ran away and took the "language" with him! Now together we are going to destroy the remains of "his works" in Mirza Hussein Vaez Lane. A fire broke out in Lilava Keced Square. Other students also came. We threw books into the fire one by one. Our new director gave sweets to every child who threw a book into the fire. School principals also ensured that children did not hide their textbooks.

After the "book burning" ceremony that day, the school was closed and told to go home, come back tomorrow. The father got angry at home and said: What is the fault of the book. "Newspapers ridiculed the Turkish language, calling it the language of "Pishuvara", they say, this is a neighboring language. What does this language have to do with writing? "Haven't we been speaking this language for generations?

My mother used to say, "They thought there was only one language in Iran, even in the whole world." If they go to France, they will scoff at the pictures and advertisements. The father laughed and said: "Khanum, you speak beautifully as always..."

Another memoir states: "Tens of thousands of people were deported to southern Iran on charges of collaborating with the Democratic Party. A large number of people were sentenced to death and severe punishments in forced courts... For several weeks, a gallows was erected in Tabriz, and every morning the lifeless bodies of several victims were carried out to the gallows, and Azerbaijani language textbooks were burned under these feet. All books in Azerbaijan (Turkish) compiled and published by the Ministry of Education were burned."

Javad Heyyat (1925-2014), who studied in Paris during the Paris Peace Conference (1947), writes in his memoirs about the tragedy of book burning in Azerbaijan after the revolution: the Shah's army entered Tabriz after a short skirmish on Mount Gaffanti. Most of the "leaders" crossed the border. The rest of the people who had the slightest cooperation with the "democrats" were captured and killed, thousands of Azerbaijanis were killed, many were arrested and exiled. Representatives of the central government, on the orders of Tehran, collected and burned school textbooks. Since then, the Turkish (Azerbaijani) press and publications were banned, radio programs and school activities could only be conducted in Persian. At that time, all the newspapers of the "Tudeh" party were still published in Tehran in Persian. But all the mass and non-mass media were silent about these actions. In terms of content, the burned books did not contain materials directed against religion, patriotic feelings, or pro-Iranian ideas... At that time, no government or organization objected to the burning of these books. Even the cultural organizations of the world were silent. The people of Azerbaijan were struck from all sides (left and right). The Azerbaijani people were "burning", and they had no choice but to endure.

In Ardabil (southern Azerbaijan) the Jodet printing house was burned: During the burning of books in Azerbaijan, Turkish printing houses were also attacked, destroyed and burned. For example, the printing house "Jodet" in Ardabil, which had modern printing houses, was looted and burned by the army and the army of the Shah. The Atesh newspaper writes: "... Some people attacked the police and killed the police (who were standing at the door on behalf of the Democrats) along with several other victims, Sari Ismail and on the same day killed Ustad Vali Salman, then burned down the Jodet printing house, captured and killed Shahbazi.

Results

When the national poet of Azerbaijan, Samed Vurgun, dedicated his poem "The Burning of Books", addressed to the Paris Peace Conference, to the "book genocide" that took place in the south of Azerbaijan, the "centers of

power" of the world were busy dividing borders. The poet "appeals to reaction" and says:

Executioner! The books you burned in heaps

This is the glory of a thousand perfections, the desire of two hearts...

We leave this world, they remain a memory

How many human emotions are engraved on each sheet,

This is the glory of a thousand perfections, the desire of two hearts... (Balash Azeroglu, 1982)

In fact, a large number of copies of the burned books were protected from "hostile eyes" by devoted "children of the Motherland". Some of them were buried under the golden rose bushes in the yard, some were kept in everyday clothes, some were hidden in the firewood in the barn, some were hidden in barrels of coal, some were in the basement, and some were hidden in the masonry of the walls. These events remind us of the preservation of "biblical" copies at the end of the Constantine reformation of Christianity in the first half of the 4th century. However, even then the books were not persecuted because of their "nationality" (Kazimi, 2021).

35 years after the book genocide of the Iranian Pahlavi regime, the books "Native Language" from textbooks printed for teaching in the first five grades of secondary schools were republished in Tehran by a prominent literary figure Mammadali Farzana. Despite this, again, Azerbaijani schoolchildren could not take lessons in their "native language", and the "fascist ban" on the lessons of their native language continued in the country.

Although the essence of these events was horrific, the intellectuals of the cultural world did not react in any way, and these events were identified with other book repressions in the world in subsequent years.

In Soviet times, especially children's books suffered greatly. At the direction of N. Krupskaya, even folk tales, books by Chukovsky, whose poems Aksakov called "The Red Flower" "bourgeois rubbish" (Krupskaya, 1931a; 1931b), were withdrawn from circulation.

Russian researcher E. Paroshina (2019) tries to give a historical background on the book genocide in his article "Anthology of book hatred: bibliocide in history and culture." In this article, the author explains the meaning of the term "libricide" and at the same time discusses the forms of book burning in history and culture. Although the events presented in the article are based on historical facts of the 20th and 21st centuries and famous "works of art", the author does not mention the "book genocide" committed in the south of Azerbaijan and is not familiar with the poetry of Samad Vurgun.

The author identifies the concepts of "libricide" and "biblioclasm" with censorship, and this is the wrong approach. By showing mass censorship events in the Soviet era, is such a picture created that there was no censorship in Russia before the Soviet era? Of course, it is not. Since our goal is to study the true nature,

purpose and causes of the book genocide, the article by E. Paroshina cannot be taken as a basis and there are no other meaningful studies on this topic among Russian-language studies.

Biblioclasm (disease) is translated from Greek as "burning of books". It is known that at different stages of history, biblioclasm (the so-called book burning disease) is a method of violent political behavior carried out by one people in order to subjugate another people or destroy their culture. Libroicide is used as a political concept and is mostly used by political scientists as "book genocide".

Qin Shi Huang is remembered for the massive book burning in 221 BC. It should be noted here that this Chinese ruler only burned Confucian books and fought the ideology in "his mind."

Later, the leaders of the Catholic and Orthodox churches, Judaism and Buddhism also resorted to this method. Church "opposition to the book" can only be assessed ideologically. Because books with national characteristics in the Vatican library were not repressed, and a number of books were kept in the library, even if they were impossible to read.

The most obvious example of the barbaric attitude to the book in cultural and modern Europe is the burning of books by the Nazis on the Opera Square in Berlin in 1934. The authorities of Nazi Germany conducted a campaign of defiant burning of books that did not correspond to the ideology of National Socialism (Paroshina, 2019). The executor of the fires was the German Student Union. During the action, students, teachers and local leaders of the Nazi Party massively burned tens of thousands of books in 70 German cities. An analysis of this event also shows that the Nazis chose books not because of her nationality, but because of her ideology, and they burned books that belonged to them on a national basis.

After the defeat of Germany in World War II, the country was again swept by a wave of repression against "spoiled books", when, as part of "denazification", the mass destruction of fascist literature was carried out, including the complete destruction of all school textbooks. These events were not repressions against another people.

Thus, along with the destruction of "harmful" knowledge that contradicted the declared ideology, books were published that supported the so-called paradigms. It was a process of reshaping and "renovating" libraries in order to form the necessary paradigm in society and develop the ideas necessary for the dominant thought in society. By convincing society of the correctness of your ideology, you get a faithful follower and a faithful executor of your will expressed through an idea. A person who extols an idea may not believe in it himself, he may know its shortcomings, but by writing a book he will make many people face this idea, leave a mark on their minds and influence their subsequent thinking. The rest can oppose the presented ideology, they can oppose it with their own, "other" thinking, different from this

ideological point of view. This is a world of different opposites, a possible world that is not real or not yet real, but exists, but exists only in someone's person, where the book appears as "other" (Kazimi, 2021).

In all these cases, the book is considered as an "ideological alternative" and their selection under special conditions, the regulation of their use at different historical stages, the publication of certain books with special interpretations is definitely not book genocide, because the goal is not to eradicate the author, words, ideas and thoughts.

Conclusions.

Although the events described in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* are a great tragedy, they cannot be called "book genocide." Books are not burned here because of their national characteristics.

After the collapse of the USSR, hundreds of thousands of materials of congresses, plenums and conferences of the CPSU, documents of regional party organizations, memoirs and various political literature were "utilized" in the bookselling network and "book warehouses" of the post-Soviet republics.

The withdrawal of a very large volume of such books from circulation at once was not regarded as a "book genocide". According to national characteristics, book burning events (secret or public) have different scenes in the history of the Ukrainian people. In the cultural history of the Ukrainian people, one can find such events as the denial of national existence, persecution and exile on a national basis, the use of book genocide as a continuation of executions and repressions, as well as the ban on speaking the national language.

As you can see, the examples in the mentioned work by E. Paroshina and the historical examples presented by many different researchers in this position do not represent the scene of genocide (libroside) in the book. For example: during the occupation of the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in 1992-1993, Armenian vandals first destroyed 9 centralized library systems, 927 libraries, including 32 libraries in Shusha, unique, ancient books stored in these libraries, 120 libraries in Kelbajar, 90 libraries in Fizuli, 31 libraries in Jabrayil, 70 libraries in Zangilan, 65 libraries in Aghdara, 119 libraries in Lachin, 85 libraries in Gubadlin, 69 libraries in Khojaly, 107 libraries in Aghdam and 4.6 million copies of books and unique manuscripts collected here were burned and destroyed precisely because of their nationality. Considering that after the fall of Soviet power, the national book wealth in Azerbaijan was about 18-19 million copies. The volume of books burned by Armenians in Karabakh has a large "specific weight" and deals a big blow to the cultural and educational life of the nation. This shows that the people who committed such a crime - "book genocide" are in a big "cultural decline".

We know cases of damage to books in various historical events, wars and political conflicts. There are many historical examples of this. In continuation of this

approach, we note that the phenomenon of censorship is a method that has been used since ancient times and is still used at different levels. However, the event of mass burning of books on a national basis is an event to which a civilized human society is forced to respond. It is wrong to confuse this event with others, to generalize and evaluate it as one and the same event.

The Shah of Iran, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, who came to power at the age of 26 with the help

of the "political forces of the world" and inherited power from his poorly educated father, "strangled the national liberation movement in South Azerbaijan with blood" and the mass genocide of books continued, as a continuation of the national-cultural genocide. As a next step, it is forbidden to speak the national language, falsification and insult of national identity are encouraged, the national "name", toponym, poetry, folklore and music are prohibited.

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