The Role of World Literature in the Formation of Students' Planetary Thinking (Azerbaijan Case)

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the issues of teaching world literature in secondary schools in the context of modern challenges in the world and the main aspects of education brought by these challenges. Here, the importance of world literature in the formation of students' planetary thinking in the teaching process is analyzed. The progressive role of these examples in the formation of students' logical, critical, and creative thinking, teaching selected examples from world literature, the formation of cognitive and communication skills is emphasized.

The study notes that the formation of national and human ideas, the development of personality in students is one of the main requirements of modern subject programs. The establishment of parallels between national and world literature is of great scientific and methodological importance in order to achieve such goals as the formation of a planetary image of the growing generation, the inculcation of ideas and ideas about the unity of the world.

There is no doubt that the main ideas, thoughts, and goals of our national literature do not stay behind the literature of the developed nations of the world. Thus, in terms of ideas, content and talent of the writer, Azerbaijani literature can be considered quite strong, modern, and comprehensive. Awareness of these qualities in students leads to a greater sense of respect for the literature and history of their people.

Keywords: world literature, foreign literature, comparative teaching, methodology of teaching literature, parallel teaching methods, planetary thinking

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Introduction.

Specialists are well aware of the serious responsibility on secondary schools in terms of the formation of student personality. The role of secondary schools in this direction is growing not only in our country, but in general, and globally over the past century. In this respect, it is not accidental to determine the specific content of each subject for state standards. One of the main directions of this content in the subject of literature is the formation of national and international worldview of students. The process of assimilation of international values by students and the formation of this worldview can also be called the process of formation of planetary thinking in them. But why is planetary thinking so important, and what are the main factors hindering its formation? Another important question for the research is what forms and methods of teaching are students' planetary thinking related to? With what teaching resources it is possible to form students' planetary thinking more effectively. For this purpose, the possibilities of subject programs are of great pedagogical-methodical, didactic importance.

The globalized world is now becoming a single space not only politically, economically, technologically, but also spiritually. It is no longer possible to imagine any geographical region as isolated from others. The trend of globalization is becoming more pronounced in the fields of education and culture. It should be noted that, of course, such a large-scale planetary phenomenon itself has various problems and shortcomings. Thus, events of regional or planetary significance taking place in any part of the world affect the overall global socio-political, scientific thought and become a factor that changes the rhythm of human life. Now the solution of environmental, political, social, humanitarian, and cultural problems of global importance depends on the young generation currently studying in secondary schools. The younger generation should approach these problems as issues that need to be addressed and understand the scale of their responsibilities in this regard. For the reasons listed above, it is important to encourage students in high school to develop a broad view of the world around them, to instill interest in the artistic achievements of other peoples. Only in this situation students may feel themselves like full citizens of a single world and realize that they are responsible for what happens on the planet.

Results.

The process of literary education in a modern school is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon. However, the main goal of literary education is unambiguous and concrete - the student should master the world cultural heritage in an emotionally and scientifically in the form of unity, to acquire the ability to cope with the numerous, diverse, and colorful flow of literature in the modern world. Literary education should also help students to develop a humanistic world view and lay the foundations for high ethical ideals.

Improving the quality of literary education in secondary school includes the introduction of new approaches to the teaching of literature. The modern school is faced with the need to master and systematize a large amount of information from various fields of science, culture, and social relations. At the same time, experts are well aware that it is necessary to clarify the system of relations of Azerbaijani literature with world literature, to cover the scale and system of our national literary and aesthetic thinking and worldview at the appropriate level. Otherwise, it will be difficult to overestimate the importance of deep knowledge of the world literary process, which is impossible even for ordinary human beings to imagine. The solution is to study world literature in depth during literature lessons, to study literature programs in a special course in the classroom, out-of-class activities, extracurricular activities, also optional classes, without increasing the class hours, within the limits of the textbooks, if necessary. We should take into account that samples of world literature should be studied in depth and systematically based on Azerbaijani literature by students during the teaching process. At the same time students conduct analyzes, and identify similarities and parallels. The urgency of this topic is obvious when working on materials related to the analysis of the main trends and problems of the literary process. In a word, in the process of analysis of world literature, Azerbaijani literature should play the role of a reference point, taken as the main criterion in the cultural and aesthetic education of students.

As well, finding the golden middle way between nationalism and internationalism and teaching students is a necessary condition. At the same time, in order to form a comprehensively developed student personality, work should be done at the level of content containing literary-artistic, historical-literary and cultural information during integrative special courses and faculties. In particular, the process of realization of state standards can be realized by finding the organic unity of national and humanist information and values in the personality of the student and combining them with the educative principle. Thus, with the effective teaching of world literature on the basis of Azerbaijani literature, the literary and artistic process in the world is fully reflected, deep typological and contact links between Azerbaijani literary thought and foreign literature are determined and planetary thinking is formed.

Since primary school till the end of high school, it is possible to organize a number of integrative special courses on world literature, effectively organized lessons with the help of materials presented in textbooks. In this method, a number of problems related to education can be solved. It is also important to take into account the fact that the ideas of integration are increasingly developing in the teaching methods of local and foreign literature. Because it is important to identify the many-sided dialectical relationship between literature and other
forms of art and social activity, and as a result, teaching can be enriched with new pedagogical solutions.

It is an undeniable fact that factors such as the perspective development and future economic growth of nations and states, the material well-being of the population, as well as the spiritual wealth and satisfaction of citizens are directly related to education. Especially after the serious changes of recent years, the situation is becoming even different. (Schleicher, 2021).

At present, education plays a key role in the effective formation of the country's human resources and its productivity and quality indicators in the coming decades. Socio-natural, biological-medical events, socio-economic, political, and cultural situations that take place on a global scale in modern times and conditions, occur in accordance with the will of man or beyond it, make it necessary for the education system to respond directly to innovative challenges. The creation of new foundations of subject programs, training technologies, educational legislation, the formation of flexible and functional management mechanisms in this area are among the conditions for the future existence of modern political structures that are currently functional. Global geopolitics, technological and systematic potential structural changes in financial systems, the formation of new world economic centers, the development of capital markets, e-commerce, digital economy, new realities of supply and demand in the global market, the need for competitive personnel, as well as other crucial factors should be the main topic of modern discussions on education.

During the postpandemic period, qualitative and quantitative changes in the value of human life came about. Thus, the content and structural modification of these values, the complexity of living standards, the formation of new socio-economic, political relations, a new strategic stage conditioned by globalization and a planetary way of thinking that is rapidly turning into a modern paradigm increased the need for modern pedagogical science to meet the latest challenges and training and education are faced with fundamentally different questions. From this point of view, the subject of literature has a wide range of opportunities in the formation of hypotheses of the problems and questions, in the conduct of research. For example, in modern times, everyone, from people with simple knowledge and skills to the leaders of large corporations, has gained unlimited access to huge amounts of information from any region of the world, using the unlimited opportunities provided by the Internet. «Today, there are constant changes in public life, science, and technology. Information overload, globalization, the Internet, the formation of a single educational space, integration into the European educational space, new learning technologies, etc. require attention to these innovations in the content of education, teaching, methods, and assessment. For this reason, the optimal option is to update the educational documents for a period of 5 years. Carrying out these changes every five years appears as a necessity» (Yusifov, 2017, pp. 26-27).

Observations and surveys indicate that this type of difficulty in teaching literature is greater than in other subjects. When teachers analyze works of art, they often face the difficulties and confusion in the process of mastering the material by students. When we look at the examples of world literature, especially from the geographical position of Azerbaijan, there are confusions, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings about the teaching of the so-called Western literature, because it is located west of us. These difficulties are multifaceted and display themselves in both philological, didactic, and psychological aspects of teaching. When we add to this the realities of Azerbaijan's historical experience over the last hundred years, the situation becomes clear. The psychological, philological, and didactic difficulties arising in modern schools in Azerbaijan, especially in the teaching of literature, are due to the influence of the leading ideological position of the Soviet era. Although the name of the protection of the interests of the toiling masses, interclass conflicts, and the exploitation of peasant labor have been removed from the presentations, the essence of communist ideology and the remnants of Bolshevik thought still live in our schools as world literature. These approaches come in different forms and contents and have deep roots. Of course, it was difficult to put an end to this tendency, which was inextricably linked with the historical aspect and experience, as well as with the long-term influence of the Soviet education system. But it is also surprising and harmful that these effects last so long.

In order to explain these ideas visually, it is possible to indicate an unpleasant situation. This is due to the 5th-11th grade literature textbooks currently used in Azerbaijani secondary schools. During the 5th-11th grades, Azerbaijani students get acquainted with world literature, especially western literature, only through the works of Jack London, Mark Twain (5th grade), Alexander Dumas (6th grade), Victor Hugo (7th grade), E. Hemingway (11th grade) and it should be noted that these few works do not characterize the essence and main content of their work (except E. Hemingway). Some of the works of these writers were allowed to be taught during the Soviet era. Soviet literary criticism to establish a one-sided, ideological impression on people with the works of dozens of writers translated into the languages of the Soviet peoples. The reader had the impression that their works depicted only the vortices of human life, the turmoil, the moral crisis of the individual, and emphasize the responsibility of the capitalist exploiting class for all this. The guilt of poverty and deprivation, tears and deprivation described was placed solely on the anti-democratic Western regime. In this way, the Soviet ideology wanted to instill in the peoples of the USSR the idea that Soviet society would live in a state of high material prosperity, but that the capitalist world would suffer from
a material and moral crisis. In an introduction to one of Henry's books, Professor Cedric Watts spoke of Henry's popularity in the USSR, saying that «Henry's popularity abroad, in the USSR, was partly due to his role as an aide to the state's anti-capitalist propaganda.” "Because he repeatedly portrayed Americans who ate only food, and in his works he preferred to indicate people's needs rather than their wealth» (Watts, 2012, p. XVI).

In this regard, Nailya Safiullina’s article «The Canonization of Western Writers in the Soviet Union in the 1930s» is very interesting. The author points out that in the 1930s, at a time when Stalinism was very strong, the official ideology of translated literature prevailed. At this time, some writers became ideals for others, and literary criticism and the dominant ideology treated them with special sympathy. Examples of such writers are Roman Rolland, Henri Barbusse, and Andre Gide.

It is interesting to note that even in modern textbooks, in some cases, there is a tradition of blindly continuing the stereotypes of the Soviet era. Especially in connection with the works of prominent writers of the XIX and XX centuries, clichés from the Soviet era are used, the negative features of the capitalist system are «disclosed». When it comes to classical works, there are still cases when they prefer an ideological approach rather than a purely literary value. Of course, such cases are in sharp contrast to the modern Azerbaijani education system, which aims to integrate into Europe.

It would be useful to take a brief look of history to describe the causes and deep roots of the current situation. From April 28, 1920, to October 18, 1991, Azerbaijan lived in the Soviet Union for 71 years. In this prison of nations, Moscow was not only the mission of economic and political leadership. All official textbooks and teaching aids taught in the republic were sent directly to Moscow, carefully checked, and adapted to the requirements of Bolshhevism. The textbooks used in schools were also presented as carriers of the dominant ideology.

A few years after the occupation of Azerbaijan by the Soviet army, towards the end of the 1920s, the Soviet leadership began to organize direct attacks on writers who were outside the communist ideology and did not support that position. The control of the central bureaucracy in the field of literature indicated a tendency to gradually strengthen. During this period, the emergence of various creative organizations appeared as a natural product of the development of this system of administrative authoritative. Thus, the famous party resolutions and decisions of «On the policy of the party in the field of fiction» in 1925, «On Restructuring Literary-Artistic Organizations» in 1932, as well as the unification of writers in different societies and unions on ideological orientation «Young Golden Pens» in 1925, called «Golden Pens» since 1926, «Society of Azerbaijan Proletarian Writers» since 1927, the Union of Azerbaijan Soviet Writers since 1934 and finally the Union of USSR Writers) slowed down the development of free inspiration, creative imagination, was a barrier to the free development of art.

In the 1930s, collectivization began in all spheres in the USSR. Peasants were forced to unite in collective and state farms, industries in industrial centers, writers and other artists in various unions and associations. This, in turn, facilitated administrative management, accelerated the implementation of orders from the center, and made the mechanism of prevention and identification of elements alien to the dominant ideology more effective.

After a short time, the results of these measures began to emerge. The famous terror of the 1930s started in the Soviet Union. Looking at the 1920s, the second half of the 1930s is remembered as a «red terror» whirlpool. There are various opinions and sources about the fact that the Soviet machine of repression killed 3 million to 10 million people. The shooting, execution, and deportation of hundreds of thousands of people who think differently from the dominant ideology in Azerbaijan alone in the 1930s were the result of a «major cleansing» operation. The mass physical destruction of human beings was aimed at establishing a new communist reality. Robert Conquest, in his study, The Great Terror, indicates that during the repression, about 2,000 literary figures were persecuted, and about 1,500 of them were physically killed (Conquest, 1990, p. 297).

For the emergence of this new reality and the victory of communist ideology, the process of physical destruction of hundreds of thousands of free-thinking people was carried out throughout the USSR. «Since the 1920s, «proletarian» literature and, more broadly, the «proletarian culture» movement have flourished in the north of Azerbaijan. It is true that this movement was organized from «above», but it should be admitted that the masses did not seriously resist this organization. In the 1930s, the ideological foundations of «proletarian literature» were already prepared, writers who did not accept it were annihilated, and literary work became «part of the general proletarian work». And so, in the North (we are talking about Northern Azerbaijan occupied by the USSR.) the literature created the character of «the Azerbaijani people who built communism» (Jafarov, 2001, p. 56). It is no coincidence that examples of local and even world literature presented to the people at that time were intended to justify these bloody crimes. The translation of foreign literature into Azerbaijani and its use as a teaching resource was also realized under the influence of the same logic.

However, it is impossible to talk about these difficulties and limitations in the teaching of world literature today. However, students are still unaware of the main ideas and content of world literature, the general picture of the world humanitarian arena, as well as the main literary trends, currents and schools that stimulate the development of world literature. But what steps need to be taken in the current situation? It can be
concluded that many things need to be done related to the presentation and interpretation of works presented to students in secondary schools.

Despite the fact that we have been separated a regime separated from the Western world by an «iron curtain» for more than 30 years, our textbooks and sources, teaching aids, the content of scientific and methodological materials have not been completely separated from these realities. Based on this fact alone, we can confidently claim that we need innovations and challenges on a large scale and in content.

The duties and responsibilities of literary specialists, textbook authors, and subject methodologists are now more. The Azerbaijani youth should master and assimilate the cultural achievements of modern peoples formed over thousands of years and absorbed in their attitudes, ethno-religious behavior, and intellects, thus, they should be able to consciously perceive the cultural achievements and genesis of the changing world, to determine the cultural and intellectual map of the world's peoples.

World public opinion and technical achievements are currently at their highest (according to time!) stage, and this trend continues to grow. «We are talking about the fundamental justification of human existence, the creation of new values. The foundations of a new worldview are already emerging within man-made civilization. In the modern world, completely different cultural traditions collide, encounter, and enter into dialogue. And humanity understands that it is necessary to learn to conduct this dialogue» (Nain, 1995, p.123).

The content of education in schools based on national and human values is one of the main factors that will ensure the future development of the people, the quality of education, the welfare of the population. The development of the student's personality and thinking are the criteria that will ensure the country's labor market, intellectual sphere, competitive training, and the quality of human resources. «The next strategic task facing the country is to ensure sustainable economic development and improve the living standards of the population through further modernization of socio-economic life and adaptation to best international practices. Modernization is primarily associated with the successful application of advanced technologies and management methods, innovations based on scientific achievements in the socio-economic life of the country. The priority for this is to accelerate the integration of the country's economy into the world economy, as well as the development of human capital in the country, ensuring the acquisition of modern knowledge and skills. The development of human capital is one of the most important conditions for the successful integration of the economy into the global system and the country's more effective use of international competition and is the main task of the country's education system» (State Education Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan).

Aliyar Garabagli, one of the founders of the methodology of teaching literature, wrote in the 60s of the XX century: «We do not need young people who are acquainted with this or that work of this or that writer. We need young people with a healthy artistic taste, the ability to express their thoughts clearly and concisely orally and in writing, the ability and habit of independent reading, a good understanding of social events and a critical approach to the literary text» (Garabagli, 1968, p. 3).

For this reason, the systematic and comparative teaching of examples of world literature, in general, allows to raise the level of teaching the subject of literature, to more effectively meet the set standards, to ensure the interest of students.

In the late twentieth century, the famous scientist V. Vernadsky claimed that the importance of the «planetary» worldview, the attitude to the surrounding world from the point of view of the inhabitant of the planet Earth based on universal principles, not on a limited world, is growing immeasurably. For this reason, the scientist considered it necessary to teach exemplary works of world literature in secondary schools.

The development of students' sense of adherence to the motherland, nation, land, the development of their intellectual levels, the process of more regular and systematic formation of cognitive-intellect and communicative skills, is directly related to the form and content of teaching and promoting literature. The use of literature samples of foreign nations, successful literary works, which are the main source of human values and examples, in teaching has a serious impact on improving the quality of education. The student gets acquainted with national literary examples, masters them, understands the logical burden of the writer, the example of folklore, and at the same time acquires more comprehensive and deep knowledge and skills by mastering the same example from world literature.

We should take into account that the samples of our national literature that resonate with the classics of world literature create a favorable basis for such an analogy. Homer's «Odyssey», «Iliad» epics, ancient Indian epics «Koroglu» epos, Nizami Ganjavi, Shakespeare, Greek mythology, Azerbaijan mythological system «Avesta» – the pantheon of Greek gods, Azerbaijani renaissance of twelfth century-European renaissance, M. F. Akhundzadeh of 19th century – Moliere in French literature, J. Mammadguluzadeh and A. Havgverdiyev – O. Henry, Mark Twain's prose, Anar, Elchin – the works of U. Faulkner, E. Hemingway, G.G. Marquez allow this analogy. By comparing and analyzing the main examples of modern Azerbaijani literature and analyzing and teaching them within the opportunities provided by the secondary school literature course, the Azerbaijani school can achieve new successes.

Of course, the teaching of literary samples should be approached with a certain sensitivity. The set of national and moral values carried by the student and the local
psychological environment should be taken into account during teaching.

«Literature has great opportunities in the formation of the student's personality, his spiritual world, aesthetic taste. Students acquire an active position in life by understanding and evaluating the complex events and realities of life reflected in the work of art. In this sense, literature lessons should be approached as life and spiritual lessons, a type of cognitive activity. The fiction is a special form of spiritual communication. A student –reader who reads a perfect work of art, thinks about the moral and aesthetic problems raised there, comments on the fate of the heroes, the position of the artist, becomes an interviewer of a powerful artist, enriches himself (herself) spiritually by studying his thoughts and ideas. In this process, it is possible for students to evaluate their activities, movements and behavior in terms of moral and aesthetic norms» (Garabagli, 1968, p. 44).

In this respect, it is an undeniable fact that along with national art samples, the presentation of works by foreign authors of universal importance plays an important role. "At each stage of the development of society, science and culture, new tasks are set for the training and education of the young generation in accordance with the changing conditions. These tasks are reflected in the theoretical stages, organization and requirements for the methodology of the lesson, which is the main form of organization of the educational process. This is a natural, irresistible process. The education system should be constantly modernized and updated in accordance with the changing and growing needs of society (Hasanli, 2016, p. 50).

The comparative teaching of some selected examples of ancient Sumer, ancient Egyptian, ancient Jewish, ancient Chinese, ancient Greek, and Roman literature in the teaching of ancient Azerbaijani literature can play a major role in developing students' cognitive and communication skills, in the transition from a local approach to global thinking. In parallel, this type of approach can play a special role in terms of creating integration between the subject of literature and general history, improving knowledge in both subjects. For example, there is a «Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor» in ancient Egyptian literature. The story is about a hero who lived far away from his homeland for a long time, longed for his homeland and eventually returned to it. The content of this example may be interesting for students in terms of its harmony with the main ideas of Azerbaijani literature.

Conclusions.

From the analysis of the above facts, we can conclude that the student receives information about the culture and literature of the peoples of the world, this information also helps to master the historical themes of that period. This connection between literature and history is also continued in the upper grades. Students hear the names of well-known figures of world literature and are briefed on the literature of different nations. Providing this information in this way can be important in terms of shaping the student's worldview but can also play a major role in the acquisition of literary knowledge. We can conclude that there is a need to include examples of literature of different foreign nations in the teaching, to make comparisons in the subject of «Literature». Discussion of Azerbaijani literature, as well as selected examples from the literature of the peoples of the world in various classes of literature allows students to understand and appreciate the moral and aesthetic problems, changes in life and society, to master national and universal moral values.

Many scientific researches and comparisons have been made on the fact that the main ideas and themes of Azerbaijani literature are the same as the ideas and themes in many countries of the world, and that this is both typological and mutual benefit. «The main feature that characterizes the process of world history in modern times is globalization. An attempt to bring together the countries and peoples of the world have accelerated integration in the socio-political, economic, and cultural spheres to such an extent that it has led to the formation of planetary thinking, as well as responsibility for the fate of the planet» (Babayev, 2009, p. 7). The scientist has prepared a serious and fact-based scientific monograph on the influence of Nasimi's work on the work of American transcendentalists.

«The propagation of Sufi philosophical views through poetry was a practical experience for American transcendentalists. Poems published by transcendentalists have been formed as a new form of artistic protest against American Orthodox Calvinism and materialists» (Babayev, 2009, p. 17).

There is no doubt that the main ideas, thoughts, and goals of our national literature do not stay behind the literature of the developed nations of the world. Thus, in terms of ideas, content and talent of the writer, Azerbaijani literature can be considered quite strong, modern, and comprehensive. Awareness of these qualities in students leads to a greater sense of respect for the literature and history of their people (Contemporary Theories of Learning, 2018).

«The Book of Dede Gorgud Epics» has a similar motif and plot similarity to the examples of world literature, «Koroglu» epos attracts attention in terms of plot similarity with the literature of many nations. The typological «kinship» of the characters, the widespread appeal to the ideas of Nizami Ganjavi around the world, the connection of Azerbaijani literature with world literature in spite of 70 years of Soviet repression and the obstacles of the Bolshevik machine are not only an indicator of the strength of our people's literary thinking, but also an indicator of the student's confidence in himself and his nation.

Azerbaijani education is currently gaining new content qualities, experiencing a new era of creativity and development, benefiting from the proven experience
of advanced educational achievements of advanced countries. The main guiding idea of the implemented reforms is the education policy based on national and human values. According to Bertrand Russell, a British philosopher, mathematician, and public figure who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1950, «education must have two purposes: to cultivate intelligence on the one hand, and to cultivate citizenship on the other» (Russell, 1962) and this idea contains many necessary points.

So, if analogies are made between literary works and teaching is carried out in a parallel, comparative form, we can give our students the followings:
1. Students’ planetary thinking is formed and their ideas about the world as a single space are strengthened;
2. Students improve the ability to evaluate our national literature more accurately and correctly in terms of ideas and content;
3. More effective implementation of state standards on the subject of literature is provided;
4. As a result of the analysis and comparison of literary works created in different geographical and cultural regions, the development of logical, critical and creative thinking of students is provided in a more accurate and correct form;
5. Favorable conditions will be created for literature lessons to be more interesting for students.

We hope that in the coming years, in the development of literary subject curriculum and textbooks, in addition to examples of national literature, preference will be given to materials that allow the parallel teaching and comparison of examples of world literature. At the same time, literature teachers will focus on a number of analogies when teaching this subject.

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