

POLITICAL AND CULTURAL-HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN KAZAKHSTAN AND ARMENIA AT THE PRESENT STAGE

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Abstract. This paper presents the political and cultural-humanitarian aspects of cooperation between Armenia and Kazakhstan at the present stage, in particular, the relations in the sphere of culture. This work describes Armenian-Kazakh literary connections beginning from the 20th century to the 1990^s and also published articles and individual translation was made during this period. Emphasizing the importance of the cognitive side of literature, the article shows the prerequisites for the further development of cultural relations between the two nations, in particular, in the sphere of literature.

Keywords. International cooperation, bilateral relations, cultural -humanitarian, cultural development, literary connections.

JEL codes: N 850, N 750.

Аңдатпа. Бұл жұмыста қазіргі кезеңдегі Қазақстан мен Армения арасындағы саяси және мәдени-гуманитарлық салалардағы байланыстар зерттелген, бұған қоса осы бағыттағы жүргізілген ұтымды әдебиет байланыстары да қарастырылған. Мақалада өткен ғасырдың тоқсаныншы жылдарындағы әдеби ынтымақтасу байланыстары қоса сипатталып, сонымен қатар осы тақырыпта жарияланған мақалалар мен жеке аудармалар да көрсетілген. Әдебиеттің танымалы үдерісін сипаттай отыра, осы жұмыста екі елдің арасындағы ынтымақтасу мәдениетін дамыту, оның әдебиет саласындағы байланыстарын көрсету де осы жұмыстың мақсаттарының бірі болып табылды.

Тірек сөздер. Халықаралық ынтымақтастық, екі жақты байланыстар, мәдени-гуманитарлық, мәдениеттің дамуы, әдеби байланыстар.

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Аннотация. В данной работе рассмотрены политические и культурно-гуманитарные аспекты сотрудничества между Арменией и Казахстаном на современном этапе, в частности, взаимоотношения в сфере культуры. В работе описаны армяно-казахстанские литературные связи начиная с 20 века до 1990-ых, а также опубликованы статьи и отдельные переводы, сделанные в этот период. Подчеркивая важность познавательной стороны литературы, в статье показаны предпосылки дальнейшего развития культурных отношений двух народов, в частности, в сфере литературы.

Ключевые слова. Международное сотрудничество, двусторонние отношения, культурно-гуманитарный, развития культуры, литературные связи.

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The 20th century can be considered as one of the most productive eras of the human history: in the world's history this period is often identified as the phase of changes, world wars, cooperations, foundation and collapse of new states, rise and fall of another ones. Along with the breakthroughs of human ingenuity, from the previous century the 21st one also inherited challenges and ongoing wars as well as ethnic conflicts and globalization. In the current phase of history it's paramount to find out the role of each society, people, and state in the context of world's history. It is also necessary to determine the ways and the directions that can be taken in order to face the current challenges and to ensure the future peaceful living of the given society.

The worldwide changes obviously impact the destinies of the Armenian and Kazakh peoples. However, in the last quarter of the 20th century

that being said at the beginning of 1990 ies it was obvious that Armenia and Kazakhstan both stepped into a hard era with identical difficulties and challenges: the acquisition of independence, the formation of a new state and a new ideology, heavy economic conditions, territorial, religious and ethnic conflicts etc. However, we can attest that within only two decades both countries managed to resolve their primary challenges each of them in its own way.

Nonetheless, there are still unresolved problems persisting in both countries in various fields such as economics, politics and civil rights. Therefore it is crucial to understand and analyze the acquired experience and, based on the latter, to point out the further steps that can be possibly taken in order to resolve the existing problems.

At the current stage when Armenia and Kazakhstan tend to cooperate deeply in various

spheres, we are prone to highlight the importance in the field of cultural and social cooperation. We are convinced that the dialogue between two peoples can be conducted through this field. The cultural cooperation which involves all the social classes is the best way to get to know each other. That's why in this work we will touch upon the cultural cooperation between Armenia and Kazakhstan by emphasizing the field of literature.

In the initial part of the work we will try to take an historical glimpse into the political and economic cooperation between two countries as well as into the current stage of that cooperation and its peculiarities. During the period of independence this kind of works concerning the literary relations between Armenia and Kazakhstan were rarely published that's why this work is one of the first attempts to appreciate the above mentioned cooperation and relations from the viewpoint of literature. In the current article we have used the works and bibliographical series of Russian, Armenian and Kazakh authors from the Soviet era as well as from the modern times.

It is obvious that the mutual historical past of both nations has far deeper roots than the history of current interstate cooperation between two independent states. The mutual past of Kazakh and Armenian nations dates back to the earliest times when the ancestors of Kazakhs called Kipchaks established in Caucasus, in the territory of current Armenia to be more specific [1]. In the 17th century a few literary pieces were created in Kipchak language written with Armenian letters which are by far the best proofs of the peaceful cohabitation and the mutual communication and collaboration of two societies. Moreover, in the Armenian museum of ancient manuscripts called Matenadaran a few Kipchak manuscripts in Armenian letters are conserved which permanently attract the attention of the Armenian and Kazakh specialists since quite a long time [2].

The communication between the Armenian and Kazakh nations based on their mutual historical past entered into a new phase after the creation of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, we should also admit that in the beginning of 1990ies, the proclamation of the independence in Armenia (on the 21th of September) and later on in Kazakhstan (on the 16th of December) opened a new page in the history of cooperation of both countries. Right after the independence, in august of 1992, diplomatic relations were established between two countries. One year later, in 1993, the Embassy of Armenia was opened in Kazakhstan (the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Armenia was opened later, in 2007) [3]. Over time the bilateral political, economic and socio-cultural cooperation was established and developed between two countries.

It is to be noted that thanks to the internal politics inherited from the 1990ies, the Armenian community of Kazakhstan is given a quite big sovereignty in their internal life. It's enough to mention that in 14 cities of Kazakhstan Armenian cultural centers are functioning, newspapers are published and various meetings are organized with the representatives of the Armenian community as well as with the Armenian functionaries.

As for the current economic cooperation between two countries, the creation and development of an intergovernmental council is important as well as the membership of both countries in the Eurasian Economic Union [4]. It is clear that the bilateral economic cooperation is prone to be developed given that Armenia as well as Kazakhstan have signed agreements of cooperation with the EAEU concerning the spheres of investments, commerce, innovative technologies, sports, tourism etc [5]. The membership of Armenia in GSP+ (a preferential tariff system) is also seen as an advantage as no other country of EAEU is a part of it.

Hence, we can confirm that the common history of the Armenian and Kazakh nations tends to persist after the independence as well in the framework of the political and economic cooperation. However, we attach a particular importance to the bilateral socio-cultural cooperation thus in this article we will try to focus on the literary relations between Armenia and Kazakhstan from the second half of the 20th century till nowadays by highlighting the perspectives and the possible aspects of the further development. In other words, we will try to provide an historical glimpse into the literary relations between the Armenian and Kazakh nations and display, in this way, their importance and analyze them, as well as to figure them out in the current stage and to examine the further ways of development.

As we know, the literature is one of many ways to get to know a nation. It comprises not only specific events of the history but also reflects the mindset of the society during a certain historical era. Besides, the literature also showcases the lifestyle of the given people, its nature and peculiarities. Therefore, the Kazakh literature displays the mentality of the Kazakh nation, its ideas and its attitude toward various historical events. However, even though the literature belongs to a certain ethnic group or nation, it can't be developed in a closed circle and it explains clearly the reason why the literature of different nations are closely connected. The Armenian and Kazakh peoples aren't an exception either. It is to be said that in the 20th century both the Kazakh and the Armenian literatures used to be firmly linked with the Russian literature due to certain

objective historical reasons and the exchanges between the Armenian and Kazakh literature were carried out via the Russian literature. The interest of the Russian elite toward the small nations, including Armenians and Kazakhs, was mainly caused by the intention of establishing the preeminence on them, extending the boundaries and making them a part of the Russian empire.

Although it is difficult to mention some extensive pieces related to the Armenian literature and culture in Russian up to 1820ies, however, we can still find several remarks and general observations concerning the Armenian arts, culture and literature in various works dedicated to the history of Armenia. The period of 50-60ies of the 19th century turned into a phase of big progress not only for Russians but also for other nations residing within the territory of the Russian empire. The novel "Wounds of Armenia" by Khachatur Abovyan laid the basis for the new Armenian literature. Later Raphael Patkanyan came on stage who started publishing the magazine "Hyusisapayl" ("Northern lights") in 1858 in Moscow. The magazine contributed enormously to the development of the Armenian literature. In the end of the 19th and in the beginning of the 20th centuries several Armenian scientists and literary critics published reports about the Armenian literature in the Russian media. Those Armenians were usually longtime residents of the Russian empire who were attending the renowned Russian universities and, thus, they were trying to raise awareness about the history, culture and literature of their nation amongst the Russian intellectuals. Various works of the Armenian authors were translated into Russian, several works concerning the Armenian literature were published, such as the "Collection of the Armenian literature" published in Petrograd in 1916 and edited by Maxim Gorky, the anthology of the "Armenian poetry" published in Moscow and edited by Valery Bryusov with an extensive introduction into the progressive development of the ancient Armenian poetry [6].

Since the 60ies of the 19th century the Russian media and literature circles started paying a particular attention to the Kazakh literature as well. The Russian literature becomes the guiding light for the Kazakh literature which had just embarked on a new journey of development. Various literary genres and directions were shortly influenced by the Russian literature.

As follows, the exchanges between the Armenian and Kazakh literatures were conducted in Russian and via the Russian literature. The literary relations between Armenia and Kazakhstan became even closer thanks to so-called "fraternal literature" created during the Soviet era. As Maxim Gorky emphasized during

the first congress of the Writers' Union within the Soviet Union in 1934: "The Soviet literature doesn't solely imply the Russian literature. It includes the literature of the entire Soviet area" [7].

Along with the Russian authors, the Kazakh ones as well pointed out the importance of the "fraternal literature". In order to give an example, we can recall the mutual report of M. Auezov and Maxim Rilsky during the second congress of the Writers' Union within the Soviet Union in 1954. "The brotherhood between the nations of the Soviet Union is the pillar of the Soviet society. One of the reflections of the above-mentioned brotherhood is the translation of the literatures of the Soviet nations." [8].

Although the authors had to face various ideological restrictions and struggles during the Soviet era, this phenomenon, however, had a positive impact on the national literatures of both nations. It gave an opportunity to exchange literary pieces with the Russian's as well as with other nations' literatures within the Soviet Union, to translate their own literature and to exhibit it to foreign readers, to enrich the national literature with new genres and topics [9]. This fact was one of the main aspects of the development of the Kazakh literature.

"The fraternal literature" also impacted particular Armenian and Kazakh authors. As the literary connections between the Armenian and Kazakh nations are considered as the focal point of our work, we will try to showcase the literary links between two nations based on the example of particular authors of both nations Mukhtar Auezov (1897-1961) and Silva Kaputikyan (1919-2006).

Along with M. Auezov, S. Mukanov and other modern authors, S. Kaputikyan has also been an active member of the Writers' Union of the Soviet Union. She has been involved in various meetings of the Union and in different years she has also met and discussed with the Kazakh authors, especially M. Auezov and S. Mukanov [10]. And it was thanks to these meetings that S. Kaputikyan discovered the literary heritage of particular authors as well as the Kazakh nation and Kazakhstan overall.

In 1946 S. Kaputikyan took part in the event organized for the 100th birthday of J. Jabayev in Almaty which inspired her to write a short poetry called "Jambyl's birthday in Almaty" [11]. However, this kind of poetry is not the only one in the literary heritage of S. Kaputikyan. After visiting Kazakhstan and especially after meeting S. Mukanov, the Armenian author was so impressed that in 1948 she writes a poem called "In Kazakhstan" which we present below:

I hear you calling, Sabit Mukanov,
In your alma mater,
But, alas, I can't understand

The words you utter in your mother tongue.
I can't understand your language, Mukanov,
However, I know that still yesterday
That your dry and tattered Kazakhstan
Was a yurt yesterday before the fierce winds.
And the sands were stretching
Beneath the feet of nomads,
Even the camels were thirsty
The land was desertic and the earth was wild.
I can't understand your language, Mukanov,
But I know that it has flourished already
And your Kazakhstan has turned into
An apple-tree of Almaty.
Instead of a desert, there's now a road,
There is a city, there is an abundant village,
The awaken world of yours delights in wheat
Just like your people juicy and fresh.
There is a serious Kazakh woman by my side
Listening to you
As you speak confidently and enthusiastically
In your alma mater.
I can't understand the words of your language,
However, I see how the endless widths of the
future
Are spreading in your Kazakh eyes. [12]

S. Kaputikyan got to know the Kazakh literature also through M. Auezov thanks to the correspondence between two authors and meetings within the framework of the union [13]. We can attest that the connections between two authors show best the literary connections between Armenia and Kazakhstan in that period. It's by far one of the best manifestations of the cooperation between the Armenian and Kazakh authors.

It is also to be noted that before establishing connections between individual authors, the representatives of both nations used to have the opportunity to learn about each other's literature through translations of particular pieces. It is important to emphasize that the "fraternal literature" also gave an opportunity to the Soviet translators to strive for excellence in the art of translations. That's why starting from 1930ies the art of translations started developing with an exclusive rapidity. There were a lot of hot discussions between various specialists and literary critics over the right principles of translating, the rules of the correct translations as well as over how one is supposed to work with a literary text [14].

The Armenian and Kazakh specialists were obviously involved in the development process of the art of translating as well. In this part of the article we will try to examine the Armenian translations of the Kazakh authors and the works of the Armenian authors translated into Kazakh.

As mentioned earlier, the Russian literature and the Russian language (as the language of the ruling power) served as a bridge between the

literatures of the soviet nations including for the Armenian and Kazakh literatures. Although we have no intentions to overestimate the role of the Russian language, however, the Armenian author S. Kaputikyan has underlined its importance in her poetry called "Jambyl's birthday in Almaty":

We are countless speaking various
languages with our country being endless,

Although we all speak the same language of
brotherhood,

However, brothers, how would we be able to
understand each other

Without the existence of the Russian
language... [15]

Some works of the Kazakh authors were translated into Armenian since 1930ies. Those were usually the works of the authors repeatedly translated into other languages, mainly Russian, and later they were translated into Armenian. So, in 1938 the works of Jambyl Jabayev called "Songs and poems" were translated into Armenian, later the works of Gabit Musirepov ("Once and for a lifetime", 1980), Anuar Alimjanov ("The messenger", 1982), Ilyas Esenberlin ("Golden horde", 1989, "The lovers", 1984), Abay Kunanbayev ("Selected works", 1970), Mukhtar Auezov ("Abay", 1952, "The shot at the pass", 1988) as well as some works of various authors were published in several collections ("The Kazakh poets", "The Kazakh short-stories", 1968). [16]

In different years the works of the Armenian authors were also translated into Kazakh Armenian thanks to which the Kazakh readers got to know the best works of a few authors [17].

Mukhtar Auezov is considered as one of the most translated Kazakh authors. Thanks to the Armenian translations he is well-known amongst the Armenian readers as well. In 1952 after publishing the Armenian translation of his novel "Abay" (translated by H. Borazanyan), the reflections were published concerning the life and the works of M. Auezov and A. Kunanbayev in the Armenian literary circles. As L. Grigoryan fairly mentions in his article called "The novel "Abay" of M. Auezov": "When a tremendous work like this is published, it certainly takes a places reserved only for it" [18]. The novel "Abay" translated into Armenian is an unprecedented literary piece of the Kazakh literature. In 1989, the collection of short-stories called "Shot at the pass" by Auezov including seven works as published with 5000 examples. The Armenian translations of other works of Auezov are included in various collections translated into Armenian in different times [19].

So, as mentioned above, the Armenian and Kazakh nations have shared a common historical past from the times immemorial regardless of the huge geographical distance. Moreover, the

cultural, economic and political relations between two sovereign countries developed quickly and dynamically after entering the Soviet Union. The literary cooperation was in an even beneficial situation thanks to the so-called “fraternal literature”. The regular meetings and discussions between the Armenian and Kazakh authors held in Moscow and Almaty, the Armenian translations of the works of Kazakh authors and the works of the Armenian authors translated into Kazakh are of the best examples of the cooperation. In the end of the 20th century, in 1990ies right after the

independence, the relations between two countries entered into a new phase of development.

Actually the cultural and especially the literary cooperation between two countries has promising perspectives thanks to the common historical past and mutual aspirations regarding the future. We are convinced that two nations will continue collaborating in the sphere of literature in the future as well by transmitting an even bigger experience of collaboration to the coming generations.

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