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**WOMAN IN SABIR'S SATIRES**

*This article deals with the analysis of poems written by M.A.Sabir. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women's rights were a subject of judgment in the socio-political life of Azerbaijan. Sabir was not indifferent to this issue, and in his satirical poems he criticized the situation and motives that deprives women of human rights. For the first time, the article analyzes Sabir's poem "Advice of a hag to the girls" and interprets satirical and poetic principles in a scientific context. The characteristic feature of his poetry is shown. The problems posed in Sabir's satires are analyzed in worldwide context. That period of socio-political inequality and violent exploitation provided a fertile ground for "primitive people of the new age" who viewed women living in conditions of various hardships and deprivations as a means of satisfying their physical needs. As a matter of fact, the people presented and exposed in Sabir's poem as "believers" were not religious figures, but illiterate and ignorant ones, so they did not understand how they disgraced Islam. Thus, we can say distinctly that Sabir caught namely the "red bearded" in the fire of satire, who do not follow the main instruction contained in the holy book of Islam and do what they want in family relations, regardless of time and circumstances or other inconsistencies (such as age differences), but not the true believers. Superstitious people oppress women, do not respect and love them, do not value them. They see women only as cleaners and servants. They even believe that a woman's personality, morals, and abilities are more limited in terms of her physical structure. For example, according to them, there are issues in society that are defined as men's work or women's work. Of course, in terms of physical strength and structure, women are different from men in what they can do.*

**Key words:** Mirza Alakhbar Sabir; environment, intellectual, position, society, criticism, enlightener, education, poet, the truth, poetry, problem, people, woman's rights.

**Introduction.** In its history of development, the Azerbaijani literature has formed such literary figures that their literary activity has contained typical aspects not only for their literary environment, but for all times in whole. From this standpoint, the works of Mirza Alakhbar Sabir are of special importance. The matter is that Sabir has chosen in satirical poetry such a way to follow, he has mastered such targets in terms of literary activity; both the poets of his time and the next literary generations considered an honor to be Sabir's followers and kept on traditions created by Sabir. As T.Novruzov, one of Sabir's researchers, touching upon this matters notes that "Sabir Literary School unites poets who are close to Sabir's work in terms of ideas, spirit, theme and style. Creative, innovative approach to traditional genres is the main principle for satirical poetry in Sabir literary school, and it is also a new, unique event in the history of our literature." [6, 40].

**Artistic features of female images in individual poems by Sabir.** The poetry of Sabir, having radically changing the current miserable situation in the lives of the people and his compatriots, set out to fight with invincible determination with the mission of leading them to a bright future with a completely fresh, pure

and healthy body. The satire of M.A. Sabir, who has perceived his duty as a citizen-poet to write only the truth, reflected all the deformities of his time. He was not indifferent to all events he has seen and taken place around him and did his utmost to divulge the shortcoming and to sober up his compatriots. His aim to write poems of distinct spirit was to open his compatriots' eyes to the world and to direct them toward the fight against injustice.

*I am a poet, a mirror of the century,*

*Where everyone sees namely his own face* [2, 303].

To secure his compatriots' and native lands' endearing future, he advanced first of all an idea to prepare the children of homeland as worthy citizens and the necessity to be ready to follow the way of struggle in terms of high intelligence and outlook.

In this connection he has chosen the ugliness of the existent education style as a target to divulge. In the satire beginning with the hemistich "*On the day when God will grant you a son in order to make your heart rejoice*", the methods based on harmful habits, thoughts and methods, which ultimately lead to the catastrophe for the child and his family, are listed in a satirical language. It is pointed out that it is impossible to achieve such a great luxury, but in fact

the calamity by reading and studying and receiving worldly education. No matter how much deprivation Sabir has to face, we must also acknowledge the fact that his fortune was happiness of art. Thus, despite the literary generations that came after him, there was no shortage in subject for this great artist. Although the poet said that he would not write everything he saw and thought, he was obliged to write them and as a result he poured out his heart. The greatest freedom is the freedom to speak and pour out his heart. It is the tragedy of the thinking person, it is the tragedy of Sabir, it is the pain of the person who cannot keep silence. Nothing could discourage the poet to write, and these verses sounded like a continuation of Mirza Jalil's idea "Be dumb and do not speak...":

*How I do not tend to write a quarter of the events  
I see,*

*Poets are also afraid to write one in four quarters  
of what they see [2, 241].*

Sabir has devoted his poems to the most serious problems and wounds of society. The most important of these themes covered the rights of women which were violated at every step, early marriages and other very painful issues like this. To the mind of Sabir, the woman is a divine power and a sacred being, she is the epitome of supremacy and majesty. According to him, the woman, who is considered a sacred being, is the angel who creates lives and protects, she is the adornment of mankind, the glory of humanity. A woman is the light to the eyes and beautiful to the heart. It is a golden line of human history, a masterpiece. But in the mirror of that time, the woman did not look like Sabir dreamed.

The stratum consisting of ignorant people, who want to keep the nation in darkness and humiliation, living with the thought, "Oh, how I should have enjoyed myself, when the children of the homeland were inexperienced" and the womanizers, who cover their evil deeds in the name of religiosity were the first to ignore women's rights. The poet who suffered perhaps the most difficult thing in life to experience voluntarily the pain to tell the truth, wrote about it:

*"The world has been our home for a while,  
There was no solution to any of our problems,  
As long as we live, our enemies have multiplied,  
What can we do, our language has not turned to  
lying" [2, 178].*

Marrying the underage girls to older men, as a result of which their consequent misfortune, is the highest stage of ignorance. Although we hear the terrible cries of the girls from Sabir's poem, this shout does not affect their dull-headed relatives, who are silenced by time and poisoned

by obsolete and strange habits; the terrible thing is that these parents do not assume possession of their girls. Using the principle to "crook a tree when it is young", they quell a sign of love to live in young girls without thinking. After all, a woman is not a tree. She also has the right to read, get an education. Mirza Alakbar Sabir has perfectly expressed this idea: "When you oblige a girl to marry but she wants to learn science, and you send her to pursue science but she wants to get married, the society loosens up and collapses. Here is that bitter scene from the tongue of a baby girl:

*I'm afraid, Xandostu\*, for God's sake!*

*The look on his face is horrible.*

*The hat on his head is like a smoke pipe,*

*The eyebrows are covered with white hair*

*Although he is old, he is the same age as my  
grandfather [2, 182].*

In the scene described by the poem, aggression and humility are confronted. The only girl who was raped in this scene. Both the parents who sold her to the old man and the old man who is not ashamed of his age are aggressive. Sabir has expressed the feelings of the girl, the artistic portrait of the husband who tried to make her his "wife" with great eloquence.

*Life is over; your head is as white as flour;*

*Teeth are falling out, beards are like wool,*

*Chest collapsed, waist bent like the letter nun,*

*So now you are no different from the old monkey.*

*So, smoke opium, but do it!*

*Suck your hookah and snore it! [2, 182].*

These satires show that in the socio-cultural thought and environment of Azerbaijan at that time, along with old-fashioned thinking, conservatism and superstition, there were also advanced thinking style, innovation and progress tendencies. In fact, it was a time when innovation and old-fashioned thinking, superstition and obedience, and secularism (as well as belief in a brighter tomorrow) were at war with each other. As in all social injustice and unfairness chosen by M.A. Sabir in his poems as a target of satire, it is cannot be justified at all the efforts of certain specialists to prove to "discover" the atheist position in criticizing any unpleasant words and actions of believers, and thus to prove that the great satirist was against religion. Unfortunately, this position also manifested itself in the great poet's remarks about the criticism of the abnormal views of the people of that time against women, and it seems ridiculous now that we have returned to our national values. It

\*Name given in honor of the wives of uncles, aunts and other relatives.

is impossible and unnecessary to comment the fact of exposure the behavior of some acts of various stratum of the society, as well as those pretending to be religious, but in fact, being far from pure religious beliefs, and their actions, which did not comply with the requirements of the Qur'an and the Shari'ah, who were hidden under the guise of religion as Sabir's negative attitude towards religion and Qur'an in his satirical texts.

*Mullahs, your destiny is with you today,  
The missionaries agreed with us today!  
Our intention was to destroy schools,  
But we did not have the strength and power to do so.  
As the number of schools increased, we became unemployed.  
Day by day our grief and sorrow increased, we were overwhelmed,  
Friends, rejoice, our need has been met today!*  
[2, 252].

As it seen from the above specified hemistiches, Sabir was against the false clerics who opposed science and development. These false clergies considered the education of women and girls as a "satanic act."

In his work related to one of the signatures of M.A.Sabir under the headline "Crying and laughing poet" in the form of chain of letters, Mammadkazim Alakbarli has analyzed the poet's work in detail and interestingly on the basis of socio-political processes in the early twentieth century. The above mentioned scholar, highly appreciating the poet's humanistic position in his poems dedicated to the issues of attitude to women, women's rights and freedoms, showing the greatest example of humanity, rightly considered Sabir a propagandist for women's freedom. However, in the section of this chain of letter of the same work called "Crying and laughing poet" and "Eastern Woman" (The eighth letter), the scholar specifies that "Sabir's greatest struggle was against polygamy, marrying young girls, and indirectly touching religion because they were closely connected with the religious matters." To prove it, the author cites the following verse from the poet's poem "The truth we know by heart, the only thing we remember is probability":

*"Let another nation treats women as it pleases,  
The wife loves her husband; the husband loves his wife, what about us?  
Whoever is content with one, let him,  
Leaving them behind, we pass everyone in the temporary marriage!  
We, the believers, take a wife every day!"* [2, 96].

The author of the article concludes that "Sabir's struggle for women's freedom should be seen as an integral part of his struggle against religion." With great respect to the memory of the author, a talented scholar of his time, but, unfortunately, a victim of repression, it is impossible to agree with his conclusion, because Sabir, as in a number of other satires, did not criticize really pure believers in this poem as well; his satirical target includes the slaves of lust, who hypocritically shield themselves from the name of the believer and make it their life's goal to marry young girls, whether it is necessary or not.

The superstition is a scourge created by Satan, who lacks love, where hate dominates, opposes purity, art and science, forbids joy and beauty, and infuriates women and children in order to turn them away from religious morality. The superstitious people do not value human beings or any living thing. There is no place for tenderness, compassion or mercy in their souls. As a result, a superstitious person hates every woman. One of the main characteristics of superstitious people is that they are enemies of women. Treating women as third-class beings is a key feature of superstition. However, this difference does not mean that a woman is weaker in intellect and ability. In our day, women, with their knowledge and skills in many areas, have exposed the futility of this unfounded judgment. Sabir, on the other hand, felt this power in a woman's spirit in the nineteenth century, felt her determination, and could not remain silent in the face of such restrictions on her rights, as well as her humiliation; as a way out, he interpreted what he could not say in strong satirical language:

"My God, what is this word? What is this treatment? What dirty, rude and unnecessary work do they force us to do? What does the girl need to know: housework, making clothes, washing old, combing wool, patching clothes, sweeping the yard, washing dishes, cooking meatballs, stuffed cabbage, cooking halva, meatballs, or bean soup, then tendir lavash; but if she does not know them, she will not be ashamed. There are some things that a girl needs to know very well some matters, If she knows these issues, everything will go well: The first and most important thing is that the bride should be able to shout at her mother-in-law and father-in-law in the house she is going to, in which case they will be reluctant to speak to the bride. The other important issue is to create a split and contradiction between her brother-in-law and her husband, to use such a pretense that in five or three days so much love, which has been gained for so many years, can turn into enmity; the third and most important thing is that the wife must know the names

of the damdabaja, khokha and vampire, which is very useful for her; the point is that if a child hears these names when he is crying or misbehaving, he will be immediately relaxed, will not be confused, and will not be in pain..." [2, 82].

It is very interesting now to touch upon Sabir's satire "Moral admonition of a hag to girls" from the standpoint of exposure of ignorance, where the "advice" given by the hag to girls was a specific and everyday picture of the time. In this text, old woman advises not to look for a faithful husband, emphasizing that such a person does not exist in the society in which they live, and that all men marry at least three or four wives. In these verses, Sabir points to polygamy, and in other verses he continues this context. It is clear from this satire that women are the material property of men. A woman cannot have her own personal tastes, entertainment, and affairs, and if so, it must be resolved when the husband is not at home. A woman is no different from a slave who is doomed to look after her master. The most realistic sentence of the satire is "As you grow old, your husband will marry another woman, and he will neither look at you nor laugh at your face." This sentence is a verbal expression of the value given to women in nineteenth-century society. The above-mentioned marriage of young girls to older men is also clearly stated in this sentence. If a woman grows old and is thrown away as a useless thing, a man can retain his dominion and remarry in his old age. The image of the old woman expressed what Sabir meant here with underlined meanings and artistic colors. In the satire, Sabir openly advises women to think about their own destiny and to save their husbands from ruining their future. In the verse "Don't worry about your husband, you think about yourself", Sabir does not use hidden and underlined meanings, he says directly and truly what he wants to say in the language of the old woman.

*Now you understand what I said, O light of my eyes,*

*Don't miss the opportunity.*

*First of all, know that there is no faithful husband in the world,*

*– Human kind is intelligent;*

*There is no man in the world who is faithful.*

*– May be ignorant;*

*My advice, do not believe what your husband says, Stay awake, it's safe!*

*Do not dream in vain, do not believe what they say,*

*He has three or four wives.*

*Even if you are obedient to your husband for forty*

*years, you do not know his intention,*

*When you grow old, your husband will have another wife,*

*He doesn't look at you; he doesn't laugh at your face.*

*Recognize and be vigilant! [2, 73].*

In general, the reason of violation of women's rights and freedoms is sought to some extent in the rules of religion and sharia in studies devoted to Sabir's work and this is typical for these studies. The very reason hereof, as we have already mentioned, is that the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, which was created to build a new society and spread rapidly in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, was a "distorted reflection of objective reality in the human brain." If it was the result of a wrong but dominant view, on the other hand, it was the ignorance of the people about the true nature of religion based on the full content of the Qur'an. How are women's rights interpreted in our religion? This can be clearly seen in Surah an-Nisa ("Women") of the Qur'an. The source states that it is permissible to marry more than one woman, provided that the woman is treated fairly; However, verse 3 of the same surah states: "If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their 'due' rights 'if you were to marry them', then marry other women of your choice—two, three, or four. But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then 'content yourselves with' one' or those 'bondwomen' in your possession. This way you are less likely to commit injustice."

Given today's civilization character and the laws of modern society, a man's marriage to two women is nothing more than an injustice, a humiliation, and insulting a woman's morality. Sabir also knew the people of his time very well. He knew that the attitude towards women was already ambiguous and unjust, and that the distortion of various provisions of the religion by the men to suit their own interests further aggravated the situation of women.

Sabir described the reality of women's lives, as well as the lives of many members of the population. His poems give a complete description of the women of that time. First of all, he describes the lawlessness of women. The fact that polygamists say, "When we get married, we marry a free woman" but then turn the woman into a servant, is a clear example of this lawlessness. As a result of the "legalization" of lawlessness by force, women were treated as ordinary creatures. Her condition was deplorable. This ignorance was so prevalent in her mind that the woman, who had accidentally married an educated man, was surprised that her husband was

“literate,” and even considered it a “disease.” In his satire “Khanbaji, my heart cracks with grief”, Sabir poetically described this event.

*What did we know about the poison of this book?  
Did we have a book in the house we were in?  
We were human beings like flowers,  
We did not understand the teacher and the lesson*  
[2, 212].

It is clear from the above verses that a woman calls people without books, teachers and science “like flowers” (that is, pure) because she has not witnessed the opposite. When confronted with the opposite situation, it seems intolerable and “sick.”

*Did your husband ever read or write a book?!  
He is not a man; he is a deadly poison!*

*He was not a husband; he was a poet!  
He wrote his thoughts and read many books ...  
You made me worse in the end,  
You married me to this idiot.  
Sometimes he writes, sometimes he reads,  
sometimes he speaks,  
He speaks with a book every day* [2, 212].

It is very clear from the above verses and the continuation of the satire that a woman is dissatisfied with her husband being very literate and reading day and night. The image of a woman in the satire “Khanbaji, protect me, don’t let him come to me” on the previous page is completely different from the image of a woman in this satire, and each of them is kind of unhappy. If the girl in the first satire is forced to marry a man the same age as her grandfather and is unhappy, the situation of the woman in this satire is even worse. So, the girl in the first poem may have a hope to get rid of it, but this woman’s “disease” is incurable. This disease of ignorance has infected her from the society, and unfortunately, a woman’s attitude to books, reading and learning, in fact, coincides with society’s attitude to education. Women are so accustomed to the violation of their rights, to being judged and beaten in their place, that they are astonished to see what they should actually do.

Or, in another poem, a woman demonstrates how far behind she is by protesting her husband’s reprimand for cursing his eleven-year-old son and sending him to school. (“He is still a child”). This is a great tragedy, because a woman does not know what her duty as a woman and a mother is due to her ignorance, and this is due to her lawlessness. The most dangerous thing is that this situation has become a habit, a common way of life. It seems to a woman that if a child is sent to school, he will soon be spoiled, and even:

*“We are not Armenians to spoil the life of our child,*

*Why send a child who has not yet opened his eyes to school?*

*We have a bad guy, he is educated,  
I will not send my child to school, it was my firm decision*

*It’s not time to learn etiquette yet, let him swear, he is still a child!”* [2, 185].

In all similar situation by calling her educated son-in-law a churl, the woman creates an image of her own level and worldview. Although this situation may seem to us so strange from the modern point of view, it was a real scene of our life at that time, and it could not have been otherwise in the conditions of national and class oppression caused by colonial slavery. Sabir’s ability to see the socio-political problems in the life of the people and to confidently put them forward was reflected in his attitude to women, as in many other issues. The poet, who has a very strong skill to observe, also saw this reality in society and raised the issue of women among the most urgent problems, because the general cultural development of the nation was also related to the solution of this problem. The poet’s ideal in this matter was an educated and caring mother. In his poem “Mother’s Adornment”, he spoke about the fact that a well-educated wife will attract the attention of her child to this path, otherwise the child born without education will be ignorant, and an uneducated child will be miserable in the end:

*“Everyone’s rights must be respected  
In this way man becomes perfect,  
Enlightenment is gained only through science  
The nation’s prestige is growing thanks to science”* [2, 54].

It may be no accident that Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev, one of the philanthropists of his time, opened the first girls’ school in the Muslim East in Baku in 1901 and took an important step in the equality of men and women. Emphasizing the importance of girls’ education, he said: “A man’s education means only an educated man. But a woman’s education means that she will be both an educated woman and a careful mother with progressive mental outlook in the future.” Yes, indeed, a woman’s education means that she will raise a well-educated child for society.

Thus, the enlightened poet came to the conclusion that observing women’s rights and full trust in women is possible only through science, and only through science can the nation gain respect and prestige all over the world. Unfortunately, none of these principles existed at that time. If there were observed

some educated people in a single family, they were discredited at once among the people as “irreligious persons” or unbeliever knowing no bounds, they were called “extremists” or “religious heretics.” Superstition was so ingrained in people’s minds that the very talk of education and enlightenment was met with such sharp opposition and protest. The Congress of Azerbaijani Teachers was held at that time as a result of the efforts of prominent educators who realized the great need for mass literacy and worked selflessly in this field; however, the incident and the very serious views expressed on the education of the population (especially the issue of women’s education) were ridiculed by the general public. In

this regard, we find bitter laughter in Sabir’s poems “Teachers” and “Teacher” Congress”. As can be seen from the following lines:

*“I do not know what good this congress is for us.  
Let’s suffer every year, teachers!  
Last year we suffered and gathered for this meeting,  
How much nonsense we talked there, teachers!”*  
[2,118]

**Conclusion.** As Atatürk, who lived at about the same time as Sabir, said in the connection that “If our women want to be the true mothers of the nation, they must do their utmost to be much intelligent and more virtuous than men.”

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#### Гаффарлі С. К. ЖІНКИ В САТИРІ САБІРУ

У статті проводиться аналіз віршів М.А.Сабіра. Наприкінці ХІХ і на початку ХХ століть права жінок були предметом обговорення у суспільно-політичному житті Азербайджану. Сабір був небайдужий до цього питання і у своїх сатиричних віршах критикував ситуацію та мотиви, що позбавляють жінок прав людини. У статті вперше аналізується вірш Сабіра «Рада відьми дівчатам» та інтерпретуються сатиричні та поетичні принципи у науковому контексті. Показано характерні риси його творчості. Проблеми, поставлені у сатирах Сабіра, аналізуються у тих соціально-політичних подій. Цей період соціально-політичної нерівності та жорстокої експлуатації давав благодатний ґрунт для «примітивних людей нового часу», які розглядали жінок, які живуть в умовах різних поневірянь та обмежень, як задоволення своїх фізичних потреб. Насправді люди, представлені та викриті в поемі Сабіра як «віруючі», були не релігійними діячами, а безграмотними та неосвіченими, тому вони не розуміли, як зганьбили іслам. Таким чином, можна однозначно сказати, що Сабір упіймав у вогні сатири саме «рудобородих», які не наслідують головне настанову, що міститься у священній книзі Ісламу, і роблять у сімейних стосунках, що хочуть, незалежно від часу та обставин. або інші невідповідності (наприклад, різниця у віці), але не вірні. Забобонні люди утискають жінок, не поважають і не люблять їх, не цінують. Вони бачать у жінках лише прибиральниць та служниць. Вони навіть вважають, що особистість, звичаї та здібності жінки більш обмежені з погляду її фізичної будови. Наприклад, на їхню думку, у суспільстві є питання, що визначаються як чоловіча робота чи жіноча робота. Звичайно, з погляду фізичної сили та будови жінки відрізняються від чоловіків тим, що вони можуть робити.

**Ключові слова:** Мірза Алекпер Сабір, поет, поезія, середовище, інтелігент, позиція, правда, народ, проблем, гуманіст, суспільство, просвітитель, виховання