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Turkic world's cultural policy in the context of culture, art and education

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Abstract: Globalization processes taking place in modern world offer ample opportunities for development of the nations with the same ethnogenesis under a unified and common policy. One of the recent developments in this context deserving attention is globalization of Turkic world and a tendency towards formation of a unified Turkic culture. This paper gives a brief overview of Turkic world's culture, tracks the historical chronology of cultural relationships between two most developed Turkic countries, that is Turkey and Azerbaijan, throws light on existing state of affairs and directions for the development of bilateral as well as multilateral cultural cooperation between Turkic countries and reviews from a culturological perspective the role played by such cooperation in formation and evolution of common Turkic culture. Impact of these relationships on common Turkic culture as well as their contribution to the establishment of the content and general principles of Turkic world's cultural policy is also analyzed. This approach then makes it possible to generate of a clear idea about the main provisions of Turkic world's cultural policy, such provisions reflecting the tasks and objectives arising out of various agreements made between above mentioned countries in various fields of culture along with the various treaties and protocols made within TURKSOY's multilateral relationships framework. The paper also analyses the mission of TURKSOY in this regard and activities to be performed by this organization in this direction.

Key words: Turkic culture, cultural globalization, cultural policy, ethnogenesis, Turkic world, TURKSOY

Introduction

Coming together of peoples sharing the same set of genetic factors and their emergence as a unified cultural entity should be considered as one of modern globalization's priorities. Falling apart of the peoples sharing the same origins throughout the course of their long history so far has been one of unwritten laws of "Its Majesty" Historical Evolution and Turkic peoples also didn't escape this common lot. The folklore specialist Huseyn Ismailov puts more detail into this conclusion of ours: "There aren't any Turkic-speaking peoples but there are Turkic peoples. We have the same genetic and ethic ancestry. Today the world once again is steering toward globalization and union. Nowadays we witness formation of associations on economical, political, militarist and even religious grounds. However, the most consolidated among such newly emerging unions will be the ones, resting upon moral consolidation of separated peoples." [8].

In this article the my effort to lay emphasis on the importance of cultural globalization for the Turkic world along with other social vectors of globalization of Turkic peoples sharing the same origins, language and religion and having similar culture, traditions and customs. The formula of such rapprochement was long age mouthed by ancient Turk sage Bilge Kaghan: "Oh Turks, return to your origin, to your Self, for you become strong only when you remain your own Self."

Common-Turkic Culture

Turkic peoples have a great historical past and rich culture. This richness should be well protected and passed on to next generations. As national leader Heydar Aliyev stated in this regard when speaking of the importance of Turkic-speaking countries' leaders: "The identity or similarity of historical past as well as national and cultural traditions of Turkic-speaking peoples having, however, separate states, is a good framework for development of relationships and enhancement of cooperation and offers ample opportunities for further rapprochement of our nations through revival of our common historical heritage. Regardless of the types of documents signed during these summits, the very possibility of bilateral and multilateral meetings of leaders and exchange of views, ideas within their framework, opens the way for the

establishment of closer contacts at economic, cultural, scientific and many other levels with following establishment of closer ties between Turkic peoples” [4, p. 142.]

Far wider than being limited to hero sagas, heroic chronicles and saint tales, the history of Turkic peoples may be considered as an immense fount of ethics and culture that enriched the humanity with its masterpieces of art. Protection and passing of this immense treasure to future generations within the framework of common ethic and cultural values should be considered as one of the goals of Turkic world. This pressing historical challenge should be accepted only with a cultural concept resting upon common Turkic ethic, cultural and artistic values and a cultural policy based on such concept. It would be a mistake to consider the idea of bringing together different, widely separated Turkic civilizations living differing social and political lives within the “Turkic world” framework as a new one. In fact, actuality of this idea has revealed itself many times throughout the history with ever increasing importance. Thus, the tendency towards establishment of cultural relations between the lead Turkic nation - Turkey and Turkic peoples of former USSR was apparent in the foreign cultural policy of this superpower. This relationship especially picked up the pace at the end of 1960s with first official contacts established in the early 1970s.

The monograph “Azerbaijan - Turkey relations” of research scientist Mahir Abdullayev published in 1988 gives a detailed and complex analysis of economic, scientific, technical and cultural relationships between these two countries for the period from 1970s to 1990s and contains scientific comments of the author on the fruitfulness, importance and perspectives of such relationships for Azerbaijan. The monograph throws light upon the peculiarities of cultural relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey during the period when the former was a territorial entity of the latter. The visit of Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel (1967) and Turkish President Turgut Sunay (1969) played a critical part in the establishment of the nature of such relationships. It is worth mentioning in this context the role played by maestro Nizami, composer Arif Melikov, singers Zeynab Khanlarova and Lutviyar Imanov in strengthening of these relationships. Under the conditions of serious restrictions and strictest prohibitions these people of art managed to serve the sacred purpose of preserving the historical affinity between two nations by representing Azerbaijani art and culture in Turkey. Azerbaijan’s distinguished bandleader, maestro Nizami adapted P. I. Tchaikovsky’s Eugene Onegin for stage in Ankara State Opera and Ballet Theatre. At the end 1980s, owing to derestrictions and loosening of Moscow’s control over science and education, Turkic-speaking soviet republics were allowed to establish contacts with Turkey, such contacts being the first signs of formation of world Turkic alliance. Two important events accelerating the relationships between Azerbaijan and Turkey under such new historical conditions were awarding of International Atatürk Peace Prize to Azerbaijani poet and scientist Rafiq Zeka Khandan (1988) and honorary title Honored Artist of Turkey as well as Atatürk Medal (gold) to People’s Poet of Azerbaijan Bahtiyar Vahabzadeh. “As a result of this well-aimed political course a new geographical reality of Turkic world was being formed. Worldwide globalization and intensification of mutual relations have laid the foundation of cultural integration between Turkic-speaking countries” [7, p. 177]. The “Cultural and Scientific Exchange Agreement” concluded in 1989 between Turkey and USSR resulted in conclusion of the Agreement between Turkey and Azerbaijan SSR with the same name on January 10, 1990. Later, the scope of the programme providing for conclusion of such agreements was extended and incorporated all other Turkic-speaking republics. In 1992-1993 Turkish government allocated 2000 scholarship student quota for each of Turkic-speaking republics (600 for secondary-level education and 1400 for tertiary education). Governments of Turkic republics were informed about this decision of Turkish government during the visit of Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel to Turkic republics (from April 27th to May 3rd of 1992) and it was fixed in relevant joint declarations. [1, p. 5].

Turkic world began to experience notable changes with the emergence of five new Turkic states (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) after breakup of the Soviet Union.

The last decade of the 20th century is the period when there were built multilateral relations between Turkic states in all fields. After the fall of the Soviet Union this programme became a priority of Turkic cultural globalization led by Azerbaijan. The programme consisted of “Education and Science”, “Culture and Arts” and “Radio, TV and Cinematography” protocols which establish the framework for joint development of Turkic common cultural values. For instance, the “Education and Science” protocol provides for joint publications and bibliography exchanges (Article 4), scientific publications in the field of archeology, art history, museology and reconditioning of monuments as well as the exchange of specialists and academic staff (Article 8) and etc. The “Culture and Arts” protocol for development of relationships in this field envisages organization of joint culture and arts festivals (Turkey and Azerbaijan weeks) (Article 19), annual

exchange of troupes, stage groups, directors, decorators and actors (Article 22) and etc. as well as the exchange of famous soloists, disk records, audio- and videocassettes (Article 23), organization of international cinema festivals comprising the radio, TV, information and cinematography (Article 35), co-production of movies (Article 36), organization of cinema weeks (Article 37) and etc. [2]. This programme may be considered the model of Turkic world's cultural policy implemented during the 90s of the 20th century as it succeeded to give conceptual reflection of overall culturological landscape of joint development in nearly all fields of culture. The works done within the Programme's framework also yielded rather tangible results. Especially in this regard it would be worth mentioning the fruitful collaboration between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the field of culture. Turkey, for example, implemented a wide range of immediate measures in order to ensure the workforce capacity required for cultural rapprochement resting upon natural mutual attraction, revival of common Turkic values, reorganization of old soviet education system with the aim of bringing it to the conformity with modern standards and provide newly emerged independent Turkic states with qualified workforce. During 1991-1995 1871 Azerbaijani students received higher education in Turkey and 2500 Turkish students - in Azerbaijan. In addition, 221 Azerbaijani students finished their education in Turkish Anatolian High Schools. [5, p. 5]. Also, there were concluded agreements between higher education institutions of the two countries having similar educational profiles (agreements concluded between Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University named after N. Tusi and Istanbul University, Azerbaijan University of Civil Engineering and Erzurum Ataturk University and Istanbul University concluded in 1992). There were concluded also cooperation agreements between: Baku State University named after M. A. Rasolzadeh on one part and Izmir Aegean University, Konya University, "Yuzuncu Yil" University on the other part; between Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts and Mimar Sinan University. This state of affairs had to exert serious influence on formation and strengthening of Turkic-speaking states' union.

It should also be pointed out that the process of Turkic world's globalization has been and is driven by Azerbaijan - Turkey relationships. Strengthening of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey is of a paramount importance for the whole Turkic world as well as from the standpoint of overall processes taking place in modern world. Cultural cooperation between these two countries has a decisive role in terms of attraction of other Turkic-speaking states to this process of Turkic world's unification. Comments of Ruintan Sevinj — a researcher of Azerbaijan - Turkey relations — in this regard is rather illustrative of this truth. She writes: "Favourable geopolitical and geostrategical location of both Azerbaijan and Turkey made them important not only to each other but to the world in general which in turn creates in this time of globalization and integration an opportunity for these two countries to build their future based on historical truth and common cultural values. Cooperation and collaboration between Azerbaijan and Turkey has undergone transformation into strategic alliance through a short, but comprehensive historical process" [9, p. 29]. Without any doubt, the cultural relationship between Azerbaijan and Turkey is not limited to these two neighboring countries and this makes it necessary to intensify the cultural contacts between them. Another factor bringing about the need for such intensification is cultural globalization. "Facing the challenges of globalization, many regional civilizations attempt to find and implement formulae of mutually beneficial relationships. As to closely related, akin civilizations, the importance of solidarity between these is increasing even more rapidly. In this context the Azerbaijani Turks' culture may be considered as a factor leading to formation of common cultural field comprising Turkey along with other nations possessing the same cultural genes. This culture is in the limelight all the time whereas the relations between our countries play a critical part in context." [4, p. 56]. More important than the programmes of student exchange between Azerbaijan and Turkey as well as joint TC and Radio broadcasts or common Turkic alphabet is definition of common goals of common cultural policy and joint development of national culture for it is culture that conditions and determines the character of economic, political, military and alike policies. Therefore, the very beginning of these process leaders of Azerbaijan and Turkey has paid special attention to Turkic context of cultural relations. Especially, summits of leaders of Turkic-speaking states (becoming a tradition now) are of great significance in terms of establishment and development of multilateral relations. These summits play specific role in accomplishment of objectives in the field of enhancing the independence of Turkic states, formation of democratic governments and implementation of relevant political principles. They also have made it possible to define the principles of Turkic world's common cultural policy model. "The summits enhance the existing relationship and cooperation between Turkic peoples in line with specific factors arising out of common history, language and culture and based on respect of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity as well as on the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs and equality" [9, p. 158].

Establishment of TURKSOY in 1993 as a specialized organization focused on cultural affairs of Turkic peoples with the mission identical to that of summits is also a landmark event than gives an impetus to formation of common Turkic world. The main reason behind the establishment of the organization is formation of common Turkic culture. The "Agreement on the principles of establishment and activities of TÜRKSÖY" was signed on July 12, 1993 in Astana by six founding states (also permanent members of the organization) - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Later, Republics of Tatarstan, Bashkiria, along with such territorial subjects of Russian Federation as Tuva, Khakassia, Altay, Sakha and Yakutia as well as North Cyprus and Gagauzia (Gagauz yeri) joined TURKSOY as observer states. From the very day of its establishment the policy of TURKSOY built on culturological concept may be characterized by following provisions:

- Acceptance and approval of humanization and stabilization priorities of international community's ethic development on regional and global level;
- Organization and development on international dialogue and supporting the cultural similarity among the member states of TURKSOY;
- Building friendly relationships and mutual understanding between Turkic peoples and states;
- Intensification of scientific researches into the ethnogenesis, history, literature, culture and arts of Turkic peoples;
- Supporting the study by young generation of their own national history, native language, literature, culture, arts and traditions and etc.

This cultural policy involves the planning of integration in the fields of culture and arts by joint efforts and initiatives of Turkic-speaking states. Within this framework following goals were determined for implementation of Turkic speaking states' common cultural policy:

- Implementation of various programmes and projects that aim for further strengthening and development of relationships between Turkic-speaking states in the fields of culture and arts;
- Promoting common cultural values, historical heritage, pieces of art, traditional sports and folk games;
- Production of TV and Radio programs, documentary films and movies. Popularization of best pieces of culture and arts of Turkic world;
- Organization of joint theatre, music, opera and ballet festivals and other events;
- Organization of fairs, exhibitions, implementation of other measures aiming at the development of arts, including the sculptural arts;
- Publications, including periodicals;
- Organization of mass events and anniversaries for the perpetuation of the memory of eminent and distinguished personalities of Turkic world's history and other landmark events occurred in the field of culture, arts and literature throughout history;
- Organization of international scientific conferences, symposiums and disputes within framework of TURKSOY's aims and objectives.

Based on the above stated, the main principles of common Turkic cultural policy may be phrased as follows: preservation of common Turkic culture and cultural identity, its integration into world civilization and promote peace at regional and global levels by the instrumentality of this culture. Turkey-Azerbaijan relations along with the cooperation within framework of TURKSOY and establishment of other organizations with cultural profile fulfill a coordination function that contributes to formation of common Turkic culture.

TÖMER (Turkce Oyretim Merkezi - Turkish Teaching Center) is an organization that acts in cooperation with universities in Turkey and Turkish embassies in other countries and plays certain role in enhancement of relations between Turkic-speaking states.

TIKA (Turk Ishbirligi ve Kalkinma Idaresi Bashkanligi - Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency) held its 9th Forum in 2001. The organizational structure of this organization includes committees on culture, education and communication. Azerbaijan actively participates in the top level meetings of TIKA.

Such publishing houses as "Qardash Adabiyatlar", "Belge", "Bilig", "Yesevi", "Turk Dunyasi" also play an important role in building of cross-cultural bridges between Turkey and other Turkic peoples. Modern Turkey and its criteria are not limited to religion and language. Various democratic mass organizations of both countries, including trade unions, specialized organizations, sports clubs and etc. also contribute to this cultural integration.

Conclusion

In this paper my reviews from a culturological standpoint such historical process, as globalization taking place in the form of formation of common Turkic culture among Turkic peoples living in different geographical areas but sharing the same cultural origins. Researches have shown the possibility of such globalization within the framework of a common cultural policy. Cultural policy of Turkic world is brand new model which rests upon common historical, ethic, cultural, social and ideological values and principles. Cultural ties between two leading countries of Turkic world - Azerbaijan and Turkey play a critical part in formation of such cultural policy. These ties have both bilateral and multilateral (especially within TÜRKSOY framework) cooperation contexts and may be considered as driving forces of common Turkic culture. In summary, further revival of Turkic world requires further enhancement of joint activities of these two nations along with bringing the cooperation with other Turkic-speaking states to the same level of buoyancy.

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