

# UNESCO'S ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL VALUES (ON THE MATERIAL OF AZERBAIJANI CULTURE AND FOLK ART)

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**Abstract:** This work is dedicated to an important and relevant topic for Azerbaijani cultural studies and political science. This study briefly reveals the essence of the basic concepts included in the main functions of UNESCO, using some specific examples to show the role of the major international organization for the preservation and multiplication of aesthetic values, which is the treasury of national culture and folk art. It follows from the materials of the articles stating that the activity of UNESCO to protect cultural property as objects of the world scale begins with its modernization. In general, this activity is covered by a number of member countries of the Organization. However, both in Russian and English, it is mainly recorded in the resolutions of Summits or Conferences. In them, first, purely theoretical material noticeably prevails over specific facts. Secondly, there is very little information directly in these areas. The following work is intended to fill this gap to a certain extent. In this regard, the following objective is set: accumulating the most striking examples of UNESCO's relations with the Republic, to show its purposeful work in the field of culture and art. A differentiation and unification of currently available information on the stated issue partially helps to achieve the goal. The focus is made on several focal points. Namely, under the flagship of UNESCO, taking into account the resolutions adopted at the Conferences, the cultural policy in modern Azerbaijan covers such areas as the maintenance and development of museums, Houses of Culture in the regional centers of the republic, replenishment of the H.A. Aliyev Foundation with new materials or exhibits, restoration work related to the restoration of antiquities both in the capital and some cities of the republic. Some of the objects discussed in the article are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. In addition, there are such arts in which Azerbaijan at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries has firmly gained popularity all over the world.

**Keywords:** Azerbaijan; UNESCO; culture; foundation; museums; carpet weaving.

## 1 Introduction

On the edge of the third decade of the 21st century, UNESCO, the largest international organization, has more than fifty member states. Historically, the Organization was created as a non-political one. It is mainly in charge of cultural issues - more specifically, the problems of science, education, culture, and art. Admittedly, we must note that depending on the circumstances, the rapidly changing situation in our unstable world, it still has to face some socio-political problems that are impossible to ignore. These are the global challenges of civilization, sometimes going beyond the scope of purely military conflicts and acquiring great resonance; repeated and persistent appeals of member states with various idealistic statements, etc. In case of urgency, the leadership of UNESCO has the right and opportunity to bring this kind of critical issues for discussion in the Convention, Summits, to insert in the agenda of the General Conference - its central body. Subsequently, the decisions taken are enshrined in resolutions. However, this is an exception to the rule, and such functions are assumed by the Organization when 'border situations' arise. After all, it is no secret that there are so many hot spots on the planet right now. Fissures all over the world, in place of the ruins are trying to build a new system. But UNESCO prudently avoids these sharp corners, focusing its main attention on these issues. The main priority of UNESCO's progressive undertakings is to guide, accompany, accredit, and assist in the above-mentioned problems as much as possible. Moreover, the development of various scientific branches, general educational processes, cultural and art history issues are considered in an integrated manner. For the Organization not only staff problems, but above all an integral part of the heritage, which includes oral traditions, languages, some items of material world culture, some kinds of performing arts, knowledge relating to ethical, economic, socio-political and environmental issues of modern life are important. In sum, it means a conglomeration of diverse facts, attributes and phenomena. The protection of cultural property for member states is one of its most important tasks and, frankly speaking, concerns. This includes the protection of ancient monuments in cities, protected areas, the replenishment of paintings and statues in museums, the trusteeship of foundations that are purposefully engaged in the preservation and multiplication of the heritage of the republics. In accordance with the principles of the UNESCO Universal

Declaration of Human Rights and the UNESCO Charter on the Rights of Persons belonging to National Minorities, the Organization periodically sends to the states responsible persons in the fields of music, theater, or dance with the missionary task of maintaining ties with the national community. To briefly show how this activity is regulated by UNESCO in relation to contemporary Azerbaijan in this area is the main goal of our article.

The goal of this research is leading to formulating a number of problems and solutions:

- Identify the elements of international cooperation of Azerbaijan with UNESCO in the field of culture and art;
- Review the most relevant aspects of the Organization's assistance to the Republic of Azerbaijan in the restoration of monuments of architecture and national art
- Identify the key factors on which today's productive dialogue of civilizations, conducted under the auspices of UNESCO, is based;
- Point out the positive moments of synchronous interaction between UNESCO and Azerbaijan in solving cultural problems in recent years.

## 2 Materials and Method

The universal method of the "cultural pyramid" primarily contributes to the realization of these tasks. In this article, it is taken as a basis for two reasons:

- 1) It assists in classifying the material.
- 2) It promotes the development of vital modern technologies in the development of Azerbaijani culture. In part, the typological method is also used, which allows us to conduct research in parallel in the field of culture and art, both separately and in the aspect of comparison.

As the main subject we used specific facts drawn from several sources: relevant Internet sites, monographs, but mainly from the current press of recent years. We see the practical value of the article in the fact that some of the information can be dosed to be used in the lectures of the humanities universities of Azerbaijan in the specialty of "Cultural Studies".

## 3 Results and Discussion

In the highest ranks of the authorities they are aware that culture is an integral part of the public policies of member states. It is a universal cushion to reduce the intensity of certain social problems in society, the likelihood of which, unfortunately, has been increasing in some states in recent years. Objects of cultural significance, in turn, are one of the links of cultural policy as a whole. It is carried out in Azerbaijan as well. Coming under the supervision and jurisdiction of UNESCO, this cultural line in particular acquires a purposeful character.

### *Cultural Concepts in the Era of Globalization*

At the outset, it should be pointed out that the spectrum of cultural issues is very broad. It includes numerous problems of art criticism, which become especially acute and urgent in the era of globalization. Our time is characterized by mass informatization and a certain mechanistic way of thinking. In a word, there is an upsurge of technological progress in all spheres of social life, including those of interest to the science of culture, education, and art. The existence of such dangers to humanity is signaled by prominent German cultural sociologists F. Brodel and K. Jaspers. In their time, they developed the concept of the so-called "Axial Time". Its essence was the synchronization of cultural and political processes, which are present in varying degrees at different stages of society. In addition, Jaspers symbolically adds: "The consequences of this mechanization stem from the absolute superiority of mechanical predestination. Man himself becomes a type of raw material subject to

purposeful processing. Therefore, he who used to be the substance of the whole and its meaning, man, now becomes the means" [10, p. 245]. The danger was also written about by representatives of different trends in literature, philosophy, culture, politics (S. Huntington, F. Fukuyama, Z. Brzezinski). Therefore, the question becomes a serious one: should we uphold the cultural values of past epochs or manifest new ones, sometimes sharply contrasting with them? UNESCO argues that it is necessary to preserve the best traditions, which have passed the test of time and do not contradict modern national interests and ambitions. At the same time, cultural processes, like progress, cannot be stopped, and the renewal of spiritual values of a particular nation is natural. The Azerbaijani government fully agrees with this position. In the 21st century, the republic is actively involved in international cooperation of countries, supervised by UNESCO. After Azerbaijan achieved independence in 1991, it has become meaningful to address the spiritual foundations of society, including the rich, centuries-old traditions of national culture. One of the modern Azerbaijani cultural scientists T. B. Mutallimov states: "Spirituality, which has a certain influence on the social and individual forms of human activity, requires a serious philosophical analysis, since they — these forms — are largely determined by the national spirit of the people, which, being the core of the existence of the ethnic group, also determines the logic of its further development" [12, p.88]. This development, in its turn, is impossible without the choice of the general strategy of society. This is the main topic of our discussion. It is well known that some of the European member states of UNESCO these days have abandoned multiculturalism with its main features. Azerbaijan has chosen a different path. In the republic, it is officially, publicly and from high tribunes defined as a general government line. At the same time, multiculturalism represents a wide field for the study of issues directly related to the preservation of original cultural values. One of the drafts of the Concept "Azerbaijan - 2020: A Look into the Future", which was recognized by UNESCO, states: "In order to maintain the cultural heritage and effective management in the republic the necessary measures will be taken to promote the rich customs and traditions of the Azerbaijani people, preserve national holidays and rituals, develop the rich traditions of fine, decorative and miniature art, and study the samples of Azerbaijani art preserved in the world's authoritative museums. This actively contributes to the promotion and popularization of national fine arts in UNESCO, ISESCO, TURKSOY, and other international organizations".

#### *UNESCO and the Museums of Azerbaijan*

Museums, it seems, should be mentioned in a special way. Expert and financial assistance in the creation and modernization of national museums and ensuring their functioning is an actual form of cultural policy of the state, which determines the level of self-identity of the Azerbaijani people, while ensuring a close historical connection of the present society with its original roots and national traditions. Many scholars - cultural scientists, politicians, historians, and art historians - are convinced that the preservation of museums takes a truly grandiose scale these days. As A. A. Rajabli points out, within UNESCO, "museums serve citizens not only in one country", but in all countries. [14, p. 281]. Indeed, Azerbaijan's state policy on the preservation of museums (of course, paintings and exhibits in them) is an integral part of international cultural relations. As W. Cummins correctly pointed out, "museums around the world are capable of taking an active part in shaping public opinion in different regions of the planet. And international exhibitions, in turn, represent an important form of direct cultural dialogue between states and peoples" [6, p. 18-19]. In early 2017, a conference in Paris spoke, among other things, about the fact that UNESCO is now actively supporting more than fifty museums around the world [16]. The presentations at the conference often dealt with qualified training of restorers, providing expert data on new and traditional restoration technologies. The most acute issue here was the exchange of information about museums (including through the publication and with the support of UNESCO of the magazine "Museum International" in English and French). The

UNESCO World Heritage Center (WHC) directs this work. It was founded in 1992, and until now it has been developing an integrated interdisciplinary strategy on the subject. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, the WHC has a unique database on the world's museums, as well as on numerous cultural and natural sites. The WHC has at its disposal numerous normative documents, on the basis of which centralized monitoring is carried out, determining the condition of museum exhibits included in the "World Heritage" body. The most active contacts in this regard are maintained with the intergovernmental bodies of UNESCO — the International Committee of Museums (ICOM) and the "International Committee for the Protection of Monuments" (ICOMOS). Clearly, museums are an important part of culture and art, a component that systematically reflects the needs of its member countries, while determining the dynamics and social trends. It is difficult to name a reasonable alternative to high spiritual culture. It determines a great deal in the life of any modern civilized society. It is what the creative and fruitful activities of both the official representatives of UNESCO and the governing staff of its member countries and ordinary citizens are based on. High level of culture, as the unified beginning of most scientific disciplines, education and enlightenment, is able to lead a civilized society to broad horizons of well-being, thus ensuring a dignified life for all mankind. The maintenance of spiritual culture and national art in the states entrusted to UNESCO is one of the central tasks ratified in resolutions and enshrined in the Constitution. However, as a rule, these tasks are initially put for discussion in public speeches at meetings, Summits, Conferences held under the auspices of UNESCO. Throughout the years of the Organization's existence, of course, there have been many; let us point out the decisions of the most important ones, directly related to the topic of our article. The Stockholm and Prague Conferences played a major role. In this regard, the main conclusions, generalizations, and recommendations of the reports of the Stockholm Conference and the International Expert Group for an Integrated Study of the Dynamics of World Cultures in the Globalization Era formed the basis of the text of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. The Declaration was adopted by consensus in 2001 (approved by order on December 15, 2001, at the 31st session of the General Conference). The approval of this order was carried out on the initiative of Russia and France.

We mentioned this declaration for a reason. Despite the fact that more than twenty years have passed since its adoption, for Azerbaijani cultural historians and political scientists it is obvious that it is still a unique international act in its significance. Azerbaijan, having taken certain points into account, thus, first of all, joins itself to the most acute and urgent problems of the world community. The second reason is to openly declare its intention to join together in a common effort to counter some of the negative challenges to the cultural diversity of the entire planet in the current era of globalization. So the document is seen as an appeal of Member States to the world community to further stimulate a tolerant dialogue between cultures and civilizations. Within the framework of UNESCO's mandate, the government of the republic is primarily interested in those laws in which the cultural context is of a humanistic, universal nature. Beside the Stockholm conference, the materials of the Paris conference played an important role in the issue under analysis. It seems to us that there is a visible connection between the two landmark events. For example, this conference specifically states: "The international community recognizes the highly relevant importance of UNESCO in protecting the rich cultural heritage of its Member States. A venerable international Organization has publicly and demonstrably stated the utmost urgency to combat intentional destruction of this heritage in any form so that its direct transmission to succeeding generations can be assured". UNESCO's action in this direction today, according to the Paris Conference, is therefore truly universal. Basically the same UNESCO cultural line has also been directed toward the reconstruction of religious sites, or rather monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Kosovo, the restoration of ancient Palestinian monuments in Nablus, Hebron, Gaza Strip,

Jericho, Jerusalem, and those that suffered during the interethnic carnages in Africa and in the East. As an aspect of this line of work at UNESCO, the aforementioned conferences considered the possibility of preparing a declaration on the negative consequences of the intentional destruction of cultural heritage, which, if adopted, could be the basis for a binding international legal instrument on the subject. As an example, to restore 13 Christian and Muslim religious and cultural monuments in Kosovo alone, international donors have offered to amount to some ten million dollars for the repair of 13 monuments damaged during the armed conflict. In September 2006, UNESCO also dispatched a mission of certified experts to make a preliminary assessment of the damage caused to Lebanese cultural monuments by the Israeli armed invasion. Azerbaijan occupies a modest place among this list. The reports on the need to cherish certain cultural heritage sites were read from the high rostrum of the Paris Conference. Among the public speeches, the most outstanding were those devoted to the promotion of popular genres of national music. It turned out that UNESCO became aware of the facts of dissemination of Azerbaijani dances and rituals in its individual member countries. Moreover, they were included in the program of some festivals, folk festivals, which aroused a certain interest. According to the materials of some speakers, it became known that they were very sincere, genuine in their audio-visual contact with such music, which in a number of countries of Europe and Asia was new, unaccustomed. It was about such genre of Azerbaijani music as mugham. UNESCO, coordinating this interest with its powers, also gave its own assessment. The organization actually agreed with the opinion of experts and ordinary people that this is a very unique genre, which should be popularized and disseminated, not only in the East but also in its European member states.

#### *Activities of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and UNESCO*

For this purpose, a special Foundation named after former President of the Republic Heydar Aliyev was established in Azerbaijan at the end of 2004. Since then it has been registered with UNESCO as a collection of cultural property. Practical part of work of Foundation consists of different types of documents. They contain a lot of information of political, socioeconomic, and ideological orientation, but for the above-mentioned reason they are not directly related to our subject. Therefore, we will focus only on the ethical and cultural themes, reflecting UNESCO's connection with Azerbaijan. We can confidently say that there is no civilized state these days that is not aware of the role and importance of the numerous cultural projects of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, a whole series of charitable activities of President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva of Azerbaijan in this process.

Since 2004 and up to now, the country has been realizing its bold and grandiose projects. In one of the monographs, we read that "The Heydar Aliyev Foundation was created based on the urgent need to express respect and reverence for the memory of national leader Heydar Aliyev, to reflect his rich spiritual and moral heritage, to emphasize the importance of new philosophical ideas and trends for Azerbaijan" [11, p. 92]. Accession to Azerbaijan is not a coincidence. Firstly, it is a tribute to the memory of a man, who in this republic is rightly considered a brilliant politician and public figure, a national leader of his people. Secondly, Heydar Aliyev paid much attention to the development of science, education, culture, and art. There is a unique literature about this aspect of his activity, not only in Azerbaijan, but also in Russia, as well as in some European countries. This talent is also appreciated in UNESCO. Thirdly, as it seems to us, the Foundation would not have its true value if its cultural values on art were not accessible for representatives of various nations. Filling the Fund with new information and national art objects is an active support of cultural diversity. This is one of the important principles of the strategy of modern independent Azerbaijan, a radical way to expand the spiritual space. The Foundation is headed by First Lady of Azerbaijan Mehriban Aliyeva. As a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and head of the Foundation, she actively promotes the expansion of cultural and political relationships between

countries. The meeting of the Fund under her leadership is a kind of "productive cultural genesis", which, as before, today is also actively involved in the harmonious development of national cultures. Scientists, representatives of various professions and the advanced part of the interested population of Azerbaijan can freely familiarize themselves with the proceeds to it. Most of the materials are directly related to the development of national art. Over the past years, the Foundation has actually turned into an organization for the preservation and development of art objects — the cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people, the propaganda of passing on to a new generation the ideas of statehood and national philosophy, which is often referred to as "Azerbaijanism" in the local press. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation is a symbolic organization of the Azerbaijani culture, which, as in the past, has been making an important contribution not only to Azerbaijan's socio-economic development, but also to the arts and culture. Being the basic form in development of art, it annually implements parallel projects of national scale in the fields of education, health, enlightenment, culture, sport, science, latest technologies, social life, ecology, etc. Among the radical ways of expressing solidarity and tolerance, there are restorations at the expense of the peacekeeping mission of the Heydar Foundation's staff. In France, for example, it financed the restoration of some ancient monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2007. Monuments of great national importance have suffered from time and negative climatic conditions over the past two centuries. In our opinion, it is significant that the restoration, financed by the Foundation, took place in Paris, near the Louvre, i.e., in the homeland of unique paintings and sculptures. It is interesting to note that in 2009 one of such projects was named "Address of Tolerance — Azerbaijan". From the state budget, the Foundation allocated financial resources for the restoration of five stained-glass windows at Strasbourg Cathedral. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of these events. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said: "We are restoring all religious monuments, and Azerbaijan is a country where religions and peoples who have always lived in peace and harmony intersect in close commonwealth" [13]. Azerbaijanis' tolerance, expressed in respect for other cultures and religions, can be confirmed by a number of examples. Thus, on September 29, 2011, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation donated fifty thousand euros to restore the Berlin Castle, which was destroyed and then burned down during World War II. In 2013, the "Hall of Philosophers" at the Capitoline Museums in Rome was restored with the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. There was also assistance in the restoration of several sections of the Louvre gallery called "Roman Catacombs". In addition, in the same year, restorers financed the construction of the bridge of friendship "Azerbaijan – Russia" in Astrakhan, and from there members of the Foundation went to Ulyanovsk, where they were directly engaged in the capital repair and improvement of secondary school No. 78. Nevertheless, the list of charity actions of Heydar Aliyev Foundation is huge, as during fifteen years (from 2006 to 2021 inclusively) it directly participated in restoration of more than fifty religious, historical, and cultural monuments in Azerbaijan and over forty in different countries of the world. Besides this, the members of this Foundation, traveling around the world, also annually organize Days of Culture of Azerbaijan republic. A curious fact: on August 14, 2017 in Minsk, residents of the capital and foreign guests had the opportunity to get acquainted with the national Azerbaijani cuisine. In particular, it was about dolma. The question, although unpretentious, but by no means is idle. Firstly, it is a very rare treat for the Belarusians. Secondly, for many decades there has been a dispute between Armenian and Azerbaijani cooks about belonging to their own nation. "On December 23, 2017, the twelfth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Cultural Heritage recognized dolma as a national Azerbaijani tradition" [7]. In parallel, Azerbaijani music festivals are periodically held in Russia and Belarus, and pavilions are opened in the world's most prestigious exhibition halls. It has been calculated by social experts and published on the official website of President Ilham Aliyev that from 2011 to the second decade of 2017, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation held more than 250 image events of various kinds. In terms of the chosen topic

of our article, we note that the activities of the Foundation are constantly under the responsibility of UNESCO. In addition, the Organization oversees the activities of several other communities, for example: "State Media Support Fund under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan", "Council of State Support for Non-Governmental Organizations", "International Baku Center for Multiculturalism", etc. Everyone at UNESCO is conscious of the significant contribution the Azerbaijani people make to this fund. And it is natural and logical. As H. Aliyev noted, "the people with high culture will always go forward, live and develop" [9, p. 59]. After all, Azerbaijan is a country where, along with Azerbaijanis, the Avars, Udi, Armenians, Lezgians, Russians, Turks, Jews, Talyshs, Kurds, and other nationalities lived in conditions of friendship, peace and brotherhood, literally were sharing the grief and hardship of each other. A number of publications on UNESCO state that supporting linguistic and cultural diversity in member countries is one of the main principles of work. Azerbaijan is no exception, for which such "cultural polyphony" reflects the national heritage. H. Aliyev said: "The more nations the state unites, the richer it is, because each of them has a real opportunity to make their personal contribution to the world civilization, culture, and art" [9, p. 71]. Indeed, it is impossible to implement and defend the principles of national policy in science, culture, education, art without the preservation and augmentation of traditional spiritual values of any people. UNESCO offers to protect and strengthen them in every possible way. They can be both secular and religious. Much depends on the mentality of a nation. Otherwise there can be a separation from national roots, and consequently from culture. H. A. Aliyev asserted: "We Azerbaijanis will never abandon our faith, our religion, and using these moral sources, we will build our future". [6, p. 111]. There is no way to overestimate UNESCO's role in preserving for posterity such world-famous sites as architectural heritage. Those include, for example, Yellowstone National Park, the world-famous Statue of Liberty in the States, the British architectural urban complex Stonehenge, the Kremlin, and Lake Baikal. Accreditation over the largest Russian structure or water area is objectively understandable and justified from both architectural and environmental points of view. The Kremlin is not only the flagship of Moscow, but also the heart of Russia. Lake Baikal is a water body of crystal purity, requiring constant care by people. UNESCO monitors it as well.

#### *UNESCO and reconstruction work in the cities of Azerbaijan*

Nowadays, UNESCO also oversees the cities of Azerbaijan. The capital of the republic occupies a certain place. Several architectural sites, which without exaggeration can be called masterpieces, distinguished by their unique ornamentation and original artistic structure, have been taken under protection. Ramiz Abutalybov, an eminent international diplomat, culture expert and political scientist who lived in Russia and Europe for many years, confessed in one of his interviews: "I have traveled around the world on official missions from the governments of various countries. In this case, I noticed with my Russian and foreign colleagues that Baku has always been a place for various cultural events of great importance. And Azerbaijan, being a part of the USSR, as well as in our days, has always sought to demonstrate its ancient culture and history to the progressive mankind". [1, p. 112-113]. After all, there are numerous monuments and most important sites of world significance in Baku, which are protected by UNESCO. It is noteworthy that they have not been demolished for decades, despite all degrees of social tension, all sorts of political shifts and trends. List of sites is very large. Let us mention the most grandiose buildings by their scale. In 1997, Icheri Sheher Citadel was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. In the following year, the Maiden Tower came under the auspices of UNESCO. Today it is unthinkable that no delegation, whether tourist or at high governmental level, has not visited these sites under the guidance of a guide. They are laden with numerous legends, echo the tales of antiquity and enrich the knowledge of foreigners about the capital of the republic — Baku as a whole. However, there are other cities in Azerbaijan that are under the supervision of UNESCO. We will not overload the article with

enumerations. Let us say a few words about the most striking event, which, in our opinion, has an unusual history. Until 1988, the oldest city of Azerbaijan, rightly nicknamed by many witnesses "the second Switzerland" — Shusha, was included in the list of UNESCO. For nearly thirty years, located in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, the city in the world media was considered a "neutral zone". By no means intervening in the conflict and thus not substituting for the functions of the UN, the EU or the decisions of the Minsk Group, UNESCO has adhered to the status of the CoHE. From November 2020, UNESCO resumed its peacekeeping mission, limited to the scope of its official mandate. Starting from the summer of 2022, the restoration of ancient monuments in Shusha is under the supervision of UNESCO. There are many of them and, of course, they are of cultural significance to the republic. The forced interruption on the part of the Organization is explained by purely historical factors, more precisely, the objective circumstances prevailing in this area. The representatives were waiting for a peaceful resolution of the issue. These and other facts are indisputable evidence of Azerbaijan's cooperation with UNESCO for many years. Elsewhere we read: "On August 29, 2021, President Ilham Aliyev and First Vice President Mehriban Aliyeva visited Shusha, where they participated in the opening ceremony of key cultural monuments and other sites formerly under UNESCO protection. The President and First Lady inaugurated the Mausoleum Museum of famous Azerbaijani poet Molla Panah Vagif after necessary repair and reconstruction works. Then the opening ceremony of the renovated house-museum of People's Artist of Azerbaijan Byul-Byul was held. The rebuilt monument to the great composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov was also inaugurated. Within the visit to Shusha, the President and First Lady were familiarized with exhibits displayed at the 'Karabakh — pearl of Azerbaijani culture' exhibition and a number of other monuments arranged by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. It was suggested that all the monuments and museums in Nagorno-Karabakh be placed under the direct protection of UNESCO" [3, p. 2]. Impressive one is geography of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation's reconstruction works. This kind of work is a manifestation of the best original qualities of Azerbaijani people. And it is logical. "According to Interpol, for the second decade of the 21st century there was a marked increase in the scale of destruction of national cultural heritage in the world. Unfortunately, this is the result of armed and other kinds of conflicts. UNESCO, based on the laws of the Convention developed in 1970, providing its member countries with the legal and practical framework, is trying to prevent such phenomena, as well as illicit trafficking of cultural and historical values" [4, p. 15]. A strong connection is also visible in the scientific field, when the city becomes an object of observation from a domestic angle, but it is research. Thus, under the banner of UNESCO, an international conference "Language and the City" was held in Baku in September-October 1981. It is noteworthy that most of the reports delivered at this conference were devoted to the development of youth culture in Azerbaijan. In the following years, it had resonance, and an international symposium on the same topic was held in Baku in 1983. Leadership of UNESCO in Paris also got acquainted with some most valuable Azerbaijani manuscripts. The photo exhibition was held in 1984 for representatives of UNESCO and honorary guests of the capital city on the theme of art, more exactly, on the French "forms and images", designed by R. Napier. In 1985, some of the photographs were shown at an exhibition in London. The honor of opening this exhibition in the presence of high members of UNESCO was awarded to academician M. Useinov and the architect R. Aliyev, known in Azerbaijan.

#### *Carpet weaving as a national art*

We would like to conclude our article with the development of such folk art of Azerbaijan as carpet weaving. That is a special page of women's needlework, which in recent years has received high marks from experts and prestigious awards at various international exhibitions. Folk art has its own remarkable prehistory. From the first day of its existence, Azerbaijan Carpet Museum paid great attention to the study of cultural heritage related to carpet weaving. Being a major scholarly center, the

museum regularly holds international conferences that bring together artists and collectors from different countries. One of the first steps in this direction was the museum's participation in the preparation of international symposiums on the art of oriental carpets. "Most of the symposia were organized at one time by the AR government, the Ministry of Culture, the Institute of Architecture and Art with the direct assistance of the UNESCO Secretariat" [2, p. 344]. As of 2010, the traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet making has become directly under the supervision of UNESCO. This was the continuation of Azerbaijan's long-standing policy of integrating national cultural values into the world space. The 16th of November 2010 is the date of including the carpet into the list. In alliance with UNESCO, Interpol and the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Azerbaijani Carpet Museum held a series of international seminars and conferences in Baku: "Legal Instruments for the Protection of Cultural Heritage" (2001); 50th Anniversary of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (2004); "UNIDROIT Convention on the Theft or Illegal Export of Cultural Property (2004)"; "Museum Databases against Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property (2008)". On 17 February 2011 an event was held on the inclusion of the art of traditional Azerbaijani carpet weaving in the above-mentioned UNESCO list. Abulfaz Garayev, the Minister of Culture and Tourism, reported that "the 5th session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage was held in Nairobi (Kenya), where the document submitted by Azerbaijan was considered and the decision on the inclusion of Azerbaijani carpet in the relevant list was made" [5, p. 20]. Therefore, we can safely assert that the protection of cultural values is a priority in the policy of Azerbaijan in the framework of UNESCO. One of the drafts of the Concept "Azerbaijan - 2020: A Look into the Future", which was recognized by UNESCO, states: "Necessary measures will be taken to promote the rich customs and traditions of the Azerbaijani people in order to preserve the cultural heritage and effectively manage the Organization. Important included issues in UNESCO's functions imply the task of preserving national holidays and rituals, developing rich traditions of fine, decorative and miniature art, studying the samples of Azerbaijani art preserved in the world's authoritative museums and confirming their belonging to Azerbaijan, promoting and popularizing the fine arts also in ISESCO, TURKSOY, and other international organizations" [5].

#### 4 Conclusion

Facts and results presented in this article allow drawing some conclusions and generalizations. An introduction outlines the main issues falling directly under UNESCO's responsibility. Practice and life shows that the Member States increasingly need the real help of this Organization, which was originally created as a non-political one and to this day regulates the activities of countries in humanitarian areas. This same section also summarizes UNESCO's role in relations with Azerbaijan in preserving national culture and the arts. The introductory part is symptomatic also includes the purpose and objectives of the study novelty, methodology, sources and practical relevance. The section "Cultural Concepts in the Age of Globalization" reveals in essence the fundamental principles of UNESCO's activity in the period of globalization. It is a mass informatization of production, press and other kinds of materials, without which today it is unthinkable to imagine both the development of dialogue between UNESCO and Azerbaijan in the designated area, and the synchronization of cultural processes in general. In the next section, we talk about UNESCO's protection of the enormous national wealth collected in the numerous museums of Azerbaijan. This is a true treasury, sometimes going beyond the national and acquiring a global humanistic significance. It was specifically pointed out that keeping all kinds of exhibits and various art specimens is an urgent task for the republic. UNESCO's concern for the preservation of museums in the territory of Azerbaijan is extremely important and necessary for the development of the culture of the nation. The following is a description of the role of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and UNESCO.

The history of its creation is briefly given and then (within the framework of the article) the main stages of its activity are reviewed. Some principles that UNESCO relies on in its work, which is reflected in the activities of the Foundation, are mentioned. First of all, it is to uphold the signs of the national policy of the republic in the field of science, culture, education, art, which is confirmed by annual replenishment of the H.A. Aliyev Foundation with the latest materials in these fields. It is about the spectrum of reconstruction work in various cities of Azerbaijan. Being under the permanent supervision of UNESCO, it is supervised by means of certain measures. Among these, in addition to the feasible funding from the Organization, there are the missionary activities of individual representatives of UNESCO. Their main task is to supervise those architectural objects of urban landscapes in the republic, which are of special value, protected by the state. Finally, the fifth and final section of the article is devoted to carpet weaving, a field which rightly and without exaggeration is considered the subject of national pride of the Azerbaijani population. Specific dates and facts are given on the materials of international seminars and UNESCO conferences, which testify to the high awards received by the masters of their craft. It was found out that Azerbaijani carpets in different years and up to now have received international recognition at numerous exhibitions and works in this field of art are highly valued in the Organization.

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#### Primary Paper Section: A

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