

THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN NORTHERN AZERBAIJAN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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Abstract. Research on the main development course and characteristics of the National Liberation Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century in Azerbaijan is important in the light of the decolonization discourse. This study analyzes religious-philosophical (idealistic), atheistic-Marxist, also enlightenment, national-democratic and social-democratic directions, existed for solving the political problems of this era. Moreover, the nature of political-ideological, socio-philological aspects of these directions has been studied.

Before the first Russian revolution (1905-1907) and during the years of the revolution, the political and ideological situation of Northern Azerbaijan became complex and contradictory. Especially after the first Russian revolution, the political and ideological life of the country mainly developed in three directions: 1) National enlightenment romanticism (realists, romantics), 2) National democratic direction (Islamism, Turkism, modernism and etc.), 3) Social democratic trends and Marxism (national revolutionaries, Menshevism, Bolshevism, Socialist Revolutionaries). The results of the study show that although all three directions played a unique role in the national liberation movement of Azerbaijan, the national democratism was a major course. At the same time, this paper scrutinize the conditions, as well as the factors that existed in the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic¹ and led to the end of its existence.

Keywords: *First Russian revolution, Nationalism, Democracy, Social-democracy, National Enlightenment, Transcaucasia Seym, National Independence, Republic of Azerbaijan*

INTRODUCTION

After the Gulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828) peace treaties, the north lands of Azerbaijan fell under the colonial rule of Tsarist Russia. As a result of administrative reforms in the 1860-1870s, these lands were divided into three provinces (Baku, Elizavetopol and Yerevan) and the Zakatala Okrug, which became Special Okrug in 1903. In fact, along with the country, the nation was divided into parts. The population of Northern Azerbaijan, who never agreed with colonial dependence on tsarist Russia,

¹ In the declaration of independence on May 28, 1918, the name of first republic indicated as the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. However in the most of archival documents it is mentioned as the Republic of Azerbaijan and based on this, further this article uses the latter.

fought for the restoration of national rights. At the turn of the 20th century, the Turks of Northern Azerbaijan, in order to regain their national freedom, fought in several directions: 1) The interests of national capital or the desire to create an independent national economy; 2) The struggle for the national rights of Azerbaijani Turks in the State Duma; 3) Creation of National organizations and parties; 4) Revival of the national press, 5) Development of the Azerbaijani Turkic language against the backdrop of an increase in the number of national schools; 6) A new stage in the development of national literature, acting as the embodiment of national philosophical thought.

For many decades, the policy of “divide and rule” led to the fact that in the early years of the 20th century, Azerbaijani intellectuals were divided into groups supporting the ideas of a constitutional monarchy or Marxism, linking the country’s fate with Russia, as well as “Islamic unity” or “Turkic unity” who believed in unification with the Ottoman Empire. In particular, before the First Russian Revolution of 1905 and during the years of revolution (1905-1907), the ideas of Islamism and Turkism (unification with the Ottomans) and liberal democracy with social democrats (continue with Russia) were widespread among the Azerbaijani intelligentsia. In this sense, the issue of the revival and development of the North Azerbaijani Turkic people in the first ten years of the twentieth century had largely two directions. Part of the intelligentsia considered Turkism and Islamism as the main principles in the renewal of the people and was turned to the Ottoman Empire, while the other part, accepting social democracy or liberal democracy as the basis, was for preservation within Russia. At that time, there were no ideas of unification with the Qajarid Iran or independence among the intelligentsia.

Similarities and contradictions between these ideological directions lie at the basis of the national idea of Azerbaijan and its obvious embodiment of the first republic in Azerbaijan. Although the ideas of social democracy and liberal democracy could not play the same role as Turkism and Islamism, they also have a certain role in creating the ideological basis of the first republic. In my opinion, the nature of the national liberation movement and the directions of its development seem to contradict each other, but in many cases these “contradictions” are embodied in one. In this sense, the contrasts that existed at that time between different movements in Azerbaijan and their authors are not difficult to understand.

The purpose of this study is to show the contradictions in different directions of the national idea of the Azerbaijani Turks, that is, social democratic, liberal democratic, national democratic, Islamism, Turkism, positivist and others. It should be noted that the bearers of these ideas, under the influence of domestic or foreign trends, wanted to serve the interests of the nation. The main principle is about loyalty to national and universal values. These ideas had a very serious impact on philosophical and public opinion of the time. In any case, the development of national organizations and the national capital, or the national press and national language were connected in one or another way. Here we intend to consider such important issues as national capital, national press, national organizations, but without touching on their detailed study, we mainly analyze important points that influenced socio-political thought.

Socio-economic Factors and Demography

At the beginning of the 20th century, one of the factors that most seriously influenced the course of socio-political and cultural processes was the development of the national economy and the emergence of national capital against its background. Building national investment in the economy, especially in the oil industry, has not been easy. Among those who took their place in the oil industry of Baku were not only Russians, but also English, Jewish, German, Swedish and Armenian oil magnates [Azərbaycan tarixi (2008): 27-28]. On the eve of the First World War (1914-1918), about 80 percent of all Russian oil was produced in the Absheron-Baku oil fields, of which up to 65 percent was produced by six foreign plants [Azərbaycan tarixi (2008): 32-33]. In 1914, the oil industry of Azerbaijan was mainly in the hands of three international monopolies: Shell, the Nobel Brothers and the Russian General Oil Company (Oil). They “controlled 86 percent of the total share capital of the oil industry and 60 percent of the oil produced in the Russian Empire” [Azərbaycan Kommunist Partiyasının öçerkləri (1986): 219]. Turkish capital in Baku oil was represented by H.Z. Tagiyev, M. Nagiyev, M. Mukhtarov, 49 of 167 oil industrial enterprises, that is, 29.3%, were under their patronage. However, although the figure seems large, the situation in total oil production was changing in favor of foreign companies.[Hüseyn Baykara (1992): 42]

Beginning in the late 19th century, significant growth in the economy of Northern Azerbaijan, especially the development of the oil industry, affected demographic growth and urban development. The colonial authorities were not interested in increasing the local population in large cities. In accordance with the “City Charter”, the main place in the city’s self-government bodies was occupied not by representatives of the local Turkic-Muslim population, but by Russians, Armenians and representatives of other nationalities. By decree of the Tsar in 1900, 50% of the seats in the City Duma were to be taken by representatives of the Muslim population, but this did not happen.

According to the population census of Tsarist Russia in 1897, 1,805,788 people lived in Northern Azerbaijan (excluding Zagatala district). M.Kh. Baharly, who was skeptical about this statistical information, wrote that some members of the population did not participate in the census due to being on summer pastures or evading military service or taxes. For this reason, Baharly suggested that the population of Northern Azerbaijan was 2,150,000 in 1897 and 2,861,862 in 1917 [Vəliyev (Baharlı) M. H. (1993): 14-15]. Baharly writes: “According to the national composition, the population of Azerbaijan is divided in the following order: 1 million 952 thousand, or 68.2% are Muslim peoples: Turks - 1 million 696 thousand; Tats – about 70 thousand; Avars - about 50 thousand; Lezgins - about 50 thousand; Kurds - about 20 thousand; Small peoples of Dagestan - about 16 thousand; Armenians – 622 thousand, or 21.7%; Russians and Ukrainians - 214.9 thousand, or 7.5%;...” [Ibid, 15]. These statistics once again confirm that even despite the policy of population resettlement that took place on the part of tsarism, they could not influence the quantitative advantage Turkic-Muslim population of Northern Azerbaijan.

The First Russian Revolution and Azerbaijan

At the beginning of the 20th century, along with the defeat in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905), the inability to get rid of the global economic crisis (1900-1903), the expansion of the national liberation and labor movement put the tsarist in a difficult

situation. On January 9, 1905, Nicholas II, instead of listening to the complaints of thousands of people addressed to him, was unable to solve the problem [Huseyn Baykara (1992): 101]. Tsarism used ethnic clashes to prevent the revolutionary movement and distract the attention of the population. Fearing the strengthening of the revolutionary Marxist and national democratic movement in Northern Azerbaijan, Tsarist Russia encouraged the Armenian-Muslim conflict (1905-1906) in the South Caucasus region. The Turks of Northern Azerbaijan and all Muslims living in Northern Azerbaijan as a whole suffered from this [Məmmədov İsmayıl (2005): 327].

On February 18, 1905, the forced statement of Tsar Nicholas II on the preparation of the State Duma project mobilized national forces in Northern Azerbaijan. Turkish intellectuals A. Topchibashi, A. Agayev, F. Vazirov and others gathered on March 15, 1905 in the house of H.Z. Tagiyev and prepared the project “National Demand for Rights.” The main content of this project was the recognition of the same political, legal, cultural, religious and economic rights for Muslims living in Russia as Russians.

The first Russian revolution reached its climax in the fall of 1905. Tsarist Russia, alarmed by the popular movement and the outbreak of revolution that engulfed the empire, promised in its Manifesto of October 17 to give all peoples freedom of speech, press, assembly and other freedoms. According to the decree of Nicholas II of December 11, 1905 on holding elections to the Russian State Duma, the first elections were held in Northern Azerbaijan in May 1906. A. Topchubashi, I. Ziyadkhanly, Kh. Bakhadurov and A. Hagverdiev were elected deputies of the First State Duma, which began work in April 1906.[Azərbaycan tarixi (2008): 146-147] A. Topchibashi became the head of the “Muslim faction”, formed by Muslim deputies elected to the First State Duma from all regions of tsarist Russia.[Devlet Nadir (2014): 147] In July 1906, the First Duma was dissolved, and at the beginning of 1907 elections to the Second Duma took place. This time Fatali Khan Khoyski, Mammad Agha Shakhtakhtli, Khalil Bey Khasmamedov and others were elected to the Duma. Although Alimardan Topchubashi could not be elected as a deputy due to the signing of the Vyborg Declaration, he remained the leader of the “Muslim faction”. [Ibid, 149] During the elections to the Third Duma, the peoples of the North Caucasus, Central Asia and Siberia were actually deprived of the right to vote, and from among the Muslims of the South Caucasus, only Kh. Khasmamedov and I. B. Heydarov could be elected deputies.[Ibid, 151] In 1912, only Mamed Yusif Jafarov was elected as a deputy from the South Caucasus in the elections to the IV Duma. “The Turks living in slavery had 46 deputies in the First Duma. They defended this number in the Second Duma. Due to the reduction of the electoral law against the Turks and leftist parties, the number of Turkish deputies in the Third Duma was 10, and in the Fourth Duma - 7.”[Huseyn Baykara (1992): 118

Before and during the years of the First Russian Revolution, the political and ideological situation in Northern Azerbaijan was quite complex and contradictory. At the beginning of the last century, especially after the first Russian revolution (1905-1907), national movement of Northern Azerbaijan developed mainly in three directions in political and ideological life:

1. National enlightenment (realists, romantics),
2. National democratic (Islamism, Turkism, modernity, etc.)

3. Social democracy or Marxism (national revolutionaries, Menshevism, Bolshevism, Socialist Revolutionaries).

The national enlightenment. First of all, the direction of national enlightenment was widespread in Northern Azerbaijan. Some of the Azerbaijani intellectuals belonged to the realistic trend, such as Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Omar Faik Nemanzadeh, and others, since they were critical of modern problems, while others, Mahammad Hadi, Abas Sahhat, Hussein Javid, and others were more utopian, as they were prone to romanticism. Democratic intellectuals of the enlightenment era wavered between national democracy and social democracy. For the reason that their views on a number of issues relating to both movements coincided. From this point of view, subsequently, a significant part of them turned to the national democratic movement, and some to Marxism (especially Bolshevism).

National democracy. The national democratic movement arose on the basis of national-religious traditions and played a decisive role in the life of the Azerbaijani people. For the reason that the main source of the national democratic direction was the Azerbaijani people themselves, the scientific and philosophical publications and thoughts of the intelligentsia in the 19th century. Prior the First Russian Revolution of 1905, the authors of the national democratic trend mainly gathered around the newspaper "Kaspi" and, in a modern spirit, spread the ideas of Islamism and Turkism. "At the end of the 19th - beginning of the 20th century, the Azerbaijani bourgeoisie did not yet have its own political party, and local pan-Islamists, led by their ideologists Ahmad bey Agayev and Alimardan bey Topchubashov, gathered around the newspaper "Kaspi", bought by millionaire H.Z. Tagiyev, and propagated their views on its pages." [Azərbaycan Kommunist Partiyasının öçerkləri (1986): 40].

After the start of the first Russian Revolution, representatives of national democracy, A. Topchibashi, A. Agaoglu, H. Vazirov and others actively participated in the 1st Congress for Muslims of Russia, held in Nizhny Novgorod on August 15, 1905, and creation of a new party "Union of Muslims of Russia". [Devlet Nadir (2014): 129-133] At the II Congress, held in St. Petersburg on January 15-25, 1906, alongside with the election of A. Topchibashi as chairman of the party, its charter and program were adopted, which defined political goals, labor issues, local autonomy, religious rules, state issues, as well as the structure of the party. [Devlet Nadir (2014): 134-136] This party, being a supporter of a constitutional monarchy, fought for an increase in the number of Muslim deputies, the participation of women in elections, and the rights and freedoms for all Muslims. At the III Congress, held on August 16-23, 1906 in Nizhny Novgorod, a Central Committee with a permanent seat in Baku was established to lead the organization. In addition to political problems, at the congress it was decided to create a new type of schools in regions inhabited by Turks, switch to compulsory primary education, teach in the native language, and open pedagogical institutes in Baku, Kazan, and Bakhchasaray to train national personnel. [Devlet Nadir (2014): 137-145] Thanks to the influence of this congress, the network of schools in the regions inhabited by the Turks expanded and the national press multiplied. However, as a result of the defeat of the First Russian Revolution (1907), the party had to cease its activities. Polish scientist Tadeusz Svyatochowski believes that in all cases, the foundation of national awakening

in Azerbaijan was laid by the First Russian Revolution and this process continued until the outbreak of the First World War.[Tadeusz Swietochowski (1998): 65-67]

During this period, there were Azerbaijani intellectuals who showed an inclination towards the liberal line of national democracy: A. Topchubashi, I. Gadzhinsky, I. Gadzhiev, K. Safaraliev and others. Since they sympathized with the Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadets), founded in Tsarist Russia, they organized the Baku branch of this organization on December 5, 1905.

The program of the Turkic social-federalist organization "Gayrat" ("Honour"), created in Ganja in 1905, based on the idea of autonomy for the Muslim population within the framework of the federation, however in its activities it sometimes also demanded the separation of the Caucasus from Russia. The leaders of "Gayrat," which operated for three years and was subsequently banned by the empire, were N. Yusifbeyli, A. Rafibeyli and A. Khasmamedov. In 1917, "Geyrat" was re-established as the Turkish People's Center Party. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2008): 153-154].

"Difai" ("Defence"), created by Ahmed Bey Agaoglu in the summer of 1906, also played an important role in preventing the massacres, carried out against the Turkic-Muslim population in the South Caucasus. "Difai" aimed to protect the population from reprisals by Dashnak armed forces. [Hüseyn Baykara (1992): 120-122; Məmmədzadə M.B (1992): 39-40].

In 1911, representatives of the national democratic movement created a new national party, "Musavat", to fight not only against the tsarist regime, but also the Bolsheviks. The first Musavat program was of an Islamic nature, then it was developed and completed during the subsequent activities of the party and was aimed at serving the independence of Azerbaijan.[Yaqublu Nəsiman (2001): 29]. M.B. Mamedzade and Huseyn Baykara write that most of the founders of Musavat were former supporters of "Hummat", and "Difai" who also joined them. Former members of "Hummat" (M.A. Rasuloglu, A. Kazimzade, Tagi Nagioglu, M.A. Rasulzade, etc.), under pressure from the Marxists, were unable to completely nationalize "Hummat", but this work, which they left unfinished, was completed with the creation of "Musavat". After some time, "Musavat" opened its doors not only to former members of "Hummat", but also to all forces that were carriers of national democratic ideas. [Hüseyn Baykara (1992):184; Məmmədzadə M.B (1992): 40-43].

In 1913, nationally minded emigrants, who returned to Baku under a general amnesty declared in connection with the 300th anniversary of the Romanov dynasty, especially the famous thinker M.A. Rasulzade, launched active propaganda work in the press and at public meetings. Rasulzade, editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Achik Soz" (Openness), the first issue of which was published in October 1915, defined the main slogan of the newspaper as Turkism, modernity and Islamism: "Achik Soz" for the first time boldly and persistently declared that the peoples of the Caucasus, who were hitherto called Muslims or Tatars, were Turks, and in connection with people start to struggle for independence.[Resulzade M.E. (1990): 17]

Thus, as a result of the national idea pursued by Musavat in the 1910s, the people of Northern Azerbaijan basically determined the path of liberation and began the national liberation struggle.

With the outbreak of the First World War (1914-1918), events in the socio-political life of Northern Azerbaijan began to take a new course. Certain reforms carried out by Tsarist Russia during this period, as well as the strengthening of Marxist-Leninist and national democratic tendencies, the creation of new press organs, schools, and individual societies were the most important factors in the socio-political life of Azerbaijan. As a result of these factors, the number of intellectuals with a national spirit increased, and the ideas of national freedom grew in Azerbaijan. First of all, all this manifested itself as a continuation of the national democratic trend that arose in the first decade of the last century and led to the realization of the ideal of national freedom. During this period, the national democratic movement was not as widespread as Marxism, but in many cases even managed to overtake it. As a result, when the Azerbaijani people were faced with a choice, they trusted not the Marxists-Bolsheviks, but the national democratic forces and acted as the main source for the creation of the Azerbaijan Republic.

The doctrine of social democracy and Marxism. Before and after the first Russian revolution, one of the most widespread ideas in Azerbaijan was social democracy based on the Marxist philosophy. Workers were the main support for Marxists in Azerbaijan. However the vast majority of these workers were not Muslim Turks. The main participants in the demonstrations and strikes that took place in various cities of Northern Azerbaijan were workers who came to work or were brought here from different regions of Tsarist Russia. In this sense, those who spread Marxism and created Marxist associations in Northern Azerbaijan in the early days were mainly representatives of Russian, Jewish, Georgian and other non-Muslim nationalities, and gradually Azerbaijani Turks were involved in this process. [Azərbaycan Kommunist Partiyasının öçerkləri (1986): 43] Even when the Baku Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) was created in March of 1898, all its members were representatives of foreign states. In 1901, when a group of agents of the "Iskra" newspaper was formed in Baku, there was not a single local Azerbaijani Turk among them. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2008): 112]

The names of S.M.Efendiyev, A.Akhundov, M.G.Movsumov, M.A.Azizbekov are mentioned as the first social democrats among the Turks of Northern Azerbaijan, who were rarely elected to the Baku Committee of the RSDLP. There were M. A. Rasalzade, M. A. Mirgasimov, M. Hajinsky, A. Kazimzade and others who sympathized with some of the provisions of social democracy, but did not want to join the ranks of this party. In 1902, under the leadership of Rasalzade, the first secret organization in Azerbaijan, the Muslim Youth Organization, was created, and then in October 1904, the social democratic Hummat, whose members were only Muslims. And even M.A. Rasalzade gave the name "Hummat" or "Himmat" to the magazine that he published in 1903-1904. [Rəsulzadə M.Ə. (2011):16-17]

Huseyn Baykara wrote that "Hummat," which operated for some time under the Baku Committee of the RSDLP, became a semi-independent party after the first Russian revolution [Huseyn Baykara (1992): 71]. However, unlike most of the founders of Hummat, some members of Hummat, including M. Mamedyarov, Kh. Safaraliev and others, were influenced by the Baku Committee of the RSDLP. As a result of the active intervention of the Baku Committee of the RSDLP in this organization, and in some

cases their desire for a violent union, discontent within Hummat grew, and at the end of 1907 its activities were discontinued.[Rüstəmov Y. (2000): 32]

R. Sharifzade, M. Juvarlinsky, R. Malikov and others were active members of the social democratic organization "Ittifag" (Union), which emerged at the end of 1905 as a Muslim party of social revolutionaries (SR). "We should not forget that the members of "Ittifag" were extremely opportunistic in their work... Such an incident was enough to discredit the unionists in the eyes of the masses groaning under the rams: the initial success of "Ittifag" was wasted in the course of national hostilities, and by the end of 1906, one could say that this organization died by itself."[Əfəndiyev S.M, (1990): 321]

Thus, on the eve of the First World War and during the war years (1914-1918), social democracy, especially its wing of Marxism-Leninism (Bolshevism), largely lost its influence among the people, in contrast to the first periods of its spread in Northern Azerbaijan. Therefore, during this period, only representatives of non-Muslim nationalities formed the leadership center of the Baku organization of the RSDLP. As a result, in the fall of 1912, the Baku Bolsheviks took part in the elections to the IV State Duma together with the Mensheviks and the Armenian party.[Azərbaycan Kommunist Partiyasının öçerkləri (1986): 233]

After the February Revolution in Tsarist Russia in 1917, the governance in the South Caucasus was entrusted to the newly created administrative body, Special Transcaucasian Committee by the decision of the Provisional Government established in Petrograd. Soon, on March 17, 1917, a group of Azerbaijani intellectuals, together, organized a bureau consisting of representatives of Baku Muslim public organizations and cooperatives. At the assembly held in the yard of the Baku City Duma, a decision was made to demonstrate loyalty to the Provisional Government in Russia. On March 27, 1917, this bureau was replaced with the Provisional Executive Committee of the National Muslim Council in Baku. Muhammad Hasan Hajinski was elected as the chairman of the Provisional Committee, and M.A. Rasulzade as his deputy. And Baku Soviet of Workers and Military Deputies formed at the end of March turned to the organ of the leftist revolutionary forces. And so, dual power emerged in Northern Azerbaijan, as in Russia.

A small number of Azerbaijani Bolsheviks taking advantage of this revolution, after a ten-year break, restored the activity of "Hummat" on March 3, 1917. As the chairman of its Provisional Committee Nariman Narimanov, and as members Mashadi Azizbekov, Mohsin Israfilbekov (Qadirli), Hamid Sultanov and others were elected. "Even though they announced that they stood by the Bolshevik position, the committees of "Hummat" in the provinces were inclining the Mensheviks. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 298] As a result of the considerable weak position of Bolshevism in Northern Azerbaijan, A. Yusifzade, who took part in the 6th Congress of the Bolshevik Party in Petrograd on July 26, 1917, asked for support from "Hummat". In this regard, "Hummat" was almost dependent on the RSDLP, and the numbers of its supporters could be counted on the fingers of one hand. [Ibid, 384]

After the February Revolution, "Musavat", being at the forefront of the national forces, and "Turkic Federalist Party" in Ganja were following the same line. It was revealed on April 15-20, 1917, at the First Congress of Caucasus Muslims in Baku. At the congress, it was agreed to merge the "Muslim Democratic Party-Musavat" with the

“Turkic Federalist Party” headed by Nasib Bey Yusifbeyli in Ganja. [Azərbaycan tarixi (1994): 56]

The first congress of all-Russian Muslims, held in Moscow in May 1917, showed that numerous representatives of national democratic ideas, and not the small number of Azerbaijani Bolsheviks, had taken the right path. Two main ideas were proposed at the congress. Rasulzade, who put forward the first proposal, stated that Russia should be governed federally, like a People's Republic, and the non-Russian peoples, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Kyrgyzstan and other countries should be given national-territorial autonomy. Opposing this idea, Tatar Akhmad Salikhov proposed the idea of national-cultural autonomy while maintaining the unitary character of Russia. Rasulzade's was accepted by the participants of the congress. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 303]

The merger in June 1917 of Musavat and the Turkic Federalist Party, choosing the national democratic direction (Turkism, Islamism and Western democracy), played an important role in the fate of Northern Azerbaijan's people, which first promoted the autonomy of Azerbaijan and then its national independence. In particular, the program announced at the 1st congress of the “Turkic Federalist Party-Musavat”, held solemnly in Baku from October 26 to October 31, 1917, was a national program. [Ibid, 309-310]

After the Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd on October 25, 1917, the Bolshevik and Dashnak parties became active in Baku. On November 2, 1917, the Bolsheviks and their supporters convened a meeting of the “Baku Soviet” and announced the establishment of the Soviet power in Baku, and the Armenian origin Stepan Shaumyan became its chairman. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 315]

22 deputies from the “Musavat” Party were included in the body that declared the Soviet power. Differing from the Mensheviks and SRs, the Musavatists, especially Rasulzade, did not seriously object the Bolsheviks' rule at first. Particularly, Lenin's declaration regarding the self-determination of all peoples was positively evaluated by the Musavatists. Therefore, “Musavat” did not accept the proposal of the SR-Menshevik bloc to leave the Soviet together. [Ibid, 315-316]

However, on December 12-13, 1917, due to the tension between the Bolsheviks and Musavatists, new elections were conducted for the Baku Soviet. On grounds of the elections held under the will of the Bolsheviks, the new Executive Committee included six Bolsheviks, five Dashnaks, four left SRs, three right SRs, and two Musavatists. On December 18, Lenin designated Stephan Shaumyan as an Extraordinary Commissioner of the Caucasus. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 317-318] The leadership of “Musavat” recalled its deputies from the Baku Soviet in protest the fact that the Bolsheviks were playing a two-headed game, especially against the Turkish-Muslim population in Turkestan.

On November 11, 1917, representatives of the Georgian Mensheviks, Turkish Musavatists, Armenian Dashnaks and right SRs who did not want to obey the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR refused to recognize the authority of the Russian Bolshevik government and decided to form an “Independent Transcaucasia Government” at the conference held in Tbilisi. As a consequence, instead of the Special Transcaucasian Committee, the Transcaucasian Commissariat chaired by Evgeni. Gegechkori was established in Tbilisi on November 15 to govern the South Caucasus.

On the basis of the Armistice of Erzincan signed between the Transcaucasian Commissariat and Turkey on December 5, 1917, Russian troops began to withdraw from the Caucasian front. At the beginning of February, 1918, in Tbilisi, at a meeting of deputies elected to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly from the South Caucasus, the Transcaucasian Sejm (Parliament), the highest authority of Transcaucasia, was opened and became the leading power center in this region. Representatives of three parties, Musavat (Azerbaijan), Dashnaktsutyun (Armenia) and Social-Democrat (Georgia), were represented in the Sejm, which began to operate on February 23. M.A. Rasullzade was the head of the Azerbaijani national faction in the Sejm, consisting of 44 deputies.

During this time, Turkey did not accept the policy pursued by Georgians and Armenians in the Sejm and declared war against them. The war lasted no more than 8 days and was concluded with the victory of the Ottomans. At the insistence of the Turkish faction, the Transcaucasian Sejm announced the country's sovereignty on April 22.

During the events of March 1918, Shaumyan, who headed the Committee for the Revolutionary Defense of Baku and its outskirts [Документы и материалы (1957): 327], achieved a decree granting autonomy to Armenia in Turkey, which was signed by Lenin in December 1917. [Насиров Т. (1993): 22] Lenin expressed Shaumyan's continued anti-Azerbaijani policy in a telegram sent to him in 1918: "We are pleased with your firm and decisive policy." [Quliyev C. (1957): 26] On March 15, 1918, Shaumyan openly declared at a meeting of the Baku Soviet that the Baku Soviet should become the main stronghold of the civil war in the South Caucasus. On the eve of the genocide, the Dashnaktsutyun party and the Armenian National Council sided with the Baku Soviet. On March 30-31, in Baku alone, Bolshevik-Dashnak military units killed more than 12 thousand Muslim population. Moreover, Armenian military units destroyed tens of thousands of the Muslim population in Shamakhi, Quba, Lankaran, Kurdemir, Salyan and other regions of Northern Azerbaijan. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 328] It is interesting that Soviet historians and scientists seriously characterized the March massacre of Muslim population of Baku as a civil war, blaming it on the Musavat party. However, indisputable facts also prove that during the March events, Bolsheviks and Dashnaks jointly carried out these massacre. [Topçubaşı Ə.M. (2013): 47]

After the Turkish-Muslim genocide of March 30-31, 1918, the Baku Soviet, led by the Bolshevik-Dashnaks, completely seized power in Baku after the "peace conference" held on April 1. [Azərbaycan tarixi (2001): 330] The Baku Soviet banned the activities of all newspapers and magazines, and national councils, except for Armenian (Dashnak) and Russian (Bolshevik) political press bodies and organizations. On April 25, the Baku Council of People's Commissars (Baku Commune) was founded under the chairmanship of Stephan Shaumyan, and its leadership mainly included Armenian Dashnaks and Russian Bolsheviks. In this regard, Khatsov, one of the leaders of Dashnak Armenia, called the Baku Commune "Armenian Soviet government". Furthermore, the Baku Commune considered itself an integral part of Soviet Russia and did not want to agree the idea of granting not only independence, but also autonomy to Azerbaijan.

National Independence and the Republic of Azerbaijan

Such unacceptable matters led to the collapse of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. After Georgia left the Transcaucasian Republic on May 26, 1918, an extraordinary conference of Turkish-Muslim deputies was held on May 27, and the conference announced the National Council of Azerbaijan, assuming the responsibility of governing Northern Azerbaijan. In reality, as the National Council of Azerbaijan consisted of 44 deputies participating in the Sejm, the National Council they created was also the first small parliament of the newly formed Republic of Azerbaijan. At the first meeting of the National Council, the Presidium and the Chairman of the National Council of Azerbaijan were elected. Most of the parties representing Azerbaijan in the Sejm—"Musavat", Muslim Socialist Bloc, Muslim Social-Democrat-Mensheviks and "Hummet" voted in favor of M.A. Rasulzade's election as the chairman of the National Council. [Yaqublu N. (1991): 79]

The Declaration of Independence of Azerbaijan announced to the world on May 28, 1918 by the National Council of Azerbaijan stated: "1. As Azerbaijan has the right of popular power from today, Azerbaijan, which consists of South-Eastern Transcaucasia, is a fully independent state. 2. The form of government of the independent state of Azerbaijan is the Popular Republic..." [ARDA: f.894, s.10, iş. 12, v.1-2].

The existence of the republic had great significance not only for the Turks of Northern Azerbaijan, but also for the entire Turkic world and the Muslim East. At the same time, the establishment of this republic was not the result of the revolutions that took place in tsarist Russia, but the legitimate result of the national idea of the nation itself.

After Azerbaijan's independence was declared to the world powers on May 30, Fatali Khan Khoyski was entrusted with organizing the first government of the Republic. The state structure of the republic was a parliamentary republic. From the first day, the provisional government announced in its program that the government should mainly refer to agricultural people such as workers and peasants and that Azerbaijan should be a country of freedom. "Here, one class did not dominate the other class. A person was neither right because of his wealth, nor unjust because of his poverty." [Rəsulzadə M.Ə. (1991): 40]

The Azerbaijani national government signed a military agreement with the Ottomans on June 4 to strengthen its foundations. The agreement was signed by the chairman of the National Council M.A. Rasulzade, foreign minister M.H. Hajinski from Azerbaijani side, foreign minister Khalil Bey and Vehib Pasha, commander-in-chief of the Caucasian front, from the Ottoman side. On the basis of that agreement, the Caucasian Islamic Army headed by Nuru Pasha was sent to help Azerbaijan. But nevertheless, the emergence of dissatisfaction between Nuru Pasha and the Azerbaijani government in Ganja caused to a crisis. "In such historical, political and military conditions, after intense negotiations with the mediation of Ahmad Bey Aghaoghlu, advisor of Nuru Pasha, an Azerbaijani by origin, a prominent thinker and politician of the 20th century, it became possible to reach an appropriate agreement under the condition of the dissolving of the National Council and transferring of all power to the Provisional National Government, which was reorganized under the leadership of Fatali Khan Khoyski". [Mərdanov M.C; Quliyev Ə.Q. (2001): 49]

The second government formed in Ganja under the leadership of F. Khoyski, on June 17, 1918, made important decisions on nationwide issues such as the national flag (June 24), the formation of the national army (June 26), and the Turkish language as the state language (June 27).

The main measure of the Caucasian Islamic Army was to liberate the Baku governorate and the city of Baku from the hands of the occupying army of the Baku Commune. Caucasian Islamic Army under the leadership of Nuru Pasha inflicted a heavy defeat on the combined military forces of the Baku Commune near Goychay and headed towards Baku on July 20. After this defeat, the Baku Commune collapsed on July 31, 1918, and on August 1, a reactionary government named "Dictatorship of the Central Caspian and the Presidium of the Provisional Executive Committee of Soviet" was formed on the basis of the SR-Dashnak-Menshevik alliance. However, the Caucasian Islamic Army could not agree with the long-term settlement of this government, which is mainly composed of SRs and Armenians, in Baku. "On the night of September 14-15, Turkish troops entered Baku with a rapid attack... On September 15, the commander of the Caucasus Islamic Army, Lieutenant General Nuru Pasha, sent a telegram with good news to the heads of the Azerbaijani government in Ganja." [Yaqublu N. (1991): 88] On September 17, the national government of the Republic of Azerbaijan was transferred from Ganja to Baku.

On September 23, 1918, a secret protocol was signed between Talat Pasha and Germany. According to that protocol, "Turkish troops were leaving Azerbaijan, and Germany ensured that Azerbaijan's independence was recognized by Russia. But, the subsequent situation did not allow Germany to set out this process. It became clear that Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria were defeated, and the course of events changed and a new examination period for Azerbaijan had begun". [Mehmmetzade M.B. (1955): 17-18] Article 11 of the agreement signed in the port of Mudros (Mondros) on the island of Lemnos on October 30, 1918 stated that the Ottoman Turkish army should recall its forces in the Caucasus and South Azerbaijan. According to this agreement, the South Caucasus was declared the sphere of influence of Great Britain and British troops were directed to Baku. "Regarding the new situation, the representatives of the Azerbaijani government met with British General Thomson, who was in Iran and represented the allies, in Anzali to clarify the situation, but he said that he did not recognize a government called Azerbaijan and did not agree to negotiate. This event was the beginning of a new era in the political history of Azerbaijan." [Baykara H. (1992): 246]

In November 1918, on the eve of the arrival of the British in Baku, the National Council of Azerbaijan restored its activity and made a resolution on the establishment of the Parliament of Azerbaijan. As attested by this decision, "since it is not possible to convene the All-Azerbaijan Constituent Assembly, it was decided to turn the National Council into the Parliament, the state legislative body of Azerbaijan." [Məmmədov I. (2005): 347] According to that law, 120 deputies should be represented in the parliament, including representatives of all nationalities living in Azerbaijan, in accordance with the national composition of the country's population. On November 29, the National Council issued an appeal entitled "To all the people of Azerbaijan": "According to the law adopted on the 19th of this month, the National Council will become a Mejlisi-Mebusan

(Parliament) with 120 deputies until December 3. Representatives from minority nationalities were involved in this assembly, as well as lawyers from provinces of the country. Deputies who will be assembled in this way will be the owner of our country, decide its fate, organize its government and protect its interests until the Assembly of Azerbaijan convenes the institution in the future by the method of general election". [ARDA: f.895, s.3, iş. 187, v.1-2]

It should be noted that the Armenian Dashnaks, Russian Bolsheviks and other political and social groups influenced General Thomson by all means, either they did not want to allow the implementation of the Azerbaijani parliament, or they demanded that their interests be ensured here as well. "Representatives of national minorities living in Azerbaijan had to be included in the parliament, and it was allowed to convene the parliament only after meeting these conditions. A delegation of the National Council consisting of M.A. Rasulzade, M.Y. Jafarov and A.J. Pepinov was chosen for further discussions". [Əfəndiyev E. (1994): 16]

On December 7, 1918, the first constituent meeting of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan took place in the building of H.Z. Taghiyev's Noble Girls Gymnasium. The Chairman of the National Council of Azerbaijan, M.A. Rasulzade, who started the meeting with his speech, voiced the motto "The flag once raised will never fall again". [Nasibzade N. (1990): 92] At the first session of the parliament, the neutral A.M. Topchubashi was elected the speaker of the parliament, and the member of "Musavat" H.B. Aghayev was elected his deputy. At the first session of the Parliament, F. Khoyski proclaimed that the Provisional Government had resigned and that the power had been handed over to the Parliament as a whole. The formation of the new government, the third in number, was assigned to F. Khoyski, and the composition of the new government cabinet was enunciated on December 26, 1918. In the meantime, the Azerbaijani government, which negotiated with General Thomson, finally achieved its goal, and General Thomson recognized it as the only legitimate government. [Baykara N. (1992): 247-248]

The program of the 4th government, which began to operate on April 14, 1919 under the leadership of N. Yusifbeyli, comprised recognition of the state independence of Azerbaijan by the world's leading countries, ensuring the country's territorial integrity, establishing cooperation with neighboring states, reinforcing national security, developing the army, founding educational institutions.

Even though, the Paris Peace Conference was basically intended to settle peace with Germany, the leaders of the great powers began to discuss the "Russian question" as well. [Topçubaşov Ə. (1998): 53-54] In consequence of those discussions, the states of Azerbaijan and Georgia were de facto recognized at the meeting of the Supreme Council of Allied States (Entente) held on January 11, 1920. [Həsənov C. (1993): 96] It is obvious from the letters sent by A. Topchubashi, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation that participated in the Paris peace conference, from Versailles, or from the meetings held with the representatives of individual states in Istanbul, that the recognition of Azerbaijan as an independent state was a very tough process. [Топчибашев Е.М. (1994)]

At a time when the independence of Azerbaijan was recognized by the Entente, the threat of Soviet Russia was looming over its head. On January 2, 1920, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR, G. V. Chicherin, sent the first note to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, F. Khoyski, demanding to join the war against Denikin. Khoyski sent a response note on January 14 and stated that the civil war was Russia's internal affair. On January 19, Russia, having received the information about the decision of the "Entente" to provide Azerbaijan with military ammunition and not the army, intensified diplomatic pressure on Azerbaijan. Chicherin, who sent a second note to Azerbaijan on January 23, stated that Azerbaijan's non-interference in Russia's internal affairs means giving up the struggle against Denikin. Khoyski said in his answer that after Russia recognizes the independence of Azerbaijan, Baku can officially look into these issues. In fact, the notes that Russia sent to Azerbaijan until March 1920 aimed to cover up the intervention against the Republic.

In order to realize the military intervention to Azerbaijan, Soviet Russia paid more attention to the strengthening of the "fifth colon"- local Bolsheviks in the country. Unfortunately, a small number of Azerbaijani-Turkish Bolsheviks also closely participated in the occupation of the Republic of Azerbaijan by Soviet Russia. The Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and SRs, who had been operating separately and had no significant influence among the people until the end of 1919, were brought together by the Russians. On February 11-12, 1920, the Baku Committee of the RC(b)P, "Hummet", "Adalet" and other leftist organizations united under the name of the Azerbaijan Communist Party (ACP) by holding their first congress. "AC(b)P, which is the follower of the policy of Soviet Russia, took the line of coup d'état in Azerbaijan as a basis. Local Bolsheviks actively campaigned against the national government. However, it was apparent that the Azerbaijani communists were not able to make a coup by their own forces. They hoped more for Russian encroachment." [Məmmədov I. (2005): 350]

On April 1, 1920, the government headed by Yusifbeyli resigned, and the organization of the new government was entrusted to M.H. Hajinski. Although Hajinski wanted to form a coalition government consisting of leftist forces, including communists, the Bolsheviks refused it. On April 22, after not being able to form a new government and losing substantial time to organize the government, Hajinski reported this to the parliament. Along with diplomatic pressure, Soviet Russia used local Bolsheviks, Armenian Dashnaks and the pretext of aid to Türkiye in order to overthrow the Republic. Soviet Russia, which unequivocally controlled the AC(b)P, encouraged the massacre of the local Turks in Karabakh by Armenians on March. On March 22, with the consent of Moscow, Armenian military units raided the garrison located in Khankendi, Gazakh and Ganja districts. The Azerbaijani government was forced to immediately direct the national army from the border of Dagestan and Baku in order to quell the Armenian uprising in Karabakh. Thus, the northern borders of the Republic remained unguarded.

Through propaganda, Soviet Russia was able to convince Ankara that the 11th Army would pass through Baku and go to the aid of Türkiye, which was fighting against the Entente. Khalil Pasha and other Turkish officers led the Muslim units of the 11th Army. On April 21 and 23, the Revolutionary Council of the Caucasus Front, headed by S.G. Orjonikidze, commanded the XI Army to cross the border of the Republic of Azerbaijan and occupy the entire territory on April 27. According to that command, on the night of

April 26-27, under the leadership of Levandovsky, the XI Red Army units crossed the state borders from the Yalama-Khachmaz side of Northern Azerbaijan. This meant that the Republic of Azerbaijan was invaded on April 27, and the XI Army entered Baku by armored train on April 28. N. Yagublu writes: "Thus, the Bolsheviks announced April 28 as the day of the establishment of Soviet power in Azerbaijan and introduced it to the world community as "the April 28 Revolution". In other words, they created a false and fake calendar, not the April 27 invasion, but the April 28 revolution." [Yaqublu N. (2018): 17-18]

The Azerbaijani Turkish Bolsheviks, trying to take advantage of the fact that the 11th army of Soviet Russia violated the state borders and turned to Baku, gave an ultimatum to the parliament on behalf of the Baku office of the RCP (b) Caucasus Region Committee and the AC(b)P to hand over power. Despite the strong objections of M.A. Resulzade and a few deputies, the Parliament adopted a decree consisting of 6 articles in its last session held on April 27 with a majority of votes on the condition that the power would be given to Azerbaijani Turkish communists. In this decree, it was stated that the national government hands over the power to the Azerbaijani Turkish Bolsheviks under the conditions of preserving the full independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the new government would be a provisional body, the retention of the former employees in government departments in their positions, ensuring the inviolability of life and property of members of the government and parliament, maintaining the National Army, the free activities of political parties, the 11th Army would directly go to aid to Türkiye by railway.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the 20th century, the national democratic direction of socio-political and philosophical thought was clearly associated with the ideas of nationalism (Turkic unity), Islamism (Islamic unity), Westernism (adoption of Western culture, modernization and renewal) and independence (independent Azerbaijan). The main goal here was to promote the positive democratic values of the West, without deviating from the basic principles of national and religious issues. Therefore, during this period, the national democratic direction occupied an important place in the national philosophical thought of Azerbaijan.

During this period, the overwhelming majority of Azerbaijani intellectuals (A. Huseynzade, A. Agaoglu, M. A. Rasulzade, A. M. Topchubashi, N. Yusifbeyli, etc.) gave the main priority to national-religious characteristics and liberal democratic values in their national philosophical worldview. These intellectuals remained faithful to national and religious values, taking into account the requirements and ideas of their time. They put forward new ideas based on the philosophical, cultural and religious worldview of the Azerbaijani people. These ideas did not deviate from the idealistic worldview and were formed on the basis of national philosophical thought. It was as a result of the ideas put forward by these intellectuals that Azerbaijan became a free and independent state after getting rid of the Tsarist Russia colonialism. Thus, the idea of national freedom, the first seeds of which were laid in the second half of the 19th century and systematized at the beginning of the 20th century, led to the creation of the Azerbaijan Republic (1918). The first (1905) and second (1917) Russian revolutions played a very important role in changing the

political and ideological landscape of the country. Undoubtedly, during these revolutions, national leaders and ideologues from among the people occupy a special place to lead the people behind their backs. Thanks to them, the basic principles of national ideology in Azerbaijan were determined in the new era. The political freedom of Azerbaijan has passed a very important stage from national autonomy to national independence. Most importantly, the term “historical-geographical Azerbaijan” was replaced by the concept of an independent and national Azerbaijan. M.A. Rasulzade, a clear ideologist of national independence, was able to raise the idea of Azerbaijani Turkism from theory to practice in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

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