

The History of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in 1920 - 30 Years Soviet Historiography

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Commendable works have been done in the studying of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic's history, major achievements have been made in this area after the restoration of state independence of Azerbaijan in the 90s of the XX. century. However, there are still gaps in the study of the history of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. At this point not studying of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic's history as a separate subject in the Soviet historiography confirms our opinion.

After the invasion on April 27, 1920, Moscow Institute of Red Professors sent a group of graduates to Azerbaijan to write the history of "the young Soviet state".

The alumni R. Rathauzer, A. Rayevski, A. Dubner, A. Steklov, I.N. Pchelina and others have had to justify the establishment of the Soviet Power in Azerbaijan from political and scientific point of view. The aforementioned authors by fulfilling these tasks wrote works meeting requirements of the Soviet ideology and acting from the common position approached the People's Republic as alien force pursuing the anti-people policies. In other words, as the Bolshevik propagandists, the authors did not consider the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic as the legitimate government and characterized the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic as the government of "beys-khans" and "Musavat". For this reason, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan in Soviet has not been studied as the main research object in Soviet historiography. We decided to study aspect of coverage of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic history in 1920-30 Soviet historiography given the mentioned considerations. The history of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic

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in the Soviet historiography was first dealt in R.B.Ismayilov's "History of Azerbaijan" work published in 1923. R.B.Ismayilov worked in a responsible position in republican Cabinet of Ministers since late 1918. He worked as history teacher at secondary school No. 18 in Baku after overthrow of Azerbaijan Republic on April 27, 1920. Events described in the book covers the period starting from the most ancient times of Azerbaijan up to the XI. Red Army's storming to Baku and overthrow of Azerbaijan Republic. R.B. Ismayilov following chronological sequence in the work, talks about establishment of the Azerbaijan Republic on the background of the Transcaucasian Sejm collapse: "Azerbaijan government declared appearance by that "Independent Azerbaijan Republic" at the same time" (2, p.128). R.B. Ismayilov recognized Azerbaijan National Council as Azerbaijani government for the first time in the Soviet historiography. It should be noted that, the author illuminates historical events objectively since was undue to order, therefore, gives objective information about the republic. The author is free enough in his views and even called last section of the work "Azerbaijani Republic". R.B.Ismayilov, characterizing the republic as national Azerbaijani state notifies on the formation of the government of twelve ministries (2, p.129).

R.B.Ismayilov also underscores the republic's temporary residence in Ganja; Baku's playing role of cultural, political and economic centre for Azerbaijani Turks and the republican leaders' making the most severe attempts to release the city. The author writes that, it is impossible to imagine existence of Azerbaijan Republic without Baku (2, p.129). R.B.Ismayilov considers the government's collapse "tragical day for Musavat government" (2, p.140) and confesses his positive attitude towards national power. Despite R.B.Ismayilov's acting under Soviet power's pressure and conditions, his keeping political views same, is reflected in relation to the republic. Thus, R.B.Ismayilov's sympathy towards the Azerbaijani republic can be seen in his work as he is Azerbaijani nationality. The history of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic is elucidated in "Musavat Party and its counterrevolution work" of A.Rayevski published in Baku in 1929. To note, the author dedicated his work to the activity of "Musavat" Party, not the republican government. A.Rayevski notes inexistence of party till 1917, functioning only within the study group and publishing the newspaper (11, p.8) in brief characteristics of Musavat party. A.Rayevski tries to distract attention from Azerbaijan government and to reset historical importance of the republic choosing Musavat party as priority. The author claims the republic was established by a small political group. However, the author brings to mind declaration of Azerbaijan De-

mocratic Republic briefly: "Turkish part of Transcaucasian Sejm announced pompously Azerbaijan "independent democratic republic" in Tbilisi on 28 May, 1918 (11, p.11). The author focuses on the republic's being power of "Musavat" party, accenting on "Musavat" government's signing a contract with Turkey which is not recognizing independence of Azerbaijan" (11, p.12).

A. Rayevski evaluating talks and agreements between APF and Turkey, with regard to Azerbaijan's becoming the colony tries to prove Turkey's not dispatching an ambassador to Azerbaijan and inadmission of any Azerbaijani representation in Constantinople. The author thinks a republic was established to protect the interests of Azerbaijani landowners and capitalists from Bolshevik threat. A. Rayevski unequivocally drawing forward "Musavat's" being counterrevolutionary party appreciates the creation of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic as a fact which manifests from self-defense instinct of the landlords and capitalists of Azerbaijan. A. Rayevski as a defender of Soviet policy is trying to present the history of the republic as a body of group of bourgeois representative by removing that from a political arena. Artificial information is given about the republic in Y. Rathauzer's work "The fight for the sake of Council Azerbaijan" (1929) dedicated to the creation of the Soviet government in Azerbaijan on the history of "April revolution". As noted by the author, main focus of the research is process of preparation for April revolution (April coup-R.K). Y. Rathauzer elucidates factors that cause April 27 in Azerbaijan, with special directives to a variety of forms as the representative of Soviet ideological views. The author describes historical and political conditions on the eve of April and also includes the Republic of Azerbaijan as part of judgements.

Y. Rathauzer opening the work with topic "For the land" explains Bolsheviks' coming to power in Azerbaijan (Azerbaijan's occupation-R.K) with "Musavat government's incompetence" (4, p.3). He focused on the issue of land in Azerbaijan, interpreted the cease of land reform by Transcaucasian Sejm as the service to interests of landlords, on June 22, i.e. three days after Azerbaijani Republic government's creation on June, 19, 1918. The author emphasizes he was not going to solve the issue over the republican government land (4, p.4) on one hand, on the other puts forward land reform issue in the Parliament agenda (4, p.5). Y. Rathauzer writes the Republic of Azerbaijan keeps on agenda agricultural issue in his work and stresses unableness to make positive decision because of defending bourgeoisie interests (4, p.5,6,8). He shows as an example Parliament's discussions on the land

issue at Parliament sittings and correspondence with government officials in this regard, decrees and decisions (4, p.10-22) to justify his views. The author brings as an argument cancellation of all public organizations and trade unions in Baku in order to prove Azerbaijan Republic's function of capitalist power (4, p.23). Y. Rathauzer expresses certain components of the Azerbaijan government from negative aspects in his work in brief. In this regard, we get information about the existence of the republic from his work. In general, as the image of Soviet ideological views, Y. Rathauzer does not analyze the republic, but he is urged to emphasize government of Azerbaijan in pole opposite to Bolshevik structure upon intensive description of political events. The only work on the army of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Soviet historiography is the study of A. Steklov "Army of Musavat Azerbaijan" (1928). The object of the research of political regime promoter, A. Steklov, is not republic or the republican army. The author's main priority was to justify laws on establishing the Soviet power in Azerbaijan, and therefore the Republic of Azerbaijan was forwarded as an alternative to the current power. In fact, A. Steklov restoring historical justice identified the name of government of Azerbaijan, i.e. legitimate government in Azerbaijan in 1918-1920, within political power. A. Steklov, stating unequivocally and firmly Azerbaijan Republic's establishment on May 28, 1918 by the Turks, focuses on Azerbaijani dependence on Turkey (12,p.6). A. Steklov demonstrated alliance with colleagues and said the government's operating under the command of Nuri Pasha, commander of the Caucasian Islamic Army (12, p.6). A. Steklov, calls the work "Army of Musavat's Azerbaijan" and admits that, the army is created by the Azerbaijan Republic.

The author wrote the book in the context of dominant ideology standards like typical Soviet historians. The author who meets defined "necessary" demands, created detailed structure of Azerbaijan Republic providing statistical data, as well as a wide range of political events. A. Steklov running to localize Azerbaijan Republic, makes judgements that are inconsistent with the existing norms under the influence of moral liability. For example, the author stressed that Azerbaijani government is not independent (12, p.6) and says republic has a deal with Ottoman Turkey on June 4, 1918 (12, p.8). Generally, according to A. Steklov, Azerbaijan Republic was founded to fight against "Soviet Russia" (12, p.14). It is stated that, "non-independent Musavat government" created the Ministry of Defence on November 6, 1918; its organization is committed to general Mehmandarov; finally, Mehmandarov's appointment a minister (12, p.14). The author accents on

military ministry's carrying out independent study after Turks departure to indicate Turkish commander's preventing army structure. (12, p.15). A. Steklov accuses on one hand the army of the Azerbaijan Republic of negligence in the building of army, on the other hand, provides information on the establishment of Ministry of Defence and its head office and headquarters (12, p.14-15). The author interpreted an army of the Republic of Azerbaijan with a term "Musavat army" (12, p.19). As we know, A. Steklov, was one of the Bolsheviks sent to Azerbaijan for first decade of the Soviet state and the research is the demonstration of his political position. In this regard, the author, distorted history of Republic of Azerbaijan on the basis of parameters of the Communist Party. The history of the Republic of Azerbaijan was also highlighted in "Baku commune" work by G. Steyn published in 1928 in essay format. The author approaches the republic prefunctorily and evaluates the Azerbaijani government as "bey-khan" government. G. Steyn distorting the organization of the Republic of Azerbaijan, commented with "the state of Azerbaijan was established on June 15 in Yelizavetpol" (13, p.67) sentence.

The author draws attention to the republic from the aspect of the restoration of the Soviet system in Azerbaijan. As a representative of the government, G. Steyn is spokesman of Soviet political interests and in this sense, his denial of Azerbaijan Republic in the form of political factor, is natural. More specifically, G. Steyn is one of numerous figures of scientific and public sphere in Azerbaijan's integration into Bolshevik society and fulfilled the assignment to write a book fitting political requirements as a participant of motivation creation for the public without exception. "Peasant issue within Musavat" work of N. Pchelin published in 1931, is the study dedicated to the agrarian issue during republican period. The work has been reviewed in a comprehensive manner based on criteria set by the political authorities. The content of the work comprises agrarian policy of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. In N. Pchelin's work, official name of the republic goes almost nowhere. But the author calling the first part "essence of agrarian issue in Musavat Azerbaijan", (8, p.1) demonstrates the republic as the face of the party's interests. The author is trying to prove that, the Republic was created to serve the interests of landlords, and plot issue has been resolved in favor of land owners, not peasants. The author also writes on one hand that, the Azerbaijani government is not going to resolve the land issue in favor of villagers, on the other hand, gives the name "Agrarian law in Musavat Parliament and offices" (8, p.21) to one section of his work. N. Pchelin evaluating removal of the Republic to Baku as "the occupation of Baku

with the help of the Turkish bayonets”, said core of Azerbaijan Parliament functioning in December 1918, consists of Khan and beys included into Muslim National Council which demonstrates critical attitude towards Parliament. The author concentrates on Azerbaijan Parliament’s formation on a democratic basis taking into account allocation of 21 rooms to Armenians, 10- Russians, 1-Germans, Jews and Georgians (8, p.21). Although N. Pchelin fulfilled political demands, he approached the republican agricultural policy contrasting: “Musavat’s bourgeois-landlord government engaged only in office correspondence regarding the preparation of agricultural law” (8, p.23). The author commenting on the issue of agriculture, had to cover the republic also. Apparently, N. Pchelin, sent to mission to carry out campaign work of political system, brings to agenda parallelly “Musavat government” (the Republic of Azerbaijan-R.K) while promoting worker-peasant dictatorship (Bolshevik dictatorship-R.K). It should be noted that, indication of Republic with various cliches, i.e. “Musavat government,” “Azerbaijani government” by N. Pchelin is indicator of his dual attitude to national Azerbaijani state.

The history of Azerbaijan Republic is dealt in study “English Friends” and Musavat “patriots” of A. Rayevski, author of work series dedicated to the activity of Musavat Party published in Baku in 1927. Note that, struggle of the English with Soviet Russia for the South Caucasus at the beginning of the XX. century is elucidated in the study. Successor of Soviet political environment, A. Rayevski acting as a defender of the Bolshevik Russia, accuses the English of occupation. A. Rayevski not stating his opinion on the establishment of Azerbaijani Republic, confirms power in Azerbaijan to be Republic stressing English people’s reaching an agreement with the Musavat Party, a real political force in the South Caucasus to struggle against Russia (9, p.10). The author wants to prove government leaders fought not for independence of Azerbaijan, but for throne. To this end, the author comes to conclusion that, government of Azerbaijan was seized by English with the consent of the Musavat. Thus, A. Rayevski claiming English turning Azerbaijan into British colony and Turkish people their slaves with the help of Musavat (Republican leaders-R.K) writes that, Azerbaijani government flattered colonialist generals, though their coarse treatment (9, p.11). The author attempts theses defined by ruling party to be observed and puts forward regularly contrasting ideas. Overall, A. Rayevski does not analyze the government of Azerbaijan, but touches upon the government covering the issue over “counterrevolution” in the Caucasus. A. Rayevski emphasized

specially the Republic in “English intervention and Musavat government” study published in 1927 in Baku, unlike the previous two works and dedicated “Independent Azerbaijan” section to that. The author noting the establishment of republic in Ganja on May 28, 1918, writes that, came to Baku on September 15, 1918 with the help of Turkish bayonets. Soviet author A. Rayevski’s biased approach is apparent in distortion of establishment date and space of the republic. The author believes Baku’s liberation to be the Turkish-Musavat attack. Thus, the author points out fled of the English from the Turks-Musavat attack, and later the capital’s seize by Turks and given to the republic of Azerbaijan and the celebration of “Musavat” on this occasion (10, p.31). The author comes to the conclusion that, sovereignty of the Azerbaijani government is no genuine against the backdrop of Turks’ interfere with affairs of the new state; Azerbaijan’s carrying urgent products and railways’ capture by Turks for five years (10, p.31). A. Rayevski not considering Azerbaijan an independent state, highlights negotiations with general Thomson, commander of allied troops of Azerbaijani government in Anzali (10, p.36).

A. Rayevski does not recognize Republic on the status of the state on one hand, while, on the other, he denies his earlier opinion with “the Azerbaijani government” phrase. It is interesting that, the author defines the Azerbaijan Republic which he does not consider legitimate, as “Musavat government”. As we can see, A. Rayevski accents on negotiations with foreign forces of Azerbaijani government which he denied as a counter-revolutionary organization, in this work. History of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic is also covered in “Musavat Agrarian Policy” (1930) work of M. Aghayev which analyses agrarian policy in Republic period. M. Aghayev starting his work with the abolition of serfdom in Tzar Russia explains agrarian situation in Azerbaijan in that period based on Petrovich’s “cotton-growing in the South Caucasus” book (1, p. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). The author drawing attention to the activity of Musavat Party which he calls “landlords and capitalists’ counter-revolutionary and security party” writes that, Musavat members represent city commerce and industry interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie (1, p.17). Then, in one word, M. Aghayev makes brief his view saying this party (Musavat party-R.K) defends the interests of the bourgeoisie and from cadets” (1, p.18). M. Aghayev interpretes the establishment of the Azerbaijani Republic in “landlords at work” section (1, p.22). The author expresses the establishment of a republic with “the Musavat seized Ganja with the help of bayonet of Turkish troops” sentence, said between the lines and emphasizes

the organization of second interim government of National Council on June 17 (1, p.22). Interestingly, the author, evaluating the collapse of Azerbaijani Republic as the occupation, interpreted 27 April, 1920 as a blow to the head of Musavat members (1, p.64). Note that, M. Aghayev sounds radical ideas against the government of the republic towards only Musavat party and agrarian program discussion in the work. The author tries to show the republic's creation by bourgeois defender, Musavat Party and its unwilling to resolve agrarian issue since being the power of hostile classes. In addition, M. Aghayev, elucidating the discussion of agrarian project in Azerbaijani Parliament has to endorse the activity of the republic in this core and deny the opinions (1, p.40-48).

The history of the Republic of Azerbaijan is dealt perfunctorily in A. Dubner's "Baku proletariat in Revolution years (1917-1920)" work, dedicated to struggle of Baku workers in the years of 1917-1920 for the set-up of the dictatorship of the working-class. A. Dubner, a graduate of The Institute of Red Professors, does not express any idea about the republic despite the coverage of the events taking place during the period of the republic. Thus, the author does not elucidate competences of Musavat members (the Musavat-R.K) while dealing with "the Musavat's bloody policy with Turks and English" (5, p.93). A. Dubner reflects the time from August 1918 until April 1920 in the section "the struggle of Baku proletariat for Soviet power during counterrevolution time" of his book. However, he does not cite Azerbaijani Democratic Republic which was real and legitimate power during the mentioned period. Only in the text "Break-up of the Turks till May strike," he writes that, "Turkish guardian of Azerbaijani independence was substituted by English supporters on November 17" (5, p.101). He adds that, "Musavat government" formed the state in the two-month period of Turkish troops' remain in Baku (5, p.101). The author gives as a sample restoration of Duma formed on the basis of 1914 elections in order to show "Musavat government's" being guard of Tsar law and order. (5, p.101). The author, calling the Republic of Azerbaijan "Musavat government", tries to restrict it in a form of party in a narrow range. He also attracts attention with contradictory statements. A. Dubner, trying to show the strength of impact of workers' strikes, verifies the English people's recognition of Azerbaijan (5, p.104). It is clear from the foregoing that, despite A. Dubner's assignment of ensuring alternative of political system, he prejudices fundamental principles of the Soviet society, bringing as a fact the existence of Republic. The fact is that, A. Dubner refers to "Musavat government," "the government of Azerbaijan"

expressions, instead of hiding existence of any government in Azerbaijan before the Soviet power due to denialism specific for Bolshevik dictatorship rules. A. Garayev, one of the major political figures in the establishment of the Soviet power (the occupation of Azerbaijan-R.K) in Azerbaijan describes the Republic of Azerbaijan perfunctorily in his "From recent past" work published in 1926 and dedicated to workers' strike, organized by Bolsheviks. The author, does not mention in general, creation and activity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. However, he describes Musavat members' considering important "celebration of anniversary of Azerbaijan's independence on May 28" (6, p.19).

The author is obliged to bring to mind republic in a minimum level from statistical point of view, because of uphold of the standards. The latter set by political tactics despite the attempt to keep away the Republic of Azerbaijan from social life, being one of the ideologists of the ruling system. A. Garayev preferred political interests, wrote his work in political review content for his engagement in elaboration of fundamental principles of the Bolshevik dictatorship in Azerbaijan and non-apply to the factual materials. Therefore, A. Garayev's work is not included in the list of serious academic research work. A. Garayev has expressed unilateral opinion about Azerbaijan Republic being leading figure of the Bolshevik elite. "Two Roads" work of G.Musabeyov was published in 1930. To note, G. Musabeyov is a political figure represented in the Bolshevik Party leadership. In this sense, any article written by him has political weight. Therefore, G. Musabeyov's work dealt with the victory of Soviet power, can be described as political work. As mentioned previously, the author presents "Musavat" party which set up the national government in Azerbaijan, as guard of Baku bourgeoisie, as well as khans and beys due to Bolshevik thinking, as political party (3, p.12-13). The author being far from historical objectivity, does not give any information about the republic. But he calls the third part of his work "Musavat, on the head of government" and displays the attitude towards Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (3, p.26). In section "betrayal to the interests of the Turkish people" (3, p.34), the author calls head of Azerbaijani state, M.A.Rasulzadeh who objected the arrival of the Red Army (the occupation-R.K) to Azerbaijan, "Musavat leader, treacherous Rasulzadeh" (3, p.45). He stresses the agreement signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ottoman Empire (3, p.36-37) on June 4, 1918, for the sake of the interests of landlords and capitalists and "Rasulzadeh's capture his people to the Sultan of Turkey" (3, p.37). G. Musabeyov tries to prove strenuously non-independence

of the Republic and its becoming Turkey's colony (3, p.59) in section entitled "Independence of Azerbaijan" (3, p.56). Generally, G.Musabeyov confirms unintentionally the legitimacy of the Azerbaijan government, while interpreting the republic which he did not consider government that thus paves the way for contradictory reasons.

M. Guliyev in his "October enemies in Azerbaijan" work dedicated to 10th anniversary of October Revolution (coup-R.K) published in 1927, "briefly listing previous events, also notes the establishment of Musavat government" in Azerbaijan (7, p.8). M.Guliyev is not going to write about Azerbaijan Republic like his colleague G.Musabeyov, but he also noted urgency to give information about the republic while analysing political events that occurred in the past. M.Guliyev not estimating historical situation correctly because of political figure's being in the events' focus, considers Azerbaijan Republic to be colony of Turkey (7, p.9-10). At the same time, M.Guliyev in fact recognizes the legitimacy of the government of Azerbaijan, giving the name "Gentlemen and landowners create a republic to protect their property" (7, p.10) to the part of his work, in order to bring out anti-people essence of the republic.

According to the author, Azerbaijan Republic is the foundation appeared as a result of fear of Azerbaijani bourgeoisie masked with phrases of independence and freedom and the bourgeois intelligentsia of October Revolution" (7, p.11). Interestingly, M. Guliyev first writes that, the Parliament is composed of police officer and the chiefs of the region, following allocation of 38 rooms to Musavat members; Ittihad (unity)-13, Ahrar party-7, socialists-12, neutral-6, center left-1 "Russian-Slavic community,"-4, national minority-4, Armenian faction-4 and the Dashnaks-7 in the text "The composition of the Parliament"(7, p.13). As you can see, M.Guliyev characterizes the Republic of Azerbaijan in legal authorities format even in the minimum level as a result of the analysis. Definitely, the subject of analysis of M. Guliyev is not the Republic of Azerbaijan, but preparation of socio-political ground for the establishment of the Soviet government in Azerbaijan. In spite of the above-mentioned, Azerbaijan Democratic Republic is appeared as alternative factor upon assessment of political environment in Azerbaijan complexly by the author. Years of 1920s, creation of Soviet historiography differ for several peculiarities. Thus, after Bolsheviks' seize the power in 1917 October, Marxism's announcement state doctrine and only scientific theory in the country defined the direction of 20-30s historiography. Bolsheviks took measures provided the development of Marxism on the way of the

power strength. So, Communist academy was founded in October 1918 for the purpose of Marxism promotion, creation of Marxist history science and preparation of marxist-historians. Marxism's consideration as only scientific theory led to announcement of other theories non-scientific. All scientific theories and socio-political movements were estimated from standpoint of closeness to Marxism: if it is close, then it is scientific. Furthermore, along with Marxism to be formed in Soviet Russia in 1920, non-Marxism history science developed in complicated circumstance existed as well. Old type entities, universities, orthographic commission, a historical museum, historical society, humanitarian institutions of the National Academy of Sciences and others created until 1917, demonstrating liberty in their work and the selection of research topics, were in the status of an alternative to Marxist historical science.

In this sense, this period can be called contradictory stage in the Soviet historiography. Therefore, contradictions are clearly observed within the attempts to transformation to Bolshevik society in 1920-30 authors' works. As we can see, the authors try to express stand in conformity with the standards of ruling party, but used scientific methodology. Because of the addressing factual materials, Azerbaijan Democratic Republic appeared as a catalyst of historical events and estimated as focus factor in determining the political environment. Apparently, the 1920-30 year Soviet historians approach the Republic of Azerbaijan from negative aspects in order to comply with the requirements of political environment and try to erase it from history. However, they have been forced to interpret the Azerbaijani State upon establishment of the Soviet regime (the occupation of Azerbaijan-R.K) in Azerbaijan.

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