



A INFLUÊNCIA DAS PERSONALIDADES HISTÓRICAS NA FORMAÇÃO DAS POLÍTICAS DO INÍCIO DO SÉCULO XX NO AZERBAIJÃO E NO IRÃ

THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES IN SHAPING EARLY 20TH CENTURY POLITICS IN AZERBAIJAN AND IRAN

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RESUMO

Este artigo explora o papel profundo de personalidades históricas na formação do cenário sociopolítico do Azerbaijão e do Irã durante o início do século XX. O estudo investiga a influência de figuras notáveis como S.M. Khiyabani e M.A. Rasulzadeh, cujas ações políticas impactaram significativamente a trajetória histórica dessas regiões. O artigo discute como personalidades individuais podem atuar como catalisadores de mudanças sociais e históricas mais amplas, demonstrando o entrelaçamento da agência pessoal com processos históricos coletivos. O artigo examina a relação dialética entre personalidades históricas e seus contextos sociopolíticos, ilustrando como as características pessoais e as estruturas sociais se unem para impulsionar movimentos históricos. Ele enfatiza que, embora os processos históricos sejam impulsionados por uma infinidade de atores, incluindo as massas, as contribuições de indivíduos importantes podem alterar o curso da história, incorporando-os permanentemente à memória coletiva de suas sociedades. Ao destacar casos da história do Azerbaijão e do Irã, o artigo defende o reconhecimento dos papéis indispensáveis desempenhados por figuras históricas na navegação e na influência de transformações políticas e sociais fundamentais. Por meio de uma análise detalhada de suas vidas e ações, ele revela a interação dinâmica entre suas ambições pessoais e as condições históricas mais amplas que facilitaram sua ascensão à proeminência. O estudo emprega uma abordagem histórico-filosófica para analisar várias fontes e literatura, com o objetivo de descobrir os mecanismos pelos quais esses indivíduos deixaram marcas indelévels em suas sociedades. A conclusão postula que o legado de tais figuras é crucial para a compreensão dos desenvolvimentos históricos e políticos do início do século XX no Azerbaijão e no Irã, incitando as sociedades contemporâneas a reconhecer o impacto potencial da agência individual na formação da história.

Palavras-chave: Processo histórico; Filosofia da história; Desenvolvimento; Dialética; Renovação; Liberdade.

ABSTRACT

This article explores the profound role of historical personalities in shaping the sociopolitical landscape of Azerbaijan and Iran during the early 20th century. The study delves into the influence of notable figures like S.M. Khiyabani and M.A. Rasulzadeh, whose political actions significantly impacted the historical trajectory of these regions. The article discusses how individual personalities can act as catalysts for broader societal and historical changes,





demonstrating the intertwining of personal agency with collective historical processes. The article examines the dialectical relationship between historical personalities and their socio-political contexts, illustrating how personal characteristics and societal structures coalesce to propel historical movements. It emphasizes that while historical processes are driven by a multitude of actors including the masses, the contributions of key individuals can alter the course of history, thus, embedding them permanently in the collective memory of their societies. By highlighting cases from Azerbaijani and Iranian history, the paper argues for the recognition of the indispensable roles played by historical figures in navigating and influencing pivotal political and social transformations. Through a detailed analysis of their lives and actions, it reveals the dynamic interaction between their personal ambitions and the broader historical conditions that facilitated their rise to prominence. The study employs a historical-philosophical approach to analyze various sources and literature, aiming to uncover the mechanisms through which these individuals have left indelible marks on their societies. The conclusion posits that the legacy of such figures is crucial in understanding the historical and political developments of the early 20th century in Azerbaijan and Iran, urging contemporary societies to recognize the potential impact of individual agency in shaping history.

Keywords: Historical process; Philosophy of history; Development; Dialectics; Renewal; Freedom.

1 INTRODUCTION

Social philosophical knowledge, an inseparable and sui generis domain within general philosophy, investigates the theoretical underpinnings of the general legal principles governing the existence and evolution of society. A fundamental aspect of this field involves the philosophical examination of historical processes. It encompasses the study of the mutual interactions among diverse societies and the developmental trajectory of humanity, constituting an analysis of historical processes. This goes beyond the mere preservation and replication of existing societal forms and structures. Rather, it unfolds as a historical process unfolding within specific temporal and spatial contexts. On one hand, historical processes adhere to their internal immanent logical and objective developmental laws. On the other hand, they are shaped by the endeavors of individuals (subjects) pursuing their own aims and interests. It becomes evident that history manifests as a unity of the objective and subjective, advancing irrespective of human volition, while concurrently representing the history of humanity itself. Questions regarding the genesis of history, the designation of historical subjects, and the role and position of individual personalities within history constitute prominent topics of discussion within the philosophy of history.

The role and place of personality in history is also reflected in contemporary world on the background of historical-political processes. The ongoing geopolitical processes, unresolved conflicts (injustice, aimed at violating the sovereignty of nations), and processes revolving around spheres of influence have brought the historical personality factor to the





forefront. In resolving political processes occurring in various regions of the world, the role of historical personality in their elimination constantly increases (especially related to political processes occurring in the post-Soviet space). Their political activities have a significant impact on the aspirations of millions of people and on the global order, influencing international relations.

It is worth noting in connection with the degree of topicality of the subject that both philosophers from the history of world philosophical thought and Azerbaijani scholars have been engaged in this problem and have written scientific research works. Regarding the role and place of personality in history, philosophers such as Hegel (1978, 1993), K. Jaspers (1996), G. V. Plekhanov (1969), P. L. Lavrov (2013a, 2013b), N. K. Mikhailovsky (2010), A. A. Gushchin (2013), M. Bradbury (2010), M. S. Erokhina (1997), C. O. Kurbanov (2016), I. A. Gobozov (1999), L. E. Grinin (2011), M. N. Ryabtseva (2017), and others have presented interesting ideas and considerations. In connection with this problem, Azerbaijani philosophers F. Alakbarli (2018; 2022), V. Akhmad (2010), E. Eminbeyli (2019), M. Rzayev (2004, 2011), M. Musayev (2023), and others have conducted scientific research and obtained significant scientific results. However, the issue of the place and role of personality in history in the modern period necessitates fundamental research and deeper investigation due to its relevance. This study addresses a significant gap in the scholarly understanding of the role of historical personalities in shaping political and social realities in Azerbaijan and Iran during the early 20th century. Previous research has often overlooked the intricate interplay between individual actions and broader historical forces, focusing either too narrowly on single events or too broadly on geopolitical trends without adequately considering the impact of key figures.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the problem of the role and place of personality in history, explore its historical mission, and search for ways to solve this problem.

- To achieve this purpose, the following tasks are set:
- To conduct a detailed analysis of historical and philosophical literature to understand the goals posed by personality in history;
- To analyze the roles played by various historical figures during political events that occurred in Iran and Azerbaijan in the early 20th century;
- To determine the role of historical personality in contemporary political processes worldwide and conduct analysis on these aspects.



2 METHODS

To achieve the objectives of this research, emphasis is placed on employing the dialectical method to deeply analyze the concept of historical personality within the context of political processes. This method facilitates understanding the dynamic interactions and contradictions within historical developments. Alongside the dialectical approach, the study also utilizes the method of the unity of history and logic. This combined methodology not only enhances the reliability of the findings by interlinking historical events and logical analysis but also aids in predicting future development trends based on past and present dynamics. By integrating these methods, the research aims to comprehensively uncover the nuanced realities and potential future trajectories of the studied historical figures, thus offering a rich, multi-dimensional view of their impacts and legacies.

3 PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY

Prominent figures emerge onto the stage of history under specific circumstances, propelled by their unique personal attributes. Their objectives and roles often extend to significantly influencing the populace. These individuals are not merely pragmatic or political functionaries but also thoughtful and contemplative beings. It is worth noting that the ascendancy of a particular prominent figure during a given historical epoch is not coincidental. The impact of such figures on historical processes is contingent upon two conditions.

Firstly, it is the inherent talent of the individual. Such figures tend to be more attuned to the exigencies of their time by virtue of their talents than their counterparts. This implies that the actions of these figures consciously and autonomously articulate the necessary and subconscious trajectory of events. It is pertinent to recognize, in this regard, that multiple prominent personalities coexist within society at any given period. However, only a select few stand out and are elevated to prominence, eclipsing others. The second condition entails that extant social structures, social groups, and classes should not impede the individual in manifesting their capabilities.

Throughout the annals of human history, countless events have been steered under the stewardship of individuals possessing varied intellectual qualities (be they genius or pedestrian, talented or ordinary, resolute or passive).

In the course of historical progression, the robust and subtle facets of personalities





manifest swiftly and distinctly. Both dimensions exert a substantial influence on the demands of the nation and humanity at large. Prominent personalities, through their intellect, erudition, and experiential wisdom, are capable of altering even certain events and their repercussions. The eminence of a historical personality is gauged by the magnitude of their endeavors. Their eminence is calibrated by innate human faculties, as well as their personal attributes and historical milieu.

The contention that personalities are the architects of world history is predicated upon the notion that ideology reigns supreme in society, i.e., an idealist interpretation of history. At first blush, it may appear that prominent personalities are the determinants of historical processes by default. For instance, figures such as Alexander the Great of Macedonia and later Napoleon forged vast empires. However, were it not for the corresponding socio-economic and political circumstances in ancient Greece or France, neither they nor others could have established such empires. It is evident that a materialist stance is requisite for delving into history comprehensively – a viewpoint propounded by Karl Marx.

In conclusion, it has been discerned that historical processes are not orchestrated by individuals or heroes but rather by the broad masses of people. Prominent personalities emerge, thrive, and distinguish themselves, while the populace remains the principal agent of history. The foregoing does not negate the pivotal role of prominent personalities in history. Precision is imperative when addressing this matter, as the term "prominent personalities" may sometimes be misconstrued to refer solely to political dignitaries and heads of state. Indeed, they wield a greater influence on historical processes owing to their social standing, making significant decisions commensurate with their societal stature. However, it is imperative to encompass prominent scholars, literary and artistic luminaries, as well as celebrated athletes within this category.

The distinguished philosopher G.W. Hegel argued that within the trajectory of historical processes, contradictions emerge between extant norms and the potential for their modification. These potentialities encompass numerous salient aspects, yet they can only be actualized through the agency of individuals endowed with the highest faculties and willing to enact those potentials. Consequently, he asserted, "those individuals who embody this universality in their objectives are authentic historical individuals, regarded as universal historical figures" (Hegel, 1993, p. 81). He included Y. Caesar in this classification, contending that his aspiration to assume the dictatorship of Rome was indispensable for both Roman and global history. This was not solely his personal accomplishment but also an expression of the prevailing instinct in his era. Thus, according to Hegel (1993), only





"those individuals who possess the substantial elements of the higher (initial) spirit in their personal objectives are noteworthy personalities in history" (p. 82). For Hegel, historical figures are those who apprehend the perspectives of historical processes with profound insight. Such individuals are historical figures; they harbor the most comprehensive content in their objectives, they are reflective beings, and they discern what is imperative in their epoch. They discern what is vital for the world's progression in the immediate future, and it is incumbent upon them to comprehend it, adopt it as their objective, and invest their energy into its realization. According to Hegel, exceptional individuals are heroes because they emerge at a juncture when the requisite conditions for decisive actions of universal historical significance are ripe. They also possess illustrious intellects and grasp what society necessitates at that moment. They posit as a goal what is indispensable for society at the pertinent time and what history has long mandated. Such heroes apprehend the essence of extant society more astutely than all other individuals. Consequently, Hegel contended that the emergence of notable personalities onto the stage of history is imperative and inexorable because it renders the future development of society between the old and new contradictions insurmountable. Great personalities resolve these contradictions and rescue all from perdition.

In this context, employing Hegel's dialectical method, it is noteworthy that historical personalities not only ensure the subsequent development of society but also undergo their own development. Thus, historical personalities, by surpassing themselves, ascend to a new historical stratum.

Hegel (1978) also demonstrated that, "upon the attainment of the objective at hand, those eminent figures are discarded akin to vacuous chaff. They either perish prematurely akin to Alexander, or meet their demise akin to Caesar, or are banished to St. Helena akin to Napoleon" (pp. 82-83). Hegel (1978) articulated,

universal history does not denote the significance ascribed to personalities in this or that aspiration. They did not deliberate extensively, they wholly dedicated themselves to a singular purpose. Even such personalities occasionally exhibit a tepid regard towards other grand, sanctified concerns, and such conduct warrants censure from an ethical standpoint. Such a grand personality is compelled to discover innocuous blossoms, to obliterate much in its trajectory. (pp. 29-30).

Hegel vehemently opposed the psychological scrutiny of the endeavors of illustrious personalities. It was diametrically contrary to him to elucidate their actions through internal stimuli. He censured scholars who attributed the endeavors of illustrious personalities to their personal human attributes. Although such perspectives existed, many construed





Alexander's conquests as driven by ambition, or sought to rationalize Napoleon's actions by his ambitiousness and his endeavor to seize dominion at any expense. The critique of the eminent philosopher should be deemed entirely equitable. The role of the disposition of historical personages becomes more conspicuous at pivotal junctures in history (e.g., during conflicts). Historians continue to debate whether, if Napoleon did not experience self-reproach, what would transpire in the course and aftermath of the Battle of Waterloo (They overlook that Napoleon had recently suffered defeat in Russia and several European states had formed a coalition against him - the historical circumstances were significantly adverse for Napoleon. France was vanquished by coalition states militarily, economically, and politically). Hegel also elucidated that personages engender transformations in all facets of communal life, articulating the interests of all strata of society. Consequently, on occasion, not all concur with their endeavors, they adjudicate their actions. According to Hegel, such adjudications are unwarranted, as the actions of eminent individuals in this regard possess an objective nature, foster societal advancement, and for this cause, individual interests may be forfeited.

In Hegel's examination of the comprehension of humanity's position and function within history, a dichotomy is elucidated. On one facet, the individual's ingress into the societal fabric via their personal endeavors occurs within the constraints of the extant labor division and requisites of socio-political occurrences, whether voluntary or compulsory. Conversely, the significance of individual agency is upheld through the mechanism of historical determinism. Hegel indeed espouses a deterministic inclination in his historical explications, markedly inflating the role of the state. Nonetheless, Hegel's stance on the efficacy of the active individual on the historical stage remains ambivalent.

Furthermore, in scrutinizing the interplay between determinism and human agency, Hegel initially posits the specificity of historical determinism. Consequently, the pertinence of the role of global historical personages piques particular interest. It is discernible that within history, human activities often yield consequences divergent from their intentions. Within the purview of historical exigency, such endeavors are deemed incidental and contingent. However, Hegel contends that on occasion, specific actions and behaviors are not incidental and inconsequential. Rather, they are accorded significant importance by virtue of encapsulating the most pivotal moments. Hegel evaluates such occurrences as significant historical occurrences. They are articulated through passions and materialized in life, yet they do not culminate in passions and specific objectives. Their peculiarity lies in their linkage to historical rejuvenation. Hegel acknowledges the significance of tumultuous





epochs in societal history and furnishes a substantive characterization of their essence. Herein, significant conflicts ensue, and the discourse on social upheaval periods is comprehensible; extant values and norms relinquish their potency, the bedrock of erstwhile immutable social regulations is destabilized, and the emergence of novel societal configurations proves disruptive to the antiquated. Thus, novel values emerge, heralded as valuable, rational, and indispensably necessary.

Historical movements are instigated by individuals driven by their own objectives, and novel, more generalized content is interjected among personal interests. Such individuals align their pursuits and endeavors with the requisites of advancement, thereby actualizing historical opportunities. (Hegel, 1978, p. 141).

In delving into the discourse on world historical figures and their contributions, Hegel unequivocally diverges from the conventional practice of essentializing personal attributes. Analogous to any individual, a historical figure pursues egoistic objectives. Caesar engaged in a struggle for personal honor and safety, the attainment of which could be ensured by his military-political triumph over adversaries. The realization of this objective necessitated exceptional personal attributes, and Caesar's eminent persona shaped the ramifications of his endeavors. Historical figures eschew standardized activities; they are adept at discerning what eludes others amidst the course of events. According to Hegel, human persona is forged on the foundation of the social unity to which it pertains. Each individual emerges within the milieu of their respective community and is intrinsically linked to its ethos. Their distinctive features are contingent upon historical exigency but not arbitrary within the contextual framework of the social-cultural milieu that molds them.

In elucidating the role of personalities in history, the eminent Russian intellectual G.V. Plekhanov primarily directed his attention towards the prevailing socio-cultural milieu. According to him,

for an individual endowed with certain aptitudes to attain greatness, two prerequisites are essential: 1) their aptitude should facilitate a swifter comprehension of contemporary exigencies compared to others; 2) the existing societal framework should not impede the implementation of what is imperative and beneficial by that individual at that juncture. Great personalities engender great epochs. (Plekhanov, 1969, p. 327).

Another noteworthy German philosopher delving into the discourse on the role of personality in history, K. Jaspers, posited that a distinguished personality is one who senses responsibility for the liberty of others. He contended that a state functionary depriving others of freedom cannot be deemed a distinguished personality, and in his view, Caesar does not





qualify as a distinguished personality because he dismantled the republic and instituted dictatorship in its place. However, K. Jaspers (1996) moderated his stance later, writing that "many distinguished personalities, though cognizant of their responsibility for the freedom of others, are compelled to contend with two conditions: coercion and liberty" (p. 152).

Hence, mere reliance on historical circumstances is insufficient for the emergence of distinguished personalities; individual attributes are also requisite. To ascend to eminence, an individual must possess the pertinent political and social standing within society. The role of the individual is deeply influenced by the level of civilization of society, the degree of influence of religious and state institutions (Zein et al., 2022), as well as the political and cultural maturity of the population. Eminent figures epitomize a distinct historical phase and epoch. For instance, Alexander the Great's conquests and invasions aligned with the historical conditions of his era. Nevertheless, individuals capable of addressing the exigencies of the times do not materialize in every historical epoch. Effectual resolution of historical quandaries necessitates suitable historical circumstances, human potential, military-technological capabilities, and the requisite personal qualities. It is imperative to underscore that individuals do not inherently embody eminence. As aptly articulated by G. Plekhanov, distinguished personalities are shaped by historical exigencies. In the context of Russia, Peter the Great emerged as a distinguished figure due to the imperative need for significant reforms in the country at the commencement of the 18th century, as if the populace was embarking on a momentous journey and anticipating someone's arrival. Such a historical figure materialized in Peter the Great. "The salience of personality in history is contingent not solely upon historical circumstances but also upon its political and social positioning within society" (Plekhanov, 1969, p. 146).

Consequently, the historical continuum is shaped by the life endeavors of individuals. They engage in labor, foster material and spiritual values, and transmit these values, traditions, customs, and cultural attainments across generations.

4 INDIVIDUAL AGENCY AND HISTORICAL CHANGE: CASE STUDIES OF KHIYABANI AND RASULZADEH

In discussing the dialectics of historical personalities, it is noteworthy that Azerbaijan's history has witnessed several historical figures whose socio-political convictions have occasionally undergone transformations, advancements, and followed a dialectical, innovative trajectory. S.M. Khiyabani stands as one of the distinguished figures emerging





from the Azerbaijani Turkic community during the 20th century.

Khiyabani advanced her societal and political views on a philosophical basis, analyzing events not as a politician but rather as a philosopher. Besides being the leader of the South Azerbaijani nationalist movement, S.M. Khiyabani can also be recognized as a prominent philosopher of Azerbaijan. Central to her philosophical ideas was the concept of "Renewal" (Təsəddüd). Khiyabani, even in planning her uprising, worked theoretically on the basis of her "Renewal" concept.

The bourgeois revolution in Russia in 1917 had a significant impact in Iran, as in the entire region. At that time, S.M. Khiyabani, who was the head of the Azerbaijan Province Committee of the Iranian Democratic Party, quickly formed both the Azerbaijan Democratic Party and emerged as a leader of the Azerbaijan Turks. Starting from 1917, S.M. Khiyabani emphasized the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice through the party's "Renewal" newspaper, stating that Muslims should actively participate in creating a new civilization. On one hand, Khiyabani acknowledged the necessity of studying the positive aspects of European civilization, while on the other hand, she deemed it essential to base renewal on national-religious culture. This implies that Khiyabani believed that renewal should be grounded in national and religious values in all cases. Only a few individuals, including herself, could grasp Khiyabani's philosophy at that time.

It is essential to note that Khiyabani's philosophy of renewal was a correct and thoughtful approach aimed at first stimulating individual conscience within society and then transforming it into a collective worldview. In her socio-political views, the rejuvenation of Azerbaijan's people was prioritized in terms of protecting national rights. Therefore, the Azerbaijani people should not be deterred on this path. Most analyses of S.M. Khiyabani's work suggest that her political activity left a deep mark on the history of Azerbaijan's national liberation and democracy movement.

In Iran, modernization is often equated with Westernization, and this association frequently leads to a perceived conflict with national values—a phenomenon observed in various other countries as well (Devetak, 2019). However, for Khiyabani, "Renewal" meant adopting and adapting to the conditions of the modern era at both societal and individual levels. She saw renewal as a process founded on national values. In her opinion, Khiyabani's social and philosophical views, as well as her political views, are a testament to her wisdom and understanding of her time. It can be concluded that Khiyabani was a wise figure who prioritized sacrifice and heroism for the nation and homeland over individual fears and slavery. In my view, Khiyabani herself became a prominent proponent of this





philosophy, sacrificing herself for the freedom of the nation and the homeland.

M.A. Rasulzadeh, the founder of the independent Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, is another notable figure originating from the Azerbaijani Turkic community in the 20th century. M.A. Rasulzadeh occupies a special place in Azerbaijani history due to his rich, dialectical, and democratic political and social activities.

In the early 20th century, various ideological currents, revolutions, nationalistic, and class conflict issues were prevalent not only in Tsarist Russia but also in Iran and the Ottoman Empire. These circumstances coincided with M.A. Rasulzadeh's formative years, significantly shaping his political activities and worldview. His affinity towards social democracy in the initial phases was primarily driven by societal equality, injustices within the empire, colonial policies, and national-religious disparities. During that epoch, there was scant intellectual enthusiasm among Azerbaijani luminaries, including Rasulzadeh, for the socialist democratic discourse advocating social equity and justice and espousing human rights. Hence, the positive inclinations of our national intellectuals, Rasulzadeh included, towards social democracy and their involvement in leftist organizations stemmed from a palpable exigency. It is notable that during such epochs, M.A. Rasulzadeh emerged more as a politician inclined towards social democracy and actively participated in propagating his ideas in the establishment of political entities.

The inaugural organization Rasulzadeh founded, the "Turk-Muslim Young Revolutionary Society," partially embraced national-religious features, especially the ideals of social democracy. Established in 1904 under the leadership of M. Movsumov and M.A. Rasulzadeh, the subsequent endeavors of the "Hummet" organization, while serving the objectives of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party to some extent, managed to attract a significant cadre of intellectuals.

From the aforementioned observations, it can be inferred that while M.A. Rasulzadeh was predisposed towards social democracy, and although socialist revolutionism predominated in the agendas of the organizations he initially established, they also mirrored national-religious characteristics.

M.A. Rasulzadeh adopted a judicious course by advocating for "freedom to individuals, independence to nations" as a proponent of social democracy. His rallying cry encapsulated the essence of personal freedom, labor rights, and national liberation as the three cardinal principles.

Rasulzadeh's more profound and comparative scrutiny of socialist democratic tenets from a concrete perspective, subsequently transitioning from social democracy to democracy and





eventually to national democracy, dovetailed with his creative output during his exile in Iran. In articles he penned in 1909, Rasulzadeh not only presented himself as a social democrat but also as a bona fide democrat. In his writings from Tabriz and Tehran, he accorded particular emphasis to the principles of democracy, especially underscoring freedom of expression and the press. "The newspaper is the voice of the nation. A nation without a newspaper is like a nation without a language. A nation without a language is a beggar and needy" (Rasulzadeh, 2001, p. 7).

According to him, press freedom supersedes everything else, as only when the press is completely free can it discharge its role effectively.

M.A. Rasulzadeh embraced certain facets of Marxist social democratic ideals, primarily tethered to societal egalitarianism and material prosperity. Overall, Rasulzadeh's perspectives on democracy and socialism can be assessed along three axes. Firstly, he accorded precedence to the social democrat idea above Islam without deeming it antithetical to it, contending that the freedom of all nations hinged solely on the triumph of socialism globally. Secondly, Rasulzadeh marginalized the social democrat idea as a social distance. This ensued because Rasulzadeh did not deem a nation's independence feasible solely based on the social democrat idea. Thirdly, Rasulzadeh treated social democracy and the national issue on equal footing. Apart from prioritizing the national idea over any other idea, Rasulzadeh opined that fascism should not be countenanced in democratic nations. In a national democratic society, the denizens of the state should coexist equitably without any national-religious discrimination.

In the realm of M.A. Rasulzadeh's intellectual pursuits, the fundamental tenet of democracy pertaining to individual, societal, and national freedom has consistently occupied a central position. His ideological trajectory has traversed a path from the realm of personal autonomy to societal emancipation, culminating in the recognition of national sovereignty, as delineated within both political-philosophical discourse and literary-philosophical exegesis.

Commencing from the years 1911-1913, M.A. Rasulzadeh embarked on a quest for an ideological paradigm distinct from the paradigms of social democracy and Islamism, aspiring to articulate an ethos conducive to the realization of national liberation. Initially, Rasulzadeh construed social democracy as a potential instrumentality for securing the liberty of his compatriots vis-a-vis the hegemony of Tsarist Russia. However, with the passage of time, he came to apprehend that neither the doctrine of social democracy nor the narrative of Islamic nationalism would efficaciously engender the national sovereignty and emancipation





of the Azerbaijani Turks. Despite the continued propagation of social democratic precepts during this epoch, Rasulzadeh lucidly acknowledged a disjuncture in its praxis. He articulated a sentiment suggestive of a sense of disillusionment, postulating an impression akin to a futile endeavor waged under the aegis of social democracy. This gesture elucidates Rasulzadeh's latent skepticism toward the tenets of the international socialist revolution. Instead, Rasulzadeh embarked upon an alternative trajectory, disentangling himself from the discursive confines of social democracy and Islamic nationalism. Over time, M.A. Rasulzadeh envisaged an alternate trajectory epitomized by the paradigm of "equality" within the precincts of Islamic social democracy, liberal democracy, modernity, and nationalism.

Initially, the doctrinal orientation of the nascent party accentuated the primacy of Islamic tenets and social democratic principles over Turkism (Alakbarli, 2022, p. 144).

In the formative years of his intellectual maturation, characterized by a predominant influence of social democratic precepts and Islamic tenets, Rasulzadeh's ideological predilections ostensibly inclined toward a primacy accorded to nationalist sentiments and Turkic cultural motifs within the nascent echelons of his egalitarian discourse. However, a discernible paradigmatic shift from the ethos of social democracy and Islamic nationalism to the rubric of national democracy emerged in Rasulzadeh's ideological lexicon upon his repatriation from exile. This ideological realignment was animated by Rasulzadeh's fervent desire to secure a modicum of autonomy for Azerbaijan within the expansive domain of Tsarist Russia. Crucially, Rasulzadeh conceived national democracy as the preeminent ideological matrix capable of actualizing the cherished aspiration of national emancipation. In light of this imperative, the conceptualization and operationalization of "equality" predicated upon the precedence accorded to Turkism vis-a-vis social democracy and Islam assumed a compelling exigency. Hence, within the epistemic landscape of "equality," the ascendancy of Islamic and social ideological precepts was construed as temporally contingent. Consequently, Rasulzadeh directed his intellectual energies toward the vindication and substantiation of the national existence of Azerbaijani Turks, an endeavor concomitant with the ideals of "equality" in its narrow instantiation and national democracy in its broader connotation.

Since the early years of 1918, the struggle spearheaded by the Azerbaijani people was directed towards national independence. The Azerbaijani populace sought its salvation within the realm of the national party "Musavat" and its leader M.A. Rasulzadeh, which had undertaken this function. It was an era where the "Musavat" party emerged as the principal





nationalist party of the South Caucasus, with its leader M.A. Rasulzadeh propelling Azerbaijan towards independence at an accelerated pace. M.A. Rasulzadeh had already evolved into the quintessential political leader of this epoch, assuming the mantle of a historical figure.

At the inauguration of the Parliament of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, M.A. Rasulzadeh proclaimed, "Once raised, the flag will never fall again." Despite the physical demise of the ADR following the April 1920 invasion, the ideal of independence persisted perpetually within the hearts of the Azerbaijani people. The official adoption of our tricolor flag as the state flag by the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1991 unequivocally demonstrated the veracity of the assertion "Once raised, the flag will never fall again." This stands as a tangible testament to the foresight of M.A. Rasulzadeh as a historical figure, substantiating his sagacity. M.A. Rasulzadeh, along with S.M. Kheyabani and other historical personalities, traversed a dialectical political developmental trajectory.

Commencing his political endeavors in Azerbaijani political history as a social democrat, M.A. Rasulzadeh subsequently distanced himself from them due to ideological disparities, initially engaging in the struggle for autonomy status within the Russian Federative state, and later embarking on the task of creating an independent state in Azerbaijan, successfully accomplishing this mission.

5 LEGACY AND RELEVANCE: HISTORICAL FIGURES IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE

In the discourse on historical processes, it is essential to recognize the significant role played by both the populace and individual figures. This acknowledgment requires a balanced analysis, appreciating the profound impacts each has on the shaping of history. While Marxist philosophy traditionally relegates the role of individuals to a secondary position, it is undeniable that singular personalities have wielded considerable influence over the aspirations of millions, shaping global order and international relations. When these figures commit to social progress and the betterment of society, they create enduring legacies within the collective consciousness.

The modern perception of leaders like Kheyabani and Rasulzadeh is critical to our understanding of their lasting influence. This not only involves an evaluation of their historical impact but also an assessment of how their philosophies and actions continue to resonate within today's socio-political frameworks. The resurgence of interest in these figures spotlights the critical roles they played in advocating for progressive changes and





championing the rights and independence of their people, thereby highlighting the timeless value of visionary leadership and the pursuit of social justice and national sovereignty.

These discussions also delve into the complexities of their contributions, examining the broader implications of their decisions on current geopolitical and cultural narratives. By exploring how these personalities are commemorated, debated, and integrated into national identities and collective memories, we can gain a deeper understanding of their influence on historical events and on shaping contemporary values and priorities. This analysis ensures that the legacies of Khiyabani and Rasolzadeh transcend mere historical footnotes, positioning them as vibrant, dynamic influences in ongoing discussions about national identity, governance, and cultural heritage.

To place the legacies of these figures in a broader context, it is useful to draw parallels with other historical figures from different countries who have similarly influenced their societies and the global stage. For instance, leaders like Nelson Mandela in South Africa and Mahatma Gandhi in India also led significant national movements that not only reshaped their respective countries but also provided templates for leadership and resistance movements worldwide. Both Mandela and Gandhi championed ideologies of non-violence and civil rights, becoming global symbols for freedom and the struggle against oppression. These comparisons underscore the universal themes of leadership, vision, and the enduring impact of determined individuals on both historical and contemporary societal structures, paralleling the profound contributions of Khiyabani and Rasolzadeh to their respective nations.

Moreover, these reflections on historical figures can serve as a lens through which current leaders might evaluate their approaches to governance and social policies. By studying the actions and outcomes associated with Khiyabani and Rasolzadeh, modern politicians and activists can identify strategies that promote national cohesion, advance human rights, and stimulate socio-economic development. This ongoing relevance of historical figures highlights their role not only in history books but also in inspiring current and future generations.

In conclusion, the examination of the lives and legacies of historical figures like Khiyabani and Rasolzadeh offers invaluable insights into the dynamics of leadership and its long-term effects on societies. Their stories encourage a reevaluation of the power of individual agency in historical transformations and serve as a reminder of the potential impact of determined leadership on the world stage. The enduring relevance of these figures in contemporary debates about governance and social justice further affirms their place as pivotal actors in





the narratives of their countries and in the broader history of global movements for independence and human rights. This understanding not only enriches our historical knowledge but also informs current and future endeavors towards societal improvement.

6 CONCLUSION

This comprehensive analysis illuminates the significant roles played by historical figures like S.M. Khiyabani and M.A. Rasulzadeh in shaping the sociopolitical landscapes of Azerbaijan and Iran during the tumultuous early decades of the 20th century. By analyzing the political events of this era, particularly those occurring in the 1920s and 1930s, the profound impact of S.M. Khiyabani and M.A. Rasulzadeh on Azerbaijani history becomes evident once more.

It is possible to vividly envisage the calamities and losses inflicted upon the lives of the populace due to the establishment of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan during the 20th century. It is noteworthy that during this period, there were no personalities among the political leaders in Azerbaijan who possessed a historical mission or attained the stature of historical figures. Any individual aspiring to lead the populace must first and foremost recognize their own responsibility.

The political events of the 1920s and 1930s in Azerbaijan were echoed in a different form towards the end of the 20th century. However, during this period, the country failed to produce individuals worthy of leading and guiding the nation. Consequently, the Azerbaijani populace faced numerous losses and setbacks. The fundamental conclusion drawn from this analysis is that individuals indeed play a significant role in history, and during critical junctures of history, such historical personalities emerge. We hope that our nation will once again produce great historical figures!

Furthermore, it is essential to emphasize that in recent times, amidst the political, economic, and spiritual events in Azerbaijan, the position and role of the individual in society are crucial, and it is imperative for individuals to recognize their responsibility for the consequences of their actions in national matters.

Many of the individuals who led Azerbaijan in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as in the 1990s, failed to comprehend and acknowledge their responsibility. Therefore, during these periods, there were no shortages of demands and events in the public arena. Hence, individuals aspiring to lead the nation must fully comprehend and acknowledge their responsibility before the country and its people.





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