

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE FORMATION OF HISTORICAL MEMORY IN AZERBAIJAN: THE CONTEXT OF THE 19TH–20TH CENTURIES

SUMMARY

The article examines the role of national and cultural heritage in the formation and transformation of historical memory in Azerbaijan during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Historical memory is considered not merely as the preservation of the past, but as a process through which societies select, interpret, transmit, and give meaning to historical experiences within social, cultural, and political frameworks. The theoretical and methodological basis of the study draws upon Maurice Halbwachs's concept of collective memory, Pierre Nora's theory of "sites of memory," and Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory. The study analyzes the impact of the Enlightenment movement, education, the development of the national press, literature, and theatre on the emergence of national consciousness and historical memory in Azerbaijan during the second half of the nineteenth century. Particular attention is paid to the role of the press and intellectual environment in the formation of national identity and ideas of statehood in the early twentieth century, as well as to the relationship between cultural heritage and national statehood during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. The Soviet period is examined as a complex stage characterized simultaneously by ideological control, selective interpretation of the past, and institutional preservation of certain elements of cultural heritage. The article also explores the re-actualization of historical memory in the late twentieth century, the place of the January 20, 1990 tragedy in collective memory, the impact of the Karabakh conflict on memory practices, and the reassessment of national statehood heritage following the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence. The study argues that national and cultural heritage has functioned as an important mechanism for the inter-generational transmission of historical experience and has significantly contributed to the formation of national identity and statehood consciousness in Azerbaijani society.

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Introduction

Historical memory is not merely the act of remembering the past; it is a process through which the past is interpreted and given meaning within a system of particular values, symbols, and collective perceptions. In contemporary historiography, the concept of historical memory is not limited to the simple preservation of past events. Rather, it has become an important analytical category for explaining how a particular society selects its past, which events and historical figures it remembers, how these memories are transmitted to future generations, and how this process influences the formation of national identity. From this perspective, historical memory functions as a complex socio-cultural mechanism that establishes connections between history, culture, education, literature, collective identity, and public consciousness.

National and cultural heritage plays a particularly important role in the formation of historical memory. Both tangible and intangible cultural heritage ensure the transmission of information, values, symbols, and social experiences related to the past from one generation to another. Historical monuments, religious and secular architectural examples, manuscripts, archival documents, literary works, folklore, language, the national press, and educational institutions function not only as cultural assets but also as carriers of collective memory. Therefore, the preservation of national and cultural heritage should be considered not merely a matter of cultural policy, but also as an integral component of preserving historical memory and national identity.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the history of Azerbaijan are of particular research significance in this regard. From the second half of the nineteenth century onward, socio-economic and cul-

tural transformations in Azerbaijani society created conditions for the emergence of new forms of national consciousness. The spread of Enlightenment ideas, the establishment of new types of schools, the development of the national press, the growing social role of literature and theatre, and efforts to preserve and develop the Azerbaijani language became important elements in the formation of national and cultural memory. As a result of these processes, attitudes toward the past also changed. History increasingly came to be perceived not merely as a collection of past events, but as a moral and political resource capable of influencing the future development of society.

The development of the Azerbaijani Enlightenment movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was one of the major indicators of this transformation. The expansion of education and the growth of literacy enabled historical and cultural knowledge to reach broader social groups. During this period, schools and educational institutions functioned not only as institutions for the transmission of knowledge but also as means of preserving the national language, literary heritage, and historical consciousness. In this regard, the study of the history of education is particularly important for identifying the mechanisms through which national and cultural heritage contributed to the formation of historical memory.

The development of the national press and literature in the early twentieth century also played an important role in shaping Azerbaijan's historical memory. The expansion of public discussions on history, the national language, culture, Enlightenment, and socio-political issues through newspapers and journals contributed to the formation of collective perceptions. Literary works, in turn, did not merely present historical events in a factual manner; they enriched them with emotional and moral meanings. Consequently, literature and the press became important communication mechanisms through which national memory was formed and transmitted.

The period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic constituted the next stage in this process. The establishment of national statehood in 1918–1920 resulted in the emergence of new institutional approaches to national history, language, education, and culture. The integration of the idea of statehood with national and cultural heritage increased the political and social significance of historical memory. Therefore, the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic should be studied not only within the framework of political history but also from the perspe-

ctive of the formation of the institutional foundations of national memory.

During the Soviet period, the development of national and cultural heritage and historical memory acquired a more complex character. On the one hand, the expansion of education, science, museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions created conditions for the systematic preservation of certain elements of historical and cultural heritage. On the other hand, the presentation of history and national identity within an ideological framework had a significant impact on the interpretation of the past. Therefore, the issue of historical memory during the Soviet period cannot be adequately explained solely through a model of “forgetting” or “restriction.” Rather, this period should be regarded as a complex historical stage in which processes of preservation, transformation, selection, and reinterpretation existed simultaneously.

The restoration of Azerbaijan's state independence at the end of the twentieth century led to the renewed actualization of historical memory. Changes in attitudes toward national history, historical figures, national and cultural heritage, and traditions of statehood were accompanied by a reassessment of the past by Azerbaijani society. During this period, the reinterpretation of the historical experiences of previous generations within a new political and social context became an important element in strengthening national identity.

Thus, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries represent an important period in Azerbaijani history characterized by a close interaction between the formation and transformation of national and cultural heritage and the development of historical memory. A systematic study of this relationship is significant not only for understanding the history of individual cultural heritage elements, but also for determining how perceptions of the past were formed, preserved, transformed, and transmitted from one generation to another in Azerbaijani society.

Historical Memory and National and Cultural Heritage: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

The concept of historical memory is one of the important theoretical categories used in the contemporary humanities and social sciences to explain societies' relationship with the past. While traditional historiography primarily focuses on establishing the chronological sequence of historical events, their causal relationships, and factual foundations, the historical memory approach places greater emphasis on how the past is remembered, interpreted, selected,

and transmitted to future generations by society. In this regard, history and memory are closely related, but they are not identical concepts. While historical scholarship seeks to reconstruct the past as systematically and objectively as possible on the basis of available sources, memory refers to the process through which the past is perceived, interpreted, and given meaning by social groups and society as a whole.

The French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs played a particularly important role in the development of the theoretical foundations of historical memory. By developing the concept of collective memory, Halbwachs demonstrated that memory is not merely an individual psychological activity but is formed within a social environment and through group relationships. In his work *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* (The Social Frameworks of Memory), published in 1925, he argued that an individual's recollection of the past is closely connected with social groups and the cognitive frameworks established by those groups. In other words, memory is not simply the preservation of individual experience; rather, it is a process through which the past is reconstructed within the context of social relations and group belonging. [4] According to his approach, even when individuals remember the past personally, the content of their recollections is closely connected with the values, experiences, and existing social frameworks of the groups to which they belong. This approach provides an important methodological perspective for the study of Azerbaijani history. The formation of national memory is a broader process than the individual recollection of the past; it takes place through families, schools, literary circles, the press, religious and cultural institutions, museums, and other social structures.

Building on Halbwachs's concept, the formation of historical memory in Azerbaijani society can be examined within the framework of "social frameworks of memory." For example, the development of schools, newspapers and journals, literary circles, and theatre in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contributed not only to the expansion of the Enlightenment movement but also to the dissemination of particular historical and national perceptions throughout society. Thus, education and the press functioned not merely as institutions for transmitting information but also as social mechanisms that contributed to the formation of historical memory.

An important theoretical approach to understanding the spatial and symbolic dimensions of historical memory is Pierre Nora's concept of "sites of memory" (*lieux de mémoire*). Nora developed this

concept particularly to explain how national memory becomes embodied in specific places, symbols, and institutional forms. According to his approach, sites of memory are not limited to geographical locations; monuments, museums, archives, commemorative ceremonies, celebrations, symbols, and other forms of collective remembrance can also function as sites through which societies preserve and reproduce their memory. [5, 12] Nora demonstrates that memory becomes concentrated in particular places, objects, symbols, rituals, monuments, and other forms that preserve the remembrance of historical events. From this perspective, examples of national and cultural heritage should not be regarded merely as material objects inherited from the past; they can also be understood as "sites of memory" that maintain society's connection with its history.

In the Azerbaijani context, historical monuments, ancient cities, mosques, mausoleums, fortresses, cemeteries, museums, memorial complexes, and other cultural heritage sites are of particular significance in this regard. Their function is not limited to their aesthetic or architectural value. These sites serve as symbolic means of preserving particular historical events, historical figures, and social experiences within collective memory. Therefore, the preservation of a historical monument also represents the preservation of the memory associated with that monument.

This approach requires the concept of national and cultural heritage to be examined in a broader context. National and cultural heritage does not consist solely of material objects; rather, it represents a complex system formed through the interaction of tangible and intangible heritage. Language, folklore, music, literary works, customs and traditions, rituals, historical places, architectural monuments, and written sources perform, in different forms, a common function: preserving and transmitting the historical experience of society.

Jan Assmann's concept of "cultural memory" is particularly important for a broader understanding of historical memory. Assmann does not limit memory to individual recollection or everyday social remembrance; he also considers symbolic and institutional mechanisms that enable a society to preserve its identity over long periods as integral components of the memory system. One of the fundamental characteristics of cultural memory is its capacity to be transmitted across generations. This transmission takes place through written sources, books, historical works, religious texts, monuments, rituals, and other cultural forms. [2, 126] Written sources, books, historical works, religious texts, monuments, rituals,

museums, and the education system all contribute to the preservation of cultural memory. Each of these mechanisms can be identified in the history of Azerbaijan. For example, national literature transmitted particular historical and social experiences to future generations; folklore ensured the continuity of oral memory; the press created opportunities for public discussion of national and historical issues; and schools systematically transmitted this knowledge to younger generations. From this perspective, the development of Azerbaijani national and cultural heritage during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be understood not only as a part of cultural history but also as a process of the institutionalization of cultural memory.

There is a direct and reciprocal relationship between historical memory and national identity. When a society perceives itself as the continuation of a particular historical experience, a collective sense of “we” emerges. In this regard, national identity is not limited to political and legal belonging; it also represents a system of shared perceptions of a common historical past. National and cultural heritage serves as a symbolic bridge in this process. Through language, literature, music, architecture, customs and traditions, and historical figures inherited from the past, society establishes a connection with previous generations. Thus, the preservation of national and cultural heritage ensures not only cultural continuity between generations but also the continuity of their shared identity.

The history of Azerbaijan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is particularly significant in this regard. The development of the national Enlightenment movement and the press in the second half of the nineteenth century, the expansion of national literature and theatre in the early twentieth century, the strengthening of the idea of national statehood during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, and the restoration of independence at the end of the twentieth century contributed to the re-actualization of the historical foundations of national identity at different stages.

National and Cultural Awakening and the Formation of Historical Memory in the 19th Century

The second half of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of a new stage of national and cultural development in the history of Azerbaijan. Political and social changes within the Russian Empire, the acceleration of urbanization, the emergence of new economic relations, and, particularly, the expansion

of opportunities for secular education brought about significant transformations in the intellectual life of Azerbaijani society. During this period, the spread of Enlightenment ideas, the emergence of the national press, the development of new themes in literature and theatre, and the wider use of the native language in social and cultural activities contributed to the development of national self-consciousness. It would be insufficient, however, to characterize these processes of the nineteenth century merely as “cultural progress.” One of their important consequences was a change in Azerbaijani society’s attitude toward the past and the formation of historical and cultural memory through new channels of communication. Whereas in earlier periods the transmission of historical and cultural experience had largely relied on the family, religious communities, oral traditions, and the classical literary environment, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, schools, the press, theatre, and new forms of literary works became increasingly involved in this process. In this regard, the second half of the nineteenth century can be regarded as a period during which the institutional and communicative foundations of historical memory in Azerbaijan were established. An important point in this context is that national identity is not formed solely as a result of political events. The way in which political events are remembered by society and associated with particular cultural symbols also plays an important role in identity formation.

One of the main characteristics of the Azerbaijani Enlightenment movement was the dissemination of the idea that the social and cultural development of society could be achieved through education and knowledge. Enlightened intellectuals regarded the elimination of illiteracy, the study of secular sciences, the expansion of education in the native language, and the renewal of public thought as essential conditions for national development. The significance of this process from the perspective of historical memory lay in the fact that the Enlightenment movement not only promoted an idea of modernization oriented toward the future but also contributed to the formation of a new attitude toward the past. The study of the past, the preservation of the native language and literary heritage, the commemoration of historical figures, and the appreciation of national culture became important elements of the Enlightenment discourse. In this respect, the Enlightenment movement developed along two interconnected directions:

The first direction — modernization: the integration of society into the modern systems of science and education.

The second direction — national and cultural self-awareness: strengthening perceptions of national belonging through language, literature, history, and cultural heritage.

The interaction between these two directions was one of the defining characteristics of the Azerbaijani Enlightenment movement in the nineteenth century [6, 1620].

The development of educational institutions was of particular importance in the formation of historical memory. The school not only performed the function of providing literacy and education but also played a role in determining which historical and cultural knowledge was transmitted to the younger generation. In this regard, the study of the history of education in Azerbaijan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provides an important perspective for understanding the formation of national memory. Our studies of Islamic education in Northern Azerbaijan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as of educational processes in the twentieth century, provide an important scholarly basis for determining the role of education in the social and cultural transformation of Azerbaijani society. However, the function of education cannot be limited solely to the pedagogical process. The language used at school, literary and historical materials, teachers' attitudes toward national and cultural issues, and the values transmitted to students all influenced the formation of subsequent generations' perceptions of the past. Thus, the school can be regarded as an institutional mechanism for the transmission and reproduction of historical memory.

The launch of the newspaper "Əkinçi" in 1875 at the initiative of Hasan bey Zardabi marked an important turning point in the history of Azerbaijani public thought. The significance of "Əkinçi" was not limited to its status as one of the first examples of the national press. The newspaper created a new public space for discussions on education, language, science, social issues, and national and cultural matters. From the perspective of historical memory, the significance of the press lay not only in disseminating knowledge about the past to a wider audience but also in shaping perceptions of which historical and cultural issues were of public importance. In this respect, the emergence of the national press can be regarded as an important stage in the democratization of historical memory. Discussions about history and culture were no longer confined to narrow intellectual circles but gradually reached a broader reading public. Another important function of the press was to contribute to the formation of

a common informational space among Azerbaijanis living in different regions. In this way, the press facilitated the integration of regional social experiences into broader national and cultural perceptions. This process was further expanded through the activities of "Kəşkül", "Şərqi-Rus", "Həyat", "Füyuzat", "Molla Nəsrəddin", and other publications in subsequent periods [10, 558].

Literature played a particularly important role in the national and cultural awakening of the nineteenth century. The literary works of Mirza Fətəli Axbundzadə represent a significant example in this regard. His works extensively addressed social problems, Enlightenment ideas, criticism of ignorance, social relations, and the challenges of modernization. The significance of literature for historical memory lies in its ability to present the past not merely as a set of facts but as the lived experience of individuals and society. A literary work preserves the social relations, worldview, values, and problems of a particular historical period for future generations. In this respect, Azerbaijani literature became one of the important carriers of historical memory during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Through literary works, numerous elements of cultural experience—including the national language, patterns of social behavior, family and community relations, religious and secular values, and the characteristics of urban and rural life—were transmitted to subsequent generations. It is important to emphasize, however, that literary heritage does not perform exactly the same function as a historical document. Nevertheless, it constitutes an important source for understanding the social consciousness, worldview, and cultural atmosphere of a particular historical period. Therefore, a comparative analysis of literary works alongside historical sources can produce more comprehensive and productive results in the study of historical memory. In this context, Azerbaijani literary heritage should be regarded not only as an integral component of national culture but also as an important medium through which collective perceptions of the past were preserved, interpreted, and transmitted across generations [7].

National Identity and National-Cultural Heritage in the Early 20th Century

The beginning of the twentieth century represented an important stage in Azerbaijani history when national and cultural development acquired an increasingly political and institutional character. The intellectual and cultural foundation established in the second half of the nineteenth century through

the development of the Enlightenment movement, the national press, literature, theatre, and education created favorable conditions for the more systematic formation of ideas about national identity in the early twentieth century. During this period, national-cultural heritage began to be perceived not merely as a cultural asset that needed to be preserved and studied, but also as an important factor shaping society's political and social self-consciousness. The political processes that unfolded at the beginning of the twentieth century—including the Russian Revolution of 1905, the strengthening of national movements within the empire, the revolutions of 1917, and the collapse of the Russian Empire—further intensified the question of national identity in Azerbaijani society. Intellectuals, the press, literary circles, educational institutions, and political organizations played an important role in this process. The formation of national identity was accompanied by a reinterpretation of the historical past, language, culture, and traditions of statehood. In this respect, the early twentieth century can be characterized as a period when national-cultural memory increasingly began to intersect with political memory.

The Azerbaijani press of the early twentieth century continued the Enlightenment traditions that had emerged in the late nineteenth century while acquiring a broader socio-political content. Publications such as “Şərqi-Rus”, “Həyat”, “İrşad”, “Füyuzat”, and “Molla Nəsrəddin” not only served the function of disseminating information but also became important intellectual platforms for discussions on national identity, language, education, culture, modernization, and social development. Through these publications, questions concerning the historical and cultural development of Azerbaijani society were increasingly incorporated into public discourse.

One of the main functions of the press from the perspective of national memory was to bring different segments of society together around a shared historical and cultural discourse. References to national history, literary heritage, language, and historical figures in newspapers and journals contributed to the transformation of the past into an important resource for constructing and legitimizing national identity. The activities of the journal “Molla Nəsrəddin” were particularly significant in this process. In addition to presenting social problems through satire, the journal contributed to the development of social self-awareness and a critical attitude toward existing problems. Satire therefore functioned not merely as a literary technique but also as a means of shaping public consciousness and collective memory.

At the same time, the intellectual environment surrounding Füyuzat provided an important platform for discussing ideas of cultural and historical unity within the broader Turkic and Muslim world. These intellectual currents subsequently influenced the development of ideas associated with Turkism, national statehood, and Azerbaijani national identity. In this context, the press of the early twentieth century should be viewed not simply as a means of preserving national-cultural heritage but also as an institution that actively reinterpreted this heritage and endowed it with new social and political meanings. Through newspapers and journals, historical memory became increasingly connected with contemporary political aspirations, while cultural heritage served as an important symbolic resource for articulating ideas of national unity and statehood [8, 120]. Thus, in the early twentieth century, the national press functioned not merely as a means of preserving national-cultural heritage, but also as an institution that reinterpreted this heritage and endowed it with new social and political meanings.

National-Cultural Heritage and Historical Memory during the Soviet Period: Preservation, Transformation, and Ideological Interpretation

The Soviet period represents one of the most complex stages in the history of Azerbaijan in the twentieth century. Following the establishment of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan in 1920 and the dissolution of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, fundamental changes took place in the country's political, social, and cultural development. The new political system reorganized all major institutions of society—including education, science, literature, the press, museums, and historiography—within a framework of ideological control. At the same time, it would be one-sided to characterize the Soviet period solely as a stage during which national-cultural heritage was restricted or eliminated. During this period, the activities of a number of cultural institutions expanded, while the collection, preservation, and systematic documentation of historical monuments, folklore, literary heritage, and archival materials also continued. Consequently, the Soviet period should be examined as a complex historical stage in which processes of preservation and institutional development coexisted with ideological control, selective interpretation, and transformation of national-cultural heritage. [1]

Following the establishment of Soviet rule, history and culture became important components of the political and ideological system. The Marxist-Leninist worldview was presented as the principal methodological framework for interpreting society's relations-

hip with the past. Historical events were evaluated primarily in terms of social classes, relations of production, and revolutionary transformations. This approach also brought significant changes to the interpretation of national history. Interpretations of historical events from the perspective of national statehood and national identity were largely marginalized, while historical processes were increasingly explained in accordance with the Soviet ideological model.

As a result, a mechanism of selective interpretation became an important component in the formation of historical memory. Not all elements of the past were presented with equal emphasis: certain events and historical figures were highlighted, while others received less attention or were interpreted within a different ideological framework. Consequently, historical memory itself became a dynamic process shaped by political and ideological contexts. The Soviet experience demonstrates that collective perceptions of the past are not static but can be transformed through institutional structures, educational practices, historiographical approaches, and public discourse. In this sense, the Soviet period represents an important example of the interaction between historical memory, cultural heritage, and ideological power. [9]

The education system was also significantly expanded during the Soviet period, and substantial measures were undertaken to increase the literacy rate of the population. The growth in the number of schools, the establishment of higher and specialized secondary educational institutions, the training of academic and pedagogical personnel, and the expansion of book publishing created important opportunities for cultural development. At the same time, the content of education was closely connected with the fundamental principles of the Soviet ideological system. The teaching of history, in particular, was shaped to a significant extent by the ideological framework of the Soviet state. Consequently, the school served a dual function: it provided access to historical knowledge while also interpreting and transmitting that knowledge within a specific ideological framework. This duality demonstrates the complex role of education in the formation of historical memory during the Soviet period, as schools simultaneously contributed to the preservation and dissemination of knowledge and to its ideological reinterpretation.

The Re-Actualization of Historical Memory in the Late 20th Century: National Identity and Statehood in Context

The late twentieth century represents an important stage in the history of Azerbaijan in terms of

the transformation of collective memory and the re-emergence of national identity. The acceleration of political and social processes in the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, the renewed prominence of national issues, and the growing political activity within Azerbaijani society contributed to a change in attitudes toward the historical past. During this period, elements of national and cultural memory that had been preserved in various forms throughout the preceding decades began to be expressed more openly in the socio-political sphere. This process was not limited merely to demands for political independence. The reconsideration of perceptions concerning national history, language, traditions of statehood, historical figures, and national-cultural heritage became an important component of the society's self-identification process. Thus, the late twentieth century witnessed a process of the re-publicization of national memory within Azerbaijani society.

The processes of political liberalization and perestroika that began in the Soviet Union in the 1980s created conditions for national and historical issues that had previously been discussed only within limited circles to enter the public agenda more openly. The expansion of public debates in Azerbaijani society concerning national language, history, culture, and traditions of statehood increased the political significance of historical memory. At this stage, historical memory went beyond its function of merely remembering the past and became an instrument of political mobilization and the formation of national solidarity. Historical events and national-cultural symbols began to play an important role in articulating the political demands of society. Consequently, the distinction between "official memory" and "unofficial memory" characteristic of the Soviet period gradually began to change. Elements of national memory that had previously been preserved through unofficial channels such as the family, literary circles, and oral traditions increasingly became explicit components of public and political discourse.

The emergence of new scholarly approaches to national history was also significant in this process. Aydın Balayev's research on the activities of Mahammad Amin Rasulzade and the formation of the Azerbaijani nation-state in the early twentieth century constitutes an important source for examining the intellectual foundations of the idea of national statehood and Rasulzade's role in this process. [3, 56]

The events of 20 January 1990 constitute one of the historical events that occupy a particularly significant place in the collective memory of Azerbaijani society. The significance of the events in collecti-

ve memory is associated not only with their political consequences but also with the fact that society experienced them collectively and transmitted their memory to subsequent generations. This process demonstrates that the occurrence of a historical event alone is insufficient for it to become part of collective memory. The remembrance, documentation, symbolization, and intergenerational transmission of the event are equally important. From this perspective, the memory of 20 January can be analyzed both as traumatic memory and as a form of national solidarity memory. The preservation of the memory of the victims, the establishment of memorial sites, and the annual organization of commemorative ceremonies are mechanisms through which the event has been transformed from an individual recollection into collective national memory.

One of the major factors contributing to the re-emergence of historical memory in Azerbaijan in the late twentieth century was the Karabakh issue. The military, humanitarian, and cultural consequences resulting from the conflict have occupied an important place in the historical and national memory of Azerbaijani society. The restoration of Azerbaijan's state independence in 1991 created new opportunities for the institutional reconstruction of historical memory. A number of historical events and figures that had been restricted or interpreted differently during the Soviet period began to be reassessed within new scholarly and public contexts. In particular, the study of the history of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic and the reassertion of its statehood legacy became one of the important directions of this process. Presenting the experience of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic as an integral part of the history of Azerbaijani statehood played an important role in explaining the historical legitimacy and continuity of contemporary Azerbaijani statehood.

During the period of independence, the place of historical figures in national memory also underwent significant changes. The legacies of individuals who played important roles in the history of Azerbaijani statehood, science, literature, culture, and education began to be examined within new scholarly and public contexts. An important aspect of this process was that historical figures came to be presented not merely as representatives of a particular historical period but also as symbolic carriers of national-cultural memory. For example, the renewed study of the legacy of intellectuals associated with the enlightenment movement made it possible to evaluate not only their literary and pedagogical activities but also their contributions to the development of national self-consciousness.

Conclusion

The examination of the role of national-cultural heritage in the formation of Azerbaijan's historical memory in the context of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrates that history, culture, language, literature, education, folklore, and tangible heritage are not merely cultural values transmitted from the past to the present. They also constitute important social mechanisms that shape collective self-awareness and national identity. The study has established that the development of historical memory in Azerbaijan has not been a continuous and unchanging process; rather, it has been a dynamic process shaped by various political, social, and ideological conditions.

The second half of the nineteenth century represented one of the important initial stages of this process. The expansion of the Enlightenment movement, the development of secular education, the emergence of the national press, and the strengthening of the social functions of literature and theater created opportunities for national-cultural values to reach broader segments of society. During this period, national-cultural heritage became an increasingly systematic subject of public discussion, while language, history, and literature emerged as key components of national self-consciousness. The development of educational institutions was particularly important in transmitting national-cultural knowledge from one generation to another.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a significant transformation occurred in the functional meaning of national-cultural heritage. The national self-consciousness formed through the press, literature, theater, and education gradually acquired a political dimension and became increasingly associated with ideas of national identity and statehood. In this respect, the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was particularly significant in terms of the integration of national-cultural memory with the memory of statehood. The experience of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic became not merely a political event in national history but also an important component of historical memory that influenced subsequent generations' perceptions of statehood.

The analysis of the Soviet period demonstrates that historical memory was characterized by a more complex structure. On the one hand, the development of educational, scientific, museum, archival, and publishing institutions created opportunities for the preservation and systematization of certain elements of national-cultural heritage. On the other hand, the interpretation of history and culture was

subject to ideological control. Therefore, it would be insufficient to assess the Soviet period solely as a period of restriction of national memory. A more objective approach requires consideration of the parallel existence of institutional preservation of cultural heritage and its ideological selection and reinterpretation during this period.

Another important finding of the study is that national-cultural memory was not preserved exclusively through state institutions. The family, folklore, oral history, literature, language, religious traditions, and socio-cultural practices constituted important mechanisms that ensured the continuity of national memory beyond official ideological frameworks. In this regard, the continuity of collective memory can be explained through the interaction between official and unofficial forms of memory. The restoration of Azerbaijan's state independence at the end of the twentieth century contributed to the re-emergence of historical memory and the acquisition of new meanings by national-cultural heritage. The reassessment of the legacy of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, national history, and historical figures, the institutionalization of the memory of 20 January and the Karabakh conflict, as well as the preservation of historical monuments and cultural heritage, demonstrate that national memory has become an important direction of state policy.

In conclusion, the analysis of Azerbaijani history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrates that, although national-cultural heritage was interpreted in different ways under various political regimes and historical circumstances, it retained its functional significance as one of the principal foundations of national memory. The cultural self-consciousness that emerged during the Enlightenment period evolved into national-political consciousness at the beginning of the twentieth century, into the memory of statehood during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, and into a complex and multilayered form of collective memory during the Soviet period. In the period of independence, it was once again revitalized as one of the fundamental components of national identity and statehood consciousness. Thus, the continuity of Azerbaijan's historical memory is fundamentally based on the preservation of national-cultural heritage, its intergenerational transmission, and its reinterpretation in accordance with changing historical circumstances. From this perspective, the preservation of national-cultural heritage should be regarded not only as a mechanism of cultural policy but also as a long-term means of safeguarding national identity, historical

consciousness, and the memory of statehood.

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Azərbaycanda tarixi yaddaşın formalaşmasında milli və mədəni irsin rolu: XIX–XX əsrlər kontekstində

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XÜLASƏ

Məqalədə XIX–XX əsrlər Azərbaycan tarixində milli-mədəni irsin tarixi yaddaşın formalaşmasına təsiri araşdırılır. Tədqiqatda tarixi yaddaş cəmiyyətin keçmişə xatırlaması ilə yanaşı, həmin keçmişə sosial, mədəni və siyasi dəyərlər sistemi daxilində mənə-

landırması prosesi kimi nəzərdən keçirilir. Maurice Halbwachsın kollektiv yaddaş, Pierre Noranın “yaddaş məkanları” və Jan Assmannın “mədəni yaddaş” konsepsiyalarından nəzəri-metodoloji əsas kimi istifadə edilərək milli-mədəni irsin yaddaşın qorunması, ötürülməsi və yenidən interpretasiyasındakı rolu təhlil olunur. Məqalədə XIX əsrin ikinci yarısında maarifçilik, təhsil, milli mətbuat, ədəbiyyat və teatrın inkişafının milli özünüdərk və tarixi yaddaşın formalaşmasına təsiri araşdırılır. XX əsrin əvvəllərində milli mətbuat və intellektual mühitin milli kimlik və dövlətçilik ideyalarının inkişafındakı rolu, Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti dövründə isə milli-mədəni irsin dövlətçilik ideyası ilə əlaqələndirilməsi təhlil edilir. Sovet hakimiyyəti dövründə tarixi yaddaşın ideoloji nəzarət, seçici interpretasiya və eyni zamanda mədəni irsin institusional qorunması mexanizmləri ilə transformasiyası nəzərdən keçirilir. XX əsrin sonlarında milli yaddaşın yenidən aktuallaşması, 20 Yanvar hadisəsinin kollektiv yaddaşda yeri, Qarabağ məsələsinin yaddaş siyasətinə təsiri və müstəqilliyin bərpasından sonra milli dövlətçilik irsinin yenidən qiymətləndirilməsi araşdırmanın əsas istiqamətlərini təşkil edir. Tədqiqat nəticəsində müəyyən edilir ki, milli-mədəni irs Azərbaycan cəmiyyətində tarixi təcrübənin nəsillərarası ötürülməsini təmin edən mühüm sosial-mədəni mexanizm olmaqla yanaşı, milli kimliyin və dövlətçilik şüurunun formalaşmasına da əhəmiyyətli təsir göstərmişdir.

Açar sözlər: *tarixi yaddaş, milli-mədəni irs, kollektiv yaddaş, mədəni yaddaş, milli kimlik, Azərbaycan, maarifçilik, milli mətbuat, dövlətçilik.*

Роль национально-культурного наследия в формировании исторической памяти в Азербайджане: контекст XIX–XX веков

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РЕЗЮМЕ

В статье исследуется роль национально-культурного наследия в формировании и трансформации исторической памяти в Азербайджане в XIX–XX веках. Историческая память рассматривается не только как сохранение прошлого, но и как процесс его отбора, интерпретации, передачи

и смыслового осмысления обществом в рамках социальных, культурных и политических ценностей. Теоретико-методологическую основу исследования составляют концепция коллективной памяти Мориса Хальбвакса, теория «мест памяти» Пьера Нора и концепция культурной памяти Яна Ассмана. В статье анализируется влияние просветительского движения, развития образования, национальной печати, литературы и театра на формирование национального самосознания и исторической памяти в Азербайджане во второй половине XIX века. Особое внимание уделяется роли национальной прессы и интеллектуальной среды в формировании представлений о национальной идентичности и государственности в начале XX века, а также взаимосвязи национально-культурного наследия и идей государственности в период Азербайджанской Демократической Республики. Советский период рассматривается как сложный этап, характеризовавшийся одновременно идеологическим контролем, избирательной интерпретацией прошлого и институциональным сохранением отдельных элементов культурного наследия. Отдельное внимание уделяется актуализации исторической памяти в конце XX века, месту трагедии 20 января 1990 года в коллективной памяти, влиянию Карабахского конфликта на процессы формирования памяти и переосмыслению наследия национальной государственности после восстановления независимости Азербайджана. В результате исследования установлено, что национально-культурное наследие выступает важным социально-культурным механизмом межпоколенческой передачи исторического опыта и оказывает существенное влияние на формирование национальной идентичности и сознания государственности в азербайджанском обществе.

Ключевые слова: *историческая память, национально-культурное наследие, коллективная память, культурная память, национальная идентичность, Азербайджан, просветительство, национальная печать, государственность.*

Rəyçi: Elvin Talışinski, siyasi elmlər üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru, dosent

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