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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF TÜRKİYE
IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS
(late XX – early XXI century)**

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INTRODUCTION

The topicality of the research and the degree of its elaboration. Türkiye's interests in the South Caucasus go back to the depths of history. However, although the struggle for the South Caucasus began mainly in the XVI century, in the XIX century it became more serious. At that time, Russia's occupation of the South Caucasus exacerbated the Russian-Turkish struggle in the region. As a result, the South Caucasus was occupied by Russia. In the 19th century, Türkiye, which failed to achieve its goal in the South Caucasus issue, took advantage of the geopolitical conditions created by the First World War and again tried to realize the interests of the South Caucasus, using the terms of the Brest Convention. The Lithuanian Treaty. However, the defeat of Türkiye and its allies as a result of the war did not allow this attempt to be carried out. The establishment of the Soviet regime, followed by the occupation of the South Caucasus by Russia, as well as the conclusion of the Moscow and Kars Agreements created an approximately 70-year break in Türkiye's geo-economic struggle for the South Caucasus.

During the Cold War, the Soviet regime was the most serious obstacle to Türkiye's economic interests in the South Caucasus. Therefore, the emergence of independent republics in the South Caucasus after the collapse of the Soviet regime created wide and favorable opportunities for Türkiye to realize its economic interests in this region. The economic situation of Türkiye in the region, which has already become an important voice in the South Caucasus region, is strengthening. The South Caucasus region is of great importance because of its rich energy resources, strategic position and at the same time is an energy corridor.

Taking advantage of the new conditions, Türkiye has taken action to ensure its geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus. There were no serious problems for Türkiye in establishing relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia, which are the main states of the South Caucasus. One of the factors that positively influenced the establishment of relations between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, which has rich energy resources and a strategic position, was the fact that they have the same origin, language, religion and customs. Azerbaijan

itself was as interested in establishing relations with Türkiye as Türkiye. In these relations, Türkiye had access to Central Asia, and Azerbaijan had access to Europe. At the same time, the establishment and development of relations with Türkiye may lead to a weakening of Russia's influence and pressure on Azerbaijan, as well as its position in the South Caucasus.

Establishing relations with Georgia meets Türkiye's geo-economic interests. These relations have had a positive impact on strengthening Türkiye's position in the South Caucasus and establishing economic ties with Azerbaijan. At the same time, Georgia plays a transit role in establishing economic ties between Azerbaijan and Türkiye.

The equal economic relations established by Türkiye with both Azerbaijan and Georgia were based on mutual interests and met all the requirements of international law, and also had a positive impact on reducing the energy dependence of European countries on Russia.

Despite the collapse of the USSR, Armenia took refuge under the protection of Russia, as during the Soviet era, instead of establishing independent relations with Türkiye, it remained "true" to its traditional position and began to make claims about "territory" and "genocide". After gaining independence, it was not possible to establish economic relations due to the fact that Armenia declared that Türkiye did not recognize the borders of Armenia defined by the Kars Treaty, as well as due to the occupation of Azerbaijani lands. Nevertheless, Türkiye recognized the state independence of Armenia in the early 90s of the 20th century. However, since Armenia has put forward a statement about "genocide" against Türkiye, it has not been possible to establish normal economic relations between the two states. At the beginning of the 21st century, Türkiye tried several times to establish relations with Armenia, but it was not perceived positively by Armenia.

During the business visit of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Azerbaijan in May 2009, he stated that the borders with Armenia would not be opened until the lands occupied by the Armenian troops of Azerbaijan were liberated from occupation.

It is a natural and successful policy for Türkiye to give priority to Azerbaijan and Georgia in realizing their economic interests in the

South Caucasus. This meets the economic and political interests of Türkiye, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Türkiye's geopolitical perspective in the South Caucasus region is more related to Azerbaijan, which is the leading state in the region. After gaining independence, Azerbaijan and Türkiye jointly implemented extremely large economic, energy and transport projects in the region. Azerbaijan is undoubtedly the main reason for the completion of the BTC oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, TRACECA, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, TANAP and other projects. The implementation of these projects, which are the result of bilateral relations, has significantly strengthened Türkiye's political and economic positions in the South Caucasus. Because Türkiye plays an important role as a transit country in the implementation of these projects. This leads to an increase in Türkiye's political power along with its economic power in the South Caucasus region.

Türkiye has direct land access to the South Caucasus only through Georgia. Therefore, in order to ensure its economic interests in the South Caucasus, Türkiye maintains not only economic, but also political relations with Georgia at a high level.

Thus, as a result of Türkiye's South Caucasian policy, economic relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia were established within the framework of mutual relations, a number of projects were implemented, and as a result of the "genocide" of Armenia and territorial claims against Türkiye and the occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan's lands at the end of the 20th century, it was isolated from projects in the South Caucasus.

The geo-economic policy implemented by Türkiye in the South Caucasus region has a fundamentally positive impact both on increasing its economic power, establishing its voice in the region, and strengthening its position in international relations.

However, the attitude of the United States and Western Europe to the geo-economic policy pursued by Türkiye in the South Caucasus is ambiguous. Despite this, Türkiye's control over important sea routes, the decline of Russia's economic and political influence in the South Caucasus, as well as the fact that it plays the role of a shield

among Islamic countries, make this country remain a serious ally for the United States and the West in international relations.

Considering all this, it should be noted that the study of the problem of Türkiye's economic interests in the South Caucasus is topical for political science.

The degree of development of the research. Research works, articles and sources written mainly in Azerbaijani, Turkish, Russian and English languages were used to fulfill the tasks set in the research work while writing the dissertation. The dissertation on Türkiye's economic interests in the South Caucasus has not yet been involved in research in Turkish, Azerbaijani and world historiography as a separate complex object of research. However, in addition to this, there are studies and articles related to the problem in one way or another, which were effectively used in the development of the dissertation.

These works and sources are extremely important from the point of view of studying the attitude to the problem during the study of Turkish, Azerbaijani, English- and Russian-speaking specialists, as well as official representatives of the state. From this point of view, the analysis of works on the problem is important from a scientific and practical point of view. The research related to this problem can be divided into four groups – Azerbaijani, Turkish, Russian and English.

Heydar Aliyev's book "Our independence is eternal: speeches, statements, interviews, letters, reports, appeals, decrees" reflected the statement of Turkish President Suleyman Demirel at the welcoming ceremony at Bina airport during the official visit to Azerbaijan, speech at a formal banquet in his honor, speech at the meeting of refugees temporarily settled in the student campus of BSU named after M.A.Rasulzade, speech at a meeting of members of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan, speech at the solemn meeting on the occasion of awarding the title of Honorary Academician of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, speech at a meeting with businessmen of Türkiye and Azerbaijan, joint statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and President of the Republic of Türkiye Suleyman Demirel, statement by the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Türkiye at a joint press conference, speech at a

meeting of Turkish President Suleyman Demirel with representatives of the Azerbaijani public¹.

As an example of research papers written in Russian on this issue, the political and economic development of the Caspian region from ancient times to the present day is analyzed in the book of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan I.H.Aliyev "Caspian Oil of Azerbaijan" based on extensive and rich sources². Archival, historical and protocol materials were widely used in the work. The author investigated one of the most pressing problems of our time – the issue of determining the status of the Caspian Sea, comprehensively analyzed the events taking place in the South Caucasus region from ancient times to the present, and paid special attention to the influence of the oil factor on economic and political processes. In his work, he spoke about the difficulties encountered in the process of concluding oil contracts, the construction of oil pipelines, as well as about Türkiye's role in exporting Azerbaijani oil and natural gas to European markets, and the competition surrounding the oil reserves of the Caspian Sea.

About this problem, M.Gasimli wrote the monograph "The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1991-2003)". The above-mentioned monograph contains enough materials on Azerbaijani-Turkish relations, mutual visits of heads of state and government, agreements and contracts reached, and Türkiye's economic and political interests in Azerbaijan.

The abstract of K.H.Jahangirli's dissertation "The place and role of Azerbaijani-Turkish relations in the formation of the regional security system", submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in political science, characterized the threats existing in the South Caucasus region, investigated the general characteristics of threats to regional security, the security system and national interests of Azerbaijan, Türkiye's position in the the direction of the formation of

¹Əliyev, H.Ə. Müstəqilliyimiz əbədidir. çıxışlar, nitqlər, bəyanatlar, müsahibələr, məktublar, məruzələr, müraciətlər, fərmanlar / H.Əliyev. - Bakı: Azərnaşr, - c.5 - 1997. - 604 s.

² Алиев, И. Каспийская нефть Азербайджана. – Москва: Известия. - 2003. - 712 с.

the security system, the importance of allied relations with Azerbaijan, Türkiye's role in shaping international energy and other projects.

Information on this issue is also given in the works of Sh.Shakhmammadov and O.Sadikhov "Azerbaijan-Türkiye: friendship, brotherhood, strategic cooperation", G.Sadigov "The problem of the South Caucasus in Russian-Turkish relations (1787-1829)", E.Nasirov "Azerbaijani oil and international agreements (1991-1999)"³.

S.Yanar, one of the Turkic-speaking authors conducting research on the problem, in his work "The Caucasian Hidden Force in Turkish-Russian relations" spoke about the position of the United States and Russia in the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan line. In addition to the current problems and economic difficulties of the Russian Federation, it was also mentioned that it still retains its military power, as well as the importance of achieving stability in the Caucasus for Türkiye and the importance of energy in the Caucasus, especially oil and natural gas, as first-class strategic products in the world⁴.

G.Tuysuzoghlu in his work "The Address of stability in Turkish Foreign Policy: Georgia" believes that Georgia is a country of symbolic importance for studying the negative consequences of the struggle of major powers in Eurasia for the countries of the region⁵.

E. Muterjimler in his work "21 Century and Türkiye: High Strategy" came to the conclusion that strategy is not knowledge of the future, but at the same time the ability to manage the future⁶. He believes that it is possible to analyze the future role of Türkiye, which

³ Azərbaycan-Türkiyə: Dostluq, Qardaşlıq, Strateji Əməkdaşlıq / red. Ş.Şahməmmədov, O.Sadıxov. - Bakı, - 1997. - 200 s.; Sadıqov, H. Rusiya-Türkiye münasibətlərində Cənubi Qafqaz problemi (1787-1829- cu illər) H. Sadıqov. - Bakı, - 1991. - 176 s.; Nəsirov, E. Azərbaycan neft və beynəlxalq müqavilələr (1991-1999) / E.Nəsirov. – Bakı: Respublika Xatirə Kitabı nəşriyyatı, - 1999. - 104 s.

⁴ Yanar, S. Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde Gizli Güç Kafkasya / S.Yanar. - İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat ve Yayıncılık, - 2002.- 400 s.

⁵ Tüysüzöğlu, G. Türk Dış Politikasında İstikrarın Adresi: Gürcistan: Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme / G.Tüysüzöğlu. – İstanbul: Türkiye Alim yayınları, - 2014, - 312 s.

⁶ Mütercimler, E. 21 Yüzyıl ve Türkiye: Yüksek Strateji / E.Mütercimler. - İstanbul: Güncel yayıncılık, - 1997. - 544 s.

is a candidate for membership in the European Union, understanding strategy as a science.

The research paper “Leaders of Turkish Foreign Policy”, written by N.Tunjer, S.Demirel and A.Demir, systematically examines the foreign policy of Adnan Menderes, Süleyman Demirel, Bülent Ecevit, Necmeddin Erbakan, Alparslan Türkeş and Turgut Özal, who with their ideas and political activities have left an imprint on Turkish politics since the 50s of the twentieth century centuries to the present day⁷.

As a result of the research conducted in the work “Caucasian Politics of Türkiye and Georgia”, O. Mert came to the conclusion that the Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia in the Caucasus region and the autonomous provinces associated with them represent one of the most difficult geographical territories in the world, attracting the attention not only of Türkiye, but also of the whole world. Throughout history, the security of Anatolia has been ensured by the possession of this region⁸.

J. Bulut, O.Aras in the work entitled “Azerbaijani-Turkish economic relations. Azerbaijan’s economy for 15 years (1991-2006)” believe that Turkish-Azerbaijani relations have a multifaceted nature and extremely serious relations in various directions⁹. One of the main aspects of these relations is bilateral economic relations.

A.Karaoğlu and O.Kamal in their research paper “The possibilities of developing Türkiye’s foreign trade against the background of Azerbaijan’s natural resources and economic potential” finally came to the conclusion that during the period of Azerbaijan’s independence, relations between Türkiye and Azerbaijan improved,

⁷Tuncer, N. Türk Dış Politikasında Liderler / N.Tuncer, D. Süleyman, Ali Faik Demir (Ed.) - Ankara: Bağlam Yayınları, - 2007. - 320 s.

⁸Mert, O: Türkiye’nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan / O.Mert. – İstanbul: İQ Kültür sanat yayıncılık, - 2004. - 196 s.

⁹Bulut, C. Azerbaycan-Türkiye ekonomik ilişkileri. Azerbaycan ekonomisi 15 yılı. (1991-2006) / C.Bulut, O.Aras – Bakü: - 2009. - 228 s.

and both countries benefited from each other, took an important place in foreign trade¹⁰.

In B.İdris's research paper "Türkiye-Armenia Relations", the relations between Türkiye and Armenia from the first day of the meeting of Turks and Armenians to today have been analyzed from the point of view of history, culture, religion, language, law, sociology, international relations and terrorism¹¹.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the presented dissertation is the economic interests of Türkiye in the South Caucasus, covering the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century. The subject of the research is negotiations, agreements reached, contracts concluded, major economic projects and Russia's attitude to this process.

The purpose and tasks of the research. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the purpose and tasks was an objective and scientific study of Türkiye's economic interests in the South Caucasus. To do this, an attempt was made to solve the following tasks:

- To explore the nature of Türkiye's economic interests in the South Caucasus by identifying areas;
- To explain the importance of establishing and developing economic relations, factors affecting Türkiye's geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus;
- To involve Türkiye's economic relations with Georgia in the study and the role of these relations in ensuring Türkiye's geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus;
- To reveal the essence of the influence of the "genocide" and "territorial" claims of Armenia against Türkiye on ensuring Türkiye's geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus;
- To investigate the Russian factor in Türkiye's policy in the South Caucasus after the collapse of the Soviet Empire;
- To involve Türkiye's economic prospects in the politics of the South Caucasus;

¹⁰Karaoglu, A. Azerbeycanın doğal kaynakları ile ekonomik potansiyali karışında Türkiyenin dış ticaretinin gelişme olanakları / A.Karaoglu, O.Kemal - Ankara - 2004. - 145 s.

¹¹İdris, B. Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri / B.İdris. Ankara: Nobel yayımları, - 2004, - 398 s.

- To explore the impact of the Second Karabakh War, the Shusha Declaration and Zangezur on Türkiye's policy in the South Caucasus.

Research methods. The methodological basis of the research is the scientific methods accepted in science and the theory of political relations. The author collected facts and materials and systematized them, researched them using political analysis, a systematic approach, a method of comparative analysis and made generalizations.

The source base of research. Official documents of the state bodies of Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia related to the problem under study, interstate diplomatic documents, statements and official documents of international organizations were used as sources used in the research. Another part of the sources used are official publications reflecting Türkiye's economic interests, interviews and press statements by heads of state and officials. The research used information published in the press of both Türkiye and the republics of the South Caucasus. In addition, research papers and articles on the same issue were also used.

The scientific novelty of the research. For the first time in the field of political science, the topic "Economic interests of Türkiye in the South Caucasus (late 20th – early 21st century)" has been comprehensively turned into an object of research.

- Various aspects and mutual interests of Turkish-Azerbaijani economic relations have been investigated and brought to the study, and it has been concluded that Turkish-Azerbaijani relations fully meet the strategic interests of both states and positively influence the strengthening of their positions in international relations;

- Georgia, as a transit country, plays an important strategic role in ensuring Türkiye's geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus and establishing economic relations with Azerbaijan;

- As a result of the study, it was concluded that Türkiye's geo-economic policy in the South Caucasus contributes to the economic strengthening of the South Caucasian republics and their exit from the geopolitical sphere of influence of Russia;

- The essence of the Armenian problem in Türkiye's geo-economic policy in the South Caucasus was investigated and involved in the study, it was concluded that Armenia's "genocide" and

“territorial” claims against Türkiye led to its exclusion from projects implemented in the South Caucasus;

- Ensuring Türkiye’s geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus was not unequivocally accepted by Russia, and the study included a positive impact on Türkiye’s position not only in the region, but also in international relations;

- Türkiye’s political support played an important role in the liberation of the Azerbaijani lands occupied by Armenia during the Second Karabakh War, and this victory laid the foundation for a new stage in Türkiye’s policy in the South Caucasus;

- The prospects of Türkiye’s geo-economic policy in the South Caucasus were comprehensively analyzed, the Russian factor was involved in this process, and it was concluded that Türkiye’s position in the region will gradually strengthen;

- The opening of the Zangezur corridor will have a positive impact on the development of political and economic relations with the Turkic world, as well as ensure Türkiye’s geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus.

The main provisions submitted for the defense of the dissertation:

- After gaining independence, economic cooperation between the republics of the South Caucasus and Türkiye ensures the economic interests of both sides;

- The economic policy implemented by Türkiye in the South Caucasus has a positive impact on the growth of its economic power and the strengthening of its position both in the region and in international relations;

- The economic policy implemented by Türkiye in the South Caucasus plays an important role in the economic development of the countries of the South Caucasus;

- Türkiye’s economic policy in the South Caucasus creates conditions for the integration of the economies of the South Caucasus countries into the global economy;

- Türkiye’s geo-economic policy in the South Caucasus has a positive effect on strengthening its political position in addition to the economic situation in this region;

- Türkiye's economic policy in Azerbaijan lays the foundation for its economic relations with Central Asia and further strengthens Türkiye's economic and political support in the region;
- Ensuring Türkiye's geo-economic interests in the South Caucasus leads to a weakening of Russia's historically established political and economic position in the South Caucasus;
- Türkiye's political support for Azerbaijan in the Second Karabakh War had a positive impact on the victory over Armenia, the signing of the Shusha Declaration and the raising of the Zangezur issue.

The theoretical and practical significance of the research.

The factual materials, documents and basic provisions collected as a result of the study can be used in the activities of the relevant departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when conducting scientific and theoretical studies of problems related to the South Caucasus region. The scientific results of the study can be used by researchers conducting research in the field of political science, international relations and other fields. In addition, it can be used when conducting lectures and seminars on specialized specialties of higher education, writing textbooks and teaching aids.

Approval and application. The study was discussed and recommended for defense at the Department of International Relations of Baku Slavic University. Certain aspects of the topic "Economic interests of Türkiye in the South Caucasus (late 20th – early 21st century)" have been published in scientific publications recommended by the Supreme Attestation Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan and reflected in scientific collections published abroad.

The name of the institution where the dissertation work was performed. Department of International Relations of Baku Slavic University.

The total volume of the dissertation. The dissertation work consists of an introduction, 3 chapters, 9 paragraphs, a conclusion and a list of references. Introduction – 22243 characters, the first chapter – 39241 characters, the second chapter – 103074 characters, the third chapter – 75926 characters, conclusion – 11799 characters, references – 38166 characters. The total volume of the research work is 176 pages, 292417 characters, there are 9 tables and 1 diagram.

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE WORK

In the “Introductory” part of the dissertation, the scientific topicality and importance of the problem are substantiated, the purpose and tasks of the research are determined, the analysis of the most important existing literature on the topic is given, the provisions submitted for defense are put forward, the scientific novelty and practical significance of the dissertation are explained.

The first chapter of the dissertation is called **“The main directions of Türkiye’s geostrategic policy in the South Caucasus”** and consists of two paragraphs. The first paragraph, entitled “The historical roots and essence of Türkiye’s policy in the South Caucasus”, outlines the historical roots of the problem and the transformation of Türkiye into a powerful state since the end of the XIII century, the South Caucasus, especially relations with Azerbaijan, Safavid-Ottoman relations, the wars between the Ottomans and Russia for the South Caucasus, relations between the Afshar state and the Ottoman the state, the Caucasian policy of the Ottomans during the Khanate, the policy of the Ottoman South Caucasus in the XIX century, also studied the Ottoman Caucasian policy during the First World War, the Batumi Conference, relations between the Ottoman Empire and the ADR and the interruption of this policy by Türkiye with the occupation of the South Caucasus by the Soviet government.

In the second paragraph of the first chapter, which is called “Türkiye’s geo-economic interests as the main direction of the geostrategic policy of the South Caucasus”, it is mentioned that after the independence of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, Türkiye tried to establish relations with all three republics based on the principle of good neighborliness and mutual cooperation within the framework of its economic interests in the South Caucasus. But at the same time, it is noted that Armenia, with its uncompromising position, aggressive policy and distrust, rejected this cooperation, presented territorial claims to Türkiye and Georgia, involved the countries of the world in a campaign against Türkiye, continued the false “genocide” and “territorial” claims against it. By carrying out open aggression against Azerbaijan, Armenia occupied one fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan,

including Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent regions¹². At the same time, the transition of Türkiye's policy in the region to a new qualitative stage was important in terms of strengthening its position in the region, regional cooperation, economic development and integration, as well as peace and security. The first important step taken in this direction was the trilateral meeting at the level of Foreign ministers in Trabzon on June 8, 2012 and the declaration adopted as a result of this meeting¹³.

In this paragraph, it is noted that the next document adopted in the direction of developing trilateral cooperation is the Batumi Communiqué, signed by the Foreign ministers of all three countries on March 28, 2013. The adoption of this communiqué was very important¹⁴. The next step in the direction of trilateral cooperation was the meeting at the highest level of Foreign ministers in Ganja on February 19, 2014¹⁵. According to the declaration adopted at this summit, the parties recognized the importance of regional cooperation arising from the Trabzon Declaration of June 8, 2012 and the Batumi Communiqué of March 28, 2013, noted the new cooperation mechanisms reflected in the "Action Plan for Cooperation in the Trilateral sphere for 2013-2015" as an important platform for the implementation of political dialogue and special trilateral projects.

In the declaration signed in Kars on December 10, 2014, all three States once again expressed their desire for alliance¹⁶. On

¹²Laçiner, S. Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerinde Sınır Kapısı sorunu ve ekonomik boyutu // Ermenistan Araştırmaları dergisi, – 2002, - Sayı 6, - s.23

¹³Çelikpala, M. Azerbaycan-Gürcüstan-Türkiye. Bölgesel İşbirliğinin Başarı Örneği // CİES. Policy Brief, - March, - 2015, - s.9

¹⁴Yenə orada s.12

¹⁵ Veliev, C, From Alliance to Integration: The Türkiye-Azerbaijan-Georgia Triangle, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 11(46): [Elektron resurs] 11 Mart 2014, URL: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42079&no_cache=1#.VOBYwuaUdVQ.

¹⁶Kars Statement of the Fourth Trilateral Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Türkiye : [Electronic resource] /10 December 2014 Kars, URL: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/kars-statementof-the-fourth-trilateral-meeting-of-the-ministers-offoreign-affairs-of-the-republic-of-azerbaijan_-georgiaand-the-republic-of-Turkiye_-10-december-2014_-kars.en.mfa.

February 19, 2016, the fifth trilateral meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the three countries at the highest level took place in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia¹⁷. At this meeting, the Ministers stressed their commitment to the Trabzon Declaration, the Batumi Communiqué, the Ganja and Kars Declarations adopted at previous trilateral meetings.

When considering the energy factor in Türkiye's economic policy in the South Caucasus, it is noted that the first meeting of the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor, held in Baku on February 12, 2015, and the ceremony of laying the foundation of the Trans-Anatolian Gas Pipeline (TANAP) in the field of energy, held in Kars on March 117, 2015, was very well received.

Full support was expressed for the development of the Southern Gas Corridor, as well as other projects involving the transportation of hydrocarbon resources from the Caspian Sea basin to Western markets through Azerbaijan, Georgia and Türkiye. The special role of the three countries and the importance of the transport corridor in the fields of transport, energy, trade and restoration of the historical Silk Road were noted.

The second chapter of the dissertation is called **“Economic relations of Türkiye with the regional states of the South Caucasus”** and consists of 3 paragraphs. The first paragraph of the chapter, entitled “Economic factors in Turkish-Azerbaijani relations”, is naturally given more space and it is noted that from the very first days of its independence, Azerbaijan has been trying to restore economic relations with fraternal Türkiye, to develop Turkish-Azerbaijani relations at a new level. With the return of Heydar Aliyev to political power, a qualitatively new stage has begun in Azerbaijani-Turkish relations.

Commenting on Türkiye's economic strategy in Azerbaijan in the paragraph, the following are mentioned as positive factors for Azerbaijan: the extensive activity of Turkish companies in the

¹⁷ ‘Regional cooperation among Azerbaijan-Georgia-Türkiye is successfully developing: [Electronic resource] URL: http://www.economy.gov.az/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1287:az-gurc-turk-bf-25-05-2013&catid=8:news&Itemid=263&lang=en

Azerbaijani economy increases the total volume of investments, helps to build sectors of the economy at the level of world standards, to open new jobs and integrate Azerbaijan into the world economy.

In 1991, documents were signed on the establishment of direct economic cooperation between the Republic of Türkiye and the Republic of Azerbaijan. In 1992, relations between the two countries became increasingly close, there was participation in international economic institutions, and the implementation of measures covering other areas of economic relations. In particular, in order to restore cooperation between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, and most importantly, the signing of the protocol on the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two states in Baku on January 14, 1992 can be noted¹⁸.

In the paragraph, speaking about the economic agreements concluded between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, it is indicated that the basis of the legal framework of Azerbaijani-Turkish economic relations was the agreement on trade and economic cooperation dated November 1, 1992¹⁹. On this day, a total of 13 documents regulating various aspects of Azerbaijani-Turkish relations were signed, including the protocol on technical cooperation in the development of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises, the agreement on road transport and the loan agreement. In 1992, the number of agreements signed between the two countries was about 33²⁰.

In 1993, after Heydar Aliyev returned to power, he made his first official visit to Türkiye. This official visit, which lasted from February 8 to 11, 1994, gave a new impetus to the development of bilateral relations, especially economic ones²¹.

On August 9, 1995, negotiations on the coordination of the energy system of the republics of Türkiye and Azerbaijan, cooperation in the development and transportation of oil and gas fields of our republic were the main topic of conversation when Azerbaijani

¹⁸Şərq qapısı. – 1992, № 17. s.2

¹⁹Resmi gazetesi. – 1994, 16 mart. s.3

²⁰ Türkiyə-Azərbaycan İqtisadi Münasibətləri : [Elektron resurs]/ URL: <http://www.qafsam.org/page/198/az>

²¹Heydər Əliyevin Türkiyə Cumhuriyyətinə rəsmi səfərə yola düşərkən Binə Hava Limanında jurnalistlərə müsahibəsi: [Elektron resurs] / 8 fevral 1994-cu il, s.36 URL: /- http://files.preslib.az/projects/toplu/v2/f3_4.pdf

President Heydar Aliyev received Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources B. Atasoy²².

On December 7-9, 1995, during the official visit of Turkish President S. Demirel to Baku, a memorandum on economic cooperation was signed between the two countries²³.

On April 30, 1997, Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev took part in the summit of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization held in Istanbul. On May 5, 1997, a declaration on deepening strategic cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of Türkiye was adopted, an additional protocol on cooperation aimed at the development of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises, an agreement on cooperation in the field of electric power industry and other documents were signed in Ankara²⁴.

The arrival of newly elected Turkish President Ahmet Necet Sezer on his first foreign visit to Azerbaijan on July 11-12, 2000 and the Joint Statement signed in Baku once again showed that deepening mutual political and economic cooperation is a priority direction of the foreign economic policy of both countries²⁵. With the election of İlham Aliyev as President and his visit to Türkiye on April 13-15, 2004, the newest stage in bilateral relations began. The program of long-term economic cooperation and the implementation plan were signed between the two countries on November 6, 2007 during the visit of former Turkish President Abdullah Gül to Azerbaijan²⁶.

On November 18, 1999, at the OSCE summit in Istanbul, an agreement was signed on transportation via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan

²² Azərbaycan. -1995, 10 avqust. s.3

²³ Azərbaycan Respublikası ilə Türkiyə Respublikası arasında sənədlərin imzalanması və mübadiləsi mərasimi. Azərbaycan. – 1995, 9 dekabr . s.3

²⁴ Əliyev, H.Ə. Müstəqilliyimiz əbədidir. çıxışlar, nitqlər, bəyanatlar, müsahibələr, məktublar, məruzələr, müraciətlər, fərmanlar / H.Əliyev. - Bakı: Azərneşr, - c.9. - 2000. - 276 s.

²⁵ Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti Heydər Əliyev və Türkiyə Respublikasının Prezidenti Əhməd Necdet Sezer tərəfindən 2000-ci il iyulun 11-də Bakı şəhərində imzalanmış Birgə bəyanat / [Elektron resurs] URL: <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/4499>

²⁶ Türkiyə-Azərbaycan İqtisadi Münasibətlər: [Elektron resurs] URL: <http://www.qafsam.org/page/198/az>

Main export Pipeline with the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Türkiye²⁷.

In April 2003, the construction of the main BTC export pipeline in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Türkiye began. On July 13, 2006, the opening ceremony of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Main Export Pipeline, one of the largest energy projects of the XXI century, took place in Ceyhan (Türkiye)²⁸.

The construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, laid in 2002, began in 2004. The first operational gas was supplied to the Ceyhan gas pipeline on May 21, 2006, and the first commercial gas was supplied on December 15, 2006. Thus, the transportation of blue gas to Georgia via the Ceyhan gas pipeline has begun²⁹.

On June 26, 2012, TANAP signed a contract in Istanbul for the transportation of Azerbaijani natural gas to Türkiye and Europe. TANAP is a project that arose as a result of the joint activities of Azerbaijan and Türkiye³⁰. The Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, commissioned in 2007, transports Azerbaijani gas to the eastern part of Türkiye through Georgia³¹.

The second paragraph of the second chapter, entitled “Economic Relations between Türkiye and Georgia”, examines Türkiye’s economic interests in Turkish-Georgian relations. It was noted that since Georgia gained independence, relations between Türkiye and

²⁷Pala C. Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan ham petrol boru hattı projesinin Hazar bölgesi ve Türkiye açısından önemi // - Türkiye: Stratejik Araştırmalar Dosyası, - 2002. - sayı 14, - s.12

²⁸BP-Azərbaycan Davamlı İnkişaf Haqqında Hesabat arxivi: [Elektron resurs] / 2012, s.13. URL: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/country-sites/az_az/azerbaijan/home/pdfs/sustainability-reports/sr-az-2012.pdf

²⁹BP-Azərbaycan Davamlı İnkişaf Haqqında Hesabat arxivi: [Elektron resurs] / - 2006, s.21. URL: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/country-sites/az_az/azerbaijan/home/pdfs/sustainability-reports/sr-az-2006.pdf

³⁰Prezident TANAP layihəsi ilə bağlı qanunu imzalayıb: [Elektron resurs] / URL: <https://www.azadliq.org/a/24782272.html>

³¹ Türkiyə və Azərbaycanın Naxçıvan Muxtar Respublikası arasında qaz boru kəmərinin tikintisi barədə niyyət protokolu imzalanmışdır: [Elektron resurs] / URL: https://azertag.az/xeber/turkiya_va_azerbaycanin_naxchivan_muxtar_respublikasi_a_rasinda_qaz_boru_kamarinin_tikintisi_barada_niyyat_protokolu_imzalanmisdir-486940

Georgia have developed in all spheres, and many agreements have been signed between the two countries in various fields. Georgia is important to Türkiye for two main reasons. The first of them is economic, the second is political. As you know, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline passes through the territory of Georgia and reaches Türkiye. Cooperation between Türkiye and Georgia continues successfully not only at the bilateral level, but also within the framework of regional cooperation projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan main export pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline.

Another important project in Türkiye-Georgia relations is the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. The foundation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project was laid by a document signed on May 25, 2005. Trade relations are of particular importance in the economic relations between Türkiye and Georgia. If we look at the trade relations between Georgia and Türkiye, we will see that Türkiye is an important foreign trade partner of Georgia³². The main areas in which Turkish companies invest in Georgia are construction, telecommunications, the manufacturing sector, port administration and the banking sector³³.

One of the factors strengthening economic relations between Türkiye and Georgia is the possibility of a visa-free regime between the two countries. The agreement on visa-free regime between Türkiye and Georgia was reached by an agreement signed during the visit of Eduard Shevardnadze on April 4, 1996. According to the protocol between the two republics, which came into force at the end of 2011, citizens of both countries can travel to each other only with an identity card. In conclusion, it can be said that in the economic sphere, the advantage in Russia's relations with Georgia has passed to Türkiye.

The third paragraph of the second chapter is called "Problems of economic relations between Türkiye and Armenia". This paragraph examines the existing problems with Armenia in ensuring Türkiye's

³²Uçarol, R., Siyasi Tarih 1789-1999 / R.Uçarol. - İstanbul: Filiz Kitabevi, - 2000. - s.726

³³Yenə orada, s.45

economic interests in the South Caucasus. The history of the first contacts between Armenia and Türkiye dates back to 1988. So, during the earthquake that occurred in Armenia in the same year, Türkiye provided assistance to this country. Armenian President-elect Levon Ter-Petrosyan announced his desire to establish economic relations with Türkiye, and immediately after that, meetings of Armenian and Turkish businessmen began in Moscow, laying the foundation for relations³⁴.

However, on August 23, 1990, the inclusion in article 11 of the Declaration of Independence of Armenia of the proposal “International recognition of the “genocide” committed against Armenians in Ottoman Türkiye and Western Armenia”, and the statement of the Armenian Parliament in February 1991 on the non-recognition of the borders established by the Kars Treaty, prevented the establishment of diplomatic relations with Armenia.

Despite this, Türkiye has allowed humanitarian aid sent to Armenia by Western countries through its territory. However, since mid-1992, as the Armenians intensified attacks on Nagorno-Karabakh, Türkiye terminated the agreement without fulfilling it³⁵. The Armenian state went further in its aggressive policy and occupied the Kelbajar region of Azerbaijan at a time when it received the most assistance from Türkiye. After the occupation of Kelbajar, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries was postponed indefinitely³⁶. When the border was closed, direct flights between Türkiye and Armenia were canceled, and Türkiye closed its airspace to Armenian aircraft³⁷.

Thus, the political and diplomatic relations that Türkiye wanted to establish with Armenia within the framework of South Caucasian

³⁴Hürriyet. – 1990, 25 eylül. – s.4

³⁵Mustafa Aydın. Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler 1980-2001 / Editor, Baskın Oran. - İstanbul, - c.2. - s.410

³⁶The Closed Armenia-Türkiye Border: Economic and Social Effects, Including Those on The People; and Implications for The Overall Situation in The Region, August 2007 European Parliament [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?languageEN>

³⁷Türkiye and Armenia Opening Minds, Opening Borders. International Crisis Group // - 2009, Report no. 199. - s.28

policy, as well as the desire to involve it in the sphere of cooperation in the Caucasus region, were rejected by Armenia and the hostile policy of this state against both Azerbaijan and Türkiye continues.

The third chapter of the dissertation is called **“Geostrategic aspects of Türkiye’s Economic Policy in the South Caucasus”**. The first paragraph of the third chapter, entitled “The geopolitical significance of Türkiye’s modern economic policy in the South Caucasus”, discusses the impact of Türkiye’s policy in the South Caucasus on its position in the region in the future, and argues that Türkiye-South Caucasus economic cooperation is of particular importance and highly appreciated by both sides. Against the background of the current high relations between Türkiye and the South Caucasus, there are areas in which economic cooperation is promising from the point of view of the interests of both sides.

The second paragraph of the third chapter, entitled “The South Caucasian factor in Turkish-Russian relations”, examines the struggle between Türkiye and Russia for the South Caucasus. This chapter notes that Türkiye’s cultural, linguistic, historical, kinship and geographical proximity to a number of Caucasian peoples gives it the opportunity to pursue an active policy in the region, which led it to conflict with Russia and Iran.

The paragraph mentions that the Kremlin directly links the strengthening of Ankara’s influence in the Caucasus with possible threats to Russia’s security. Because Muslims are the majority in this region. At the same time, the issue of Azerbaijan and Armenia has always been of great importance between Türkiye and Russia. Azerbaijan has been in the spotlight of the West and Russia as a country with energy resources and as an important transport corridor. Their interest in this aspect has not decreased at all.

The third paragraph of the third chapter, entitled “The Second Karabakh War and the impact of the geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus on Türkiye’s economic interests”, describes the April fighting, the actions of the Armenian leadership violating peace, and the beginning of major military operations. The study included large-scale military actions between the parties as a result of the attack by the Armenian armed forces on September 27, 2020, territories liberated from occupation by the Azerbaijani army. Speaking about

the successful conclusion of the second Karabakh war, it was noted that Türkiye has supported Azerbaijan in its just struggle and provided political support to it since the first day of hostilities. Turkish President R.T. Erdoğan made a speech on the day of the outbreak of war and stated that... We support Azerbaijan in this war “as two states – one nation”. In the first hours of the war, Turkish Defense Minister H.Akar stated in his interview that they were with fraternal Azerbaijan and that these actions of Armenia impede peace and security in the South Caucasus³⁸.

In the following days Foreign Minister M. Cavaşoglu visited Baku several times and stated that he always supports Azerbaijan, and stated that Pashinyan is responsible for the losses caused by both sides³⁹.

On November 10, Türkiye did not leave Azerbaijan alone at the Victory Day Parade. Speaking at the parade, Erdoğan said that from the very first days Türkiye supported Azerbaijan’s struggle with all its institutions and organizations, supported its Azerbaijani brothers with all its capabilities.

The fourth paragraph of the third chapter entitled “Geo-economic aspects of the problem of the Zangezur corridor” analyzes the new geopolitical reality created by the Azerbaijani army in the region as a result of the Second Karabakh War. The fact that Zangezur is the historical land of Azerbaijan and later illegally transferred by the Soviet leadership to Armenia, as well as the issue of Zangezur raised after the second Karabakh War, are considered. Considering the importance of the Zangezur corridor for the South Caucasus, Türkiye and the Turkic world in terms of strategic, regional cooperation, geo-economic, transport, logistics and geographical aspects, it was

³⁸Hülusi Akardan Azərbaycana mesaj : Kardeşlərimizin yanındaıyq: [Elektron resurs]. URL:

<https://www.yenisafak.com/video-galeri/gundem/bakan-akardan-azerbaycana-mesaj-kardeslerimizin-yanindayiz-2210581>

³⁹Dışışleri Bakanı Cavaşoglu Bakü’de: [Elektron resurs].

URL: <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/disisleri-bakani-cavusoglu-bakude-527465.html>

concluded that Iran's positions in Azerbaijan and Armenia will weaken as a result of Türkiye's increased influence in the Caucasus.

At the same time, it was noted that the new opportunities opening up due to the Zangezur issue are of exceptional importance not only for Azerbaijan, the region, the Turkic world, but also for the countries of the world involved in the trade and economic project "one belt, one road". The Zangezur corridor increases the opportunities for diversification on the East-West route. Therefore, the countries of South-East and Central Asia, as well as the European Union, are interested parties in the implementation of this project⁴⁰.

Considering that 96% of the annual Silk Road containers from China to Europe are transported by sea, the central and southern corridors are practically inactive, since only 4% of road transport is carried out through the northern corridor. The central corridor reduces the time of transportation by road by 2000 km, and the time of transportation by sea by 1/3. In general, compared with the northern corridor, the trade route from China to Europe is reduced by 2,300 km⁴¹.

As a result of the study, conclusions were drawn, generalizations were made and general recommendations were put forward:

- In the modern period, the South Caucasus region has historically been and continues to be extremely important for Türkiye's interests. Türkiye should determine the priorities of its economic policy in this region within the framework of a strategic partnership with Azerbaijan and Georgia;

- In order to strengthen its position in the region, Türkiye is trying to implement measures towards establishing relations even with Armenia;

- The rapidly developing strategic partnership between Türkiye and Azerbaijan plays an important role in ensuring energy

⁴⁰ Əfəndiyev, P. Qarabağ regional logistika şəbəkəsində: [Elektron resurs] Xalq qəzeti. -2023. 28 sentyabr. URL: <https://xalqqazeti.az/az/sosial-heyat/141395-qarabag-regional-logistika-sebekesinde>

⁴¹ Kazancı, A. İpek yolu üzerinde Alternatif Güzergahın Türkiye açısından önemi: Olası Türk koridoru: [Elektron resurs].

URL:<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2181742>

security both in the South Caucasus region and in Europe in all its parameters. Therefore, European countries should abandon the double standards they currently apply to Azerbaijan and Türkiye, and should give an objective and realistic assessment of the processes taking place in the South Caucasus, as well as the role of Türkiye's South Caucasian policy in ensuring energy security in Europe;

- Türkiye must continue its peace-loving policy in order to establish lasting peace in the region. First of all, Türkiye's geo-economic and political interests in the South Caucasus require this;

- During the second Karabakh war, Türkiye, as a strategic ally of Azerbaijan, sharply demonstrated its political support from the international stands with the phrase "Two states, one nation", which led to the easing of a number of external pressures on Azerbaijan;

- The Shusha Declaration, signed between Türkiye and Azerbaijan after the Second Karabakh War, laid the foundation for a new stage in Türkiye-Azerbaijan relations as a strategic ally.

The main content of the dissertation is reflected in the following published scientific works of the author:

1. Экономические приоритеты Турции на территории республик Южного Кавказа. Материалы VII международной научно-практической конференции «Современные тенденции развития науки и технологии». ч. V. Белгород, 2015, с.94-97
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4. Türkiyə iqtisadiyyatının modernləşdirilməsinin əsas amilləri. Bakı Universitetinin Xəbərləri. Sosial-siyasi elmlər seriyası. Bakı, 2016, №3, s.122-127

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6. Поиск методов решения политических вопросов на Южного Кавказе. Наука Красноярья. Научно-Инновационный центр. Том 6. Красноярск, 2017, №2, с.80-87
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11. İkinci Qarabağ müharibəsində Türkiyə-Azərbaycan münasibətləri. Azərbaycanda dövlət müstəqilliyinin bərpası və ölkənin siyasi, sosial-iqtisadi, mədəni inkişafı mövzusunda Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları. Sumqayıt, 13-14 aprel 2023, s.264-268.

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