

AZERBAIJAN REPUBLIC

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**THE ROLE OF ILHAM ALIYEV IN THE
TRANSFORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
INTO A LEADING STATE IN THE CAUCASUS**

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Candidate: Ulkar Karim Mammadzada

ABSTRACT

of the thesis submitted for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy


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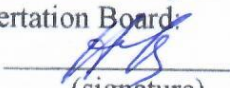
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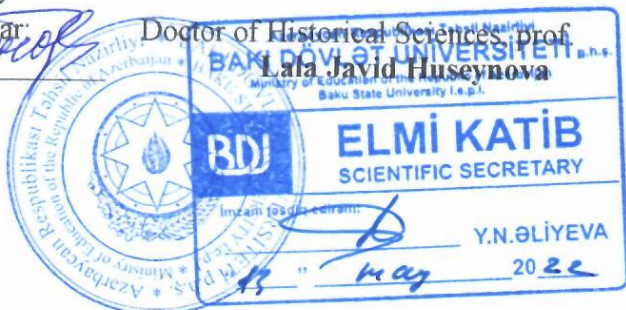
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GENERAL SPECIFICITY OF THESIS

Urgency of the thesis and level of progress. Since of the great leader Heydar Aliyev returned to political power in 1993 at the insistence of the Azerbaijani people a turning point in the socio-political, social, economic, scientific and cultural life of the country, in international relations, the process of building an independent state in accordance with scientific principles, international norms and principles began. New and urgent measures were taken to improve the legislation, protect civil rights, address socio-economic issues, and significant progress was made in the protection of human rights and freedoms. The great leader laid the foundation of a free, secular, legal state in our country and began to further strengthen and develop our statehood with his consistent reforms.

The great leader with phenomenal qualities determined intensive development of the state and the people who leads it in fateful times. Just as the national leader Heydar Aliyev's mission to save the country has been important since 1993, it became necessary to continue this mission in the post-2003 period. Even then, there were many who thought about the fate of the Republic after Heydar Aliyev. President Ilham Aliyev proved that since the President is elected by the people, he is able to perfectly continue the development strategy created by the national leader, bring it into line with the requirements of the time, and allow the Republic to move forward on the path of intensive development. President Ilham Aliyev, confidently pursuing the national leader's strategy of progress based on solid scientific foundations, managed to turn Azerbaijan into the most intensively developed, unchanging and powerful country in the Caucasus region in a very short time.

Free Azerbaijan has been successfully moving towards the future for 18 years under the honorable leadership of President Ilham Aliyev. Under his leadership, our republic is known in the world as a country with a stable economy and an important geostrategic position, has gained a reputation as a leading state in the Caucasus region. As a leading state in the Caucasus, Azerbaijan already has a leading role in

determining the course of events in the region, and it is no coincidence that the world powers and international organizations showing economic and political interest in the region are forced to take into account Azerbaijan's position.

After the victory in the Second Karabakh War, Azerbaijan has further strengthened its leadership position in the new geopolitical conditions in the South Caucasus region. Ilham Aliyev once again proved his leadership qualities and professionalism as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of Azerbaijan during the counter-offensive launched on September 27, 2020 against the next provocations of Armenia in the Second Karabakh War. Exactly under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani army and the Azerbaijani people were united in victory in the Patriotic War and returned the lands occupied by Armenia for about 30 years. Azerbaijan's historic victory also created a new geopolitical situation that led to changes in the balance of power throughout the region. The statement of the Presidents of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia, signed on November 10, 2020, aims to end the conflict, and to open communications between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the region as a whole. We are also talking about regional cooperation between Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Turkey, Russia and Iran in the "3 + 3" format. Despite a number of contradictions between the countries of the region, some activity is observed in this direction. In any case, it would not be wrong to show Azerbaijan as a country that will play a key role in this cooperation. Because Azerbaijan is located at the crossroads of North and South, East and West in terms of geopolitical location, the opening of these communications in the current situation will be one of the main factors that will further strengthen Azerbaijan's leadership in the region.

Azerbaijan, pursuing a completely independent policy, is developing dynamically and comprehensively, regardless of the international situation, financial and economic crisis, increasing its political, socio-economic power and constantly strengthening its position in the world. Strong economy and social policy, strengthening of civil society, establishment of the rule of law, development of democracy, implementation and deepening of political reforms - all

these are important factors for the comprehensive development of Azerbaijan.

The afore-mentioned clearly showed the relevance of the thesis topic and conditioned its selection as an object of thesis. The urgency of the issues studied in the thesis created the basis for our thesis in this direction. With relation to the disclosure of the topic, the bibliography showing the degree of its development and used in the thesis, the works considered can be divided into several groups:

1. Considering that the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan İlham Aliyev is the political successor of the great leader Heydar Aliyev, and that the policy pursued by him continues the course on which he laid the foundation in all directions while working on the thesis First of all, works dedicated to the personality, life and activity of Heydar Aliyev were widely used. First of all, this group includes the 46-volume multi-volume "Our Independence is Eternal", which includes speeches, speeches, statements, interviews, letters, reports, appeals and decrees of Heydar Aliyev during his presidency of the independent state of Azerbaijan. Different volumes of the multi-volume have been widely used in the analysis of various aspects of the activities of the national leader.¹

Most of the research works included in this group belong to the historian I.M.Hüseynova. Thus, I.M.Hüseynova is one of the most extensive and comprehensive researchers of the life and activity of Heydar Aliyev, the author of many monographs, textbooks and books on this topic.²

¹ Əliyev, H.Ə. Müstəqilliyimiz əbədidir: [46 cilddə] / H.Ə. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azər nəşr, -c.2. -1997. -604 s.

² Hüseynova, İ.M. Dövlətçilik naminə / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Bakı Universiteti, -2001. -294 s.; Hüseynova, İ.M. Elmin yüksək zirvələrini fəth edən alim // -Bakı: Azərbaycan elm və mədəniyyət xadimləri, -2014. №3, -s.38-40; Hüseynova, İ.M. Heydər Əliyev mütərəqqi sosial siyasət modelinin banisidir // Xalq qəzeti. -2014, 13 may. -s.3; Hüseynova, İ.M. Heydər Əliyev və Qafqazda sülh prosesi / İ.M. Hüseynova. -Bakı: Çarşıoğlu, -2008. -672 s.; Hüseynova, İ.M. Müstəqil Azərbaycan Hüseynova, İ.M. Müstəqilliyimizin təminatçısı / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Təhsil, -2003. -504 s.; Hüseynova, İ.M. Müstəqil Azərbaycan dövlətinin yaranması və möhkəmləndirilməsində Heydər Əliyevin rolu: /tarix e. d-ru a. dər. al. üçün təq. ol. dis./ -Bakı, 2004. -426 s. və d.

Irada Huseynova is the first historian to defend her doctoral thesis on "The role of Heydar Aliyev in the establishment and strengthening of the independent state of Azerbaijan." With this research work, the foundation of a new direction of science - "Aliyev studies" was laid. I.Huseynova developed her research work on the basis of rich, primary sources collected from various state archives of the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, many of which were first included in the scientific circulation, as a result of analysis and generalization of all scientific literature published in the republic and abroad. In particular, it should be noted that for the first time the author used the personal archive of the great historical figure Heydar Aliyev.³

One of his monographs "Founder of the Independent Azerbaijani State" is dedicated to the study of the main aspects and stages of the political and state activity of the founder of the independent Azerbaijani state, phenomenal politician and statesman, national leader Heydar Aliyev on the basis of rich archival materials. This book comprehensively, systematically analyzes and scientifically substantiates the life and activity of the great leader.⁴

In the first and second chapters of the monograph, the author rightly studies and analyzes the work of Heydar Aliyev in the 70s and 80s of the last century on the way to future independence of Azerbaijan in the light of modern principles of statehood and new political thinking. A large part of the monograph is devoted to the coverage of the National Salvation Stage, which began on June 15, 1993, in particular, all aspects of Heydar Aliyev's activity as President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The book "For the sake of statehood" contains historical and scientific-publicist writings of I.M.Huseynova on the work done by

³ Hüseynova, İ. M. Müstəqil Azərbaycan dövlətinin yaranması və möhkəmləndirilməsində Heydər Əliyevin rolu: /tarix e. d-ru a. dər. al. üçün təq. ol. dis./ -Bakı, 2004. -426 s.

⁴ Hüseynova, İ.M. Müstəqil Azərbaycan dövlətinin qurucusu / İ.M.Hüseynova. - Bakı: Təhsil, -2004. -472 s.

Heydar Aliyev in the establishment and protection of the Azerbaijani statehood.⁵

The book “History. Time. Thoughts” mainly analyzes the services of Heydar Aliyev, a historical figure who stood at the forefront of strengthening our independence, one of the great figures of the twentieth century, with various articles.⁶ In the book the issues of the peace-loving foreign policy pursued by the Great Leader in the Caucasus as an important guarantee for the expansion and deepening of cooperation between the peoples of the Caucasus and the development of integration processes were examined speaking about the role of Heydar Aliyev in strengthening peace and stability in the Caucasus region, the Caucasus, a unique region in terms of cultural and ethnic diversity.

The published scientific articles on the struggle for liberation, reforms aimed at building a legal, democratic government are dedicated to the Great Leader's foreign policy strategy aimed at maintaining peace and stability in the country and the Caucasus in the next book by I.M.Huseynova “Guarantor of our independence”. The book is about the positive changes that have taken place in the country during the Great Leader's leadership in Azerbaijan, his extraordinary management and reforming qualities. Also, protection of national and moral values, improvement of social life of citizens, acceleration of democratic development, raising the level of education, strengthening the country's position in the geopolitical space, etc. Such important issues are widely covered in the publication.

The textbook of I.M.Huseynova “Heydar Aliyev and the Peace Process in the Caucasus” systematically and scientifically analyzes many activities of Heydar Aliyev in ensuring peace, security and stability in the Caucasus region. Based on historical, cultural, political and economic richness and knowledge, the author explores the unparalleled role of national leader Heydar Aliyev in the peaceful

⁵ Hüseynova, İ.M. Dövlətçilik naminə / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Bakı Universiteti, -2001. -294 s.

⁶ Hüseynova, İ.M. Tarix, zaman, düşüncələr: [5 cilddə] / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Elm və təhsil, -c.1. -2016. -512 s.

settlement of national conflicts in the Caucasus and in ensuring peace and security in the region. As of the author, “*Heydar Aliyev stressed the importance of expanding socio-political, economic and cultural ties with the peoples of the Caucasus. In this regard, Heydar Aliyev first made extensive use of existing historical traditions. Aware of all the values and cultural ideologies of the Caucasus, the Leader played an unprecedented role in ensuring peace, stability and security in the Caucasus and promoting regional cooperation in the republic's development strategy*”.⁷

In addition, I.M.Hüseynova participated as the author of the section "Heydar Aliyev's Karabakh policy and his struggle for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" in the writing of the collective monograph “Karabakh is Azerbaijan! Epic of Victory” prepared by the faculty of Baku State University and published in 2021.⁸ Here, the author analyzes issues such as Heydar Aliyev's prevention of separatist attempts by Armenians during the Soviet era, and his choice to restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan as the main direction of his policy after returning to power in independent Azerbaijan for the second time.

While analyzing various aspects of Heydar Aliyev's economic development strategy in the thesis basically monographs on "Heydar Aliyev Strategy of Azerbaijan's economic development" prepared by A.Muradov, "Transition to a market economy: economic policy of the state" as of author by A.A.Aliyev and A.S.Shakaraliyev were used.⁹ Thus, these theses show points such as the situation in Azerbaijan in the first years of independence and the causes of the economic crisis, analyze how Heydar Aliyev overcame the existing problems in a short time with the help of the economic development strategy developed

⁷ Hüseynova, İ.M. Heydər Əliyev və Qafqazda sülh prosesi / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Çəşioğlu, -2008. -672 s., s.583

⁸ Qarabağ Azərbaycanıdır! Zəfər epopeyası. Kollektiv monoqrafiya. -Bakı: Azəri poliqrafiya, -2021. -600 s., s. 189-210

⁹ Azərbaycanın iqtisadi inkişafının Heydər Əliyev strategiyası: Monoqrafiya / Elmi redaktor Ə.Muradov -Bakı: “Şərq-Qərb”, -2019. -328 s.; Əliyev, A.Ə. Bazar iqtisadiyyatına keçid: dövlətin iqtisadi siyasəti / A.Ə.Əliyev, A.Ş.Şəkəraliyev. -Bakı: “Bakı Universiteti” nəşriyyatı, -2002. -440 s.

and implemented after his return to power, the achievement of economic development in detail, successful implementation of economic policy in the direction of transition to a market economy.

2. Another group of works used in the study is research on the personality and political activities of President İlham Aliyev. The largest source in this group is the multi-volume "Development is our goal", which was published in November 2021, Volume 113 and consists of speeches, speeches, statements, interviews, letters, reports and appeals of President İlham Aliyev.¹⁰ The materials in the last volumes of this multivolume cover the period after the Second Karabakh War and in this regard play an invaluable source in the study of recent events in this direction.

Professor I.M.Hüseynova chose to study the political activity of İlham Aliyev as the political successor of the Great Leader as one of her main research topics. He is the author of various articles examining the activities of İlham Aliyev as a leader and the monograph "İlham Aliyev and the glorious pages of our history of victory" published in 2021.¹¹ In this thesis, the scientist revealed the characteristics of İlham Aliyev, the head of state of Azerbaijan, who is developing rapidly in the modern world, analyzed the main directions of his activities, and in the last book, especially during the 44-day war, the heroism of the mighty Azerbaijani army led by President İlham Aliyev and the

¹⁰Əliyev İ.H. İnkişaf - məqsədimizdir: [113 cilddə] / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərənşr, -c.8. -2011. -408 s.; Əliyev İ.H. İnkişaf - məqsədimizdir: [113 cilddə] / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərənşr, -c.18. -2014. -423 s.; Əliyev İ.H. İnkişaf - məqsədimizdir: [113 cilddə] / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərənşr, -c.24. -2015. -408 s.; Əliyev İ.H. İnkişaf - məqsədimizdir: [113 cilddə] / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərənşr, -c.26. -2015. -400 s. və d.

¹¹ Hüseynova, İ.M. İlham Əliyev yeni əsrimizin lideridir // -Bakı: Dirçəliş – XXI əsr, -2003. №59, -s. 108-119; Hüseynova, İ.M. Azərbaycan İlham Əliyev rəhbərliyi ilə yeni zirvələr fəth edəcək // -Bakı: Zəriflik, -2015. №20, -s. 58-59; Hüseynova, İ.M. Azərbaycan müasir dünyada: demokratik inkişaf yolu və tarixi nailiyyətlər // Yeni Azərbaycan Partiyasının təşəbbüsü ilə Azərbaycanın Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 92-ci ildönümünə həsr olunmuş "Azərbaycan müasir dünyada" mövzusunda keçirilən konfransın materialları, -Bakı, -2015, -s. 230-258; Hüseynova İ.M. İlham Əliyev və zəfər tariximizin şanlı səhifələri / İ.M.Hüseynova. -Bakı: Füyuzat, -2021. -224 s. və d.

restoration of historical justice with the liberation of Karabakh as a result of the unity of the people and power.

One of the thesis included in this group it is G.M.Pashayev's monograph "Saviors".¹² In his book, G.Pashayev spoke about Azerbaijanism in the socio-political sphere, noting in detail the successful statehood of national leader Heydar Aliyev and President Ilham Aliyev and their multifaceted victories in the history of the Azerbaijani people. In general, it should be noted that this book summarizes the epoch of the national leader Heydar Aliyev and the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, and shows them as parts of a single whole.

One of the notable works is the book "Ilham Aliyev - the successful successor of the Great Road: 60 years of history" Prepared on the initiative of the YAP Central Office, author N.Galandarli, as adviser and author of the "Foreword", by Deputy Chairman of the YAP and Head of the Central Office T.Budagov.¹³ Here, as in the previous book, the activities of Heydar Aliyev and Ilham Aliyev, their policies are analyzed as a continuation of each other, and the national development strategy implemented by President Ilham Aliyev based on the principle of political succession, as well as foreign policy based on national interests. The main directions of the course have been studied.

The next and new direction of the work of this group is various books dedicated to the victory of Azerbaijan in the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the liberation of the occupied territories as a result of the leadership and efforts of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev in the Second Karabakh War. Thus, 2021 was fruitful in this regard, and many books were published that deeply analyzed various aspects of Ilham Aliyev's activities during both the Second Karabakh War and the 44-day war. Among the authors studying this topic are B.Y. Sadigov, E. Azizov, S. Heydarova,

¹² Paşayev, Q.M. Xilaskarlar /Q. Paşayev. -Bakı: Təhsil, -2021. -135 s.

¹³ Qələndərli, N. İlham Əliyev - Böyük yolun müzəffər davamçısı: 60 ilə sığan tarix /N. Qələndərli. -Bakı: Teas Press, -2021. -595 s.

E. Shahinoglu and others.¹⁴ Their research focuses on the victory of the Azerbaijani Army under the leadership of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, explains the historical and political significance of this victory, shows the essence and importance of army building in the country in 2003-2020, Azerbaijan's state policy to win this conflict. political, socio-economic, diplomatic aspects are investigated, the course and results of the "Iron Fist" operation are shown.

In addition, at the initiative of various agencies, such as ANAS, the Institute of Human Rights of ANAS, the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan, YAP, the Association for Civil Society Development in Azerbaijan and others addresses and speeches of President Ilham Aliyev on the policy and measures pursued during the Second Karabakh War, his interviews with leading television channels, news agencies and newspapers on the realities of the war, a grouping of speeches made by Turkey and a number of other countries during meetings with government and state officials, decrees and orders, as well as "tweets" written by the head of state on Twitter during the war and eagerly awaited by all the Azerbaijani people. published in series collections.¹⁵ All these books, of course, give

¹⁴ Heydərova, S. Azərbaycanın dövlət siyasətində Qarabağa aparan yol [Mətn] /S. Heydərova. -Bakı: Elm və təhsil, -2021. -119 s.; Sadıqov, B.Y. Xilaskar İlham Əliyev [Mətn] /B. Y.Sadıqov. -Bakı: Hədəf Nəşrləri, -2021. -317 s.; Şahinoğlu, E. Dəmir yumruq /E. Şahinoğlu. -Bakı: Qanun, -2021. -279 s.; Vətən müharibəsi tarixi. Şəxsiyyət faktoru : 27 sentyabr - 10 noyabr 2020-ci il / layihənin rəhbəri E. Əzizov. -Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, -2021. -442 s.

¹⁵ İlham Əliyev: "Əziz Şuşa, biz qayıtmışıq!" /Azərbaycanda Vətəndaş Cəmiyyətinin İnkişafına Yardım Assosiasiyası (AVCIYA). -Bakı: AVCIYA, -2021. -225 s.; Qarabağ Azərbaycandır! /Azərb. Resp. baş Prokurorluğu; hazırl. K. Əliyev ; baş red. H. Məmmədov. -Bakı: Azərbaycan Respublikasının Baş Prokurorluğu, -2021. -590 s.; 44 günlük diplomatiya dərsləri / ideya müəllifi. A. Mustafazadə. -Bakı: Elm və təhsil, -2021. -251 s.; Zəfər salnaməsinin 44 günü / layihə. rəhb. və tərt. müə. A. Novruzov. -Bakı: Maarif, -2021. -318 s.; Zəfər salnaməsi /YAP ; baş red. N. Cabbarlı. -Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, -2021. -535 s.; Zəfər yolu: Qarabağ savaşıdan Şuşa Bəyannaməsinədək/layihənin rəhb. və ön söz. müə. R. Mehdiyev ; nəşrə hazırl.: İ. Həbibbəyli, K. Şükürov. -Bakı: Elm, -2021. -903 s.

researchers more opportunities to study the events and history of recent years in more depth.

3. The third group of theses includes international relations, international and regional policy, geopolitical situation in the Caucasus, foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and relations with the countries of the region, diplomatic struggle over the status of the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan oil strategy, etc. works devoted to such topics as and used as a scientific-theoretical source in the thesis.

Hikmet Babaoglu can be mentioned as one of the researchers studying the mentioned topics. The study of the problems mentioned in his monograph "The place and role of the Republic of Azerbaijan in modern world politics" is covered in detail.¹⁶ The monograph for the first time in the political science of Azerbaijan comprehensively studies the place and role of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the system of modern international relations. , The role of Heydar Aliyev in the formation of the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the place of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the international security system, the role of the Republic of Azerbaijan in ensuring international energy security, regional organizations of the post-Soviet space and security interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In addition, the features of the modern system of international relations, which has acquired a new quality against the background of recent global changes, are analyzed, and the existing theoretical approaches to its development trends and directions are widely covered.

Another textbook by H.B.Babaoghlu, named "Foreign Policy", also touches on various aspects of the problem of Azerbaijan's becoming a leading state in the region and the role of President Ilham Aliyev in this process.¹⁷ This textbook reflects the scientific-theoretical and conceptual foundations of foreign policy. The book deals with foreign policy decision-making and rationality, the influence of public opinion, media institutions, domestic sociological factors and non-state actors on foreign policy, approaches to foreign

¹⁶ Babaoğlu, H.B. Azərbaycan Respublikasının müasir dünya siyasətində yeri və rolu / H.B.Babaoğlu. –Bakı, Aypara-3, -2009. -328 s., s.309

¹⁷ Babaoğlu, H.B. Xarici siyasət / H.B.Babaoğlu. –Bakı: Elm, -2009. -324 s.

policy such as realism, idealism, liberalism, neorealism and neoliberalism, constructivism, government-adviser relations, Issues such as the role of strategic research centers in foreign policy were brought to the attention on the basis of theoretical and conceptual sources and empirical examples. The textbook also covers the impact of moral norms on foreign policy and interstate relations in the context of universal values and strategic interests, international organizations and foreign policy, foreign policy information, foreign policy and diplomacy, the impact of terrorism on world politics and international relations. The main directions, principles and priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy, the country's foreign policy resources and mechanisms, energy security in Azerbaijan's foreign policy are also among the topics in the book.

Research on Azerbaijan's oil diplomacy is also important in terms of the thesis topic. The works of İH Aliyev, as well as EH Nasirov, E. Hertzig and others can be shown in them, including the "Contract of the Century", Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Novorossiysk oil pipelines, etc. It is about the intense diplomatic struggle around.¹⁸ The authors assess these issues as the main factors of international relations in modern times, show the role of the Treaty of the Century and Heydar Aliyev's oil strategy in general in the economic development of Azerbaijan and study the features of İlham Aliyev's policy in this direction.

In addition, among the authors who conducted research on Azerbaijan's participation in international organizations, its policy in the region, its relations with world powers, as well as neighboring countries, we can name M.J.Gasimli, N.I.Mammadov, A.M.Hasanov, R.A.Mehdiyev.¹⁹

¹⁸ Əliyev, İ.H. Azərbaycan nefti dünya siyasətində / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərbaycan, -1997. -263 s.; Алиев, И.Г. Каспийская нефть Азербайджана / И.Г.Алиев. -М.: Известия, -2003. -712 с.; Nəsirov, E.X. Azərbaycan nefti və beynəlxalq müqavilələr. 1991-1999-cu illər / E.X. Nəsirov. -Bakı: Qanun, -1999. -104 s.; Hertzig, E. The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia / E.Hertzig. -London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, -1999. -252 p.

¹⁹ Qasımlı, M.C. Azərbaycan Respublikasının diplomatiya tarixi. Azərbaycan Respublikasının xarici siyasəti (1991-2003). I hissə / M.C.Qasımlı. -Bakı: Mütərcim,

The authors study the features of the Azerbaijani model of foreign policy, try to determine the past, present and future development of the Republic of Azerbaijan and explain the main national development of the country, considering the geopolitical interests and policies of the major countries of the Caspian-Black Sea basin and the South Caucasus. In addition, energy centers, development of the Caspian Sea's energy resources and exports to the world market, creation of east-west transport corridors, geopolitical and geoeconomic activities of Azerbaijan and other countries in the region and the world, energy, transit, international transport, transport and communication systems, Europe and the transnational world, the South Caucasus, the Caspian-Black Sea countries were analyzed.

The diplomatic struggle over the status of the Caspian Sea and the international aspects of the Caspian problem have also been investigated in the works of R.N.Musabayov and P.G.Darabadi.²⁰ Thus, the authors analyzed the place of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea region in world history, its position in modern times, in modern geopolitical conditions, explored Azerbaijan's leadership role in the region at the beginning of the XXI century, considered the process of determining the status of the Caspian Sea and tried to identify the available problems.

-2015. -648 s.; Qasımlı, M.C. İlham Əliyev Azərbaycan tarixinin mühüm illərinin müəllifidir // Azərbaycan. -2016, 16 oktyabr. -s.3; Həsənov, Ə.M. Azərbaycanın geosiyasəti / Ə.M.Həsənov. -Bakı: "Zərdabi LTD" MMC, -2015. -1055 s.; Həsənov, Ə.M. Azərbaycanın müasir geosiyasi inkişafı: mövcud vəziyyət və perspektivlər // -Bakı: Geostrategiya, -2011. № 1(01), -s. 10-20; Mehdiyev, R.Ə. Qloballaşma dövrünün tələbləri / R.Ə. Mehdiyev. -Bakı: XXI - Yeni Nəşrlər Evi, -2005. -584 s.; Mehdiyev, R.Ə. Yeni siyasət: inkişafa doğru: [2 cildə] / R.Ə. Mehdiyev. -Bakı: Oskar NPM, -c.1. -2008. -581 s.; Məmmədov, N.İ. Xarici siyasətin Azərbaycan modeli. Məqalələrdən seçmələr (1997-2011) / N.İ. Məmmədov. -Bakı: Çarşıoğlu, -2012. -464 s.; Məmmədov, N.İ. Xarici siyasət: reallıqlar və gələcəyə baxış / N.İ. Məmmədov. -Bakı: Qanun, -2013. -264 s. və d.

²⁰ Musabəyov, R.N. Xəzər status qazanmağa yaxındır // -Bakı: Region+, -2014. - №16 (224), -s. 10-13; Дарабади, П.Г. Геоистория Каспийского региона и геополитика современности / П.Г.Дарабади. -Баку: ЭЛМ, -2002. -192 с.; Дарабади, П.Г. Кавказ и Каспий в мировой истории и геополитике XXI века / П.Г.Дарабади. -М.: Весь Мир, -2010. -216 с.

Thereby, as can be seen from the reviewed research works, various aspects of the topic of the thesis were touched upon in these works, and some scientific problems related to the essence of the thesis were studied. However, the scientific problem to which this thesis is devoted is a new problem and has not been comprehensively studied.

Subject matter and scope of the study. As a region, the events and processes taking place in the Caucasus at the present stage of history, the relations between the states in the region are the object of study. The subject of the research is the process of transformation of the Republic of Azerbaijan into a leading state in the Caucasus, the factors influencing this process, the activity and role of Ilham Aliyev in this process.

Aim and tasks of the thesis. The **main aim** of the thesis is to determine the role of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the transformation of the Republic of Azerbaijan into a leading state in the region within the new historical and geopolitical realities of the Caucasus in modern times and to determine the directions of Ilham Aliyev's political course aimed at strengthening Azerbaijan's leading position.

Based on the said aims, the thesis attempts to solve the following **tasks**:

- Analysis of the legacy of national leader Heydar Aliyev as a national treasure of the independent Azerbaijani state;
- Determination the main features of Ilham Aliyev's statehood strategy as a successor and political successor of the great leader Heydar Aliyev's legacy;
- Consideration of the signing of the "Contract of the Century" as a basis for a turning point in the socio-economic, socio-political, military and cultural life of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan;
- Clarification of the role of Ilham Aliyev in the implementation of new transnational projects in the Caucasus region;
- Investigation of the main directions of Ilham Aliyev's energy policy in the context of Europe's search for energy security;
- Revealing the role of Ilham Aliyev in the emergence of a new geopolitical reality in the Caucasus;

- To study the main directions of Ilham Aliyev's policy on settlement and settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict;
- Defining the place and role of the Republic of Azerbaijan as a guarantor of peace and stability in the region;
- Coverage of Ilham Aliyev's successes in strengthening Azerbaijan-Russia strategic cooperation;
- Disclosure of the role of Ilham Aliyev in the development of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations.

Methods of the thesis. The methodological basis of the thesis covers the generally accepted methods of historiography and international relations. In addition to the analysis and synthesis, generalization, as well as the method of historical description of the general logical methods used in the historical sciences, the methods of comparative and systematic analysis were preferred in the preparation of the thesis. As the period covered by the problem is rich in many documents, a comparative analysis is given a wide place in the process of writing the case.

The main provisions of the thesis are as follows:

- At the new stage of the consistent line of development carried out under the direct leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, the building of an innovative society in the true sense of the word has become a national project in our country. As a result of the reforms implemented by President Ilham Aliyev in recent years, any conditions have been created for the development of innovation in our country as a key factor in production.

- Although Azerbaijan has been at war for almost 30 years as a result of the aggressive policy of Armenia, it has pursued its national policy, developing friendly and cooperative relations with the countries of the region, first through the efforts of the national leader and then his political successor, President Ilham Aliyev.

- As a result of the Second Karabakh War launched on September 27, 2020 against the next provocations of Armenia, as a result of the successful activities of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev both in the military and diplomatic spheres, the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict ended and

Azerbaijan liberated its occupied lands. The war ended with the Declaration of the Presidents of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia signed on November 10, 2020, and activities were launched to achieve lasting peace and cooperation in the region through negotiations to open transport and communication links in the region.

- As time goes by, Azerbaijan is changing from an ordinary participant in ensuring international energy security to a key player. This is due to the fact that the issue of energy security, both domestically and internationally, covers an important aspect of President Ilham Aliyev's foreign policy strategy.

- As a result of the successful diplomatic policy pursued under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev Azerbaijan's role in solving international and regional problems is growing. As a result of domestic reforms and effective foreign policy, Azerbaijan has become a leader in the South Caucasus.

- President Ilham Aliyev not only declares his objectives to turn Azerbaijan into a modern and strong state, but also takes serious steps to establish precise implementation mechanisms. Azerbaijan is now recognized as one of the centers of tolerance, peace and development not only in the South Caucasus, but also in Europe. The multicultural dialogue held in our republic is important as an ideal example of peaceful coexistence between people of different religions and origins.

- achieving successful results in all areas of development in modern times. Because as a result of his policy, as well as through measures taken in the fields of sports, culture and tourism, Azerbaijan has become better known in the world and has gained a great reputation not only as an oil country, but also as a country of sports and culture.

The scientific novelty of the thesis. Consideration of various research works on the degree of development of the problem means that “The role of Ilham Aliyev in the transformation of the Republic of Azerbaijan into a leading state in the Caucasus” as a scientific problem is involved in complex research at the thesis level for the first time in Azerbaijani historiography. It is this provision that allows to determine the scientific novelty of the topic to which the thesis is dedicated.

In addition, continuation of the policy of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev in the Caucasus at a new qualitative

stage, the main features of Ilham Aliyev's policy in the implementation of new transnational projects in the region, the main directions of Ilham Aliyev's energy policy in ensuring Europe's energy security, the role of Ilham Aliyev in the emergence of new geopolitical realities in the region after the Second Karabakh War, in this new historical context, as the main driving force of Azerbaijan's policy to ensure peace and stability in the region issues such as the study of Ilham Aliyev's personality can also be assessed as a scientific novelty of the research.

Theoretical and practical relevance of the thesis is determined by the role of thesis materials and the results of multilateral thesis in the development of new regional policy concepts in Azerbaijan. The materials and scientific results of the work can be used widely in the practical activities of Azerbaijani diplomats in the international arena, in the writing of generalized works on the history of Azerbaijan's activities in the region, in the process of preparing students and masters in historiography and international relations.

Proof of concept of the thesis and its use. The author has published 11 articles abroad, one of which is devoted to the analysis of various aspects of the thesis topic and reflects the main content of the thesis. In addition, the author participated in 2 international and 8 national scientific-practical conferences and made 8 reports on the results obtained during the thesis, which were published and tested in this way. In addition, the ideas and proposals claimed in the thesis were discussed at the meetings of the department where the work was performed, the applicant's reports were heard.

Title of the facility the thesis to be defended. The thesis was held at the department of “History of the Caucasian peoples” in Baku State University.

Scope of the thesis. The thesis consists of an introduction, 8 half-chapters, 4 chapters, conclusion and references. Introduction consists of 29239, Chapter I - 52293, Chapter II - 50184, Chapter III - 64785, Chapter IV - 62554, conclusion - 7966, and references – 21875 characters of the thesis. The total volume of the thesis is 161 computer printed pages, references consists of 269134 characters.

MAIN CONTENT OF THESIS

In the section **“Introduction”** of the thesis the relevance of the topic is settled, the degree of development of the problem is developed, the objectives of the thesis methods, main provisions, scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance, approbation and application are determined, and the title of the facility studied and thesis scope is reflected.

I chapter of the thesis **“Ilham Aliyev is a worthy successor of the policy pursued by national leader Heydar Aliyev in the Caucasus”** consists of two half-chapters.

II half-chapter **“The legacy of national leader Heydar Aliyev is the national wealth of the independent Azerbaijani state”** of I chapter is dedicated to an important stage in the recent history of Azerbaijan - the study of the legacy of the last 30 years of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century, the well-known statesman and politician, national leader Heydar Aliyev, who led our country at that time.

This half-chapter shows that in both socio-political structures, both in the Soviet Union and during independence, under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's economy was strengthened, its prestige increased, its national interests, national mentality, culture and spirituality were preserved and developed.

The implementation of complex evolutionary plans developed under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev in 1970-1985 ended with unprecedented innovations and progress in the history of our country. During the 9th and 10th quinquennials, more products were processed than in the period from 1945 to 1970. As a result, Azerbaijan, which previously lagged far behind the All-Union in all important respects, soon became one of the most developed countries in the former Soviet Union.

It was noted that the great leader Heydar Aliyev, who came to power in our country for the second time in 1993, was developing the foreign policy course of independent Azerbaijan with agile maneuvers without putting the poles of global power into tensions.

In addition, it was noted that the balanced policy pursued by the great leader Heydar Aliyev is one of the most important factors underlying the regional leadership of Azerbaijan today. Heydar Aliyev's strategic thinking and political professionalism overcame a task that is useful for our country, and over the past period, Azerbaijan has built and developed relations with the region, as well as non-regional countries in a constructive manner. Thanks to the domestic and foreign policy course founded by the great leader and continued by his successor Ilham Aliyev, our country has become one of the most influential and intensively developing countries in the region and the world as a whole.

The second half-chapter of the first chapter **“Ilham Aliyev is the successor of the legacy of the great leader Heydar Aliyev, his political successor”** shows that that as a result of the policy founded by our great leader Heydar Aliyev and perfectly pursued by President Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani model of sustainable development has been created in our country, which includes improving people's living standards.

It was noted that since 2003, new changes have taken place in the life of Azerbaijan. The last 15 years of independence are considered to be the period of the highest progress in the economic history of our country. In 2003-2018, our country established itself as a successful state, pursuing a free international policy, seriously defending its national interests, and a strong state on earth. During this period, in addition to becoming an important transit country in the Euro-Atlantic space and the initiator and organizer of major economic projects, our country has established itself as a reliable partner who skillfully implements of BTJ oil, BTA gas pipelines operation, construction of the North-South and East-West transport corridors, being a non-permanent representative to the UN Security Council.

Due to the successful socio-economic policy pursued under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev in recent years, the country's economy has grown more than 7 times, the share of non-oil sector in GDP was 69%,

the minimum wage increased by 11.7 times, and the average monthly wage per man increased by 6.3 times and amounted to 489.3 manat.²¹

As a result, the chapter shows that the advantage of İlham Aliyev's activity over the past 18 years is that he, as a pragmatic political leader, evaluates reality in an operative and objective way, takes principled steps in the national interest, makes optimal and correct decisions in any extreme environment. is the ability to approach. Today, our country, which is not mentioned on the map of the world, is under threat and injustice under the influence of the notorious Armenian lobby, and is unable to show its rightful place to the world under the information blockade, is recognized today in a completely different status. Today, Azerbaijan is considered an important player in many regional issues, and no important project in the region can be realized without Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan, whose prestige is strengthening year by year at the international level, has taken its rightful place among the countries of the world. Prestigious competitions and contests, international summits, forums, exhibitions and etc., held in our country are the result of the great trust we have obtained in the international arena.

The second chapter of the thesis **“İlham Aliyev's political activity in the implementation of new transnational projects in the Caucasus region”** consists of two half-chapters of which I half-chapter **“The Contract of the Century”: The road to new heights in the Caucasus”** shows that the energy policy pursued by our country serves the political and economic well-being of the region. Mr. İlham Aliyev emphasized that *“oil and gas projects implemented by the Republic of Azerbaijan are a solid foundation for energy progress in the world today”*.²² Speaking about Azerbaijan's energy policy, it should be noted that the founder of this policy was the national leader of the Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev.

²¹ Azərbaycanın Statistik Göstəriciləri – 2017/tərt. ed. Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Statistika Komitəsi. -Bakı, -2017. -812 s., s.51

²²Əliyev, İ.H. İqtibaslar və təhlil / İ.H. Əliyev. -Bakı: Azərbaycan, -2006. -328 s., s.236

While defining the oil strategy of Azerbaijan, the national leader, considering the main economic, political and geostrategic factors, determined the directions of oil's service to the people of Azerbaijan and its future generations in the third millennium. This global energy project, which laid the foundation for integration into the world community and international cooperation in the region, was aimed at the country's acquisition of its natural resources, national interests, economic and political interests as a free state. All this is aimed at increasing the prestige of Azerbaijan in the international arena, expanding development opportunities and finds its full expression in the "The Contract of the Century", that was signed on September 20, 1994.

It was emphasized that "The Contract of the Century" has important political significance. This agreement practically demonstrated that Azerbaijan is a sovereign state and has the right to independently dispose of its wealth and natural resources. Western companies and the countries to which they belong have become Azerbaijan's economic partners.

The study of the second half-chapter of Chapter II "**Ilham Aliyev's policy in ensuring regional energy security**" shows that at present, along with the successful implementation of Azerbaijan's oil strategy, under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, the successor of Heydar Aliyev's policy, strategic goals related to gas export policy have begun to be identified. Azerbaijan is currently the only country in the region that exports gas to international sales centers (Turkey, Russia, Georgia). For this reason, it is considered by the European Union as a "supplier and participant" of the Southern Gas Corridor. In line with this strategy, Azerbaijan aims to become a long-term strategic exporter of natural gas to the EU.

At the end of all the complex processes, the decisive role in the selection of the TANAP project by Azerbaijan also belonged to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. As a result of his diplomatic efforts, Azerbaijan, with the help of the transnational world, has strengthened the region's geoeconomic position in the field of oil and gas production and exports, while maintaining its image as a reliable partner.

As the President rightly emphasized in his speeches, energy projects implemented in the region with the participation of Azerbaijan do not only affect this area. Such projects once again prove Azerbaijan's favorable geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic position and play a key role in the implementation of new communication projects in the future.

Chapter III “The role of Ilham Aliyev in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the largest ethnic and territorial conflict in the Caucasus” and consists of two half-chapters.

The study of the first half-chapter **“The role of Ilham Aliyev in the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh”** shows that Azerbaijan, as in all sectors, continues the course of independent foreign policy founded by National Leader Heydar Aliyev. The policy pursued by President Ilham Aliyev serves to further strengthen the international prestige of the state, ensure national security, sustainable development and protection of the interests of the country's citizens.

As President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev has expressed his views on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict quite openly and comprehensively in all his visits, participation in international events, meetings in Azerbaijan, interviews and speeches. The unchanging position of President Ilham Aliyev was that we would restore our territorial integrity. This conflict must be resolved only on the basis of international law and the order of international organizations.²³

However the time shows that, Armenia has always tried to maintain the status quo by creating obstacles to the settlement of the conflict and imitating the negotiation process. The failure of the international community to take any action against Armenia has stalled the peace process. As Pashinyan has come to power in Armenia on May 8, 2018, his unconstructive position on the settlement of the conflict and his statement that “Karabakh is Armenia, and that's it” made it pointless to continue the already stalled negotiation process.

²³ Əhmədov, E.İ. Ermənistanın Azərbaycanca təcavüzü: Beynəlxalq təşkilatların və böyük dövlətlərin siyasəti / E.İ. Əhmədov. -Bakı: Elmin İnkışafı Fondu, -2015. -368 s., s.254

In response to his words, President Ilham Aliyev said at a conference in Valday, “Karabakh is Azerbaijan and an exclamation mark!” and his words became the slogan of Azerbaijan's struggle for justice.²⁴

During the 44-day Karabakh war, Azerbaijani soldiers and officers carried out an honorable mission with great heroism and bravery, the Armenian army destroyed and liberated our lands from the Armenian occupiers.

The Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict ended with the Second Karabakh War and the subsequent trilateral declaration. This conflict was the biggest threat to peace and cooperation in the South Caucasus. Following the end of the conflict, Azerbaijan began talks with Armenia through Russia to restore transport and communication links for lasting peace in the region. Another advantage gained by Azerbaijan with the tripartite statement was the agreement on the opening of a Zangazur corridor connecting the main territory of Azerbaijan with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic from the territory of Armenia. Through this corridor, the NAR will end the blockade and a land connection will be established between Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Thus, although it was not possible to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict peacefully, which lasted for almost 30 years, Azerbaijan forced the Armenian state to make peace by military means, and this conflict ended. In the future, provided that Armenia fulfills its obligations, Azerbaijan will do its best to maintain peace, security and cooperation in the South Caucasus, thereby strengthening its leading position in the region.

The study of the second half-chapter of Chapter III “**The Republic of Azerbaijan as a guarantor of peace and stability in the region**” shows that the founder of the independent Azerbaijani state Heydar Aliyev and President Ilham Aliyev, who continues his policy in any sector, has repeatedly speached and spoke about the essence, tasks and direction of Azerbaijan's regional policy to ensure its

²⁴ Zəfər salnaməsinin 44 günü / layihə. rəhb. və tərt. müə. A. Novruzov. -Bakı: Maarif, -2021. -318 s., s.35

geopolitical, geoeconomic and military-geostrategic interests in the Caucasus.

The half-chapter shows that after the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Azerbaijan will be able to cope more successfully with these tasks. Thus, one of the main points of the November 10 trilateral statement is the restoration of transport and communication links in the region and the opening of the land connection between the main territory of Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan AR – the Zangazur corridor. Since a peace agreement is made between Azerbaijan and Armenia as a result of resolving the conflict it is the essence of the establishment of an effective platform for regional cooperation between Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran, Russia, Georgia and Armenia in the region. The steps taken in this direction include the meetings of the Presidents of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia on January 11 and November 26, 2021. The issues discussed at these meetings, the statements made show that if the Armenian side strictly fulfills its obligations, all transport and communication lines in the region will be opened, and the South Caucasus will further strengthen its position in the North-South, East-West corridor. This, in turn, will further strengthen Azerbaijan's leadership in the Caucasus region.

Chapter IV **“Ilham Aliyev and issues of cooperation in the region”** consists of two half-chapters.

The first half-chapter **“Ilham Aliyev's success in strengthening Azerbaijan-Russia strategic cooperation”** is about that in modern times, Azerbaijan-Russia relations, which began with bilateral neighborly relations, have risen to the level of strategic partnership. This stage is connected with the name of President Ilham Aliyev. As a result of the successful foreign policy strategy implemented by President Ilham Aliyev, raising relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation based on historical traditions to the level of strategic partnership is a necessity that meets the national interests and sovereign rights of both countries. Both countries have broad political opportunities, economic potential and, finally, political will to expand and strengthen these ties. These equal

relations are based on the principles of mutual respect for each other's sovereign rights and independent policies that meet national interests.

The aforementioned self-manifested in Russia's relatively objective position during the Second Karabakh War. Despite being a military ally of Armenia, the Russian state ignored the provocative calls of Armenia, noting that the war did not take place in the territory of Armenia, and that Azerbaijan restored its territorial integrity. It was through Russia that the tripartite statement of the heads of state ending hostilities on November 10 was signed and the foundations for lasting peace and cooperation in the region were laid. One of the most important points of the statement was the deployment of Russian peacekeepers in the territory of the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region and the Lachin corridor. Although there are some problems with the activities of Russian peacekeepers, Azerbaijan believes that they will contribute to peace and security in the region by acting objectively to eliminate these problems. In addition, representatives of Turkey and Russia are participating in the ceasefire monitoring center established after the war.

In the study of the second half-chapter **“Ilham Aliyev's role in the development of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations”** is known that a new stage in bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia was established after the return of Heydar Aliyev to power and successfully continued by his political successor Ilham Aliyev.

Over the past 30 years, relations between the two countries have deepened to such an extent that they cannot be shaken by outside forces or any local incompetent politicians looking for experimentation and alternatives. Over the past period, under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan has built on the principles of good neighborliness and reliable strategic partnership, based on the principle of good neighborliness, assisting Georgia in difficult times of energy security, but never using the factor of interdependence as a tool of pressure on the neighboring state and the Georgian people. proved his loyalty. In addition, Ilham Aliyev, as the head of a country suffering from aggressive separatism and aggression, has always supported Georgia's territorial integrity during both bilateral meetings and various international events. All this gives grounds to say that

Azerbaijan and Georgia, as exemplary relations based on solid foundations and meeting the strategic interests of both peoples, will continue to be the main driving force for the development and prosperity of the region for many years to come.

In the “**Conclusions**” section the thesis is summed up, the main conclusions are summarized. In conclusion, generally, the following main results were obtained:

- For 30 years, our country has been moving forward by overcoming the difficult situations it faces and strengthening its independence and sovereignty. The balanced policy pursued by national leader Heydar Aliyev is one of the most important factors underlying Azerbaijan's regional leadership today. Heydar Aliyev's strategic thinking and political professionalism overcame a task that is useful for our country, and over the past period, Azerbaijan has constructively and developed relations with regional and non-regional countries. As a result of the policy founded by our great leader Heydar Aliyev and perfectly pursued by President Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani model of sustainable development has been created in our country, which includes improving people's living standards.

- During the Second Karabakh War, Ilham Aliyev once again proved himself as a strong politician, head of state and Supreme Commander-in-Chief. President Ilham Aliyev also achieved political success by leading the Azerbaijani army to victories and giving interviews to several foreign media representatives. although it was not possible to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict peacefully, which lasted for almost 30 years, Azerbaijan forced the Armenian state to make peace by military means, and this conflict ended. In the future, provided that Armenia fulfills its obligations, under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan will do its best to maintain peace, security and cooperation in the South Caucasus, thereby strengthening its leading position in the region.

- After the victory of Azerbaijan in the Second Karabakh War, the return of our occupied lands by the Azerbaijani army and people under the leadership of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, a new geopolitical situation began to form in the South Caucasus region. The opening of the Zangazur Corridor, envisaged in one of the

clauses of the Declaration dated on November 10, 2020, will once again strengthen Azerbaijan's position as a transit country. As Azerbaijan is located on the historic Silk Road, and the economic power of China and other developed countries in Southeast Asia is growing rapidly in the modern world, the passage of the land line connecting these countries with Europe through Azerbaijan will undoubtedly make it stronger in all areas.

- At the VIII summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States in Istanbul on November 12, 2021, the organization was renamed the Organization of Turkic States. After this summit, cooperation and integration between the countries of the Turkic world is expected to intensify. Azerbaijan will again act as a link between the Turkic states of Central Asia and Turkey and Europe. The importance of the Zangazur corridor in this direction is even clearer.

- The inclusion of the item on the Zangazur corridor in the Declaration dated on November 10, as is clear from the speeches of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, was an issue insisted on by Ilham Aliyev himself. This fact alone is enough to characterize Ilham Aliyev as a far-sighted and strategic leader. All this indicates that the success of Azerbaijan under the leadership of Ilham Aliyev in recent years not only strengthens its position as a leader in the South Caucasus, but also expands its leadership to the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The main content of the thesis is reflected in the following works published by the author:

1. Məmmədzadə, Ü.K. Azərbaycan Heydər Əliyev ideyalarının layiqli davamçısı Prezident İlham Əliyevin rəhbərliyi altında // - Gəncə: Elmi Xəbərlər, -2015. –s. 224-227

2. Məmmədzadə, Ü.K. İlham Əliyev Cənubi Qafqaz bölgəsində beynəlxalq layihələrin həyata keçirilməsinin təşəbbüskarı və aparıcı qüvvəsidir // Doktorantların və gənc tədqiqatçıların XIX Respublika elmi konfransının materialları, -Bakı: -2015, -s. 335-336.

3. Məmmədzadə, Ü.K. İlham Əliyev və Cənubi Qafqaz müasir geosiyasi şəraitdə // Gənc tədqiqatçıların H. Əliyevin 92 illiyinə həsr

edilmiş III Beynəlxalq elmi-praktik konfransı, -Bakı: -2015, -s. 1439-1440.

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