

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science

THE NORTHWESTERN TERRITORIES OF AZERBAIJAN IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF NEIGHBORING STATES (11TH – FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURIES)

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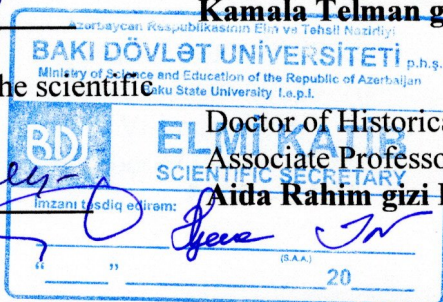
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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance of the research and degree of study of the topic.

The northwestern region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which includes the territories of the modern-day Sheki, Gabala, Oghuz, Gakh, Zagatala, and Balakan districts, has historically been part of Azerbaijan's lands and has played a significant role in the political events of the Caucasus throughout history. These regions held considerable military-strategic importance for both Azerbaijani states and neighboring countries and empires with interests in the Caucasus. Its importance primarily stemmed from the location at the junction of the Turkic-Muslim and Christian worlds, a factor that had a profound impact on the region's ethno-political history.

With Tiflis becoming a border city of Islam, the northwestern lands of historical Azerbaijan, located east of Tiflis, became one of the main regions serving later as a "frontier" or "border zone." During the Seljuk period, they constituted a border area with the Christian world, known as the "uj" lands, which held a special status. Over time, these lands were seized by neighboring Georgian rulers, but in later periods—under the Mongols and during the rule of the Kara Koyunlu and Ak Koyunlu—they became part of these states and were integrated into their administrative systems.

The region's significance further increased during the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry for control over the Caucasus, which spanned the 16th century to the first third of the 18th century. By the time the region was conquered by the Russian Empire, it was home to the Jar-Balakan free societies (jamaats), the Ilisu Sultanate, and the Sheki Khanate. Its proximity to Dagestan, which later became the center of the resistance movement of mountain peoples, also contributed to the growing role of this region in the struggle against the colonial policies of the Russian Empire.

Although the administrative-territorial reforms implemented by the Russian Empire resulted in parts of the region's lands remaining within the borders of neighboring states, the portion of this historical area that lies within the modern Republic of Azerbaijan, bordering the

Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia, continues to hold political, strategic, and economic importance. For this reason, studying the history of this region solely within the framework of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan would not provide a complete historical picture, highlighting the need to examine its place and role in the foreign policy of neighboring states within the broader context of Caucasian history.

The necessity of timely studying the history of Azerbaijan's border regions is clearly demonstrated by the bitter experience of the Karabakh War imposed by neighboring Armenia. The full return of Azerbaijan's occupied territories was achieved through the skillful diplomacy of President Ilham Aliyev and the heroism of the Azerbaijani national army.

The importance of studying the role and place of Azerbaijan's northwestern territories in the foreign policy of neighboring states is further emphasized by the fact that this region has always been distinguished by its ethnocultural diversity. At times, neighboring states attempted to exploit this factor to create ethno-religious divisions among the region's population.

Considering all the factors mentioned above, the presented dissertation not only traces the foreign policy strategies of neighboring states in the region but also examines the fate of Azerbaijan's northwestern territories amidst this struggle.

In the course of working on the dissertation, a significant number of primary sources, comprehensive studies, specialized monographs, and articles on the subject written in Azerbaijani, Turkish, English, Russian, and Persian, were studied, analyzed, and critically reinterpreted

Among the sources particular attention should be given to unpublished archival materials from the State Historical Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SHARA) in funds 579, 866, and 892; the Russian State Historical Archive in Saint Petersburg (RSHA) (funds 28, 1018, 1268); the Russian State Military-Historical Archive (funds 482, 846); the National Archive of Georgia (NAG) (funds 2, 16, 236, 416, 1414); the newspaper collection of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Russian National Library and the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul (BOA) (funds A.{DVNS_MHM.d...}, ADVNS_MHM.d, C..AS, HAT, HR.SFR.1, TS.MA.e).

From Georgian sources, the study extensively utilized the work

of the 11th-century author Leonti Mroveli¹, as well as another source from the same period, «The Chronicle of Kartli»², and the work of Georgian prince Vakhushti Bagrationi³.

The ethno-political processes that took place in the region during and after the Mongol conquests were studied by comparing data from sources of the period under investigation, such as Fazlullah Rashid al-Din⁴, Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Nasawi⁵, Ibn al-Athir⁶, and Mahmud al-Kashgari⁷.

In studying the place and role of the researching region in the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry for the Caucasus, were used works of such Ottoman authors as Bedreddinzade Ali Bey⁸, Ibrahim Efendi Pechevi⁹, and Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali¹⁰. Among Safavid sources, the works used

¹ Мровели, Л. Жизнеописание Картлийских царей. Перевод, предисловие и комментарии Г.В.Цулая / Л. Мровели. - Москва: Наука, - 1979. - 851 с.

² Летопись Картли / Перевод, введение и примечания Г.В. Цулая. -Тбилиси: Мецниереба, - 1982. - 112 с.

³Багратиони, В. История царства Грузинского / В. Багратиони. - Тбилиси: «Мецниереба», - 1976. - 338 с.

⁴ Рашид ад-Дин, Фазлуллах. Сборник летописей [в трех томах] / Р. Фазлуллах. - Москва-Ленинград: Изд.-во Академии наук СССР, - т. I, кн. II. - 1952. - 316 с.; Рашид ад-Дин, Фазлуллах. Сборник летописей [в трех томах] / Р. Фазлуллах. - Москва-Ленинград: Изд.-во Академии наук СССР, - т. II. - 1960. - 248 с.

⁵ Ан-Насави, Ш. М. Жизнеописание султана Джалал ад-Дина Манкбурны / Ш. М. Ан-Насави. - Баку: ЭЛМ, - 1973. - 450 с.; Ан-Насави, Ш. М. Сират Ас-Султан Джалал ад-Дин Манкбурны (Жизнеописание султана Джалал ад-Дина Манкбурны) / Ш. М. Ан-Насави. - Москва: Восточная литература, - 1996. - 798 с.

⁶ Ибн ал-Асир. Материалы по истории Азербайджана из Тарих ал-Камиль (полного свода истории) / Ибн ал-Асир. - Баку: Изд-во АЗФАН, -1940. - 184 с.

⁷ Kaşgarlı, M. Divan-ü Lügati't-Türk: [4 cilddə] / M. Kaşgarlı. - Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, - с. I. - 1998. - 530 s.; Kaşgarlı, M. Divan-ü Lügati't-Türk: [4 cilddə] / M. Kaşgarlı. - Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, - с. III. - 1999. - 452 s.

⁸ Мамедов Т.М. «Каиме» Бедреддинзаде Али-бея // Баку: Известия АН Азерб. ССР, СИФП, - 1988. № 3, - с.71-73

⁹ Печеви И. История (Извлечения по истории Азербайджана и сопредельных стран и областей периода 1520-1640 гг.) / И. Печеви. - Баку: ЭЛМ, - 1988. - 100 с.

¹⁰ Gelibolulu M. A. Nusret-name / M. A. Gelibolulu. - Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Erek matbaası, - 2014. - 355 s.

include "Ahsan al-Tawarikh" by Hasan Bek Rumlu¹¹, "Tarikh-i Alam Ara-yi Abbasi" by Iskandar Bek Munshi,¹² and "Tadhkirat al-Muluk" translated by V. Minorsky.¹³

Among European sources, it is necessary to note the works of the 18th-century British merchant Jonas Hanway, who described the period marking the decline of the Safavid state¹⁴.

From local sources, it is necessary to highlight "The Chronicle of the Wars of Jar" by Molla Muhammad al-Jari.¹⁵

A special place among the sources is occupied by the materials collected in the "Acts of the Caucasian Archaeographic Commission."

The study of certain aspects of the history of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan began in the XIX, that is, with the beginning of the conquest of this region by the Russian Empire.

From the first quarter of the XIX century, research by Russian authors on the history and culture of the population of the Jar-Balakan communities, the Ilisu Sultanate, and the Shaki Khanate began to appear in periodicals. These materials, according to their nature and time of appearance, can be divided into three periods.

The first period covers the first third of the XIX century.

¹¹ Rumlu, Həsən bəy. Əhsənüt-Təvərix (Tarixlərin ən yaxşısı). Hicri 807-985/ Miladi 1404-1578-ci illərin hadisələri haqqında tarixi salnamə / H.Rumlu. -Kas-tamonu: Uzanlar, - 2017. - 661 s.

¹² Münşi, İsgəndər bəy. Dünyanı bəzəyən Abbasın tarixi (Tarixə-aləmaraye-Abbasi) [2 cilddə] / İ. Münşi. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, - c.1. - 2010. - 1144 s.; Münşi, İsgəndər bəy. Dünyanı bəzəyən Abbasın tarixi (Tarixə-aləmaraye-Abbasi) [2 cilddə] / İ. Münşi. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, - c.2. - 2014. - 1400 s.; Münşi, İsgəndər bəy. Tarix-i aləmaraya-yi Abbasi (Abbasın dünyanı bəzəyən tarixi). I cild / Bakı, İ. Münşi. – Bakı: "Təhsil", 2009, 792 s.

¹³ Tadhkirat Al-Muluk. A Manual of Safavid Administration (circa 1137/1725). Translated and explained by V.Minorsky. / London: "E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust", - 1943 (reprinted 1980). -218 p.

¹⁴ Hanway Jonas. The Revolutions of Persia: Containing the Reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, with the Invasion of the Afghans, and the Reigns of Sultan Mir Maghmod and his Successor Sultan Ashreff. vol I. / Jonas Hanway. - University of California Libraries, - 1923. - 624 p.; Hanway Jonas. An Historical Account of British Trade Over The Caspian Sea With a Journal of Travels. Vol. II. / J. Hanway. – Dublin: Booksellers in Dame-street, - 1753. – 606 p.

¹⁵ Əl-Cari, Molla M. Car salnaməsi. Ərəbcədən tərcümə, giriş, şərhlər və qeydlər Sevda Süleymanovanındır / Molla M. Əl-Cari. – Bakı: Səda, - 1997. - 146 s.

However, even before the conquest of Azerbaijani territories in the early XIX century, the Russian Empire was actively collecting information on the khanates and territories of Azerbaijan.¹⁶

In 1819, immediately after the abolition of the Shaki Khanate, a "Description of the Shaki Province" was compiled. This document provided detailed information on the estates and incomes of the Shaki khans, as well as on fortresses and structures. It also included a list of all the villages of the former khanate, accompanied by statistical data.¹⁷

In 1829, an article appeared in the newspaper "Russian Invalid or Military News", in which the author described the borders of the Jar-Balakan societies and the circumstances of their conquest.¹⁸

In the following year, 1830, an article titled "Trip to the Jar and Belokan regions" was published in numbers 81-83 of the "Tiflis News" newspaper.¹⁹

In 1834-1835 was published a four-volume work of P. Zubov. The third part of his multi-volume work includes a description of the population of the Jar-Balakan area.²⁰

¹⁶ Бурнашев, С.Д. Описание Областей Адрибиджанских в Персии и их политическое состояние / С.Д. Бурнашев. - Курск: Типография Курского Приказа Общественного Призрения, - 1793. - 27 с; Картина Грузии или описание политического состояния царств Карталинского и Кахетинского, сделанное пребывающим при Его Высочестве царе Карталинском и Кахетинском Ираклии Темурзавиче полковником и кавалером Бурнашевым в Тифлисе в 1786 г. / Издание К.Н. Бигичева. – Тифлис: Типография И.А.Мартirosянца, - 1896. - 24 с.

¹⁷ Описание Шекинской провинции, составленное в 1819 году по распоряжению главноуправляющего в Грузии Ермолова, генерал-майором Ахвердовым и статским советником Могилевским / Тифлис: Типография главного наместника Кавказского, - 1866. - 98 с.

¹⁸ О Чарских и Белокавказских лезгинах // Русский инвалид или военные ведомости. СПб. - 1829, 20 января, № 19, - с.74-76.

¹⁹ Поездка в Джарскую и Балакенскую области // Тифлиские ведомости. - 1830, 9 октября, № 81, - с. 119-120.; Поездка в Джарскую и Балакенскую области (продолжение). // - Тифлис: Тифлиские ведомости, 1830, 11 октября. № 82-83, - с.123-128.

²⁰ Zubov П. Картина Кавказского края, принадлежащего России и сопредельных оному земель в историческом, статистическом, этнографическом, финансовом и торговом отношениях: [в четырех томах] / П. Zubov. Санкт-Петербург: Типография Конрада Вингебера, - III часть. -1835. - 272 с.

Among the works published during the period under consideration, it is worth mentioning "Review of Russian Holdings in the Caucasus in Statistical, Ethnographic, and Financial Aspects".²¹

The authors of almost all of the aforementioned works share the concept of considering the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan as "historical lands of Georgia" and, in accordance with this view, dividing the population of the region into "indigenous" and "immigrant" groups. The Ingiloy population was considered indigenous Georgian people who were forcibly converted to Islam during the reign of Shah Abbas I. The other ethnic groups— "Lezgins" (Tsakhurs and Avars) and "Mughals" (Turks)—were regarded by Russian authors as immigrants who had conquered "Georgian lands."

The second period of publications by Russian authors on the Caucasus spans the 1840s-1870s. During this time, a number of works discussing the history of the region were published. For example, in 1841, the article by D.E. Zubarev was released.²² A.A. Neverovsky touched upon the circumstances of the origin of the Jar-Balakan Jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate.²³

A special place among the authors of this period belongs to the founder of Azerbaijani historical science, A.A. Bakikhanov.²⁴ Of particular value to our research are the details found in this monograph on the history of the Ilisu Sultanate, the Jar-Balakan communities, and the Sheki Khanate, shedding light on specific historical episodes from the XVI to the early XIX centuries.

In the same year, a book by Yu.A. Gagemeister was published,

²¹ Обзорение российских владений за Кавказом в статистическом, этнографическом, топографическом и финансовом отношениях [в четырех частях] / Сост. Легкобытов. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография департамента внешней торговли, - ч. I. - 1836. - 399 с.

²² Зубарев Д.Е. Поездка в Кахетию, Гушетию, Пшавию, Хевсурию и Джаро-Белоканскую область // - Санкт-Петербург: Русский вестник, - 1841. № 6, - с.359-558.

²³ Неверовский А.А. Краткий исторический взгляд на Северный и Средний Дагестан до уничтожения влияния лезгинов на Закавказье: отрывок из рукописи подполковника Неверовского / А.А. Неверовский. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография военно-учебных заведений, - 1848. - 42 с.

²⁴ Бакиханов А.А. Гюлистан-и Ирам / А.А. Бакиханов. - Баку: Элм, -1991. - 304 с.

in which the author allocates a certain space to the ethnic composition and political history of the Caucasus.²⁵

In the article by A. Poserbksy, statistical data on the economy and religious affiliations of the population of the Zakatala district are presented.²⁶ In 1869, the work by P.G. Butkov was published in three volumes.²⁷

In the 70s of the XIX century, a series of extensive articles appeared in the "Collection of Information on the Caucasian Highlanders," containing a wealth of material about the region. For example, an article by A. Fon Plotto is of great interest for studying the ethnic and political history, customs, and traditions of the population of the Zakatala district.²⁸

A wealth of factual material is contained in an article by I.P. Linevich, published in the VII edition of the "Collection."²⁹

A special place among the authors of the second half of the XIX century, who explored the issue of the conquest of the Caucasus, belongs to N. Dubrovin. His six-volume work holds exceptional significance for understanding the nature of the Caucasus policy of the Russian Empire.³⁰

²⁵ Гагеймейстер Ю.А. Новые очерки Закавказья / Ю.А. Гагеймейстер. - Санкт-Петербург: Тип.-я Министерства внутренних дел, - 1848. - 157 с.

²⁶ Посербский А. Очерк Закатальского округа // - Тифлис: Кавказский календарь на 1866 год. - 1865, - с.3-60.

²⁷ Бутков П.Г. Материалы для новой истории Кавказа, с 1722 по 1803 год: [в трех частях] / П.Г. Бутков. - Санкт-Петербург: Тип. Имп. Акад. наук, - ч. 3. - 1869. - 601 с.

²⁸ Фон-Плотто А. Природа и люди Закатальского округа // - Тифлис: Сборник сведений о кавказских горцах, - 1870. Вып. IV, - с.1-62.

²⁹ Линевич И.П. Бывшее Елисуйское султанство // - Тифлис: Сборник сведений о кавказских горцах, - 1873. Вып. VII, - с.1-54.

³⁰ Дубровин Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: [в 6-ти томах] / Н.Ф. Дубровин. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография, департамента уделов, - т.2. - 1886. - 324 с.; Дубровин Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: [в 6-ти томах] / Н.Ф. Дубровин. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография департамента уделов, - т.3. - 1886. - 557 с.; Дубровин Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: [в 6-ти томах] / Н.Ф. Дубровин. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография И.Н. Скороходова, - т.4, - 1886. - 546 с.; Дубровин Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: [в 6-ти томах] / Н.Ф. Дубровин. - Санкт-Петербург: Склад издания у В.А. Березовского, - т.5, - 1887. - 502 с.; Дубровин Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: [в 6-ти томах] / Н.Ф. Дубровин. - Санкт-Петербург: Склад издания у В.А. Березовского, - т. 6, - 1888. - 765 с.

In 1876, a small brochure by L. Zagursky was published.³¹ The author's work helps shed light on the nature of the administration of the Caucasian territories under the command of General Ermolov, his attitude toward the khans, and the policy of appointing commissioners to the khans.

For studying the Ilisu uprisings of 1844 and 1847, as well as the measures taken by Tsarism to govern the Sultanate after its liquidation, the work of A.L. Zisserman is of great importance.³²

The third period of publications on the topic covers the 1880s to the early XX century. Among them, special attention should be paid to the article by Dmitri Bakradze.³³

In the work by M.N. Chichagova there are very interesting details about Daniyal Sultan of the Ilisu Sultanate.³⁴

It is also important to mention the article by V. Linden.³⁵ In contrast to the authors of the XIX century, V. Linden claims the initial belonging of the studied territory to Caucasian Albania and also considers the Mughals as the indigenous population of the region.

During the Soviet period, the history of the region became the subject of specialized research starting from the 1930s. The first work in this direction was the monograph on the history of the Jar-Balakens' free societies in the first third of the 19th century, published by I.P. Petrushevsky.³⁶ The work, written based on numerous sources and historical studies, established a set of concepts and a dominant perspective that later prevailed in historiography regarding the jamaats. Of

³¹ Загурский Л. Краткий очерк Ермоловского времени / Л. Загурский. - Тифлис: Типография И. Чанцева и К., - 1876. - 23 с.

³² Зиссерман А.Л. Двадцать пять лет на Кавказе: [в 2-х частях] / А.Л. Зиссерман. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография А.С. Суворина, Ч.1 (1842-1851). - 1879. - 424 с.

³³ Бакрадзе Дм. Заметки о Закатальском округе // Записки КОИРГО, - 1890. - вып. I, кн. XVI. - с.248-261

³⁴ Чичагова, М.Н. Шамиль на Кавказе и в России. Биографический очерк / М.Н. Чичагова. - Санкт-Петербург: Типография и Литография С. Муллер и И. Богельман, - 1889. - 202 с.

³⁵ Линден В. Краткий исторический очерк бывшего общественно-политического и поземельного строя народностей, населяющих мусульманские районы Кавказского края // - Тифлис: Кавказский календарь на 1917 г., - 1916. - с. 296-310.

³⁶ Петрушевский И.П. Джаро-Белаканские вольные общества в первой трети XIX столетия / И.П. Петрушевский. - Тифлис: 1934. - 172 с.

course, Soviet ideological policy also played a role in shaping this viewpoint.

The political history of the region in the XVIII century was highlighted in the monograph by V.N. Leviatov, published in 1948.³⁷ The author, adhering to the Soviet tradition, views the Azerbaijani states of the Safavids and Afshars as part of Iran.

In the 1960s and 1970s, T.M. Musevi made a significant contribution to the study of the political and socio-economic history of Sheki in the XVI-XVII centuries.³⁸

In 1982, M. Ismailov's monograph was published, in which the author briefly covered the main points of Sheki's history from ancient times to the 70s of the XX century.³⁹

The next study on the history of the Jar-Balakan Jamaats after I.P. Petrushevsky's work was conducted in the 1990s, when S.A. Süleymanova defended her dissertation on this topic.⁴⁰ Particularly valuable were the translation and publication, accompanied by commentary, of the work "Chronicle of Jar" by the local XVIII century author Molla Muhammad al-Jari, made by mentioned scientist.⁴¹

A turning point in the study of various aspects of the history of the northwestern region of Azerbaijan came in the mid-1990s to early 2000s. Under the guidance of the then Dean of the History Faculty at Baku State University, Professor Yagub Mahmudov, young researchers were involved in studying the history of the region. It was during that time that he laid the foundation for two new concepts in national

³⁷ Левиатов В.Н. Очерки по истории Азербайджана в XVIII в. / В.Н. Левиатов. – Баку: Изд.-во АН Азербайджанской ССР, - 1948. - 227 с.

³⁸ Musəvi T.M. Orta əsr Azərbaycan tarixinə dair fərs dilində yazılmış sənədlər / T.M. Musəvi. – Bakı: Azərbaycan SSR Elmlər Akademiyasının nəşriyyatı, - 1965. - 132 s.; Musəvi T.M. Orta əsr Azərbaycan tarixinə dair fərsdilli sənədlər, XVI-XVII əsrlər / T.M. Musəvi. – Bakı: Elm, - 1977. - 238 s.

³⁹ İsmayılov, M. Şəki (tarixi oçerk) / M. İsmayılov. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dövlət nəşriyyatı, -1982. - 152 s.

⁴⁰Süleymanova, S.Ə. XVIII əsrdə Azərbaycanın siyasi tarixində və iqtisadiyyatında Cəh-Tala icmalarının yeri (ərəbdilli “Cəh salnaməsi” mənbəyi əsasında): /Tarix elmləri namizədi alimlik dərəcəsi almaq üçün təqdim olunmuş diss. avtoreferatı / Bakı: 1999. - 30 s.

⁴¹Əl-Cari, Molla M. Cəh salnaməsi. Ərəbcədən tərcümə, giriş, şərhlər və qeydlər Sevdə Süleymanovanındır / Molla M. Əl-Cari. – Bakı: Səda, - 1997. - 146 s.

historiography: "Lost territories" and "Falsified history." The first results of research in this direction began to appear in the form of monographs on the studied region. In 1999, Z.A. Javadova published a work in which the author explored the region from a historical and demographic perspective.⁴² In the same year, the first monograph by E.M. Latifova was published, in which the history of the Ilisu Sultanate became the subject of a specialized study for the first time.⁴³ In 2001, a monograph by A.F. Mamedov was published, dedicated to the history of the Zakatala district.⁴⁴ The next in this series was the monograph by Sh.G. Aliyev, in which the subject of special study became the Ingiloyls.⁴⁵ In 2009, A.A. Mamedova's (Ashraf qızı) monograph was published.⁴⁶ In 2010, E.M. Latifova's second monograph was published.⁴⁷

Y. Nasibli devoted a series of articles to the ethnic and political history of the region in the X–XII centuries.⁴⁸

In the comprehensive monograph by S.I. Aliyeva, "Azerbaijan and the Peoples of the North Caucasus", attention is given to the study of military-political, economic, and cultural interconnections in the

⁴²Cavadova Z.Ə. Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan (tarixi-demoqrafik araşdırma) / Z.Ə. Cavadova. – Bakı: "Altay" nəşriyyatı, - 1999. - 107 s.

⁴³ Летифо́ва, Э.М. Северо-западный Азербайджан: Илисуйское султанство / Э.М. Летифо́ва. - Баку: Шарг-Гарб, -1999. - 152 с.

⁴⁴ Məmmədov Ə.F. Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan: Zaqatala dairəsi / Ə. Məmmədov - Bakı: Adiloğlu, - 2001. - 116 s.

⁴⁵ Hacıəli Ş. Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan: İngiloylar / Ş. Hacıəli. – Bakı: Təhsil, - 2007. - 280 s.

⁴⁶ Əsrəf qızı A. Car-Balakən camaatlığı (XVII əsrin sonu – XIX əsrin 30-cu illəri) / A. Əsrəf qızı. - Bakı: UniPrint, 2009. - 256 s.

⁴⁷ Летифо́ва, Э.М. Илисуйское султанство (историко-этнографическое исследование) / Э.М. Летифо́ва. - Баку: Шарг-Гарб, - 2010. - 400 с.

⁴⁸ Nəşibli, Y. Azərbaycan Respublikasının şimal-qərb bölgəsinin tarixdə yeri və müasir Gürcüstan tarixşünaslığı // - Bakı: AMEA akademik Z.M. Bünyadov adına Şərqsünaslıq İnstitutunun "Elmi araşdırmalar"ı, - 2014. - X buraxılış, - s. 303-308; Nasibli Ю. Из истории эмирата Шаддаидов Гянджи (по данным древнегрузинских источников) // Orta əsrlər Şərqi. Akademik Z.M. Bünyadovun xatirəsinə həsr olunmuş məqalələr toplusu. – Bakı: Elm, -2000. - s. 79-89; Nasibli Ю. Место северо-западного региона Азербайджанской Республики в истории и в современной грузинской историографии // Azərbaycan arxeologiyası və etnoqrafiyası, - 2004. № 2, - s. 167-173

context of bilateral relations.⁴⁹

The monograph by I.G. Aliyeva is dedicated to the study of the problem of the Christianization policy of the Ingilo population in Azerbaijan⁵⁰.

In 2020, under the editorship of Y.M. Mahmudov, a collective monograph on the history of Sheki was published.⁵¹

In 2024, Sh.G. Aliyev defended his doctoral dissertation dedicated to Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the IX to early XIII centuries.⁵²

Alongside specialized works, we frequently referred to the works of specialists on various periods of the history of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus as a whole. Regarding conceptual issues, the works of Y.M. Mahmudov are of great significance.⁵³ The works of Z.M. Buniyatov⁵⁴ and N.M. Velikhanli⁵⁵ were used for the Arab period, for the Seljuk period, the works of R. Guseyn-zade⁵⁶, for the Mongol period, the works of V. Piriev⁵⁷, and for the periods of the Gara-Goyunlu, Ag-Goyunlu, and Safavids, the works of Y.M. Mahmudov⁵⁸, O. Efendiyev and

⁴⁹ Алиева С.И. Азербайджан и народы Северного Кавказа (XVIII- начало XXI вв.) / С.И. Алиева. – Баку: Şərq-Qərb, - 2010. - 620 с.

⁵⁰ Əliyeva İ.H. İngiloylar: zorakı xristianlaşdırmaya və gürcüləşdirməyə qarşı mübarizə tarixindən / İ.H. Əliyeva. – Bakı: AZPoliqraf, - 2019. - 368 s.

⁵¹ Şəki: ən qədim zamanlardan günümüzədək. / Layihə rəhbəri, elmi redaktor və ön sözün müəllifi Y.M. Mahmudov. / - Bakı: Turxan NPB, - 2020. – 708 s.

⁵² Əliyev, Ş.H. IX əsrin sonları – XIII əsrin əvvəllərində Azərbaycan - Gürcüstan münasibətləri (Şəki hakimliyinin tarixinə dair materiallar əsasında): / tarix üzrə elmlər doktoru dis. avtoreferatı. / - Bakı, 2024. – 58 s.

⁵³ Mahmudov Y.M. Azərbaycan tarixi. İntibah dövrü (IX əsrin ikinci yarısı – XIII əsrin əvvəlləri) / Y.M. Mahmudov. – Bakı: Altay dünyası, - 1996. - 84 s.; Махмудов, Я.М. Азербайджан: краткая история государственности / Я.М. Махмудов. – Баку: Тахсил, - 2005. – 160 с.

⁵⁴ Bünyadov Z.M. Azərbaycan VII-IX əsrlərdə / - Bakı: Azərbaycan Dövlət nəşriyyatı, - 1989. - 336 s.; Буниятов, З.М. Государство Атабеков Азербайджана (1136-1225 годы) / З.М. Буниятов. – Баку: Элм, 1978. - 272 с.

⁵⁵ Vəlixanlı, N. Ərəb xilafəti və Azərbaycan / N. Vəlixanlı. - Bakı: Azərbaycan Dövlət nəşriyyatı, - 1993. - 153 s.; Vəlixanlı, N. Azərbaycan VII-XII əsrlərdə: tarix, mənbələr, şərhlər / N. Vəlixanlı. – Bakı: Elm və Təhsil, - 2016. - 480 s.

⁵⁶ Гусейн-заде, Р.А. Кавказ и Сельджуки / Р.А. Гусейн-заде. – Баку: Кавказ, - 2010. - 269 с.

⁵⁷ Piriye, V. Azərbaycan XIII-XIV əsrlərdə / Bakı: Nurlan, - 2003. - 458 s.

⁵⁸ Махмудов, Я.М. Взаимоотношения государств Аккоюнлу и Сефевидов с западноевропейскими странами: II половина XV-начало XVII века / Я.М. Махмудов. – Баку: Изд-во Бакинского университета, - 1991. – 264 с.

N.Musaly⁵⁹, T.G. Najafli⁶⁰, were referenced. For the period of Safavid-Ottoman-Russian rivalry and the khanates, the works of T.T. Mustafazade⁶¹, G.J. Najafli⁶² and others were also consulted.

Among Turkish authors, it is important to highlight the articles of G. Şüküroğlu⁶³ and M. Aydın.⁶⁴

The majority of works written by Turkish historians on this topic focus on the Safavid-Ottoman wars and relations between the two empires. Turkish researchers' positions and views on these issues differ from those of Azerbaijani historians. For example, Sadık Müfit Bilge identifies the Safavid proselytization efforts among the Alevi communities of Anatolia and Kurdish lords on the Ottoman-Safavid borderlands as one of the key reasons that pushed the Ottomans into a new war.⁶⁵ Almost all Turkish historians regard the Azerbaijani Safavid state as Iranian and view Ottoman-Safavid relations through the lens of relations with Iran.

It is regrettable to note that in the works of some Georgian

⁵⁹ Эфендиев, О.А. Азербайджанское государство Сефевидов / О.А. Эфендиев. - Баку: Элм, - 1981. - 308 с.; Эфендиев О., Мусалы Н. Взаимоотношения Азербайджанского государства Сефевидов с грузинскими княжествами в первой четверти XVI века // Актуальные проблемы истории Кавказа (Материалы международной конференции, посвященной 100-летию со дня рождения профессора Р.М. Магомедова), – Махачкала: Изд.-во ДГУ, - 2010. - с.201-203

⁶⁰ Nəcəfli, T.H. Azərbaycan Qaraqoyunlu və Ağqoyunlu dövlətləri / T.H. Nəcəfli. – Bakı: Çaşıoğlu, - 2012. - 604 s.; Nəcəfli, T.H. Azərbaycan Səfəvi dövlətinin xarici siyasəti / Bakı: Turxan NPB, - 2020. - 520 s.

⁶¹ Mustafazadə, T.T. XVIII yüzillik – XIX yüzilliyin əvvəllərində Osmanlı-Azərbaycan münasibətləri / T.T. Mustafazadə. - Bakı, - Elm: 2002. - 372 s.; Mustafazadə, T.T. Qarabağ xanlığı / T.T. Mustafazadə. – Bakı: Sabah, - 2010. - 333 s.; Мустафазаде, Т.Т. Азербайжан и русско-турецкие отношения в первой трети XVIII века / Т.Т. Мустафазаде. – Баку: Элм, - 1993. - 240 с.

⁶² Nəcəfli, G.C. Azərbaycan xanlıqlarının Osmanlı dövləti ilə siyasi əlaqələri (XVIII əsrin ikinci yarısı) / G.C. Nəcəfli. - Bakı: Nurlan, - 2002. -132 s.

⁶³ Şüküroğlu, Q. Hacı Çelebi'nin Arzuhali // Azərbaycan'ın Panoraması. – 2008. sayı 3, - s. 47-49.; Şüküroğlu, Q. Şeki Eski Hakimi Selim Han'ın Osmanlı Devleti'ne İlticası // ETÜ Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (ETÜSBED). - 2018. c. 3, - s.113-129.

⁶⁴ Aydın, M. Kafkasya'dan İstanbul'a: Son İlisu Sultanı Danyal Bey (ö.1871) // Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları, - 2021. c. 129, № 254, s. 135- 62.

⁶⁵ Bilge, S. M. Osmanlı Çağ'ında Kafkasya (1454-1829) (Tarih-Toplum-Ekonomi) / S.M.Bilge. – İstanbul: Kitabevi, - 2015. - 738 s

researchers, such as D.L. Muskhelishvili, M.D. Lordkipanidze, and others, there are attempts to present the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan as part of medieval Georgian states.⁶⁶ In the relevant chapters and paragraphs of the presented dissertation, responses to such claims are provided.

Among the Dagestani researchers who have studied the history of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, T. Aitberov should be highlighted.⁶⁷ The author due to the political and ideological objectives he set for himself, he failed to approach the valuable facts he gathered with objectivity. Instead, he interpreted them in a way that allowed him to achieve his intended goals. This same approach was continued by the author in another study co-authored with Sh.M. Khapizov.⁶⁸

The relationships between the Jar-Balakan societies and the administration of the Russian Empire in the Caucasus are the subject of a monograph by Dagestani researchers Z.A. Khalayev and A.O. Murtazaev.⁶⁹

Along with the previously mentioned works of Dagestani researchers, the article by R.S. Abdulmadzhidov and Z.A. Magomedova is also involved in this type of research.⁷⁰

Among Western authors, the works of J. Hanway⁷¹, L. Loc-

⁶⁶ Мухелишвили Д.Л. Из исторической географии Восточной Грузии (Шаки и Гогарена) / Д.Л. Мухелишвили. - Тбилиси: Мецниереба, -1982. - 101 с.; Очерки истории Грузии: [в 8-и томах] / Под ред. М. Лордкипанидзе, Д. Мухелишвили. - Тбилиси: Мецниереба, - т. 2. - 1988. - 580 с.

⁶⁷ Айтберов, Т.М. Закавказские аварцы: этнос, государственность, законы (VIII–XVIII вв.) / Т.М. Айтберов. - Махачкала: Международный фонд Шамиля, - ч. I. 2000. - 172 с.

⁶⁸ Айтберов, Т.М. / Елису и Горный магал в XII – XIX вв. (очерки истории и ономастики) / Т.М. Айтберов, Ш.М. Хапизов – Махачкала: 2011. - 390 с.

⁶⁹ Халаев, З.А. Взаимоотношения Джаро-Белокавказских обществ и администрации Российской империи на Кавказе в 1783-1860 годах / З.А.Халаев, .О.Мургазаев. – Махачкала: Алеф, - 2021. – 210 с.

⁷⁰ Абдулмаджидов Р.С., Магомедова З.А. Эпистолярные источники по истории имамата: корреспонденция Даниял-бека Елисуевского // История, археология и этнография Кавказа, - 2018, т.14 (№ 2), - с.92-105.

⁷¹ Hanway Jonas. The Revolutions of Persia: Containing the Reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, with the Invasion of the Afghans, and the Reigns of Sultan Mir Maghmud and his Successor Sultan Ashreff.vol I. / Jonas Hanway. - University of California Libraries, - 1923. - 624 p.; Hanway Jonas. An Historical Account of British Trade Over The Caspian Sea With a Journal of Travels. Vol. II. / J. Hanway. – Dublin: Booksellers in Dame-street, - 1753. – 606 p.

khart⁷², J. Baddeley⁷³ and others were involved in the research.

Object and subject of the study. The object of the study is the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan from the XI to the first half of the XIX centuries, and the subject is the foreign policy of neighboring states regarding the studied region. In accordance with the object and subject of the chosen topic, the place and role of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan in the foreign policy of neighboring states, which had geopolitical and economic interests in the region, were examined based on primary sources and special literature.

Aims and objectives of the study. The aim of the study is to examine the place and role of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan in the foreign policy of neighboring states from the XI century to the first half of the XIX century in the context of international relations of the respective periods, based on an objective analysis of sources and literature. To achieve this aim, the following tasks needed to be solved:

- analyze the political situation of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan during the weakening and collapse of the Caliphate;
- trace the ethnic-political processes occurring in the region that contributed to the activation of the policy of neighboring Georgian kingdoms towards the studied region;
- follow the process of expansion of the Georgian kingdoms towards the north-western areas of Azerbaijan against the backdrop of resistance by Azerbaijani states (the Shirvanshahs, the Kingdom of Sheki) to this expansion.;
- investigate the north-western territories of Azerbaijan in the context of the policies of the Seljuk and Mongol empires in the Caucasus and the influence of their campaigns on the ethnic-political situation in the region;
- examine the north-western territories in the context of the unification policy of the Azerbaijani Safavid state.;

⁷² Lockhart L. Nadir Shah. A Critical Study Based Mainly Upon Contemporary Sources. / L. Lockhart. – London: 1938. First Pakistany Reprint: Lahor, Urdu Bazaar. – 1976. - 344 p.; Lockhart L. The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia. / L. Lockhart. – London: Cambridge University Press, - 1958. – 256 p.

⁷³ Баддели, Дж. Завоевание Кавказа русскими (1820-1860) / Дж. Баддели. - Москва: Центрполиграф, - 2011. - 351 с.

–to identify the place and role of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan in the Caucasian policy of the Safavid and Ottoman states in the second half of the XVI century;

– to trace the process of the emergence of such political entities as the Sheki and Tsakhur (Ilisu) possessions and the Djar-Tala (Balaken) jamaats in Northwestern Azerbaijan in the context of the Caucasian policy of the Safavid and Ottoman states;

–to examine the main stages of the Safavid-Ottoman confrontation in the XVII century and the place of the studied region within them;

–to reveal the nature of the relations between the Sheki principality, the Ilisu Sultanate, and the Jar-Tala (Balaken) Jamaats with the Safavid and Ottoman courts;

– to trace the position of the Sheki principality, the Ilisu Sultanate, and the Jar-Tala (Balaken) Jamaats within the context of the Safavid-Ottoman-Russian confrontation in the first half of the XVIII century;

– to analyze the causes and nature of the foreign policy of the feudal territories of Northwestern Azerbaijan in the context of the geopolitical and regional interests of the major powers of the studied period;

–to analyze the political situation of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan within the empire of Nadir Shah;

–to examine the region in the context of the Ottoman-Russian rivalry for the Caucasus in the second half of the XVIII century;

– to analyze the process of the conquest of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan by the Russian Empire;

–to examine the methods of establishing the power of the Russian Empire in the territories of the Sheki Khanate, the Jar-Balakan Jamaats, and the Ilisu Sultanate;

– to outline the main stages of the region's population struggle against the colonial policy of the Russian Empire;

– to analyze the results of the conquest of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan by the Russian Empire.

Research Methods: The methodological basis of the dissertation is the objective research method, which relies on a comprehensive, critical, and comparative analysis of all sources and literature. A fundamental role in the research process was played by general

scientific principles such as the principle of historicism. The method of comparative analysis of the main concepts of the foreign policy of neighboring states towards the north-western territories of Azerbaijan helped to identify them in the changing historical context, explain the reasons for the transformation of these concepts, and assess their effectiveness and efficiency.

The theoretical and methodological foundation of the study is built according to the problem-chronological principle, which allows for tracing the evolution and specificity of the studied issues at different stages of history. The methods of comparative and systematic analysis made it possible to present events and facts in a chronologically consistent manner. The study of the policies of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, the Safavid and Ottoman states, and the Russian Empire in relation to the north-western regions of Azerbaijan determined the importance of a comprehensive analysis, which allowed for a clearer presentation of the externally and internally conditioned features and characteristic traits of the foreign policies of these states in relation to the studied region.

Main Points to Be Defended:

1. Objective study of the history of border territories, including the north-western region of Azerbaijan, is of state significance, as it contributes to the protection of borders from territorial claims by neighboring states.

2. The formation of the foreign policy of neighboring states towards the north-western territories of Azerbaijan during the study period was influenced by the geopolitical interests of these states and took into account the important geographical and strategic position of the studied region as a borderland.

3. The struggle between the Georgian kingdoms (Egris-Abkhazeti, Tao-Klarjeti, Abkhaz-Kartli, and Kakheti kingdoms) for hegemony and the unification of the entire country within the framework of a centralized state, which unfolded in IX – early XI centuries, had a direct impact on the political situation of the neighboring north-western territories of Albania, including the Albano-Sheki kingdom. It was as a result of this struggle that the northwestern region of Albania, mentioned in Georgian sources as Shaki – Rani – Ereti, by the 70-80s

of the XI century, under the pressure of the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, fell within the influence of the Kakheti kings.

4. During the Seljuk period, the north-western territories of Azerbaijan formed a border zone with the Christian world, known as the "uj" lands, which had a special status. This status was maintained until the decline and collapse of the Seljuk Empire. During the reign of David the Builder (1089–1125), who pursued a policy of uniting Georgian kingdoms under his rule amidst the weakening position of the Seljuk Empire in the Caucasus, the Georgian kings strengthened their influence in the north-western regions of Azerbaijan.

5. The Seljuk and Mongol campaigns constituted a distinct period in the ethno-political history of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan. The Turkic migrations that accompanied these campaigns had a noticeable impact on the subsequent ethno-political processes in the region. To this day, ethnonyms and toponyms linked to this period remain in the north-western region of Azerbaijan (e.g., Jalair, Tangyt, Bujag, Mughal, Oirat). One of the independent state formations that emerged in northern Azerbaijan was the Sheki principality, where representatives of the Oirat clan, one of the tribes that resettled in Sheki during the Mongol campaigns, came to power.

6. Starting from the second half of the XIV century, there was an intensification of the state formations that became independent after the fall of the Ilkhanid State, in the political processes taking place in the Caucasus. The rulers of Sheki fought for the strengthening of their independence, and in this struggle, the relations between Sheki and the Shirvanshahs, Sheki and Georgia, and Sheki and the Timurids played a significant role. The Sheki principality, which became independent after the death of Emir Timur in 1405, formed an alliance with the Shirvanshah State and the Georgian rulers to protect Gara Yusuf Garagoyunlu. The defeat of the allies forced them to recognize their vassal dependence on the Gara-Goyunlu State. In general, throughout the XV century, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, depending on the twists and turns of the international relations of that period, either became independent or fell under the sphere of influence of various Azerbaijani states (Gara-Goyunlu, Shirvanshahs, etc.).

7. Due to the intensifying competition for the Caucasus between

the Safavid and Ottoman states in the XVI–XVII centuries, the northwestern lands of Azerbaijan gained special military-strategic importance. For the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, this rivalry had an overall positive impact, as both empires, depending on who prevailed in the Caucasus, continued their policy of creating and strengthening local Muslim possessions in the border regions with Georgia.

8. Unlike other feudal domains in Azerbaijan, the Ilisu Sultanate and the Jar-Balaken communities were exempt from paying any taxes to the Safavid and Ottoman treasuries. On the contrary, they received special salaries for performing the role of border guardians. Local rulers pursued a balanced policy toward both empires to maintain the independence of their domains.

9. The weakening of the Safavid state by the end of the XVII–early XVIII centuries led to an intensification of the rivalry between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire for Azerbaijan and to an increase in Ottoman influence in the northern and northwestern territories of Azerbaijan. In this context, the Ottoman court actively utilized the religious factor to win the local population over to its side. The first anti-Safavid uprisings in Azerbaijan broke out precisely in the Jar-Tala (Balaken) Jamaats. In this situation, the influence of Ali Sultan of Ilisu grew, and he became one of the leaders of the uprising.

10. Given the influence and merits of Ali Sultan of Ilisu, the Ottoman court entrusted him with the administration of the Shaki province, granting him the title of Pasha. However, with the rise of Nadir Khan Afshar to the political stage, the Ottoman army was forced to leave Azerbaijan in 1735.

11. During the period of independent khanates in Azerbaijan, which began after the death of Nadir Shah in 1747, the Shaki Khanate, Jar-Balaken communities, and the Ilisu Sultanate pursued an active foreign policy. This often led to clashes with neighboring Azerbaijani and Dagestani khanates, as well as with Georgian kingdoms.

12. At the beginning of the XIX century, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan became an integral and highly important part of the Russian Empire's conquest policy in the Caucasus. Given the strategic significance of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan for the conquest of all of Azerbaijan, followed by neighboring Dagestan, as

well as strengthening its position in the already conquered Georgia, it was decided to begin the conquest of Azerbaijan with the subjugation of the Jar-Balakan Jamaats.

13. Despite the conquest of the Jar-Balakans Jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate in 1803, and the subjugation of the Sheki Khanate in 1805, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan became a stronghold for the national liberation struggle against the colonial policies of the Russian Empire. The climactic moments of this struggle were the Jar-Balakans uprisings of 1830 and 1832, the Sheki uprising of 1838, and the Ilisu uprising of 1844.

14. The conquest of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan and the suppression of uprisings in the region were accompanied by territorial-administrative and religious reforms. These reforms aimed at the gradual erasure of centuries-old traditions of statehood, the disruption of territorial integrity, and the undermining of the ethno-religious identity of the local population.

The scientific novelty of the research arises from the relevance of the chosen topic, its historical, political and practical significance, and is determined by a number of the following points:

- the dissertation is the first study in Azerbaijani historiography that comprehensively examines the place and role of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan in the foreign policy of neighboring states from the XI century to the first half of the XIX century;

- based on a comprehensive, critical, and objective analysis of sources and literature, the foreign policy interests of neighboring states in the north-western regions of Azerbaijan have been studied at various stages of history. The most characteristic features, patterns, dynamics of development, and evolution of bilateral and multilateral relations have been identified;

- it has been established that the north-western territories of historical Azerbaijan, including the village of Tsakhur, in the late XI – early XII centuries, formed the northern periphery of the Great Seljuk Empire. It has been determined that the Seljuk sultans attached such great importance to Tsakhur as a frontier area of the "uj" that, as part of a program to establish educational institutions in the Seljuk Empire, conducted by the chief vizier Nizam al-Mulk, a madrasa was opened

in Tsakhur. This madrasa operated at least until the XVII century, when it was visited by the famous Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi;

- it has been established that the Turkic tribes, which appeared as a result of the powerful migration wave accompanying the Mongol invasions in the Caucasus, subsequently merged and assimilated with the indigenous Turkic tribes of the north-western region of Azerbaijan. As a result of this process, from the XIII-XIV centuries onwards, the Turkic population of the region was collectively referred to by the ethnonym "Mugal", derived from a distorted form of the name "Mongol" or "Mogol";

- in connection with the topic under investigation, for the first time in national historiography, the hüküms (decrees) of the Ottoman sultans addressed to the rulers of the north-western territories of Azerbaijan and other documents discovered by the researcher in various fonds of the Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (BOA) are introduced into scientific circulation;

- it is shown the continuity of the policies of the Azerbaijani states of Garagoyunlu, Aggoyunlu, Safavids, and the Nadir Shah Empire in ensuring the security of Azerbaijan's north-western borders and organizing campaigns against neighboring Georgian kingdoms that encroached upon the studied territories;

- based on the comparison of sources such as Iskander Bek Munshi and A.A. Bakikhanov, the kinship between the Shirvanshahs and the Sheki rulers is confirmed, in particular, between Shirvanshah Ibrahim I and Hasan Beg of Sheki, which is also confirmed by Ibrahim I's possession of Sheki before he was established as Shirvanshah.;

- based on information from sources of the XVI century, it is suggested that during the described period, the western borders of the Sheki principality extended to the right bank of the Alazani River, which also served as the boundary between the Georgian principality and the Sheki domain;

- by revealing the geographical term "Dagestan," the study provides an interpretation of why the Safavid and Ottoman courts, as well as authors of the examined period, referred to many of the northwest rulers of Azerbaijan as "Dagestani.";

- based on the epic "Kitab-i Dede Korkut" and Mahmud Kashgari's work "Divanu lugat-itturk," a completely new interpretation is

provided for the name of the founder of the Ilisu Sultan dynasty, Adigorklu Bek (Görklü – in Turkic means "beautiful, prominent, outstanding" – a person with a beautiful name), and for the first time, it is written in Russian in the aforementioned form, rather than as "Adi-Kurkulu" or "Adi Gergalau." This rejects the association of the Ilisu Sultan dynasty with the Avar and even Georgian lineages, which was made by both imperial authors of the 19th century and some contemporary authors of neighboring states;

- the policy of gradual rapprochement of the Kakhetian rulers to Sheki in XVI century is traced, through the relocation of their political center from Telavi to Gremi and further to Zaghamb, which was part of the Shekin principality. The failure of this policy is established, as per the firman of Shah Tamasib from 1562, which transferred Zaghamb under the authority of the founder of the Ilisu Sultan dynasty, Adigörklü Bek;

- Based on sources introduced into scholarly circulation in recent years, a number of positions have been reconsidered, and the dates of several events covered by other researchers have been clarified (for example, the date of Isa Khan Gürji's appointment as ruler of Sheki in Musavi's work is indicated as 1574, but according to Munshi, it is not earlier than 1578, etc.);

- Based on materials from the Ottoman archive and works by authors from the period, the names and reign years of the rulers of Sheki during its period under Ottoman control after 1578 have been identified for the first time: Mirza Omar and Shah-Emir (Shahmir), and their affiliation with local Sheki families has been established;

- based on two firmans from 1609, it was revealed that Shah Abbas I, like his predecessors, recognizing the strategic importance of the small-sized Tsakhur region, did not impose tribute on it. Instead, he allocated a salary of 70 tuman from the state treasury to its ruler, Ali Sultan, with the responsibility of guarding the border territories of the state. This act confirmed that Adigorklu Bek and his son, Ali Sultan, held the status of rulers of a border territory (uj), as this appointment was specifically granted to their family – the Adigorklu Bek lineage;

- through the comparison of Ottoman firmans from the National Archive of Georgia and the Ottoman Archive, the circumstances surrounding the policy of Ali Sultan of Ilisu and his son, Muhammad Bek,

in relation to the Safavid and Ottoman states have been established;

- through a comparative analysis of materials from the National Archive of Georgia and published Georgian sources, it has been established that Ali Sultan of Ilisu was killed by the Kakhetian king Teimuraz I in 1628, as retaliation for his involvement with Yusuf Khan of Shirvan in Shah Abbas I's Great Campaign against Georgia in 1616;

- based on the source "Tazkirat al-Muluk", it has been established that according to the administrative division of the Safavid state in the XVI-XVII centuries, the north-western territories of Azerbaijan were divided between the Shirvan (Aresh, Sheki, Tsakhur) and Karabakh Beglarbegliks. The latter also included Kakheti;

- it has been established that the villages of Tangyt, Gakh, and Meshabash were under the rule of the Tsakhur rulers Adigorklu Bek and his son Sarı Ali Bek from approximately the second half of the XVI century until 1616 or the early XVII century. Subsequently, particularly after 1639, as a result of the new administrative division, they were included in the Sheki province;

- based on local and Georgian sources, previously unknown facts regarding the relations of the Sheki Khanate with the Kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti are studied for the first time. This includes the rule of Aghakishi Bek, the son of Haji Chelebi, in the Gazakh and Borchali regions, and his relations with King Irakli, among other topics;

- For the first time in Azerbaijani historiography, based on the "Jars Chronicle," the campaigns of Haji Chelebi, the Khan of Sheki, within his unification policy against the Shamakhi Khanate in 1753, as well as the joint campaign with Shakhverdi Khan of Ganja, Shamakhins, and Jar-Talians in 1754, are highlighted;

- for the first time in domestic historiography, based on materials from the Russian State Military Historical Archive, the plan for joint actions by Azerbaijani and neighboring Dagestani khanates and possessions to expel Russian troops from the Caucasus, following the sudden assassination of General P.D. Tsitsianov in 1806, is highlighted. It has been revealed that the participants in the agreement included the Khans of Sheki, Shirvan, Karabakh, Avar, Kazikumukh, and Derbent, as well as Georgian Prince Alexander and the Jar-Balakan leaders;

- for the first time in domestic historiography, in connection with

the study of the Jar-Balakan uprising of 1830, materials from the Russian State Military Historical Archive are introduced into scientific circulation, based on which new details and facts related to this uprising are revealed;

- based on the materials from fund № 482 of the Russian State Military Historical Archive, for the first time, administrative-territorial transformations and measures introduced by the tsarist administration immediately after the liquidation of the Ilysu Sultanate are revealed.

The theoretical and practical significance of the dissertation lies in the fact that its findings and conclusions can not only become part of general studies on the medieval and modern history of the Caucasus and Azerbaijan, but also lay the foundation for preparing comprehensive works on the issues and specifics of the foreign policies of Russia and Turkey toward the Caucasus in various historical periods.

The positions and conclusions of the dissertation may be of interest to researchers and academic staff at academic centers engaged in the study of the history of the Caucasus, including the foreign policies of neighboring states toward the Caucasus.

The materials of the research can be used for the preparation of general and specialized courses, textbooks, teaching and methodological guides, and programs on the history of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus as a whole for undergraduate and graduate levels in higher educational institutions of the relevant profile.

Approval of the research. The main positions and conclusions of the dissertation work are reflected in three monographs, two collective works, and numerous articles and abstracts published both in the country and abroad – in Turkiye, Russia, Georgia, Poland, Albania and Romania. They have also been presented at international and national scientific and scientific-practical symposiums, conferences, and sessions.

Place of completion of the dissertation. The dissertation was carried out at the Department of Ancient History and Medieval Studies of Baku State University. The work was discussed at an extended meeting of the department with the participation of invited specialists and was recommended for defense.

Structure and overall volume of the dissertation. The struc-

ture of the dissertation is determined by the specifics of the subject and methodology of the research, as well as the goals and objectives set. It consists of an introduction, four chapters and 14 paragraphs, a conclusion, a list of sources and literature, and a list of abbreviations. The total number of pages is 340, and the volume of the dissertation without the list of references is 501,176 characters, including 65,221 characters in the Introduction, 64,005 characters in Chapter I, 118,233 characters in Chapter II, 109,145 characters in Chapter III, 128,224 characters in Chapter IV, and 13,756 characters in the Conclusion, excluding spaces.

II. MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Introduction justifies the relevance of the dissertation topic, thoroughly analyzes the degree of research on the problem, the subject and object of the study, defines the goals, objectives, and methodological basis of the research, outlines the points to be defended, and reveals the scientific novelty and practical significance of the dissertation. Information about the approval, practical importance, and volume of the work is also provided.

The first chapter of the dissertation, consisting of 3 paragraphs, is titled "**The Political Situation of the Region in the XI – XV Centuries.**" In the first paragraph "**The Political Situation of the Region in the Context of the Collapse of the Caliphate,**" the boundaries of Albania or Arran at the time of the Arab conquests are defined based on the analysis of sources and studies from the period.

With the beginning of the disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate by the mid- IX century, emirs and large feudal lords essentially became independent rulers.

The paragraph traces the political and territorial changes that occurred during the existence of the state of Grigori Hammam and the restored Albanian-Sheki kingdom in the X century. Clarification is also provided on the territorial affiliation of Ereti.

During the strengthening of the Azerbaijan state under the Sajjid dynasty, Yusuf ibn Abu Sajj conquered Tbilisi and Kakheti, forcing

the Georgian rulers to recognize the authority of the Sajjids.⁷⁴ The state of the Shirvanshahs also fell within the sphere of influence of the Sajjids during this period. However, with the weakening of the Sajjid state after 927, the Shirvanshah state began to strengthen again. Under Sevada-Ishkhane, the Sheki kingdom was also in a certain degree of dependence on the Shirvanshah state: the tribute from Sheki, according to the 955 register, was sent to the Caliphate's representative in Azerbaijan through the Shirvanshah.⁷⁵ However, by the second half of the X century, there was a new rise of the Albanian-Sheki kingdom. In the early 960s, the son of King Sevada-Ishkhane, Senekerim, united under his rule Sanaria and Sheki, restoring the borders of the Albanian kingdom established by Grigor Hammam.⁷⁶ But the military-political struggle of this state with neighboring Azerbaijani and Georgian states led to its weakening. Subsequently, in the early XI century, its weakening resulted in a confederation with the Kakheti principality. The key points of this issue, discussed in this paragraph, are primarily reflected in our article "The Political Situation of the North-Western Territories of Azerbaijan after the Collapse of the Caliphate."⁷⁷

In the second paragraph "**Expansion of the Policy of Conquest of the Georgian Kingdoms Towards the North-Western Regions of Azerbaijan,**" the influence of the struggle between the Georgian kingdoms for hegemony on the political situation of the north-western territories of Albania is explored.

Bagrat III succeeded in capturing the Sheki-Ereti Kingdom.⁷⁸ Local feudal lords were forced to submit to Bagrat III, but later they united with the archbishop of Kakheti, David, against Bagrat.⁷⁹ After the death of David in 1010, his son Kvirike came to power in Kakheti. He assumed the royal title only after the death of Bagrat III, which

⁷⁴ Mahmudov Y.M. Azərbaycan tarixi. İntibah dövrü (IX əsrin ikinci yarısı – XIII əsrin əvvəlləri) / Y.M. Mahmudov. – Bakı: "Altay dünyası", - 1996. – c.8.

⁷⁵ Ибн Хаукаль. Книга путей и царств // - Тифлис: СМОМПК, - 1908. -вып.38, - с.105; Крымский, А., The stated work, p.377.

⁷⁶ Kalankatuklu, M., The stated work., p.203.

⁷⁷ Летишова, Э.М. Политическое состояние северо-западных территорий Азербайджана после распада Арабского халифата // Bakı Dövlət Universitetinin xəbərləri. Humanitar seriyası, - 2017. №1, - с.123-131.

⁷⁸ Kalankatuklu, M., The stated work., p.40.

⁷⁹ Насиэли Ş., The stated work, p.135.

means that the Sheki-Ereti kingdom was not under the control of the Kakheti kingdom between 1010 and 1014.⁸⁰ In 1058, Ahsertan I came to power in the Sheki kingdom, ruling until 1084.⁸¹

Ahsertan I had to withstand military-political pressure from various sides. By accepting Seljuk rule in 1068, the ruler of Sheki, Ahsertan I, was able to ensure the protection of his state from the encroachments of the Georgian kings.⁸² Sources confirm that by this time, Sheki and Gabala were under the authority of the Shirvanshahs.⁸³ Based on the information from A. Bakuvi and E. Chelebi, it is concluded that the north-western territories of historical Azerbaijan, including the village of Tsakhur, in the late XI and early XII centuries, formed the northern outskirts of the Great Seljuk Empire⁸⁴.

From the end of the XI century, against the backdrop of the weakening of the Seljuks, the Georgian kings sought to strengthen their positions in the region. They succeeded particularly after the decisive battle between the Seljuk army and the forces of David the Builder (1089-1125) at Didgori, which took place on August 12, 1121. The united Georgian Kingdom was further strengthened after David IV captured Tbilisi and eliminated the Tbilisi Muslim Emirate in 1122.⁸⁵

In the third paragraph, **"Ethnopolitical Situation in the Region in the Context of Turkic-Mongol Campaigns and Events of the XV Century,"** the ethnopolitical processes that occurred during and after

⁸⁰ Насибли Ю. Из истории эмирата Шаддадидов Гянджи (по данным древнегрузинских источников) // *Orta əsrlər Şərqi. Akademik Z.M.Bünyadovun xatirəsinə həsr olunmuş məqalələr toplusu.* – Bakı: Elm, -2000. - s.80-81.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Багратиони, В., *The stated work*, p.129.

⁸³ Ан-Насави, Ш. М. Жизнеописание султана Джалал ад-Дина Манкбурны / Ш. М. Ан-Насави. – Баку: Элм, - 1973. - с.216.

⁸⁴ Бакуви, Абдуррашид. Сокращение (книг о) памятниках и чудесах царя могучего / А. Бакуви – Москва: Наука, - 1971. – с. с.107-108; Челеби, Э. Книга путешествия (Извлечения из сочинения турецкого путешественника XVII века) / Э. Челеби. – Москва: Наука, -1983, вып. 3. - с.178; Latifova, E. Selçukluların Kafkasya'daki Manevi-Kültürel Mirasının Örneği Olarak Sahur Medresesi // *Ankara II. Uluslararası Bilimsel Araştırmalar Kongresi*, - Ankara: - 6 – 8 Mart, - 2020, - s. 972-974.

⁸⁵ Mahmudov Y.M. *Azərbaycan tarixi. İntibah dövrü (IX əsrin ikinci yarısı – XIII əsrin əvvəlləri)* / Y.M. Mahmudov. – Bakı: “Altay dünyası”, - 1996. – с.22; Mustafa, R.Ə. *Tiflis müsəlman əmirliyi* / R.Ə. Mustafa. – Bakı: “Turxan NPB”, - 2019. - s.266-267; Крымский, А.Е. *Низами и его современники* / А.Е. Крымский. - Баку: Элм, -1981. - с.157.

the Turkic-Mongol invasions in the studied region are examined.

With the beginning of the Mongol campaigns in the 20s of the XIII century, a new stage in the history of the South Caucasus began. By the time of the Khwarezmshah Jalal ad-Din Manguburni's campaign to Azerbaijan and Georgia in 1225, Sheki and Gabala were still under Georgian control. Subsequently, during the punitive campaign of Jalal ad-Din in 1227 against the Georgians, Gabala and Sheki were returned to the Shirvanshakhs.⁸⁶ The Mongol invasions triggered a new wave of migrations, which had a significant impact on the ethnic processes among the peoples of the Caucasus. New Turkic tribes left their names in the local toponymy. Among the tribes mentioned in connection with the Mongol campaigns, Rashid al-Din lists Kipchaks, Jalairs, Tanguts, Oyrats, Kurkans, and others.⁸⁷

It is concluded that the migrations of Turkic tribes in the XI-XIV centuries had a significant impact on the ethnic processes in the region. The ethnonym "Mugal," which emerged to refer to the Turkic population of the region, originated from a distorted form of the "Mongols" and became the final note that reflected the influence of the Mongol invasions on the ethnopolitical processes in the region.

In the context of the decline of the Ilkhanid state in the 30s of the XIV century, the Sheki domain gained internal independence, governed by representatives of the Oirat dynasty.⁸⁸ The paragraph also highlights the relations between the Sheki principality and the Timurid state, as well as the place and role of the region in the political events that occurred in during the XIV–XV centuries.

Chapter II, titled "**Ottoman-Safavid Confrontation in the Caucasus in the XVI–XVII centuries and the Northwestern Territories of Azerbaijan**," consists of three paragraphs. The first paragraph, titled "**The Political Situation in the Region in the First Half of the XVI century**," researchs the political situation in the region in the first half of the XVI century in the context of the unifying policy of Shah Ismail I (1501-1524). An important condition for incorpo-

⁸⁶ АН-НАСАВИ, III. М., The stated work, p.186

⁸⁷ Latifova, E. Türk-Moğol Tarihi Bağlamında Azərbaycan'ın Kuzey-Batı Bölgeleri // *Avrasya Uluslararası Araştırmalar Dergisi*, - 2023, 11 (36), - s.224-225.

⁸⁸ Piriyevev, V. *Azərbaycan XIII-XIV əsrlərdə* / Bakı: Nurlan, - 2003. – s.191.

rating the northern lands of Azerbaijan into the Safavid state was ensuring the security of the borders. The security of the northwestern outskirts of the state could be ensured by subordinating the Muslim rulers of the Georgian borderlands to the Safavid rulers. The Ottoman Empire also had claims to these territories.

Under Shah Ismail I, three campaigns were organized into Georgia, and he periodically had to suppress the rebellions of the Georgian kings. In such a situation, he turned his attention to the neighboring Muslim rulers. The first among them to accept Safavid power in 1519 was the ruler of Sheki, Hasan Bek.⁸⁹

The policy of supporting the Muslim rulers of the region continued under Takhmasib I. During his reign, the ruler of Sheki was Dervish Muhammad, the son of Hasan Bek. The relations between the Safavid court and Sheki became complicated during this period. In 1551, Shah Takhmasib launched a campaign towards Shirvan and the northwestern borders of Azerbaijan. The Sheki people organized their defense in the fortresses of "Kish," "Gelesen-Goresen," and "Sygnakh" – in the fortification at the foot of Mount "Elburz" (Elbrus – E.L.).⁹⁰

Despite the fierce resistance, Dervish Muhammad was killed in battle.⁹¹ The Sheki domain was transformed into one of the provinces of the Safavid state.

In the second paragraph of this chapter, titled "**The Ottoman-Safavid Confrontation in the Caucasus in the Second Half of the XVI Century and the Northwest Principalities of Azerbaijan**," the role and importance of the northwest lands of Azerbaijan in the rivalry between the two Turkic empires for control of the Caucasus in the second half of the XVI century are examined.

According to the peace treaty signed between the Ottoman and Safavid states on May 29, 1555, in Amasya, the regions of Western Georgia—Imeretia, Mingrelia, and Guria—fell under the sphere of influence of the Ottoman Empire, while its eastern territories, Meskheta,

⁸⁹ Эфендиев, О.А., The stated work, p. 64.

⁹⁰ Münşi, İsgəndər bəy. Dünyanı bəzəyən Abbasın tarixi (Tarixə-ələmarayə-Abbasi) [2 cilddə] / İ. Münşi. – Bakı: "Şərq-Qərb", - c.1. - 2010. – s.189.

⁹¹ Münşi, İsgəndər bəy, The stated work, p.190; Rumlu, Həsən bəy, The stated work, p. 553.

Kartli, and Kakheti, were assigned to the Safavid state.⁹² Despite the peace agreement, both empires had to suppress uprisings from local rulers and feudal lords, especially in Georgia. In this context, the Safavid court continued its policy of establishing and strengthening Muslim holdings near the Georgian kingdoms. The Tsakhur domain was one such development, which also included the region of Zaghamb.⁹³ Thus, the policy of the Kakhetian kings to move their political center from Telavi to Gremi, and then to Zaghamb, right on the very border of Sheki, was interrupted.⁹⁴

On September 10, 1578, the Sheki fortress was captured by the Ottomans and turned into a district center (kaza).⁹⁵ The administration of Sheki was entrusted to the grandson of Levend Khan and son of Alexander Khan, Eregli Mirza.⁹⁶ However, in late September 1578, when Lala Mustafa Pasha was in Aresh, he transferred the administration of Sheki to a representative of the local dynasty, Mirza Omar.⁹⁷ Thus, Sheki came under the control of the Ottoman Empire as a sancak within the Shirvan Beglerbeglik, with Mirza Omar appointed as the sancakbey. Shirvan was divided into the Shemakhi and Derbent Beglerbegliks. The Shemakhi Beglerbeglik also included Gabala, Sheki, and Aresh. Among the cities and fortresses conquered by Lala Mustafa Pasha, Aresh, Sheki, and Zaghamb are also listed.⁹⁸ The Sheki Sanjak was ruled by a representative of the local clan, Shahmir Khan. By the 90s of the XVI century, the sanjaks of Gabala, Sheki, and Aresh were part of the Shemakhi Eyalet.⁹⁹

According to the Istanbul Treaty of 1590, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan came under Ottoman control. Sheki was turned

⁹² Эфендиев, О.А., The stated work., p.96; Bilge, S. M. Osmanlı Çağ'ında Kafkasya (1454-1829) (Tarih-Toplum-Ekonomi) / S. M. Bilge. – İstanbul: Kitabevi, - 2015. – p.53-54.

⁹³ Летишова, Э.М. Илисуийское султанство / Э.М. Летишова. - Баку: Шарг-Гарб, - 2010. – с.45.; Фирман персидского шаха Тамаза // Национальный архив Грузии (НАГ), фонд №2, опись № 1, ед. хр. 10322, л. – 143-143 (об.)

⁹⁴ Кутелия, Т.С. Грузия и Сефевидский Иран (по данным нумизматики) / Т.С. Кутелия. – Тбилиси: «Мецниереба», - 1979. - с.15.

⁹⁵ Bilge, S. M., The stated work, p.96; Kütükoğlu, B. Osmanlı-İran Siyasi Münasebetleri (1578-1612) / B. Kütükoğlu. - İstanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti (Özal matbaası), - 1993. – p.61.

⁹⁶ Печеви И., The stated work, p. 37.

⁹⁷ Gelibolulu M. A., The stated work, p.160-161.

⁹⁸ Kırzioğlu, M.F., The stated work, p.301.

⁹⁹ Kırzioğlu, M.F., The stated work, p.304-305.

into an Ottoman province under the administration of Emir Osman. The Tsakhur principality became part of it with the status of a sanjak under the administration of Adigorklu Bek.¹⁰⁰

The third paragraph is titled "**The Caucasian Policy of the Safavid and Ottoman States in the XVII Century and its Impact on the Region.**" Shah Abbas I managed to restore the potential of the Safavid state and began to seek revenge for the Istanbul Treaty. After the conquest of Shirvan in 1607, many local rulers of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Dagestan expressed their allegiance to Shah Abbas I. Among them was Ali Sultan of Tsakhur.¹⁰¹

In the summer of 1616, Shah Abbas I launched a campaign to Kakheti, then proceeded to Tbilisi. The campaign also included Beglerbeg of Shirvan Yusuf Khan, along with Ali Bek of Tsakhur.¹⁰² On the banks of the Zagam River, a bloody battle took place between the Georgians and the forces of Yusuf Khan of Shirvan and Ali Sultan. The Georgians were defeated, and Zagam was totally destroyed.¹⁰³

The campaign of Shah Abbas I to Kakheti in 1616 indirectly contributed to the emergence of another local principality to the west of Sheki – the Jar-Tala Societies. By the end of his reign, Shah Abbas I entrusted several oymaqs to the ruler of Sheki, Muhammad Sultan, from the Jagirli tribe.¹⁰⁴ Teymuraz also recognized Safavid rule. In 1627, Shah Abbas I confirmed him as the governor of Kakheti. However, after the death of Abbas I, in 1628 (or 1629), Teymuraz seized Kartli and then killed Ali Sultan in revenge for his involvement in the Zagam battle of 1616. This is also confirmed by the fact that in January 1629, when Shah Safi came to power in the Safavid state (reigning from 1629 to 1642), he issued a firman in the same year to Muhammad Bek, the son of Ali Sultan, confirming him as the ruler of the Takhur principality.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Перевод копии с фирмана Турецкого Султана Осман хана Второго, воследовавшего на имя Адикерклу Али бека в месяце Сафара 1000 года хиджры // Национальный архив Грузии (НАГ), фонд № 236, опись № 2, ед. хр. 88, л. – 8-8 (об.).

¹⁰¹ Бакиханов А.А., The stated work, p.116.

¹⁰² Фирман шах-Аббаса Захурскому владетелю Али-султану, от раби-уль-эввеля 1025 (1615) года // АКАК, т. II, док. 3, с. 1085-1086

¹⁰³ Бакиханов, А.А. The stated work, p. c.120.

¹⁰⁴ Münşi, İsgəndər bəy. Dünyanı bəzəyən Abbasın tarixi (Tarixə-aləmarayə-Abbasi) [2 cilddə] / İ. Münşi. – Bakı: “Şərq-Qərb”, - c.2. - 2014. – s.1919.

¹⁰⁵ 1038 شاه صفی حجری چار صورت فرمان ازجان غلام بهشت چار // НАГ, фонд 236, оп. 2, ед. хр. 88, л. 3-4.

After the completion of the Safavid-Ottoman wars on May 17, 1639, the Safavid court made a series of changes to the administrative-territorial division of Northern Azerbaijan, including its northwestern regions: 1. The Sheki and Tsakhur principalities, as the Sheki province,¹⁰⁶ were subordinated to the Shirvan Beglerbeglik, while Zagam, along with Kakheti, became part of the Karabakh Beglerbeglik¹⁰⁷. 2. A practice was introduced of transferring individual villages of the Sheki ulka to the title ownership, with the right of inheritance granted to beks for their services to the Safavid court. 3. From the reign of Shah Abbas I, the rulers of the Sheki ulka no longer held the title of khan, but that of sultan. For the management of individual villages and districts of the Sheki ulka, the positions of meliks were established. 4. Sheki was subjected to a monetary tax called "ikhrajat", the proceeds from which were spent on state needs. 5. The villages of the Tsakhur principality – Tangyt, Gakh, and Meshebash – were transferred under the rule of the Sheki ulka.

The third chapter, titled "**Military and Political Events of the XVIII Century in Caucasus and the Northwestern Principalities of Azerbaijan,**" consists of four paragraphs. The first paragraph "**Uprisings in the Region Against the Center in the Early XVIII century,**" examines the uprisings in the region against the backdrop of the crisis and weakening of central authority in Safavid state.

As a result of the disorder in the country and the abuses of the Shirvan Beglerbegs, the Jar-Tala Districts and the Ilisu Sultanate stopped receiving their stipends on time.¹⁰⁸ The response to this situation was the raids by the Jar-Tala and Ilisu groups on the border with Kakheti.

Another cause of the uprisings in the region was the change in the central authority's attitude toward local rulers. Shah Sultan Husayn's circle began to trust the offspring of Georgian royal dynasties, who

¹⁰⁶ Its borders stretched from the Caspian Sea in the east to the Kura and Gabyrra (Iori) rivers in the west, and in the south — from the Kura River to the lands of Tabasaran in the north; look. Bilge, S. M., The stated work, p.133.

¹⁰⁷ Tadhkirat Al-Muluk. A Manual of Safavid Administration (circa 1137/1725). Translated and explained by V.Minorsky. / London: "E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust", - 1943 (reprinted 1980). - p.101-102.

¹⁰⁸ Левиатов В.Н., The stated work, p.66;

adhered to the Shiite branch of Islam, more than the local Sunni rulers. It was these figures who were appointed as shah's valis to govern the country.

The largest anti-government uprising began in region in 1707. The united forces of the Jar-Tala, Ilisu, and Sheki groups played an active role in it. The uprising was led by Ali Sultan of Ilisu. To suppress the rebellion, the governor of Kakheti, Imamkuli Khan, was sent.¹⁰⁹ This further exacerbated the local population's dissatisfaction with the central government's policies.

The excessive aggravation of discontent led to new uprisings in the region in subsequent years. The influence of the Jar-Tala communities and the Ilisu Sultanate on the Caucasus grew to such an extent that they actively intervened in the internal conflicts taking place both in Northern Azerbaijan and in Georgia.

The second paragraph of the chapter, titled "**The Intensification of Ottoman Policy in the Region**," focuses on the measures taken by the Ottoman Empire to strengthen its presence in the region.

Amid the decline of central authority in the Safavid state after the Ghilzais captured Isfahan in 1722, the Ottoman Empire managed to solidify its position in Northern Azerbaijan. The Ottomans effectively leveraged the failed religious policies of the Safavid state to gain the support of a significant portion of Northern Azerbaijan's population.

The Ottoman court placed particular emphasis on winning over local rulers. On 3 August 1723, Ahmed III issued a special firman addressed to Ali Sultan of Tsakhur. Based on the firman, he was elevated to the rank of beglerbeg of the Sheki Province, with the Tsakhur sanjak annexed to it. He was also instructed to closely collaborate with Haji Dawud.¹¹⁰

According to the terms of the Treaty of Istanbul dated June 27, 1724, the Sheki province, including the Tsakhur Sanjak, as well as the Jar-Tala Jamaats, which were administratively attached to the Shirvan

¹⁰⁹ Алиев, Ф.М., The stated work. - p.17.

¹¹⁰ Перевод копии с фирмана Турецкого Султана Ахмед Хана на имя Шекинского правителя Али Султана от 1-го числа месяца Зилькаде 1135 года хиджры на долине города Тифлиса // Национальный архив Грузии (НАГ), фонд № 236, опись № 2, ед. хр. 88, л. – 27-27(об.).

Beglerbeylik, officially came under the authority of the Ottoman state. However, the Jar-Tala Jamaats refused to recognize Ottoman rule for several years. Peace between the Jar-Tala Jamaats and the Ottoman Empire was concluded in the final days of January 1728.¹¹¹

The Ottomans continued their policy of strengthening Muslim domains along the border with Eastern Georgia. Starting in 1725, a firman was issued by Ottoman Sultan Ahmed to Ali Sultan's son, Muhammad, granting him the neighboring Aresh domain, located near Sheki. The grant was conditional upon Muhammad's agreement to mobilize 300 select warriors at the request of Ottoman pashas to serve in Ganja, Shirvan, and other locations where military action might be required.¹¹² Gakh was placed under the administration of Utsmi Muhammad, who was granted the title of Gakh Beygerbey.¹¹³

At the beginning of 1730, hostilities between the Safavids and the Ottomans resumed. According to the terms of the Kermanshah Treaty, concluded between the Safavids and the Ottomans in January 1732, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan also remained under Ottoman control.¹¹⁴

After the signing of the Baghdad Treaty in February 1733 and the transition of Azerbaijan's northwestern lands under the control of the Safavid state, Ali Sultan was removed from the administration of Sheki. In his place, Nader Khan's appointee, Melik Alimardan Bek, was appointed.¹¹⁵

In mid-October 1734, Nadir Khan laid siege to the Ganja fortress. Nadir Khan sent punitive detachments against the Jar people too¹¹⁶. At this time, Ali Sultan sided with Nadir Khan and took part in the punitive expedition, for which the Jar people, in alliance with Murtaza Khan of Kazikumukh, burned the Gakh vilayet after the Afshar troops had withdrawn.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ Əl-Cari, Molla M. *Car salnaməsi*. – p.22.

¹¹² Фирман султана Ахмеда на имя Мамед-Али-султан-задэ, от 1-го ряби-уль-эввеля 1138 (1725) года. – Гянджа // АКАК, т. VI, часть II, док. 13, с. 775.

¹¹³ Фирман Турецкого султана на имя Шекинского беглярбека Али-паши, от последних чисел зиль-хидже 1142 (1729) года // АКАК, т. II, док. 19, с.1091-1092.

¹¹⁴ Bilge, S. M., *The stated work*, p.208-209; Мустафазаде, Т.Т., *The stated work*, p.181.

¹¹⁵ Musəvi T.M., *The stated work*, - p.16.

¹¹⁶ Бакиханов, А.А. *Гюлистан-и Ирам / А.А. Бакиханов. – Баку: ЭЛМ, -1991. - p.140.*

¹¹⁷ Əl-Cari, Molla M. *Car salnaməsi*. – p.32.

The third paragraph of "**Feudal Domains of Northwestern Azerbaijan as Part of Nadir Shah's Empire**" is dedicated to studying the period of the region's incorporation into Nadir Shah's empire.

Shirvan held extremely important military-strategic significance in Nadir Shah's rivalry with the Ottoman and Russian Empires for control of the Caucasus. Nadir Shah appointed Najafgulu Bey as the melik of the Sheki mahal.¹¹⁸ The relations between Nadir Shah's brother, Ibrahim Khan, and the northwestern domains of Azerbaijan were complex from the very beginning. In May 1737, a peace agreement was signed in Ganja between Ibrahim Khan and the elders of the Jar-Tala jamaats, without any conditions for paying tribute or providing hostages.¹¹⁹

In 1738, uprisings in northwestern Azerbaijan flared up with renewed force.¹²⁰ The punitive expedition of Ibrahim Khan in October of the same year was unsuccessful and even cost him his life.¹²¹ The punitive campaigns organized by Nadir Shah in subsequent years to punish the rebellious northwestern domains of Azerbaijan and neighboring Dagestan also ended in failure.

In this situation, Haji Chalabi, a descendant of Dervish Muhammad Khan, emerged on the region's political stage.¹²² However, the further intrigues of Melik Najaf, which led to Haji Chalabi being summoned once again by Nadir Shah, forced him to raise a rebellion against the central authority in 1743. In this situation, Haji Chalabi defended the "Gelesen-Geresen" fortress for three years. Realizing that further resistance was impossible, in March 1746, Haji Chalabi appeared before Nadir Shah in submission. They were forgiven, but Nadir Shah appointed Melik Jafar, the nephew of Melik Najaf, as the ruler of Shaki. However, as is known, in May 1747, Nadir Shah was assassinated as a result of a conspiracy.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Musəvi T.M. – The stated work. p. 33-34, 77

¹¹⁹ Əl-Cari, Molla M., The stated work. – p.33.

¹²⁰ Süleymanova S.S. XVIII yüzylıda Osmanlıların Azerbaycandaki Faaliyetinin Arap Dilinde Yazılı Yerel Kaynaklarda Tasviri // Ankara: XIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, - 04-08 Ekim 1999, - s.180

¹²¹ Əl-Cari, Molla M. Car salnaməsi. – p.36.

¹²² Fateh, Kərim Ağa., The stated work. – p.9.

¹²³ Левиатов В.Н., The stated work . – p.120.

The final paragraph, titled "**Northwestern Territories of Azerbaijan in the Foreign Policy of Neighboring States in the Second Half of the XVIII Century**," discusses the foreign policy activities of the state formations in Northwestern Azerbaijan in the context of their relations with neighboring Azerbaijani khanates, Georgian kingdoms, and Dagestani khanates and domains on one hand, and with the Russian and Ottoman Empires on the other.

The victory of Haji Chalabi Khan over Heraclius II in the Battle of Gyzylgaya in 1752 further strengthened his position and secured the transition of the Gazakh and Borchaly mahalas under his control.¹²⁴

In 1754, Heraclius II again advanced with great force against the Jar-Balakan jamaats, but they, in alliance with Haji Chalabi Khan, defeated Heraclius's forces on the left bank of the Ganykh River.¹²⁵

After the death of Haji Chalabi Khan in 1755, his son Agakishi Bek inherited the power. However, after his murder by his father-in-law, Muhammad Khan of Kazikumukh, in 1759, the power passed to Haji Chalabi Khan's grandson, Hussein Khan.¹²⁶

During the reign of Magomedghasan Khan (1783-1795), relations between the Shaki and Guba khanates became more complicated.¹²⁷ Subsequently, Magomedghasan Khan was forced to pursue a foreign policy that was aligned with Fatali Khan of Guba.

By the end of the XVIII century, especially after the signing of the treaty in Georgievsk on July 24, 1783, which placed Georgia under the protection of the Russian Empire, the khanates of Northern Azerbaijan had to contend with the influence of the latter. After the signing of the Georgievsk Treaty, Heraclius II increasingly demanded that the Azerbaijani khanates accept his authority, and through him, submit to the Russian Empire.¹²⁸ During this period, the Jar-Balakan jamaats, in alliance with Omar Khan of Avaria, played a significant role in restraining the Russo-Georgian pressure on the Azerbaijani and

¹²⁴ Такайшвили, Е.С. Исторические приписки двух кинклов и хронологический перечень событий по некоторым другим источникам. Материалы для истории Грузии // - Тифлис: СМОПК, - 1896. вып.21, - с.52; Бакиханов, А.А., The stated work. - p.157.

¹²⁵ Бакиханов, А.А., The stated work. - p.157.

¹²⁶ Бакиханов, А.А., The stated work. - p.158; Fateh, Kərim Ağa., The stated work. -p.12.

¹²⁷ Левиатов В.Н., The stated work., с.20-21.

¹²⁸ Məmmədov H.M., Osmanlı imperiyasının xarici siyasətində Azərbaycan xanlıqları // - Bakı: Azərbaycan SSR Elmlər Akademiyasının xəbərləri, Tarix, fəlsəfə və hüquq seriyası, - 1989. №3, - s.44

Dagestani territories.¹²⁹

The Azerbaijani khanates sought to secure the support of the Ottoman court. In 1785, the ruler of the Karabakh Khanate, Ibrahim Khalil Khan, the ruler of Sheki, Magomedghasan Khan, and Fatali Khan of Guba sent their envoys to the Sultan's court. However, the Ottoman court, taking into account the interests of the Russian Empire in the region, bet on the expectation that the Russian Empire would go to war with Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar and lose to him.¹³⁰ Subsequent events contributed to the expansion of the Russian Empire in the region.

The fourth chapter, titled "**The Caucasian Policy of the Russian Empire in the First Half of the XIX Century and the Northwestern Territories of Azerbaijan,**" outlines the goals, course, and methods of the colonial policy of the Russian Empire in the region, within the context of its Caucasian policy.

The first paragraph is dedicated to analyzing the situation in the region on the eve of Russian conquest.

After the accession of Emperor Alexander I, decisive steps were taken towards establishing Russian rule in Eastern Georgia. The first step was the imperial rescript of September 12, 1801, regarding the governance of Georgia.¹³¹ At the same time, the military leadership of the Russian Empire, noting Georgia's inability to defend its borders independently, urged the emperor to consider expanding the empire's territories by annexing neighboring Muslim holdings.¹³²

During this period, the imperial government also took steps to win over the neighboring Jar-Balakan societies to its side. The elders of the Jar-Balakan jamaats, aware that, being unequal to the Russian Empire, any peace treaty with it would result in the loss of their independence, avoided entering into agreements with the Russians.¹³³

¹²⁹ Бутков П.Г., The stated work, Материалы для новой истории Кавказа, с 1722 по 1803 год: [в трех частях] / П.Г. Бутков. - Санкт-Петербург: Тип. Имп. Акад. наук, - ч. 3. - 1869. - с.178-179.

¹³⁰ Мəммəдов Н.М., The stated work. - p.44-46.

¹³¹ Бутков, П.Г., The stated work. - p.485-488.

¹³² Всеподданнейший рапорт ген. - л. Кнорринга, от 28-го июля 1801 года // АКАК, т. I, д. 543. - с.427.

¹³³ Письмо Джарских обществ к ген.-л. Кноррингу // АКАК, т. I, д. 899. - с.645.

Emperor Alexander, recognizing the need for decisive measures in subduing the Jar-Balakan jamaats and other Azerbaijani khanates, recalled General Knorring from his post in September 1802 and appointed General P.D. Tsitsianov as the commander-in-chief in the Caucasus.¹³⁴ The first target in Tsitsianov's plans for the conquest of the region were the Jar-Balakan jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate.

The second paragraph, titled "Conquest of the Northwestern Territories of Azerbaijan and the Introduction of Russian Rule," focuses on the analysis of the process of conquering the region and establishing Russian rule. Despite the stubborn resistance of the Jar-Balakan people, the military expedition to Jar, launched on March 2, 1803, under the command of General Gulyakov, ended successfully for the Russians.¹³⁵

On April 12, 1803, nine elders of Jar-Balakan and three representatives from the Ilisu Sultanate signed a treaty in Tbilisi with Commander-in-Chief P.D. Tsitsianov, accepting the suzerainty of the Russian Empire.¹³⁶ The Jar-Balakan jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate were required to pay an annual tribute in two installments, amounting to 1,100 liters (220 poods) of silk. The ninth article of the "Oath of Allegiance" laid the foundations for future religious policies, aimed at the Christianization of the Ingiloy population.¹³⁷ But following the failure of General Gulyakov's second expedition to Jaro in January 1804, the Russian Empire's position in the region weakened.

In the Sheki Khanate, the situation was complicated by internal strife between Magomedghasan Khan and his brother Selim Khan. Tsitsianov bet on Selim. An important factor in this was that Selim Khan's mother was a Georgian from the renowned Bagrationi family.¹³⁸ His marriage to the daughter of Ibrahim Khan of Karabakh, Tuti-bika, could have contributed to the mutually beneficial influence between the two khans in the matter of

¹³⁴ Дубровин Н.Ф., The stated work – p.534.

¹³⁵ Бакрадзе, Дм., The stated work. - p.260.

¹³⁶ Всеподданнейший рапорт кн. Цицианова, от 17-го апреля 1803 года, № 42 // АКАК, т. II, д. 1387. – с.685.

¹³⁷ Клятвенное обещание / Всеподданнейший рапорт кн. Цицианова, от 17-го апреля 1803 года // АКАК, т. II, с.686-687.

¹³⁸ Утверждение русского владычества на Кавказе: [В четырех томах] / Под ред. Генерал-майора Потто. - Тифлис: 1901, - Типография Я.И. Либерманна. – т. I. – с.190.

accepting Russian suzerainty¹³⁹. The removal of Magomedghasan Khan, who had close alliances with the Jar-Balakan jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate, as well as with neighboring Dagestani khanates and societies, could have facilitated the full submission of all of these groups. During the First Russo-Persian War (1804-1813), the removal of the pro-Qajar Magomedghasan Khan was beneficial for Russian command.

A week after the signing of the Kurakchay Treaty between the Russian Empire and the Karabakh Khanate, on May 21, 1805, a similar treaty was signed between the Russian Empire and the Sheki Khanate.¹⁴⁰

The murder of Ibrahim Khalil Khan and his family by Major Lisanevich in June 1806 provoked Selim Khan into rising up.¹⁴¹ In the battle that took place on October 22, 1806, Selim Khan was defeated.¹⁴² The Khan was forced to flee to Prince Abbas Mirza and settle in Tabriz. Later, in June-July 1819, he moved to the Ottoman Empire, settling in Erzurum.¹⁴³

On December 10, 1806, the new ruler of Sheki was appointed as Dzhafar Gulu Bek Khoyski.¹⁴⁴ After the death of Dzhafar Gulu Khan on August 22, 1814, his son Ismail Pasha was declared the new khan.¹⁴⁵ The death of Ismail Khan in July 1819 provided a pretext for the abolition of the khanate in Sheki. General Yermolov introduced Russian administration in the region.¹⁴⁶

After the successful conclusion of the Second Russo-Persian and Russo-Ottoman Wars for the Russian Empire, the command took decisive measures to finally subdue the Jar-Balakan jamaats. In 1830,

¹³⁹ Утверждение русского владычества на Кавказе. – с.190; Latifova, E. Karabağ Hanları ve Şecereleri // *Mevzu Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, - 2024. No 12 (Eylül), s. 747-748.

¹⁴⁰ Всеподданнейший рапорт кн. Цицианова, от 22-го мая 1805 года, № 20 // АКАК, т. II, д. 1301. – с.646.

¹⁴¹ Latifova, E., The stated work. - p.748.

¹⁴² Утверждение русского владычества на Кавказе. – с.263.

¹⁴³ Sabık Şeki ve Şirvan hanı olmuş Selim Han'ın Gönderdiği Adanın İfadesi // BOA, NAT fondu, dosya № 1265, gömlek 48977; Şüküroğlu, Q. Şeki Eski Hakimi Selim Han'ın Osmanlı Devleti'ne İlticası // *ETÜ Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (ETÜSBED)*. - 2018. c. 3, - s.119.

¹⁴⁴ Высочайшая грамота Джафар-Кули-хану Хойскому и Шекинскому, от 10-го декабря 1806 года – С.-Петербург // АКАК, т. III, д. 488. – с.271.

¹⁴⁵ Рапорт Севастопольского пехотного полка пор. Шебашева ген. Ртищеву, от 18-го августа 1814 года, № 199. – Нуха // АКАК, Т. V, д. 664.- с.553.

¹⁴⁶ Господам Артиллерии генерал-майору и кавалеру Ахвердову и Статскому советнику Могилевскому // НАГ, фонд 2, оп. 1, ед. хр. 912, л. 18-19.

their internal autonomy was abolished, and a "Temporary Provincial Administration" was established with Russian officials.

The Ilisu Sultanate was subordinated to the head of the newly created Jar-Balakan Province.¹⁴⁷ According to the "Project for the Reform of Provinces" dated April 17, 1840, the Jar-Balakan Province was renamed into a district and incorporated into the Georgian-Imeretian Governorate. The district was divided into three sections: Balaken, Yenisel, and Ilisu. Daniyal Sultan was appointed as the district judge of the Ilisu section of the Jar-Balakan district.¹⁴⁸ The inclusion of the Sultanate and the Jar-Balakan district into the Georgian-Imeretian Governorate was a manifestation of the colonial policy of the Russian Empire, aimed at disintegrating and liquidating the Muslim holdings.

In the third paragraph, titled "**Religious Policy of the Imperial Government,**" the measures taken by the Russian Empire for the forced spread of Orthodoxy among the Ingilo population of the region are examined. The spread of Christianity among the Ingiloes was intended to tie them to the Georgian church. The first decisive steps in this direction were taken in the early 1820s. As a result of missionary activities in the Ilisu Sultanate, 17 people were converted. However, the missionaries, faced with discontent from the population, were forced to leave the Sultanate's territory.¹⁴⁹

A new and more consistent phase of religious policy in the region began after the abolition of the Ilisu Sultanate in 1844. In order to accelerate the process, M.S. Vorontsov, starting from 1849, granted privileges to the population, exempting them from all direct taxes to the treasury. As a result, by 1851, there were approximately 1,200 Ingiloes who had converted to Christianity in the Jar-Balakan district as a whole.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ О порядке управления Белокаанским округом // РГИА, ф.1268, оп.1, д.567, л. 13.

¹⁴⁸ Колониальная политика российского царизма в Азербайджане в 20-60-е годы XIX века [в двух частях] / Под ред. И.П. Петрушевского. - Москва-Ленинград: Изд.-во Академии наук СССР, - ч. I. - 1936. - с.69; О порядке управления Белокаанским округом // РГИА, ф.1268, оп.1, д.567, л. 13-19.

¹⁴⁹ Письмо экзарха Грузии Ионы к ген.-л. Вельяминову от 12-го августа 1822 года, № 712 // АКАК, т.VI, часть I, д. 567. - с. 427-428; Отношение митрополита Ионы к гр. Паскевичу, от 17-го января 1830 года, № 59 // АКАК, т. VII, д. 197. - с.249.

¹⁵⁰ Отчет князя М.С. Воронцова за 1849-1851 годы. Всеподданнейший рапорт кн. Воронцова, от 29-го сентября 1852 года // АКАК, т. X, с. 875-904.

The next step was the issuance of the decree to the Governing Senate on December 6, 1859, based on which, starting from 1860, Ingiloes who converted to Christianity were granted land free of charge, exchanged with local landowners. Those who accepted Orthodoxy were also permanently exempted from state taxes and, for six years, from monetary land duties.¹⁵¹

Since the 1850s, the construction of churches began in the region.¹⁵² An important aspect of the religious policy was also the establishment of church parish schools. Since 1858, the Georgian clergy began teaching Ingilo children Georgian literacy in schools set up in private homes. The opening of church parish schools was taken over by the Society for the Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus.¹⁵³

The religious policy had a significant impact on the ethnic and religious identity of the Ingiloi population.

The last paragraph of the fourth chapter, titled "**The Struggle for Liberation Against the Colonial Policy of the Russian Empire and Its Results**," is dedicated to examining the struggle of the region's population against the colonial policy of the Russian Empire. The northwestern territories of Azerbaijan became one of the key strongholds in the fight against colonialism in the Caucasus. The first major uprising in the region against the Russian Empire was the uprising raised in 1830 in Jar-Balaken. The large-scale uprising, which began on June 12, 1830, was suppressed in December 1830. Another major uprising in the region occurred in 1838 in Sheki. The proclamations of the uprising declared as its main goal the destruction of all Russians in the Sheki province and the restoration of a representative of the Sheki khan dynasty, Meshadi Muhammad, to the throne.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Отчет ген.-фельдмаршала князя А.И. Барятинского за 1857-1859 годы. Часть 1. Ингилойцы // АКАК, т. XII, с. 1349; Об утверждении сделанного Наместником Кавказским распоряжения об освобождении Ингелойцев, принявших Православную веру от платежа в казну поземельной, подъемной и прочих податей и повинностей // РГИА, ф.1268, оп.10, ед. хр.221, л. 2 -11.

¹⁵² Отчет о состоянии причтов и приходов Ингилойского благочиния за 1892 год. История распространения христианства среди ингилойцев-мусульман и обратный переход их в магометанство. Работа миссионеров по распространению христианства и постройка церквей в Закавальском округе // ГИААР, ф. 579, оп. 1. Ингилойское (Закавальское) Благочиние, ед. хр. 3, л. 14.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 3 (об.)

The rapid movement of the rebels on September 1, 1838, prevented the Russians from bringing in reinforcements. After the arrival of infantry with artillery on September 1, Colonel Bezobrazov, the commander of the Nizhny Novgorod Dragoon Regiment and acting head of the Jar-Balakan region, launched an offensive. By the end of the second day, the rebels were pushed out of Sheki, and the uprising was suppressed.

The Sheki uprising demonstrated that, although the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan had been conquered, the local population was always ready to rise again in resistance against the colonizers.

The climax of the liberation struggle in the region was the Ilisu Uprising of 1844.¹⁵⁵ After the suppression of the uprising on June 25, 1844, the Ilisu Sultanate was officially abolished. A Temporary Administration was established, and the Ilisu Sultanate was renamed the Ilisu District. The district was subdivided into three magalas: Ilisu, Rutul, and Ingiloy. The district was governed by a staff officer, who was subordinate to the Jar-Balakan district commander. The mahals were administered by naibs, who were also appointed by the commander of the Jar-Balakan military district.¹⁵⁶

The government ordered the division of the territory of the sultanate into two parts: the Mountain Mahal and the Ilisu Magistracy. The Mountain Mahal, which included the territory of the sultanate to the north of the Main Caucasian Ridge, was included in the Samur District, established in 1839. The Ilisu Magistracy, which included the foothill and lowland territories of the sultanate, was assigned to the Jar-Balakan District, and later to the Zakatal District.¹⁵⁷

As a result of the aforementioned measures, part of the territory of the Ilisu Sultanate - the villages of the Mountain Mahal, remained outside the borders of North Azerbaijan. It should also be noted that as a result of administrative-territorial reshaping of the northwestern holdings as a whole, 16 villages were left outside Azerbaijan—7 villages of the Ilisu Sultanate and 9 villages of the Jar-Balakan Jamaats. Thus, the Russian

¹⁵⁵ Ковалевский П.И., The stated work. - p.235.

¹⁵⁶ Инструкция Джаробелоканскому окружному начальнику, для временного управления бывшим Елисуйским владением и Рутульским магалом. 26 июня 1844 г., Темир-Хан-Шура. // РГВИА, ф. 482, оп. 1, ед. хр. 226, л. 111.

¹⁵⁷ Летишова, Э.М. Илисуйское султанство / Э.М. Летишова. - Баку: Шарг-Гарб, - 2010. - с.119.

Empire succeeded in dismembering and eliminating the last stronghold of resistance against colonial policies on the territory of Azerbaijan.

In the conclusion, the main results of the dissertation are summarized, the conclusions and generalizations derived from the conducted research are formulated, and some scientific-practic recommendations are given. The study and comparative analysis of numerous sources and literature reflecting the policies of medieval Turkic-Azerbaijani states, neighboring Georgian kingdoms and Dagestani possessions, the Ottoman and Russian empires regarding the north-western territories of Azerbaijan, led to the following conclusions:

1. Among the regions that fell out of the control of the Caliphate during its disintegration, which began in the mid-9th century, was Arran, covering the former Albanian territories. The state, re-established in these territories by Grigor Hammam around 866, had to, starting from the early 10th century, withstand the pressure of the strengthening Georgian-Abkhazian kingdom on one side, and on the other, maneuver between the Azerbaijani states of the Sajids and the Shirvanshahs.

2. The expansionist policy of the Georgian kingdoms, which began in the X century, had a direct impact on the neighboring north-western regions of the former Albania. The areas of Ereti, whose settlements Arash and Gavaz were seized by the Georgian kings, were especially subjected to attacks. However, at the initial stage, i.e., in the early 10th century, the positions of the Georgian kings in these areas were unstable. The situation changed after the 70s-80s of the 11th century, when the Abkhazian-Kartlian kingdom, strengthened as a result of victories in civil wars between Georgian kingdoms, began to exert increasing pressure on the Kingdom of Kakheti and the Sheki-Ereti Kingdom by the early 12th century.

3. Analyzing the sources allows for the conclusion that, despite the bias of Georgian sources, they all distinguish between the Georgians, "ranians," and "er" people, whom they consider nearly one and the same, associating them with the ancient Albanians.

4. With the exception of the brief period of the Seljuk state's rise in the Caucasus, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan remained under the influence of the Georgian kingdoms until the Mongol invasions. With the Mongol campaigns, the Georgian kingdoms were

forced to focus on their own defense, which, to some extent, contributed to the gradual liberation of the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan from their influence.

5. The campaigns of the Seljuks and Mongols led to significant changes in the ethnopolitical situation of the region under study – there was a compact settlement of new Turkic-Mongol tribes in the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan and their intermingling with the local Turkic tribes.

6. The Sheki principality, under the ruler Seydi Ali, attempted to pursue an independent policy, resisting the campaigns of Emir Timur, which began in the 1380s. However, due to the efforts of Shirvanshah Ibrahim I, relations between Emir Timur and Seydi Ali's son, Seydi Ahmed, were restored, and the latter remained loyal to Timur until his death in 1405.

7. The medieval northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, including the Sheki and Takhur regions, were politically linked to Shirvan. The subjugation of Shirvan by the Safavid state of Azerbaijan inevitably influenced the position of neighboring territories, which were also turned into vassals;

8. Both the Safavid and Ottoman states, during their struggle for the Caucasus, pursued a policy of creating and strengthening Muslim territories in the northwestern regions of Azerbaijan bordering Georgia, which served the function of "border guardians."

9. Although the religious factor played a significant role in the rapprochement of the rulers and populations of Shirvan, Aresh, Gabala, Ilisu, etc., with the Ottoman Empire, the main factor in determining their position was the local rulers' own state interests. If the relations were not effective, the allies had no hesitation in switching sides to the enemy;

10. In relation to the Jar-Tala Jamaats and the Ilisu Sultanate, the military-strategic interests of the Ottomans prevailed over economic ones. The primary focus of the Ottoman Empire's policy in the region was ensuring the security of its borders in the Caucasus;

11. Based on the content of the Shah Safi's firmans, the Sheki principality, according to the administrative division of the Safavid state in the first half of the XVII century, was under the jurisdiction of the Shirvan Beglarbegi. Even before the completion of the third phase

of the Safavid-Ottoman wars, the north-western territories of Azerbaijan had firmly come under Safavid rule;

12. The causes of the major anti-Safavid uprisings that broke out in the region in the early XVIII century were the increase in taxes and the change in the policy of the Safavid court towards the territories of North-Western Azerbaijan against the backdrop of the growing crisis of the state since the end of the XVII century;

13. During the uprisings in the early XVIII century, the Kakhétians and Kartlians were forced to recognize the formidable force that emerged in the east in the form of the Jaro-Tal tribes and the Ilisu Sultanate, which not only blocked their path for further expansion to the east but also gradually pushed them out of the northwestern territories of the former Albania, which had been occupied by the latter since the X-XI centuries;

14. The reason for the capture of Shemakha in May 1720 by the united forces of Surkhay Khan of Kazikumukh, Ali Sultan of Ilisu, and others was the appeal for help from the Gabala melik Mahmud, who was oppressed by the Shemakha beglerbeg Hussein Khan;

15. In the early XVIII century, the influence of the Jaro-Talj Khams and the Ilisu Sultanate in the Caucasus grew to such an extent that they actively intervened in the internecine struggles occurring both in Northern Azerbaijan and in neighboring Georgia;

16. Against the backdrop of the weakening of the Safavid state in the first quarter of the XVIII century, the Ottoman Empire began to pursue an active policy in the region. However, not all feudal holdings of Northern Azerbaijan had smooth relations with the Ottomans. While the Ilisu Sultanate and Sheki principality immediately sided with the Ottomans, it took another two decades for the Jaro-Talj Khams to accept Ottoman rule;

17. In its Caucasian policy during the first third of the XVIII century, the Ottoman Empire placed special importance on the northwestern lands of Azerbaijan. In fact, this policy was a continuation of the one started by the Ottomans in the XVI century. The difference from the previous period was that in the 1720s and 1730s, the Ottoman state, in its struggle for the Caucasus, began to compete with the Russian Empire;

18. The fate of the Caucasus, including the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, was largely decided with the signing of the Ganja Treaty between the Russian Empire and the Safavid state in March 1735. After

three centuries of active policy in the Caucasus, the Ottoman Empire was forced to leave the region until the beginning of the XIX century;

19. The difference in positions towards Nadir Shah between the Jar-Tala tribal communities and the Ilisu ruler Ali Sultan led to the latter's loss of power. The nobility and local rulers saw Nadir Shah as a threat to their authority and considered the Ottoman Empire as the closest ally in their struggle against him;

20. The Sheki Khanate, under Haji Chelebi Khan, became a powerful obstacle to King Irakli II's consolidation in the northwest of Azerbaijan. Irakli II had ambitions for the territories of Azerbaijan populated by the Ingiloy. However, the resistance from the united forces of the Sheki Khanate and the Jar-Balakan communities in 1754 prevented Irakli from realizing his plans;

21. The Jar-Balakan communities, in alliance with the neighboring Avar ruler Omar Khan, played a significant role in restraining the Russian-Georgian pressure on the Azerbaijani and Dagestani territories neighboring Kartli-Kakheti after the conclusion of the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783;

22. Amid the increasing activity of the Russian Empire in the Caucasus from the second half of the XVIII century, the northwestern territories of Azerbaijan, particularly the Sheki Khanate, sought support from the Ottoman Empire. However, the Ottoman Empire, being in a difficult position due to unsuccessful wars with the Russian Empire, limited itself to sending letters of support to the local rulers;

23. The manifesto of January 18, 1801, regarding the annexation of Georgia to the Russian Empire, not only marked the completion of the full loss of political independence of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, but also signaled the beginning of the loss of independence for neighboring Muslim possessions in the Caucasus;

24. The "Oath of 1803" not only marked the beginning of the loss of independence for the possessions of North-Western Azerbaijan, but also laid the foundation for a religious divide among the population, as the agreement included a specific clause requiring the free practice of Christian rites by the Ingiloy population without obstruction;

25. The conquest of the Sheki Khanate brought significant economic, strategic, and political benefits to the Russian Empire;

26. Selim Khan was forced to sign the Kyurekchay Treaty due

to: 1) his ambitions to seize the Sheki throne by displacing his brother, Magomedkhasan Khan; and 2) his conflicts with Mustafa Khan of Shirvan and Surkhai Khan of Kazikumukh. Despite doubts about his decision before signing the treaty, there was no turning back;

27. The inclusion of the territories of the former Jar-Balaken Jamaats and the Ilysu Sultanate into the Georgian-Imeretian Governorate in 1840 was a manifestation of the colonial policy of the Russian Empire, aimed at destroying the traditions of statehood, dismembering, and eliminating the independence of the former Muslim holdings. This created a fertile ground for future territorial claims from neighboring countries to Azerbaijan;

28. The religious policy implemented by the tsarist government from the 1820s significantly impacted the ethnic and religious identity of the Ingiloy. The peak of conversions to Christianity occurred after the government offered material and economic incentives, particularly in 1851 after M.S. Vorontsov granted privileges in 1849. By 1859, the number of baptized Ingiloy Christians reached 3,042. However, growth slowed in the following years, with 3,094 in 1871 and 3,436 in 1873, showing only modest increases.

29. The biased and brutal attitude of tsarist officials towards the local population sparked mass resistance against the colonial policies of the Russian Empire. After suppressing the uprisings, the tsarist government more decisively proceeded with redrawing borders, resulting in 16 villages of the Jar-Balakan jamaats and the Ilysu Sultanate being left outside Azerbaijan.

30. Despite their small size, the north-western territories of Azerbaijan, due to their advantageous military-strategic location, played an important role throughout the period of our study in the foreign policy of both neighboring regional states and major empires seeking to establish themselves in the Caucasus.

31. Considering the strategic importance of the north-western territories of the modern Republic of Azerbaijan, it is essential, alongside continuing comprehensive research into the region's history, to also focus on promoting the results of scientific studies through mass media—by increasing the share of educational programs, films, and channels.

The main content of the dissertation is reflected in the following publications:

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