

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**REBELLIONS AND RESISTANCE TO POWER
IN THE SAFAVID STATE OF AZERBAIJAN
IN THE LATE 17TH AND EARLY 18TH CENTURIES
(BASED ON SOVIET HISTORIOGRAPHY)**

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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance and elaboration of the topic. The rebellions and acts of resistance against the authority in the Safavid state of Azerbaijan in the late 17th and early 18th centuries marked the beginning of the collapse of a great empire. This period is characterized by widespread discontent, rebellions against the central government, and increasing internal conflicts throughout all regions of the Safavid state. Political and economic stagnation, along with social and cultural decline, rendered the Safavid Empire a primary target for the expansionist ambitions of neighboring states. Due to administrative failures, external pressures, and successive uprisings, the weakening of the Azerbaijani Safavid state accelerated, making the intervention of powers such as the Ottoman Empire and Russia inevitable. This process evolved into a chain reaction that ultimately led to the dissolution of the Safavid Empire. The study of this topic in the context of Azerbaijani history enables us to draw valuable lessons from similar events in medieval times, thus laying the foundation for building a stronger, more stable, and resilient state for future generations.

History is not merely the study of the past but also a means of learning lessons for the future. The decline of the Safavid state should not be viewed solely as a historical event, but also as a significant experience for the modern era. The lessons learned bear critical importance for the sustainable development of Azerbaijani society, the strengthening of national unity, and the achievement of economic stability.

Generally, during that period, the overall socio-economic condition of the Azerbaijani Safavid Empire was marked by stagnation, with the urban life, artisan centers, and agriculture suffering a severe crisis. Additionally, the shift of the traditional East-West trade routes from overland paths to maritime routes, the struggle of leading European powers to conquer Eastern countries, and natural disasters adversely affected the Safavid economy. In today's context—where economic crises are deepening—it is particularly important to learn from past experiences in order to find viable solutions. Simultaneously, the emergence and restructuring of new trade routes at a time when the importance of trade routes is increasing makes the study of such historical processes highly relevant. The global changes we observe to-

day further enhance the significance of the topic and intensify the demand for research.

In Azerbaijani historiography, when studying the history of the Safavid state, the political perspectives of Soviet-era historians have primarily been emphasized. Therefore, in our research, not only the political aspect but also the economic dimensions of the problem have been examined on the basis of Soviet historiography, in comparison with other local and foreign historiographical works and sources.

The approaches of Soviet-era historians to this issue are noteworthy. The majority of them linked the state's decline to the shift of trade routes from overland to maritime paths and emphasized the loss of intermediary roles of Azerbaijani cities—Shamakhi, Ganja, Tbilisi, Yerevan, Julfa, and Tabriz—in East-West trade. The political situation of the Azerbaijani Safavid state in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, its domestic and foreign trade relations, the condition of traditional caravan routes, and the overall state of the national economy must be thoroughly investigated and considered among the primary priorities of Azerbaijani historical science. Despite the existence of numerous studies on the final period of the Safavid Empire, the condition of the state in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the uprisings against the central authority, as well as the causes, aims, and consequences of these revolts, have yet to be comprehensively examined and objectively assessed through in-depth research. Some European historians have approached the issues of this period subjectively, emphasizing negative aspects and interpreting the historical events through the prism of religious conservatism, thereby misdirecting their research. As a result, it was impossible to objectively evaluate the internal and external policies of the Safavid state, as well as its social and cultural development. Moreover, some researchers regarded the Safavids' acceptance of Shiism as the state religion as a factor that contributed to the fragmentation of the Turkic world and the confrontation with the Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that in Soviet-era historiography, particularly in works by authors of Russian and Armenian origin, a more subjective and one-sided approach is observed regarding the issues under study. This research is specifically devoted to the study of the internal situation of the Azerbaijani Safavid state during its final period and the uprisings against both central and local authorities within Soviet historiography.

Soviet historians such as A.P. Novoseltsev¹, Sh. Huseynov², M. Heydarov³, and others economically studied the history of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, linking the decline to economic factors, yet they did not provide detailed information on the causes and course of the uprisings. In this regard, utilizing primary sources to investigate the political, economic, and social processes during the final period of the Safavid dynasty, particularly the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn, and giving them an accurate historical assessment is among the pressing and necessary tasks for modern Azerbaijani historiography.

The study of the history of the late 17th and early 18th centuries based on Soviet-era historiography and its comparative analysis can be considered an innovation in Azerbaijani historical science. Within the framework of this research, issues related to resistance against the authority have been analyzed using primary sources, and the works of Azerbaijani, Russian, Central Asian, Dagestani, British, Georgian, and Armenian authors active during the Soviet period have been examined. To ensure an objective outcome in the research, contemporary publications have also been consulted.

Scientific interest and research approaches to the historical issues of the Azerbaijani Safavid state began to take shape for the first time during the Soviet period. The Soviet national policy had a wavelike character. Researchers divide the development of this policy into six main periods. The first period, termed “Revolution and Civil War (1917–1925),” is characterized by the establishment of national republics and the declaration of the right of nations to self-determination. Examining the works of A. Pakhomov⁴ and V. Sisoyev⁵, authors of comprehensive general works on Azerbaijani history, it becomes apparent that these works were written in a generalizing manner, and the

¹ Новосельцев, А.П. Города Азербайджана и Восточной Армении в XVII – XVIII вв. // – Москва: АН СССР, История СССР, – 1959. №1, – с. 87–108.

² Гусейнов, Ш.С. Последствия налоговой политики шаха султан Гусейна и Надир шаха для экономики Азербайджана // – Баку, серия общественных наук, – 1961. №4, – с. 11–23.

³ Гейдаров, М.Х. Социально-экономические отношения и ремесленные организации в городах Азербайджана в XIII–XVII вв / М.Х. Гейдаров. – Баку: Элм, – 1987. – 212 с.

⁴ Пахомов, Е.А. Краткий курс истории Азербайджана / Е.А.Пахомов. – Баку: Общество Обследования и Изучения Азербайджан, – 1923. – 48 с.

⁵ Сысоев, В.М. Краткий очерк истории Азербайджана (Северного) / В.М. Сысоев. – Баку, – 1925. – 146 с.

events of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, especially uprisings and protests, were approached superficially.

During the second period, known as “Positive Discrimination (1926–1939),” the Soviet Union applied different approaches to local nations and ethnic groups, facilitating the development of national cadres, and the preservation and advancement of cultures and languages.

When discussing works written on the history of Azerbaijan in the early 18th century at the end of the 1920s, Y. Zevakin’s⁶ extensive article deserves special mention. Written in 1927, the work addressed Russia’s invasion of Azerbaijan between 1722 and 1735 and the economic conditions of the Caspian provinces under Russian occupation. Unlike other historians of his time, Y. Zevakin accurately assessed the attitude of the local population towards Russia and rejected the concept of “voluntary annexation.”

During the third period, “the rise of Russian nationalism (1940–1955),” the policy of Russification came to the forefront, and the promotion of the Russian language and culture was emphasized more strongly.

Soviet historian V.N. Leviatov was the first to study the events of Azerbaijan’s 18th-century history in historiography.⁷ Although Leviatov’s 1940s work focused primarily on analyzing the economic and political conditions of the period studied, he also provided detailed information on the movements led by Haji Davud and Surkhay Khan, Peter I’s campaigns in the Caspian provinces, Russo-Ottoman rivalry in the region, and the status of territories under Russian and Ottoman control in the 1720s and 1730s. Leviatov noted that the movement affected not only political changes in Shirvan and its surroundings but was also closely connected with Dagestan. The work emphasized that the movement’s main objective was not only opposition to Iranian (Safavid – Shah Sultan Husayn) rule but also ensuring the participation of Dagestan and other regions.

The role of Soviet Orientalist I.P. Petrushevsky, who wrote

⁶ Зевакин, Е.С. Прикаспийские провинции в эпоху русской оккупации XVIII века // – Баку: Известия Общества исследования и изучения Азербайджана, – 1927, №5, – с. 133

⁷ Левиатов, В.Н. Очерки из истории Азербайджана в XVIII века / В.Н. Левиатов. – Баку: АН АзССР, – 1948. – 225 с.

works based on archival materials in the 1940s, should also be especially noted.⁸ Petrushevsky gave superficial information about the uprisings, noting that rebellions occurred among Afghans, Kurds, Lezgins, and Armenians as a result of brutal repression and looting. He also provided information about uprisings in Tabriz and Georgia.

We should particularly note the 1925 work of Russian historian V.P. Lystsov⁹, “*Peter I’s Persian Campaign, 1722–1723.*” Although this work mainly focuses on Peter I’s campaign to the Caspian coastal provinces, it also addresses many issues relevant to our research. While providing information on the Haji Davud uprising, the author mentioned that “Azerbaijani and Dagestani rulers sought to become Ottoman subjects,” though further research has shown this claim to be inaccurate. It should be noted that Haji Davud sought independent rule in Shirvan, appealed to Peter I for military support, and, after being refused, turned to the Ottoman Sultan.

The fourth stage, called “Korenizatsiya (indigenization) and trust in national cadres (1956–1970),” saw some relaxation of national self-governance issues after Stalin’s death, although state control remained strong. This marked the beginning of a new ideological phase in the Soviet Union and created broad opportunities for social sciences, including history, literature, philosophy, and the arts in Azerbaijan. This is clearly reflected in Soviet-era works on Azerbaijani history. However, as Soviet censorship was not fully abolished, some works remained biased and portrayed Russia as the “great elder brother” and “savior.” Historians from this period include A.Guliyev¹⁰, F. Aliyev¹¹, T. Mustafayev¹², among others.

One of the earliest research works on the history of the 18th century was written by Alovzat Guliyev¹³ (1922–1969). A.N. Guliyev

⁸ Петрушевский, И.П. Очерки по истории феодальных отношений в Азербайджане и Армении в XVI – начале XIX вв. Ленинград, Из-во. ЛГУ, 1949, 382 с.

⁹ Лысцов, В.П. Персидский поход Петра I [1722–1723 гг.] / В.П.Лысцов. – Москва: МГУ, –1951. – 245 с.

¹⁰ Quliyev, Ə.N. Azərbaycan – Rusiya münasibətləri tarixindən (XV–XVIII əsrlər) / Ə.N.Quliyev. – Bakı: Renaissance – A, – 2015. – 56 s.

¹¹ Алиев, Ф.М. Антииранские выступления и борьба против турецкой оккупации в Азербайджане в I половине XVIII в / Ф.М. Алиев. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1975. – 230 с.

¹² Мустафазаде, Т.Т. Азербайджан и русско – турецкие отношения в первой трети XVIII в / Т.Т.Мустафазаде. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1993. – 240 с

¹³ Quliyev, Ə.N. Azərbaycan – Rusiya münasibətləri tarixindən (XV–XVIII əsrlər) / Ə.N.Quliyev. – Bakı: Renaissance – A, – 2015. – 56 s.

presented the events of the 18th century in accordance with Soviet ideology, portraying Russia as the savior and interpreting the uprisings as “popular movements” with social and religious grounds.

The period from 1971 to 1985 is characterized by increasing contradictions in national policy. During this time, the strengthening of national cadres continued, but simultaneously, a harsh policy of Russification was implemented.

One of the main researchers of the events that took place in the early 18th century during the Soviet period was Azerbaijani historian Fuad Aliyev, who deeply studied Russia–Azerbaijan relations of that period based on primary sources and archival documents. Several works by F. Aliyev, who directly researched the period under study, were used during the dissertation research. Although Fuad Aliyev was among the first historians in Azerbaijani Soviet historiography to examine Russia–Azerbaijan relations from economic, political, military, and social perspectives, traces of Soviet ideology are clearly felt in his works. Additionally, the author’s one-sided stance and certain justification of Russia stemmed from Soviet ideological pressures. It is an undeniable fact that the historian thoroughly investigated the causes and consequences of the events of the 18th century based on primary sources. However, the author’s conformity to the demands of the Soviet era and failure to assess events from an objective political perspective are considered results of ideological pressure.

In his 1975 work titled “Anti-Iranian Uprisings and the Struggle Against Ottoman Occupation in Azerbaijan in the First Half of the 18th Century,”¹⁴ the author illuminated Azerbaijan’s political situation during the specified period, especially the uprising led by Haji Davud. For the first time in historiography, the work conducted an in-depth study of the course, driving forces, goals, and character of the uprising. The author portrayed uprisings in Shirvan and other regions of the Safavid Empire as “people’s liberation movements” against the oppression of Iran (Safavid – F. A.). Contrary to previous authors, he noted that the insurgents attacked the city of Shamakhi once in 1721 and that the movement was hidden under a religious guise.

During the study of the topic, the author’s work, which used

¹⁴ Алиев, Ф.М. Антииранские выступления и борьба против турецкой оккупации в Азербайджане в I половине XVIII в / Ф.М. Алиев. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1975. – 230 с.

A.P. Volynsky's travel notes, was also referenced.¹⁵ In studying the internal political situation in Azerbaijan, the activities of the Shah, Etimad-ud-Dowleh, and other central government representatives, as well as analyzing the lesser-studied Ahar uprising in Azerbaijani historiography, F. Aliyev's work was consulted. The author's extensive use of terms such as "Iranian shahs" and "Iran" in his works clearly shows the influence of Soviet ideology.

Dr. Tofiq Mustafazadeh¹⁶, who researched various 18th-century issues, examined Azerbaijan's relations with Russia and Turkey during the Soviet period and touched on Azerbaijan's inclination toward Russia. He tried to demonstrate the "progressive" role of the Russian state in Azerbaijan's development in his Soviet-era writings. Although Soviet ideological influence is clearly evident in these works, their role in studying 18th-century Azerbaijani history is undeniable. It should also be noted that in his works written after Azerbaijan regained independence, the author is seen referring directly to primary sources and reflecting an objective historical reality.¹⁷

The last period is called "Perestroika and the Rise of National Movements (1986–1991)," during which the independence tendencies of national republics strengthened and ultimately led to the collapse of the USSR.

Based on this division, the main goal of the newly established Soviet state was to permeate socialist ideology into all spheres of society and to form a unified society composed of citizens loyal to the Soviet regime's interests and serving it faithfully. This dissertation holds scientific and topical significance in terms of analyzing the ideological pressures exerted on historical science during the Soviet era, the policies directed against social sciences, and Moscow's activities in this regard. By investigating the causes of the decline of the Azerbaijani Safavid state, it becomes possible to understand the political landscape of the period and the internal conditions of the empire's various regions.

A comparative analysis of the events in the late 17th and early 18th centuries based on Azerbaijani, Georgian, Armenian, as well as

¹⁵ Алиев, Ф.М. Миссия посланника русского государства А.П. Волынского в Азербайджане / Ф.М.Алиев – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1979. – 122 с.

¹⁶ Mustafayev, T.T. XVIII əsrin birinci yarısında Azərbaycanca Rusiyaya meylin güclənməsi / T.T.Mustafayev. – Bakı: Elm, – 1986. – 88 s.

¹⁷ Мустафазаде, Т.Т. Азербайджан и русско – турецкие отношения в первой трети XVIII в / Т.Т.Мустафазаде. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1993. – 240 с.

Dagestani, Central Asian, Turkish, and English historiographical sources shows that many authors presented the Safavid state as the “Iranian state.” This approach is mainly explained by the influence of Soviet ideology. The formation of this approach was largely due to the influence of Soviet historiography, especially the ideological management of national identity issues. In Turkish historiography, the term “Iran” is mostly used in a geographic sense, although certain political influences are also noticeable. However, modern Azerbaijani historiography reflects a clear removal of these Soviet-era inaccuracies, with a more objective view of the Safavid state being presented.

During the research, a comparative analysis was conducted on the works of georgian historians V. Bagrationi¹⁸, T.Q.Natroshvili¹⁹, V.Papava²⁰ and V.D.Dondua²¹; armenian historians A.R.Ioannisyan²², G.A.Ezov²³, M.G.Nersisyan²⁴, P.T.Arutyunyan²⁵, T.Avakimova²⁶, G.A.Saroyan²⁷; Western scholars A.J.Newman²⁸, L.Lockhart²⁹,

¹⁸ Багратиони, В. История царства грузинского / В.Багратиони. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1976. – 197 с.

¹⁹ Натрошвили, Т.Г. От машрика до магриба. Пер. с груз. / Т.Г.Натрошвили. – Москва: Наука, – 1978. – 198 с.

²⁰ Папава, В. Иран от династии Сефевидов до династии Афшаридов // – Тбилиси: Материал опубликован в журнале «Караван», – 2019. №69, – с. 1–14

²¹ История Грузии I. С древнейших времен до 60–х годов XIX века / Н.А.Бердзенишвили, В.Д.Дондуа, Г.А.Меликишвили [и др.]. – Тбилиси: Государственное издательство учебно – педагогической литературы, – 1962. – 253 с.

²² Иоаннисян, А.Р. Присоединение Закавказья к России и международные отношения в начале XIX столетия / А.Р. Иоаннисян. – Ереван: АН Арм ССР, –1958. – 447 с.

²³ Эзов, Г.А. Сношения Петра Великого с армянским народом / Г.А.Эзов. – Спб: Тип. Императорской Российской Академии, – 1898. – 681 с.

²⁴ Нерсисян, М.Г. История армянского народа с древнейших Ереван [электронный ресурс] / Ереван: Ереванского университета, – 1980. – 357 с.

²⁵ Арутюнян, П.Т. Освободительное движение армянского народа в первой четверти XVIII века / П.Т. Арутюнян. – Москва: АН ССР, – 1954. – 307 с.

²⁶ Тер-Авакимова, С.А. Армяно – русские отношения в период подготовки Персидского похода / С.А. Тер-Авакимова. – Ереван: АН Арм. ССР, – 1980. – 127 с.

²⁷ Сароян, Г.А. История армянского народа в кратком изложении / Г.А. Сароян. –Краснодар: Фамилия, – 2015. – 48 с.

²⁸ Newman, A. J. Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire / A.J.Newman. – London: London-New York, – 2006. – 281 p.

²⁹ Lockhart, L. The fall of the Safavi dynasty and the afghan occupation of Persia / L.Lockhart. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, – 1958. – p. 583.

R.M.Savory³⁰, Rudi Matthee³¹; Dagestani historians A.A.R.Abdulgaliimov³², A.D.Davudov³³, D.M.Mirzabekova³⁴, A.A.Butayev³⁵, V.G.Hajiyev³⁶ and Turkish historians İ.H. Uzunçarşılı³⁷, Mahmut Biy³⁸, Ali Bademci³⁹, Yaşar Baş⁴⁰ focusing on the political events and uprisings that occurred in Azerbaijan and neighboring regions during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. As a result of this analysis, it was determined that despite the ideological biases present in many of these works, they also contain valuable information about the historical events of the period.

To create an objective picture of the studied period, conduct comparative analyses, and reveal historical truth, the dissertation utilized primary sources. The main part of these sources consists of Russian-language materials, travelogues, and diplomatic documents.

Among the local sources, the work of Yesai Hasan Jalal⁴¹ (1702–1722) is of special importance. It extensively illuminates the increasing tendencies of decentralization during the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn, the effects of tax policies, and consequently the deepening socio-

³⁰Savory, R.M. Iran under the Safavids / R.M.Savory. – Cambridge, – 1980. – 277 p.

³¹Matthee, P. R. Persia in crisis Safavid decline and the fall of Isfahan / P.R.Matthee. – London: I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd, – 2012. – 419 p.

³²Абдулгалимов, А.Р. Союзники и сподвижники Хаджи Давуда // Вестник Социально – Педагогического Института, – 2017. №2 [22], – s. 39–42.

³³Давудов, А.Д. Исторические письма и высказывания Хаджи Давуда. // Вестник Социально–Педагогического Института. №2 (22), 2017, 39–42с.

³⁴Мирзабекова, Д.М. Исторический взгляд на Хаджи Давуда / Д.М.Мирзабекова, З.М.Курбанов // Вестник социально – педагогического института, – 2017, №2 [22], – с. 36–39.

³⁵Бутаев, А.А. Народно–освободительное движение на Восточном Кавказе под руководством Хаджи Давуда Мюшкюрского [первая треть XVIII века] / А.А. Бутаев. – Махачкала: Мавел, – 2006. – 159 с.

³⁶Гаджиев, В.Г. История Дагестана / В.Г.Гаджиев. – Москва: Восточной литературы, т.1. – 1967. – 430 с.

³⁷Uzunçarşılı, İ.H. Osmanlı tarihi [IV cilt] / İ.H. Uzunçarşılı. – Ankara: Türk tarih kurumu basımevi, – bölüm.1. – 1988. – 687 s.

³⁸Bi, M. Kafkas tarihi 2 / M. Bi. – Ankara: Berikan yayınevi, – 2011. – 886 seh.

³⁹Bademci, A. Şamanizmden kızılbaşlığa şiilğin türkmen yüzü / A.Bademci. – İstanbul: Çizgi kitabevi, – 2019. – 520 s.

⁴⁰Baş, Y. Şirvan hanı Hacı Davud, siyasi mücadelesi, sürgün hayatı ve ailesi // Ekev akademi dergisi. İl 18, sayı 58, – 2014. – s.629 – 646.

⁴¹Джалальян, Е.Х. Краткая история страны Албанской [1702–1722гг.] / Е.Х. Джалальян. – Баку: Элм, – 1989. – 45 с.

political crisis in the country, especially the events in Shamakhi.

One of the first to systematically collect materials concerning the studied period was Abbasgulu agha Bakikhanov⁴². His work “Gulistani-Iram,” written in Persian in 1841, laid the foundation of Azerbaijani historiography. The work comprehensively describes the main political events of the period, as well as Azerbaijan’s relations with Russia and the Ottoman Empire.

In studying the late period of the Safavid state, travel accounts, memoirs, and diaries of foreign authors who visited the region during that time serve as important sources. Reports from diplomatic representatives, as well as treaties and agreements concluded, have also played a crucial role in uncovering the essence of many events. In this regard, the works of A.P. Volynski⁴³, A.I. Lopukhin⁴⁴, J.Bel⁴⁵, Y.T.Krushinski⁴⁶, A.D. Efendi⁴⁷, J. Hanway⁴⁸, J. Chardin⁴⁹, E. Kempfer⁵⁰, and other authors hold significant importance.

Object and Subject of Research. The object of the study is the

⁴² Bakıxanov, A. A. *Gülüstani-İ İrəm* / A.A. Bakıxanov. – Bakı: Möminin, – 2001. – 225 s.

⁴³ Алиев, Ф.М. Миссия посланника русского государства А.П. Волынского в Азербайджане / Ф.М.Алиев – Баку: Элм, – 1979. – 122 с.

⁴⁴ Лопухин, А.И. Журнал путешествия через Дагестан 1718 г. История, география и этнография XVI – XIX вв. // Архивные материалы. Москва: Издательство восточной литературы, – 1958. – с. 6 – 58

⁴⁵ Белл, Д. Белеви путешествие через Россию в разных Азиатские земли, а именно: Пекин, Дербенд и Константинополь [Перевод с французского М.Попов] Ч. 2 / Д.Белл. – СПб: Императорская академия наук, – 1776. – 250 с.

⁴⁶ Kruşinski, Y.T. *Xristian səyyahın tarixi. Farscadan tərcümə edən Ş.Fərzəliyev / Y.T.Kruşinski.* – Bakı: Azərbaycan Dövlət nəşriyyatı, – 1993. – 105 s.

⁴⁷ Ürkündağ, A. *Ahmet Dürri Efendinin İran Sefaretnamesi / Yüksek lisans tezi.* – Afyon: Kocatepe üniversitesi sosyal bilimler enstitüsü, – 2006, – 140 s.

⁴⁸ Hanway, J. *An historical account of the British trade over the Caspian Sea: with the author’s journal of Travels from England through Russia into Persia and back through Russia, Germany and Holland / J.Hanway.* – London, – vol.1. – 1762, – 460 p.

⁴⁹ Chardin, J. *Voyages de Monsieur le chevalier Chardin en Perse, et autres lieux de l’Orient* Amsterdam, J.Chardin. – Jean – Louis de Lorme, 1711. In translation of R. Savory, vol V.

⁵⁰ İsmayilov, Ş.N. XVII yüzilliyin 80 – 90 – cı illərində Səfəvi dövlətinin sosial – iqtisadi həyatı (Sanson və Engelbert Kempferin “Səyahətnaməsi” əsasında): / Tarix üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru dis. / – Bakı, 2013. – 163 s.

political processes that took place in the Azerbaijani Safavid state during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, particularly the uprisings and revolts directed against the central authority, as well as the ways in which these events have been represented in Azerbaijani, Georgian, Armenian, Dagestani, Russian, Turkish, Western, and other historiographical approaches.

The subject of the presentation is the analysis of the causes, socio-political nature, course, and consequences of the uprising led by Haji Davud, alongside other local movements during the studied period, as reflected in the historiographies of various countries — especially Soviet, post-Soviet, and contemporary research. This includes a comparative examination of ideological influences, methodological approaches, and terminological differences within these representations.

The goals and objectives of the research. The study of the history of the Azerbaijani Safavid state in the late 17th and early 18th centuries is one of the essential issues in Safavid studies. Although numerous works have been written on the history of the Safavid state in Azerbaijani historiography, the analysis of information available in Soviet historiography concerning the late period of the Safavid state, the presentation of subjective data, and the accurate evaluation of events have yet to be fully realized.

The primary objective of this dissertation is to examine and evaluate the economic and political crisis, the weakening of the empire, and the uprisings and revolts that occurred in the Azerbaijani Safavid state during the late 17th and early 18th centuries based on Soviet historiography. Using primary sources and scholarly works, a comparative analysis will be conducted and conclusions drawn.

To achieve the stated objectives, the following tasks have been identified:

1. To engage historiographical materials related to the economic and political crisis in the Safavid state during the late 17th and early 18th centuries and to analyze them comparatively;
2. To investigate Shah Sultan Hussein's tax policy and its impact on the deepening of the crisis based on Soviet historians' research and contemporary sources;

3. To demonstrate the main causes of the weakening of the Azerbaijani Safavid empire using Soviet historiographical materials;
4. To clarify the attitudes of Soviet historians toward the uprisings against the central authority during the late period of the Safavid empire;
5. To present the positions of Azerbaijani, Turkish, English, Georgian, Dagestani, Central Asian, and Armenian authors regarding the uprisings in the Safavid empire;
6. To elucidate the depiction of the uprising led by Haji Davud in Shirvan within Soviet historiography;
7. To examine and evaluate the representation of uprisings in the Afghan province and other regions of the Safavid state in Soviet historiography.

Research Methods. Systematic application of historical research methods was employed in the preparation of the dissertation. During the study of Soviet historiography related to the topic, comparative analysis and analytical approaches were utilized. Primary sources from the research period were examined, and alongside Soviet historiography, local and foreign historiographical works were also subjected to comparative analysis. Additionally, by employing a systematic and comprehensive approach, the facts presented in the dissertation were substantiated with abundant sources. Furthermore, through individual evaluation methods, the strengths and weaknesses of the works were identified and discussed within the dissertation.

Main issues defended. The main theses submitted for defense in accordance with the objectives and tasks of the research are as follows:

1. To conduct a comparative analysis of the information presented in Soviet historiography regarding the economic crisis that occurred in the Safavid state in the late 17th – early 18th centuries;
2. To examine the approaches of Soviet historians in determining the internal and foreign policies of the Safavid ruler Shah Sultan Husayn;
3. To identify the inadequately evaluated reasons for the weakening of the Safavid Empire in Soviet historiography;
4. To investigate the reasons behind the characterization of the uprisings against the central authority in the late Safavid period

- as “popular uprisings” within Soviet historiography;
5. To analyze the separatist nature of the movement led by Haji Davud, which Soviet historiography described as being disguised under religious pretexts and having peasant and popular liberation characteristics;
 6. To study and deeply analyze, based on primary sources, a number of uprisings that occurred in various regions of Azerbaijan in the late 17th – early 18th centuries but were overlooked in Soviet historiography;
 7. To investigate the causes and consequences of the uprisings in the Kandahar province and other regions of the Safavid state within Soviet historiographical discourse.

Scientific novelty of the research. The main points substantiating the scientific novelty of the dissertation are as follows:

1. All objectives set forth in the dissertation were investigated and evaluated based on a comparative analysis of Soviet historiography and primary sources;
2. For the first time, research works of homeland, Turkish, Georgian, Dagestani, Central Asian, and Armenian historians—mainly those from the Soviet period—related to the studied era were systematically incorporated into the research;
3. Historiographical materials were grouped according to the periods covered by Soviet national policy, and comparative analyses were conducted;
4. The uprisings and revolts that occurred in the Safavid state in the early 18th century were studied in Soviet historiography from three aspects—religious, regional, and ethnic composition—and for the first time became the object of research;
5. The dissertation applied the periodization principle in line with Soviet national policy, systematically grouping and analyzing the positions of Soviet-era historians within this framework. This approach enabled tracing Soviet ideological influences stage by stage in the research;
6. The uprising against the central authority in the Shirvan region in the early 18th century was characterized as having separatist tendencies;

7. The uprisings that took place in other regions against the Safavid state during the first quarter of the 18th century were assessed as separatist movements;
8. The ideas of Soviet historians, distorted under the influence of Soviet ideology, were critically examined in the dissertation in light of the current demands of Azerbaijani historical science, and new objective perspectives were presented;
9. The dissertation deeply investigated uprisings and protests against the central authority in the late 17th – early 18th centuries, which had been neglected in Soviet historiography, and presented the historical truth about these uprisings.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The dissertation holds scientific and theoretical as well as practical significance in uncovering new findings and historical truths through a comparative analysis of data obtained from primary sources and Soviet historiography. Accordingly, it can be noted that the main provisions and conclusions of the dissertation may be utilized in new research works, comprehensive studies on the history of the Safavid Empire of Azerbaijan, textbooks, teaching materials, as well as lectures, seminars, and specialized courses designed for higher education institutions.

Approval and application of the dissertation. The dissertation titled “Rebellions and Uprisings Against the Authority in the Safavid State of Azerbaijan in the Late 17th – Early 18th Centuries (Based on Soviet Historiography)” was completed at the Department of Azerbaijani History (for natural sciences faculties) of the Faculty of History at Baku State University. The main provisions and results of the dissertation have been presented by the author at international and national scientific conferences and are reflected in published theses and articles.

The name of the institution where the dissertation work was performed. The dissertation was carried out at the Department of Azerbaijani History (for natural sciences faculties) of the Faculty of History, Baku State University.

The total volume of the dissertation. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, six subsections, a conclusion, and a list of references. The cover and table of contents contain 1108 char-

acters; the introduction – 38547 characters; Chapter I – 55918 characters; Chapter II – 60498 characters; Chapter III – 44408 characters; the conclusion – 8223 characters; and the list of references – 25729 characters. The total length of the dissertation is 208702 characters, comprising 121 pages.

II. MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION WORK

The "**Introduction**" section of the dissertation includes facts demonstrating the relevance of the research topic. It also contains an analysis of sources and literature, outlines the objectives and tasks of the dissertation, defines its chronological framework, theoretical-methodological basis, and practical significance. Additionally, the main scientific innovations of the study are briefly summarized in this section.

The first chapter of the dissertation is titled "**The Safavid State of Azerbaijan in the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries (Based on Soviet Historiography)**" and consists of two subchapters. The first subchapter is entitled "**The Economic and Political Crisis in the Safavid State.**"

From the 1670s–1680s onwards, the initial signs of economic and political crisis began to emerge in the Azerbaijani Safavid Empire. An analysis of Soviet historical literature reveals that various causes were identified for the economic and political crisis that occurred in the territories of the Azerbaijani Safavid state during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. In an attempt to counteract the economic crisis, the Safavid administration granted certain concessions to representatives of European states. Natural disasters, epidemics, diseases, widespread famine, and scarcity of food further exacerbated the economic downturn. A comparative analysis of the works of various authors consulted in this study to examine the crisis indicates that, by the late 17th and early 18th centuries, public discontent over food shortages and the decline in state revenue had significantly undermined the functioning of the royal court. During this period, the weakening of central authority led provincial governors and military commanders to show increasing disregard for orders from the center, while within the court, bribery became widespread as a means to gain political position and privilege. These issues have been discussed in Soviet, English, and modern

Azerbaijani historiography and are also reflected in primary sources.

Although the religious policy implemented during the reign of Shah Sultan Husayn received relatively little attention in Soviet historiography, English historians devoted more focus to this subject and proposed diverse interpretations. At the same time, Soviet and English historiographies largely concurred on the role of Etemad-ud-Dowleh Fatali Khan in the Safavid court. Research shows that in Soviet historiography, the Qizilbash were generally portrayed as being of Persian origin, while the Safavid state was characterized as an Iranian polity, with sectarian matters emphasized within the ideological framework of Marxism–Leninism. In contrast, modern Azerbaijani historiography has criticized this perspective and, based on primary sources, has demonstrated that the state traditions of the Safavids were rooted in the Turkic ethno-cultural heritage and that, in essence, the state belonged to the Azerbaijani Turks.

The second subsection of the dissertation, titled “**The Tax Policy of Shah Sultan Husayn and the Deepening of the Crisis,**” focuses on the country’s economic decline and the consequences of the census implemented to replenish the state treasury, along with the outcomes of the Shah’s fiscal policies.

In Soviet historiography, the late 17th to early 18th centuries were characterized as a period of internal weakening for the Safavid state. Based on historical literature, it is noted that during this time the state treasury was depleted. As a result, the royal court and government officials sought to generate additional financial resources by increasing the tax burden and initiating large-scale census and taxation campaigns. Assertions regarding the intensification of taxation are supported by contemporary sources from the period.

Shah Sultan Husayn, one of the last rulers of the Azerbaijani Safavids, is generally portrayed in a negative light. His political ineffectiveness, lack of willpower, detachment from state governance, and susceptibility to the influence of courtiers were frequently emphasized. This perspective, particularly prevalent among Russian Soviet and English researchers, portrayed the Shah’s weakness as emblematic of the broader decline of the state. In contrast, Georgian Soviet historiography depicted some of Shah Sultan Husayn’s personal qualities

more positively—especially his mild and humane disposition—thus diverging from other branches of Soviet historiography. Some Soviet historians, however, argued that attributing the fall of the state solely to a single individual—Shah Sultan Husayn—was unscientific and stressed the importance of analyzing the decline in terms of broader social and economic factors.

Thus, Soviet historiography presented a range of perspectives on the causes of the crisis during the final phase of the Safavid state. A comparative analysis of these views indicates that the fall of the Safavid state was not merely the result of individual shortcomings or flawed political leadership. Rather, it was shaped by long-term structural issues, social injustice, economic deterioration, and the weakening of central authority. While the Shah's weakness was one of the contributing factors to the collapse, portraying it as the sole or primary cause is inconsistent with the principles of historical scholarship.

The second chapter of the dissertation is titled **“Rebellions and Uprisings in Various Regions of the Safavid State (Based on Soviet Historiography),”** and it is divided into two subsections. The first subsection is titled **“Rebellions Against the Central Government in Azerbaijan.”**

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, large-scale uprisings occurred across various territories of the Safavid Empire, including Azerbaijan, in response to oppressive taxation and social injustice. The population refused to pay taxes and other economic obligations, actively protesting against tax collectors and, in some cases, resorting to armed resistance. While the main causes of these uprisings were tax-related burdens and social inequality, a distinctive feature was the pronounced tendency toward regional separatism. According to Soviet historiography, the late 17th and early 18th centuries saw numerous rebellions in different parts of the Azerbaijani Safavid state, primarily driven by economic grievances. Soviet historians often highlighted religious and sectarian differences as central elements in these uprisings.

Although Soviet historiography provides extensive information on the revolts in Ahar, Jar-Balakan, Mugan, Tabriz, Syunik, and Shirvan, it offers only superficial accounts of the uprisings in regions such

as Qabala (in Shirvan) and Nakhchivan, leaving their causes and consequences insufficiently explored. This research has undertaken a more comprehensive approach to these events, incorporating both primary sources and historical literature in an effort to reconstruct an accurate historical narrative.

Soviet Azerbaijani historiography also noted that the suppression of these uprisings posed significant challenges for the Qizilbash elite, attributing these difficulties to the weakening of the central government. In Georgian Soviet historiography, however, special emphasis was placed on the role of Georgian forces in suppressing the uprisings. Presenting them as the decisive power reflects a one-sided interpretation of the events.

The second subsection of Chapter II is titled **“The Uprising in Shirvan Led by Haji Davud and Its Consequences.”**

Among the uprisings that occurred in the early 18th century in the Azerbaijani Safavid state, the Shirvan uprising stands out for its significance. This issue has been extensively studied in Azerbaijani Soviet historiography. Although Soviet historians emphasized sectarian discrimination as the primary cause, research shows that religious factors were often used as tools to mobilize the population and legitimize the opposition to central authority, rather than being the root cause of the unrest.

Most 19th- and 20th-century authors approached the uprising led by Haji Davud with a lack of objectivity, which hindered a full understanding of the events. While some sources described the Shirvan revolt as a popular liberation movement, the course of events and the orientation of its leadership indicate that the uprising had a largely separatist character. Its direct opposition to the central government and its role in the disintegration of the state reinforce this conclusion.

Historians from various backgrounds—Soviet, Dagestani, and British—offered differing interpretations of Haji Davud’s role. Dagestani scholars portrayed him as a symbol of national liberation, whereas British researchers considered the uprising a response to the abuses committed by the governor of Shirvan. In contrast, Soviet historiography either ignored or only briefly mentioned the role of European powers in the region. Relations with the Ottoman Empire were

typically depicted in a hostile context, while ties with Russia were exaggerated and presented in a friendly, allied framework.

Haji Davud's efforts to establish diplomatic relations with both the Ottoman and Russian empires, his control over vast territories, and his recruitment of allies from Dagestan demonstrate that the revolt evolved beyond a local rebellion into a separatist movement with political ambitions and connections to regional powers.

In conclusion, the Shirvan uprising was neither purely social nor religious in character. Historical evidence reveals that it was a politically driven separatist movement aimed against the central authority, with wide territorial scope and aspirations for foreign support. This made it one of the major factors that accelerated the fragmentation of the Safavid state.

Chapter III of the dissertation is entitled **“Reflections of Separatist Movements within the Safavid Empire in Soviet Historiography”** and is divided into two subsections. The first subsection is titled **“Rebellions in the Afghan Province of the Safavid State.”**

At the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, one of the most powerful and fatal uprisings for the Safavids was led by the Afghans. Krushinski explains the strengthening of the rebellions of the Afghan tribes—Gilzai and Abdali—against Safavid rule as a consequence of the harsh and unjust treatment by the Georgian Gurgin Khan, who was sent against them. During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, uprisings by Baluchs, Afghans, Abdalis, and other ethnic groups in the Kandahar beylerbeylik of the Azerbaijani Safavid state caused serious repercussions for the Qizilbash administration. The Soviet historiographical materials examined in this research provide only limited comprehensive analysis of these uprisings. To reconstruct an objective historical picture, primary sources and modern historiographical materials were included in the study, resulting in a more complete understanding of the nature of the rebellions in Kandahar, Kirman, and Balkh.

Based on the collected data, the Afghan leader Mir Wais, who led one of the major uprisings in the Kandahar province, used religious propaganda to influence the Qizilbash court and the local population. He succeeded in rallying Sunni groups dissatisfied with the Shiite regime, expanding the geographical scope of the uprising by exploiting

sectarian differences. These events paved the way for later uprisings led by the Gilzai tribes, which took on a broader scale. Soviet historiography attributes the causes of these uprisings primarily to increased taxation, the arbitrariness of central government representatives, and religious discrimination. However, comparative analysis of historiographical and source materials demonstrates that both uprisings were driven not only by economic and religious discontent but also pursued broader political objectives.

Thus, the Afghan and Gilzai uprisings in the Kandahar region of the Safavid state were not merely local events rooted in socio-economic and sectarian grounds but had separatist characteristics directed against the central government and posed a threat to the territorial integrity of the state. These uprisings exposed internal weaknesses and were significant factors accelerating the disintegration of the Safavid Empire.

The second subsection of Chapter III is titled **“Uprisings in Other Regions of the Empire.”**

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, uprisings and rebellions erupted in nearly every region of the Safavid Empire. Soviet historiography records that in 1709, the population of Tabriz revolted; in 1715, the Kurds; in 1717, the Shahsevan of Mugan; in 1720, the Lurs; in 1721, the Baluchs; in 1722, Armenians in Syunik and Georgians under the leadership of King Vakhtang VI in Eastern Georgia staged uprisings.

To suppress these uprisings, the Safavid government dispatched military forces to various regions—for example, Keykhosrow Khan to Shirvan, and Gurgin Khan against the Afghans. It should be noted that the deployment of military forces from the center was historically a common practice to preserve the existence and stability of the state. Such measures cannot be explained solely by religious discrimination or ethnic bias. Any rebellion or separatist initiative against the government was perceived as a threat to state stability, making direct central intervention inevitable.

Therefore, the uprisings that occurred in various regions of the Safavid Empire at the turn of the 17th to 18th centuries cannot be explained exclusively by economic and social reasons. These rebellions were especially pronounced in border regions of the empire—areas characterized by weak administrative control. Often forming around

religious and ethnic identities, these uprisings transcended local grievances and acquired a political character.

The “Conclusion” section of the dissertation summarizes the research findings, presents recommendations, and provides relevant scientific generalizations.

- For the first time, the dissertation offers a multifaceted and systematic investigation—rather than the superficial Soviet analyses—of the uprisings that occurred in Shirvan, Ahar, Isfahan, Kurdish regions, and other areas, taking into account political, social, economic, and ethnic dimensions. One notable finding highlights the ethnic diversity of the Kandahar rebellions. While Soviet-era historiography extensively covered revolts led by the Gilzai tribe, its accounts of uprisings involving Baluch, Abdali (or Durrani), Nurzai, Alkozai, Kakar, Tarin, and other ethnic groups remain cursory. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the rebellions across the Kandahar beylerbeylik — each driven by distinct ethnic motivations — and concludes that these revolts significantly weakened the Safavid state’s position in the region, yielding serious political and military repercussions for the empire as a whole.

- The observed similarities between the Shirvan uprising led by Haji Davud and the Gilzai rebellion under Mir Wais reflect a shared tendency toward regional autonomy. In both cases, participants engaged in destructive activities such as looting and banditry, and their leaders sought external military support—demonstrating that these movements relied not only on internal resources but also on foreign intervention. These factors substantiate the conclusion that the uprisings possessed a separatist character.

- Soviet historiography adopted a superficial approach to certain issues: the Safavid state was equated with “Iran,” and the Qizilbash were portrayed primarily as “Persians.” Sectarian questions (Shiism) were emphasized and aligned with Marxist–Leninist ideology, while notions of Turkic unity and partnership were entirely omitted. Such framing formed part of a broader policy aimed at marginalizing Turkish identity and eroding collective memory. However, research grounded in primary sources and contemporary Azerbaijani historiography demonstrates that these interpretations lack objectivity.

- Comparative analysis reveals that Soviet historiography did not adopt a unified perspective on the uprisings of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Instead, historiographical works from different Soviet republics offered divergent explanations aligned with their respective national ideological frameworks. Yet, primary sources and modern scholarship clarify that the majority of these uprisings transcended religious motivations, occurring in social, economic, and political contexts and exhibiting fundamentally separatist characteristics.

- It is recommended that a comparative examination of historiographical positions from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Dagestan, and Turkey be conducted. This approach would enable a more objective scientific appraisal of the events and serve as a valuable foundation for enhancing educational curricula and developing new scientific and methodological materials.

- The dissertation's methodological approaches can be applied to enrich Azerbaijani historiography's source base by incorporating newly accessible archival documents, diplomatic correspondence, and travelers' accounts.

- Further research into the separatist character of the uprisings and their relations with foreign powers could yield new insights within the field of international relations.

- The dissertation's findings can be employed as a basis for developing teaching resources and methodological guides in university history departments.

- The methodological approaches presented in the dissertation can be integrated into academic curricula, facilitating students' mastery not only of factual content but also of methodological frameworks.

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

1. XVII əsrin sonu - XVIII əsrin I rübü Səfəvi dövləti tarixinin sovet tarixşünaslığında əksinə dair // Tarix və onun problemləri. Nəzəri, elmi, metodik jurnal. Bakı, 2019, №4, s. 292 – 296.
2. The english historiography on the decline of Azerbaijan Safavids empire // Проблемы и перспективы в международном трансфере инновационных технологий сборник статей по итогам

- Международной научно-практической конференции. Стерлитамак, 2019, 18 февраля, П 781, с.57 – 60.
3. XVIII əsrin ilk onilliklərində Rusiyanın Qafqaz siyasəti (Sovet tarixşünaslığı əsasında) // Bakı Universitetinin xəbərləri, humanitar elmlər seriyası. Bakı, 2020, №3, s. 130 – 136.
 4. Səfəvilər dövlətinin tənəzzülü dövründə imperiyanın şərq ərazilərində separatçılıq hərəkətləri (T.Kruşinskinin “Xristian səyahının tarixi” əsəri əsasında) // Pedaqoji Universitetin xəbərləri. Bakı, 2020, №2, s. 92 – 99.
 5. Şirvan üsyanının iqtisadi səbəbləri (sovet tarixşünaslığı əsasında) // Bakı Dövlət Universiteti. Dünya azərbaycanlıları: tarix və müasirlik. IV Beynəlxalq elmi konfrans. 29-30 dekabr, 2021, Bakı, s. 53 – 56.
 6. XVIII əsrin əvvəllərində Azərbaycan Səfəvi dövlətinin iqtisadi vəziyyəti (sovet tarixşünaslığı əsasında) // Tarix, insan və cəmiyyət. Bakı, 2022, №2, s. 87 – 93.
 7. XVIII əsrin ilk onilliklərində Azərbaycanın siyasi, iqtisadi və sosial vəziyyəti (sovet tarixşünaslığı əsasında) // Qərbi Kaspi Universiteti. “Ortaçağ Azərbaycan tarixinin aktual problemləri” mövzusunda Respublika elmi-praktik konfransının materialları. 20 fevral, 2021, Bakı, s. 493 – 500.
 8. Azərbaycan Səfəvi imperiyasının tənəzzülünə dair tarixşünaslıq materiallarının qısa təhlili // Tarix və onun problemləri. Nəzəri, elmi, metodik jurnal. Bakı, 2023, №4, s.265 – 269.
 9. The trade relations of the Azerbaijan Safavids state at the end of the 17th century – the first decades of the 18th century (on the basis soviet historiography) // Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук. Украйна, 2023, № 61(3), с. 28 – 32.
 10. XVIII əsrin ilk onilliklərində Əfqanıstanda mərkəzi hakimiyyətə qarşı baş vermiş üsyanların sovet tarixşünaslığında əksi // Bakı Dövlət Universiteti. “Dünya azərbaycanlıları: tarix və müasirlik. V beynəlxalq elmi konfrans. 26 -27 dekabr, 2024, Bakı, s. 177 – 181.



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