

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

U.S. Caucasus policy (1992-2000)

Speciality: 5502.01 - General history

Field of Science: History

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Baku - 2025

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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance and level of development of the topic. In the context of fundamental changes in the international relations system, the velvet revolutions that emerged in Europe during the late 1980s and early 1990s, a transitional period led to the collapse of the socialist system. These developments strengthened the position of the United States within the newly established unipolar world order, while the economic potential and military power of the Russian Federation, which considered itself the successor of the USSR, significantly weakened. As a result, the United States emerged as the sole superpower, gaining broad opportunities to implement an active foreign policy strategy in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

During the mentioned period, the recognition of newly independent states and the establishment of relations with them became one of the main directions of the United States' foreign policy strategy. In line with this logic, from the early 1990s, the U.S. began to establish bilateral relations and develop cooperation with the newly independent states, particularly Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. At the same time, attention was also paid to security issues in the North Caucasus. These realities increase the relevance of the topic and make it important for further research.

In the context of the realities identified as a result of the research, there are a number of factors that determine the relevance of the study, and paying attention to these factors is of particular scientific importance in terms of thoroughly examining the topic.

It is important to remember that from 1991 to 1994, the United States primarily believed that Russia had influence over the Caucasus and favored a non-interventionist approach as long as its own interests were not in immediate danger. However, official Washington started to adopt a more forceful strategy to fortify U.S. interests in the Caucasus after the 1994 "Contract of the Century" was signed. Therefore, improving the efficacy of this research

requires determining the reasons behind and effects of changes in U.S. policy towards the Caucasus across particular time periods.

Azerbaijan's role within Washington's broader Caucasus policy can be more comprehensively assessed through a detailed comparative analysis of the United States' political, economic, and military relations with Georgia and Armenia. Such an approach not only enables the identification of fundamental differences in U.S. strategies towards the three South Caucasus states but also enhances the relevance and analytical depth of the research. The political significance of the topic is further underscored by the potential of the U.S. - Armenia dimension to shed light on the influence of lobbying efforts and the Armenian diaspora in shaping Washington's official stance towards Azerbaijan.

This study offers a scholarly analysis of the steps taken by the United States between 1992 and 2000 for the purpose of resolving regional disputes (Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Adjara) in the South Caucasus. While the position of the United States on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been examined to some extent in Azerbaijani academic discourse, the conflicts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Adjara have not received the same level of attention as independent subjects of research. Therefore, investigating these issues allows for a more comprehensive understanding of both the similarities and differences in U.S. policy towards conflict resolution in the South Caucasus during this period. These factors underscore the scientific and political relevance of analyzing the U.S. approach to regional conflicts.

The analysis of U.S. policy towards developments in the North Caucasus over the designated period is another element that highlights the study's significance. The fight for independence among the North Caucasus peoples grew more fierce once the Soviet Union broke up. The Chechen issue was the most notable example of attempts to gain independence amid escalating political tensions in Dagestan and Chechnya. Thus, it is especially important to examine the U.S. position on the Chechen independence movement, as well as its broader perspective on similar developments in Kabardino-

Balkaria, Ingushetia, Dagestan, and North Ossetia. An examination of this kind is essential for determining how official Washington handles security concerns in the North Caucasus.

It should be noted that as a result of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, Azerbaijan has resolved the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and restored its territorial integrity, thereby establishing a new geopolitical environment in the South Caucasus region. The successful domestic and foreign policy pursued by President I.Aliyev led to significant achievements for Azerbaijan in both military and political-diplomatic arenas. Furthermore, the global energy crisis triggered by Russia's aggression against Ukraine has further elevated Azerbaijan's role in ensuring global energy security. These realities have prompted leading world powers, including the United States, to adjust their foreign policy approaches not only towards Azerbaijan but also towards the entire South Caucasus region. Today, the United States seeks to position itself as one of the principal mediators in the negotiations aimed at normalizing Armenia-Azerbaijan relations and concluding a final peace agreement. In light of these developments, analyzing the evolution of U.S. policy in the Caucasus, particularly during the period from 1992 to 2000 remains highly relevant for understanding the shifts in Washington's regional strategy.

Throughout this investigation, a range of sources were used. Numerous works, monographs, and articles written by Azerbaijani, American, European, Turkish, Georgian, Russian, and Armenian scholars were consulted in the research.

National historiography should be the first area of focus. The necessity for a more thorough examination of U.S. strategy in the Caucasus cannot be overstated, especially because scholars have mostly concentrated on Azerbaijan-U.S. ties in the national historiography. Scholars like H.Pashayev, E.Nasirov, M.Gasimli, A.Hasanov, E.Nasibov, Y.Mahmudov, K.Shukurov, and others¹ have

¹Paşayev, H. Bir səfirin manifesti / H.Paşayev. - Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, - 2007. - 246 s; Qasımlı, M. Azərbaycan Respublikasının xarici siyasəti (1991-2003) / M.Qasımlı. - Bakı: Mürtəcim, - 2015. - 648 s; Nəsirov, E. Azərbaycan-ABŞ münasibətləri (1991-

studied the Armenia–Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh war as well as the relationship between Azerbaijan and the United States.

For researching the dynamics of the evolution of Azerbaijan-U.S. relations in a variety of fields, the writings of H. Pashayev², Azerbaijan's first ambassador to the United States, are important. The author's involvement in the events as a direct participant and executor enhances the works' scientific worth.

M.Gasimli's book³, which draws from a wealth of sources, offers a thorough examination of a variety of topics, including Azerbaijan's energy diplomacy and, most significantly, the US stance on the Armenia–Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

E.Nasirov's work⁴ is important for studying the U.S. stance on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the formation and evolution of Azerbaijan-U.S. political, economic, and humanitarian relations between 1991 and 1997. Although E.Nasibov covers a lot of ground on U.S. cooperation with Azerbaijan in the political, economic, and military domains in his monograph⁵, he only briefly discusses U.S. geostrategic interests in Georgia and Armenia.

The work authored by Y.Mahmudov and K.Shukurov⁶ holds substantial academic value in the context of studying the history of

1997-ci illər) / E.Nəsirov. - Bakı: Qanun, - 1998. - 133 s; Həsənov, Ə. Azərbaycan-ABŞ anlaşılmaz münasibətlərdən strateji tərəfdaşlığa doğru (oktyabr 1991-avqust 1997) / Ə.Həsənov. - Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti Nəşriyyatı, - 1997. - 101 s; Nəsibov, E. ABŞ və Türkiyənin Qafqaz geosiyasi regionunda strateji maraqları və Azərbaycan Respublikası monoqrafiyası / E.Nəsibov - Bakı: Azərənəşr, - 2006. - 312 s; Mahmudov, Y. Qarabağ real tarix, faktlar, sənədlər / Y.Mahmudov, K.Şükürov. - Bakı: Təhsil, - 2005. - 377 s;

²Paşayev, H. Bir səfirin manifesti / H.Paşayev.-Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, - 2007. - 246 s; Pashayev, H. Racing up to the hill. Selected papers of Azerbaijan's first ambassador to the United States of America / H. Pashayev. - New York: GSP, -2006. - 339 p.

³Qasımlı, M. Azərbaycan Respublikasının xarici siyasəti (1991-2003) / M.Qasımlı. - Bakı: Mürtəcim, - 2015. - 648 s.

⁴Nəsirov, E. Azərbaycan-ABŞ münasibətləri (1991-1997-ci illər) / E.Nəsirov. -Bakı: Qanun, - 1998. - 133 s.

⁵Nəsibov, E. ABŞ və Türkiyənin Qafqaz geosiyasi regionunda strateji maraqları və Azərbaycan Respublikası monoqrafiyası / E.Nəsibov. - Bakı: Azərənəşr, - 2006. -312 s.

⁶Mahmudov, Y. Qarabağ real tarix, faktlar, sənədlər / Y. Mahmudov, K.Şükürov. - Bakı: Təhsil, - 2005. - 377 s.

Karabakh. Of particular significance is the authors' comprehensive presentation of the region's historical background, geographical position, and territorial boundaries. Furthermore, the book provides well-documented evidence and credible sources regarding the acts of genocide perpetrated by Armenians against Azerbaijanis. In addition, the authors examine the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in detail, including the efforts undertaken towards its resolution.

In American and European historiography, works and articles authored by political scientists, statesmen, and historians such as H.Kissinger, Z.Brzezinski, M.Jeffrey, and N.McFarlane⁷ have primarily focused on the following issues:

- The foreign policy course of the B.Clinton administration;
- Key aspects of U.S. bilateral relations with regional countries;
- The U.S. stance on existing conflicts in the region;
- The role of the North Caucasus in U.S. policy towards Russian Federation.

H.Kissinger's monograph⁸ is highly valuable and essential for understanding the main directions and essence of U.S. foreign policy strategy. The work offers valuable insights into the foreign policy courses of several U.S. presidents, including the administrations of George H.W.Bush and B.Clinton. It is worth noting that Kissinger's recent interpretations of various issues related to U.S.-Russia Federation relations, especially given his reputation as a pro-Russia

⁷Kissinger, H. (çev: Kurt H.İ.) Diplomasi / H.Kissencer. - İstanbul: Kültür yayıncılık, - 2012. - 856 s; Bjezinski, Z. İkinci şans: Üç Prezident və Amerika fəvqəldövlətinin böhranı / Z.Bjezinski. - Bakı: Oğuz eli, - 2009. - 267 s. (Tərcümə:Əli Qara); Mankoff, J. Russian foreign policy. The return of Great Power Politics / J.Mankoff.-New York: Rowman, - 2009. - 359 s. Macfarlane, N. The reluctant partion: Georgia-U.S. relations p.79-95 / Kakachia K., Cecire M. Georgian foreign policy. The quest for sustainable security. Tbilisi: Stiftung, - 2013. - 219 p; Lynch, D. Engaing Eurasia's Separatist States. Unresolved conflicts and de-facto states / D. Lynch Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press - 2000. - 170 p.

⁸Kissinger, H. (çev: Kurt H.İ.) Diplomasi / H.Kissencer. - İstanbul: Kültür yayıncılık, - 2012. - 856 s

political analyst who has faced criticism within his own country provide clarifications and perspectives of particular interest.

In his book⁹, M.McKinnon discusses U.S.-Georgia relations, detailing Secretary of State J.Baker's visit to Georgia, U.S. military aid to Georgia, the appointment of R.Miles as ambassador, and his activities. The author substantiates with facts that the government of E.Shevardnadze placed special importance on relations with the United States.

N.McFarlane, in his article¹⁰, examines U.S.-Georgia relations during the periods of E.Shevardnadze and M.Saakashvili. The author acknowledges that "the Clinton administration initially preferred Russia to take a leading role in resolving conflicts in the Caucasus".

For understanding the main directions of the Clinton administration's foreign policy strategy, the work of Y.Goldgeier and M.McFaul¹¹ is significant. The book provides information on U.S.-Russia relations after the end of the Cold War. Additionally, it addresses the U.S. approach to security issues in the North Caucasus in the context of the Chechen wars.

Thus, the examination of American historiography indicates that American authors, guided by their country's interests, have generally adopted a neutral stance towards issues related to U.S. policy in the Caucasus, which has resulted in a somewhat biased perspective in their works. Nevertheless, their writings remain indispensable for the accurate study of the subject through comparative analysis.

The research topic has consistently been a focal point for Turkish historians as well. One of the primary reasons for this is Turkey's membership in NATO and its status as the United States' closest ally

⁹Makinnon, M. Renkli devrimlerin sırrı. Yeni Soğuk Savaş / M.Makinnon - Ankara: Başak, - 2008. - 378 s.

¹⁰Macfarlane, N. The reluctant partion: Georgia-U.S. relations p.79-95 / Kakachia K., Cecire M. Georgian foreign policy. The quest for sustainable security / N.Macfarlane. - Tbilisi: Stiftung, - 2013. - 219 p.

¹¹Goldgeier, M.J.Power and Purpose. U.S. Policy toward Russia after the Cold War / M. Goldgeier M. McFaul. - Washington: Brookings Institution Press, - 2003. - 475 p.

in the Near and Middle East. Another important factor is Turkey's role as a regional power with greater capacity to influence developments in the area. In this context, several works have been authored by Turkish scholars such as O.Mert, F.Karabayram, K.Kasim, N.Iyikan, and others¹².

The work of Turkish author O.Mert¹³ is particularly significant for studying the research topic. It provides detailed information on the regions of Ingushetia, Dagestan, North Ossetia, and Chechnya, as well as the Ossetian-Ingush conflict and the ethnic-political issues in the North Caucasus.

F.Karabayram's work¹⁴ offers an in-depth analysis of Russian-Georgian relations and the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, also addressing U.S.–Georgia military cooperation within this framework. Considering these aspects, Karabayram's research is important for investigating the causes of conflicts in the Caucasus and for their comparative analysis.

Regarding U.S. policy in the Caucasus, K.Kasim's work¹⁵ provides information on relations with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. In addition, the author places particular emphasis on energy and security issues. Kasim highlights the importance of the Turkish factor in U.S. Caucasus policy and explains the underlying reasons for this significance.

The Caucasus policy of the United States has also attracted the attention of Russian historians, resulting in several books and articles on the subject published in Russia. The primary reason for this

¹²Mert, O. Türkiye'nin Kafkasya politikası ve Gürcistan / O.Mert. - İstanbul: İQ Kültür sanat yayıncılık, - 2004. - 360 s; Karabayram, F. Rusya Federasyonunun Güney Kafkasya politikası / F.Karabayram. - Ankara: Lalezar kitabevi, - 2007. - 357 s. Kasım, K. Soğuk savaş sonrası Kafkasya / K.Kasım. - Ankara: USAK yayınları, - 2011. - 290 s; İyikan, N. Orta Asya ve Güney Kafkasya siyasi gelişmeler (1991-2010) / N.İyikan. - İstanbul: Hiperlink yayımları, - 2011. - 812 s.

¹³Mert, O. Türkiye'nin Kafkasya politikası ve Gürcistan / O.Mert. - İstanbul: İQ Kültür sanat yayıncılık, - 2004. - 360s

¹⁴Karabayram, F. Rusya Federasyonunun Güney Kafkasya politikası / F.Karabayram. - Ankara: Lalezar kitabevi, - 2007. - 357 s.

¹⁵Kasım, K. Soğuk savaş sonrası Kafkasya / K.Kasım. - Ankara: USAK yayınları, - 2011. - 290 s.

interest lies in the fact that after the end of the Cold War, official Moscow began taking serious steps to restore and strengthen its former influence in the Caucasus. Although the military-political rivalry with the U.S. lost some of its urgency within the new global order that emerged during this period, the Caucasus region remained of great strategic importance to Russia. Consequently, U.S. interests in the region became a central focus for Russian historians. The work by A. Protopolov, V. Kozmenko, and N. Elmanova¹⁶ discusses the changes in international relations during the last decades of the 20th century, the end of the military-political confrontation between capitalist and socialist systems, and the collapse of the USSR. Additionally, it touches upon various spheres of U.S.-Russia relations.

A. Shipov¹⁷ provides historical information on the Caucasus from the early 19th century through the early 21st century, including a detailed account of the conflict in Chechnya. Meanwhile, A. Zdravomislov¹⁸, in his monograph, sheds light on the Ossetian-Ingush conflict and the Chechen crisis, but does not address the position of the United States regarding the resolution of security issues in the North Caucasus.

The main directions of U.S. policy in the Caucasus have also drawn significant interest from Georgian scholars, given Georgia's long shared border with the North Caucasus. During the period under study, Georgian foreign policy faced critical choices, and this has added diverse perspectives to the political and scholarly discourse on the region. Consequently, several books and articles authored by Georgian researchers address U.S.-Georgia relations while highlighting Russia's pressures on official Tbilisi. Unlike the more

¹⁶Протополов, А. История международных отношений и внешней политики России / А.Протополов, В.Козменко, Н.Елманова. - Москва: Аспект пресс, - 2001. - 359 с.

¹⁷Шипов, А. Двуглавый орел над Кавказом 1804-2008 г / А. Шипов. - Москва: Вече, - 2009. - 446 с.

¹⁸Здравомыслов, А. Международные конфликты в постсоветском пространстве / А.Здравомыслов. - Москва: Аспект пресс, - 1999. - 285 с.

balanced stance of Washington, these works emphasize Moscow's provocative role in the conflict resolution processes.

G.Khutsishvili and T.Goqueliiani, in their book¹⁹, reflect on the political developments in Georgia following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, while also providing insights into Georgia-Russia relations and the Abkhazia conflict.

M.Tsereteli, in his article²⁰, examines Georgian foreign policy in stages, highlighting the impact of internal conflicts on the country's foreign policy strategy. The author analyzes Georgia's efforts between 1994 and 2004 to establish close ties not only with Turkey, Azerbaijan, and European countries but also with the United States. He considers Russia's decision at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999 to withdraw its military bases from Georgian territory a significant success for official Tbilisi's foreign policy.

The main directions of Georgia's foreign policy, including its relations with several countries and cooperation with the United States, are discussed in the work of A.Bibilashvili²¹. The author emphasizes that U.S. government circles highly value Georgia's progress towards democratic development and independent state-building, and notes that the U.S. intends to take concrete steps to provide financial assistance aimed at the withdrawal of Russian military bases from Georgian territory.

U.S.-Armenian relations, including the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, have also been the subject of works²² by Armenian authors. In articles related to the conflict, Armenian

¹⁹Khutsishvili, G., Russia and Georgia. The ways out of the crisis / G. Khutsishvili, T.Goqueliiani. - Tbilisi: -2010. - 109 p.

²⁰Tsereteli, M. The scars of separatism: the impact of internal conflicts on Georgian foreign policy // - Tbilisi: Kakachia K., Cecire M. Georgian foreign policy. The request for sustainable security. -2013. - p 205-213.

²¹Бибилавили, А. Проблемы внешнеполитической ориентации и аспекты построения государственности в странах Южного Кавказа/ А. Бибилашвили.- Тбилиси: Институт политологии, - 2008. - 379 с.

²²Krikorian, R. Armenia the Crossroads / R.Krikorian, J.Masih. - London: Routledge, -1999. - 142 p; Zolyan, M. My friend's enemy is my friend: Armenian foreign policy between Russia, Iran and United States // - Zurich: Caucasus analytical digest. – 2010. № 13. - p.2-5.

writers traditionally adopt a biased approach, making unfounded claims by portraying the conflict as solely between Azerbaijan and “Nagorno-Karabakh”, while presenting Russia as supposedly taking significant steps to resolve the dispute. At the same time, some Armenian authors oppose Armenia’s Russia-oriented foreign policy, which is seen as being dictated by Moscow, and instead support a policy aligned with the United States.

Thus, the analysis of Armenian historiography on the topic shows that the authors often take a biased stance, lack objectivity, and tend to interpret events in a way that serves their own interests.

The sources used in the research work, available in various languages, can be divided into several groups:

The first group²³ includes legislative acts adopted by the U.S. Congress, documents from the Department of State, statements made by presidents and political leaders, documents prepared by the legislative bodies of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, and Armenia, as well as speeches delivered by government officials of these countries.

The second group²⁴ consists of archival documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the

²³Əliyev, H.Ə. Müstəqilliyimiz əbədidir: [46 cilddə] / H.Əliyev. - Bakı: Azərneşr, - c. 1. - 1997. - 612 s.; U.S. Department of State. Office of the Spokesman. Press Statement by James P. Rubin. Chechnya: U.S. Helps Fund Red Cross Efforts in North Caucasus Region. - February 29, 2000; U.S. Department of State. Office of the Spokesman. Press Statement by James P. Rubin. U.S. Responce to Decision of UNCHR To Pass Resolution on Chechnya. - April 26, 2000; U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union. FY 1997 Annual Report/ Prepared by the office of the Corrdinator of US Assistance to the NIS-Washington,- January 1998. - 172 p.; U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union. FY 1998 Annual Report/ Prepared by the office of the Corrdinator of US Assistance to the NIS-Washington,- January 1999. - 145 p.

²⁴Amerika Birləşmiş Ştatları Hökuməti və Azərbaycan Respublikası Hökuməti arasında onların gömrük idarələri arasında qarşılıqlı yardım haqqında saziş // Azərbaycan Respublikası Xarici İşlər Nazirliyi Tarix-Arxiv İdarəsi, Fond № 26, siyahı №11, iş №5, vərəq - 203-208; Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti Möhtərəm Heydər Əliyev cənablarına Çikaqodakı kooperasiyalardan birinin sədri

George Bush Library in the United States. The inclusion of important and previously unused archival materials is significant not only for studying U.S. relations with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia but also for determining the White House's position regarding unresolved conflicts in the region during the period under study.

The third group²⁵ comprises resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The fourth group includes periodical press sources. Various newspapers and journals published in the U.S., Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia (such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Kommersant, Khalq, Azerbaijan, Milliyet, Insight Turkey, Strategic Analysis, Armenian Studies, etc.) are valuable for researching the topic.

The fifth group²⁶ consists of memoirs written by political figures.

Object and subject of the research. The object of this research is the United States' policy towards the Caucasus, while its subject encompasses the goals and directions of U.S. policy in the region during the period under study, including military-security issues, the economic strategy of official Washington, as well as the

Robert Bert tərəfindən məktub // Azərbaycan Respublikası Xarici İşlər Nazirliyi Tarix-Arxiv İdarəsi, Fond № 26, siyahı №19, iş № 7, vərəq-195; Profiles on six Republics: Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan // George H.W.Bush Presidential Records, National Security Council, folder № 01487-017, row № 8, section № 9, paper-47; Political situation: Georgia //George H.W.Bush Presidential Records, National Security Council, folder № 01613-012, row № 9, section № 5, paper-15.

²⁵Resolution 822: [Electronic resource]/UN Security Council. - April 30, 1993. URL: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/822\(1993\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/822(1993)); Resolution 849: [Electronic resource] / UN Security Council.-July 9, 1993. URL: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/849\(1993\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/849(1993)); Resolution 854: [Electronic resource] /UN Security Council. - August 6, 1993. URL: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/854\(1993\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/854(1993)); Resolution 858: [Electronic resource] / UN Security Council.-August 24, 1993. URL: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/858\(1993\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/858(1993))

²⁶Олбрайт, М. Госпожа Госсекретарь (мемуары) / М. Олбрайт. - Москва: Альпина Бизнес Букс, - 2004. - 687 с.

examination of its multifaceted cooperation with the independent states of the South Caucasus and its approach to the political developments taking place in the region.

The aim and tasks of the research. The primary aim of this research is to conduct a detailed comparative analysis of U.S. policy in the Caucasus from 1992 to 2000, based on materials published in various languages and archival documents. To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been set:

- Identify the factors influencing U.S. policy in the Caucasus;
- Determine the objectives and directions of official Washington's policy in the Caucasus;
- Analyze the priority directions of U.S. policy in the Caucasus;
- Track the phased development of official Washington's policy in the Caucasus;
- Scientifically examine the changes in U.S. policy in the Caucasus after the signing of the "Contract of the Century", including their causes and consequences;
- Study U.S. policy towards Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia in a broad and comparative context;
- Determine the place of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia in the White House's foreign policy strategy;
- Analyze the influence of the Armenian diaspora and lobby on U.S. policy in the Caucasus, particularly towards Azerbaijan;
- Investigate the reasons behind Washington's adoption of Section 907 of the "Freedom Support Act", which restricted aid to Azerbaijan in cases of aggression;
- Follow the steps taken by the U.S. to strengthen its political, economic, and military positions in the Caucasus region;
- Analyze the U.S. stance on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Adjara conflicts based on facts and documents;
- Examine the differing positions of the White House regarding ongoing conflicts in the Caucasus during the studied period;

- To trace the United States' stance towards the developments taking place in the Russian Federation's North Caucasus region over different stages.

- Study U.S. economic interests in the Caucasus;

- Analyze the U.S. position on transport corridors in the Caucasus region.

Research methods. The research is primarily based on methods of analysis, synthesis, generalization, as well as the principles of historicism and comparative analysis. Thus, while conducting the research, events were analyzed and conclusions were drawn. The method of comparative analysis was extensively applied during the investigation.

The main arguments of the dissertation to be defended

- The main priorities of the U.S. policy in the Caucasus were steps taken to secure its political, economic, and military interests in the region. Official Washington, particularly from 1994 onward, began pursuing a more active foreign policy. The key reasons for this included Azerbaijan's favorable geographic and strategic position and its wealth of energy resources, Georgia's importance as a transit country following the signing of oil contracts, and the necessity of exerting greater influence over Armenia to reduce Russia's impact in the region;

- During the period in question, Georgia became the closest military-political partner of the U.S. in the region. In this context, the White House took serious steps to remove Russian military bases located in Georgia, which were used by Moscow to pressure the official Tbilisi;

- As a result of the Armenian lobby's activities, Armenia became the largest recipient of U.S. aid among the South Caucasus countries. This led Washington to prioritize Armenia in order to diminish Russia's influence in the Caucasus region, using Armenia as a tool to serve its own interests;

- The U.S. took different stances towards Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia regarding the ongoing conflicts in the Caucasus. While the White House supported the settlement of the Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Adjara conflicts within the territorial

integrity of Georgia, due to the influence of the Armenian lobby and Armenian disinformation during 1991-1993, it largely supported Armenia's position rather than Azerbaijan's, whose territories were occupied in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. One of the most evident examples of this was the U.S. Congress's adoption of the "Section 907" amendment to the Freedom Support Act, which prohibited humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan at the state level. However, in 1993, following H.Aliyev's active foreign policy strategy and the signing of the "Contract of the Century", the U.S. position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict shifted positively as Azerbaijan's stance was more accurately conveyed;

- Although there were varying views within U.S. political circles about developments in the North Caucasus, official Washington prioritized cautious relations with Russia, giving special importance to its bilateral ties;

- The core of U.S. economic policy in the Caucasus focused on relations in the fields of economic and energy security. After the signing of the "Contract of the Century", U.S. oil companies became among the largest stakeholders in Azerbaijan's oil sector, and Washington supported the construction of new pipeline routes for transporting energy resources;

- Official Washington placed particular emphasis on the development of international and regional transportation corridors in the Caucasus to strengthen its position in the region and ensure energy security.

Scientific novelty of the research. The scientific novelty of the research is as follows:

- U.S. policy in the Caucasus during Bill Clinton's presidency (1992–2000) was systematically examined for the first time in national historiography, providing clarity on numerous issues based on a thorough analysis of extensive sources and research;

- During the research process, materials and sources in Azerbaijani, Turkish, English, and Russian were studied, followed by a comparative and analytical examination thereof;

- Archival documents from the George Bush Presidential Library were used for the first time;

- The United States' policies towards Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia were comparatively and comprehensively analyzed;
- Unpublished documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan were introduced into academic circulation;
- The U.S. position on the conflicts in the Caucasus (1992-2000) was comparatively examined;
- For the first time in national historiography, the U.S. stance on the developments in the North Caucasus was highlighted;
- A range of books, journals, and newspaper materials published in foreign countries in various languages (English, Russian, Turkish) were introduced into scientific circulation for the first time.

Theoretical and practical significance of research. The methodological approaches presented in the dissertation, as well as the comparative analyses conducted and the scientific findings obtained, can be utilized in the following areas: in the Faculties of History and International Relations of higher education institutions; in the preparation of textbooks related to the field; in the writing of comprehensive research works on General History, the History of the Caucasus, and the History of Azerbaijan; and within the system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Approval and application. The main content of the dissertation has been reflected in various articles, as well as in materials from conferences and congresses held at both local and international levels. Eleven scientific articles and five conference materials related to the topic have been published in Azerbaijan, Turkey, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation.

Name of the Institution where the dissertation was carried out. The dissertation was conducted at the Institute of History and Ethnology named after A.A. Bakikhanov of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

The volume of the structural sections of dissertation separately and the general volume with the sign. The total volume of the dissertation, including the introduction, 3 chapters, 7 subchapters, and the conclusion, is 250786 characters. Introduction:

number of characters - 34105, Chapter I: number of characters - 51684, Chapter II: number of characters - 104514, Chapter III: number of characters - 51308, Conclusion: number of characters - 7183. Total volume of the dissertation in characters: 250786

II. MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The introduction discusses the relevance and level of development of the topic, the object and subject of the research, its aim and tasks, research methods, the main arguments of the dissertation to be defended, the scientific novelty of the research, its theoretical and practical significance, the approbation of the work, and provides the structure of the dissertation.

The first chapter of the dissertation is titled **“The U.S. strategy in the Caucasus: conditioning factors, goal, and directions”** and consists of two subchapters.

The first subchapter, entitled **“The goal of U.S. policy in the Caucasus and its determining factors”**, provides a comprehensive analysis and substantiation of the key elements influencing the formulation of the United States’ strategy in the Caucasus. It outlines how, beginning in the early 1990s following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, official Washington began to actively engage in the region, capitalizing on newly emerged geopolitical conditions to advance and safeguard its political, economic, and military interests across the Caucasus.

During this period, the “expansion” doctrine, intended for implementation, was announced in speeches made by U.S. President B.Clinton at the UN General Assembly, Secretary of State W.Christopher at Columbia University, and U.S. Ambassador to the UN M.Albright at the National Defense University²⁷.

It is especially important to note that after the collapse of the socialist system, in the context of the new geopolitical realities in the

²⁷Önal, B. Amerikanın dış politikasının oluşum sürecinde başkanın rolü ve Türkiye-Amerika ilişkilerinde Clinton faktörü / B.Önal. - Kocaeli:Umuttepe kitapevi, - 2010. - 248 s.

Caucasus region, the U.S. administration initially did not take very serious steps to secure its political, economic, and military interests. However, after the signing of the “Contract of the Century,” it began to undertake more active work in this direction.

On July 21, 1997, during a speech at Johns Hopkins University, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State S. Talbott stated that as a result of the proactive and farsighted policy of the George H.W. Bush administration, the United States was the first country to open embassies in the newly independent states that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and to provide them with humanitarian aid²⁸.

It should be noted that the American political scientist Z. Brzezinski identified a specific subdivision within Eurasia, which he termed the “Eurasian Balkans”. This region, comprising Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan was conceptualized by Brzezinski as an area marked by complex internal dynamics, including ethnic conflicts and regional rivalries. Characterized by its volatile structure, the Eurasian Balkans has gained increasing geopolitical significance in recent years due to several factors: its vast reserves of natural resources, particularly oil and natural gas; the presence of major pipeline projects; its highly strategic location within the Asian continent; its proximity to key regional powers such as the Russian Federation, China, Turkey, and Iran; and the sustained interest of global actors such as the United States, the European Union, and other European states in the region’s political and economic trajectory²⁹. From this perspective, the primary factors conditioning U.S. policy in the Caucasus have been identified as the region’s rich energy resources and the strategic necessity of consolidating a presence in the Caspian Sea basin; the Caucasus’s favorable geographic and strategic location; Azerbaijan,

²⁸Тэлботт рассказывает о подходе США к Кавказу и средней Азии // Историко-архивное управление Министерства иностранных дел Азербайджанской Республики, Фонд № 26, список №19, дело №7, лист - 195

²⁹Brzezinski, Z. The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and its geostrategic imperatives / Z. Brzezinski. - New York: Basic Books, - 1997. - 217 p.

a country rich in oil and gas resources in the Caucasus, maintains very close and strong relations with Turkey, one of the United States' most important strategic allies, and these countries take each other's interests into account in their foreign policy strategies, and etc.

The “Grand Strategy” of Clinton administration, the bolstering of US positions following the fall of the USSR, and foreign policy priorities in the Caucasus, including the growth of cooperation with independent republics, are the main topics of the second subchapter, “**Directions of U.S. Caucasus policy**”.

The subchapter provides information about the 1992 visit of U.S. Secretary of State J.Baker to the region. During his meetings with the leaders of the newly independent republics of the Caucasus, it was announced that official Washington was ready to take steps towards establishing diplomatic relations with the countries of the region. At a press conference held in Baku during the visit, J.Baker emphasized that for Washington, establishing diplomatic relations with the former Soviet republics depended on principles such as democracy, free-market economy, human rights, and peaceful resolution of conflicts³⁰. However, the adoption of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in 1992 revealed a biased position of official Washington towards Azerbaijan.

It is important to note that the amendment prohibiting direct aid to Azerbaijan was proposed by congressman V.Owens and Senator J.Kerry. The justification for this decision was cited as “the blockade and other offensive use of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh”. However, the discussions regarding the adoption of the amendment were neither held transparently nor was Azerbaijan's position taken into account. This once again clearly reflected the double standards in U.S. policy³¹.

³⁰Thomas F. Baker opens tour of the Caucasus // New York Times - 1992, 12 February. - p.5

³¹Why Section 907(a) of Freedom Support Act Is An Impediment To Azerbaijan-Armenia Peace -OpEd [Electronic resource] URL: <https://www.eurasiareview.com/24122022-why-section-907a-of-freedom-support-act-is-an-impediment-to-azerbaijan-armenia-peace-oped/>

As for U.S.-Georgia relations, it should be noted that after declaring its sovereignty, Z.Gamsakhurdia sent a delegation to the United States seeking recognition of Georgia's independence. However, the U.S. did not take this proposal seriously, as it did not want to confront the Soviet government at the time³². The U.S. recognized Georgia's independence on December 25, 1991. Although diplomatic relations were established between the countries, official Washington did not engage in close relations with Tbilisi³³.

U.S. Secretary of State J.Baker's 1992 visit to Armenia played an important role in establishing bilateral relations. After gaining independence, the government of L.Ter-Petrosyan sought to establish relations not only with Russia but also with the U.S. and other Western countries. During L.Ter-Petrosyan's presidency, U.S. citizen J.Libaridian was even appointed as his advisor³⁴.

The second chapter, titled **"The U.S. and military-security issues in the Caucasus,"** consisting of three subchapters, provides a scientific analysis of official Washington's efforts and steps to strengthen its positions in the military-security sphere in the Caucasus. It also examines the U.S. stance on conflicts such as the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Adjara conflicts, and security issues in the North Caucasus.

In the first subchapter titled **"The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the U.S. position"**, the military relations of the U.S. with both Azerbaijan and Armenia are discussed, alongside a step-by-step analysis of the changes in official Washington's stance on the conflict. The study of the topic allows the conflict resolution process to be divided into three stages: 1991-1994; 1994-1998; and 1998-2000. In the first stage, the efforts of Iran and Russia were at the forefront.

³²Cemilli, E. ABD'nin Güney Kafkasya politikası / E.Cemilli. - İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, - 2007. -192 s.

³³Zeynalabdinov, Ə. ABŞ-Gürcüstan münasibətləri (1990-2001-ci illər). // - Bakı: Tarix və onun problemləri Nəzəri, elmi, metodik jurnal, - 2013. №4. - s. 140-145.

³⁴ Kasım, K. Soğuk savaş sonrası Kafkasya / K.Kasım - Ankara: USAK yayınları, - 2011. - 290 s.

On May 8, 1992, the U.S. Special Envoy J.Maresca stated that the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict involved both self-determination and the issue of state territorial integrity. The U.S. Department of State issued a statement saying that without naming Armenia directly, they would not accept the unilateral change of Nagorno-Karabakh's status³⁵.

In the second stage, the situation changed: the foreign policy of Azerbaijan's new government increased U.S. and Western interest in the region, Iran's mediation efforts failed, and Russia's leverage over Azerbaijan and Georgia weakened. Nevertheless, the election of the pro-Russian R.Kocharyan as President of Armenia and the OSCE's 'common state' proposal delayed the resolution of the conflict.

In the stage following 1998, despite U.S.-mediated talks between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia and Azerbaijan's demonstrated strong political will, the conflict remained unresolved during this period.

The second subchapter of the second chapter is titled **“The conflicts in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Adjara, and the U.S. approach”**. This subsection explores U.S.-Georgia military cooperation and the U.S. position on these conflicts. For Georgia, the main issue was the resolution of the conflicts in Adjara, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, and the restoration of territorial integrity. The root of these challenges lay in the regions' aspirations for self-governance and, in particular, Russia's interest in escalating unrest in Georgia. Russia deliberately delayed conflict resolution in order to maintain its influence over Georgia and Azerbaijan.

In the third subchapter titled **“The U.S. and security issues in the North Caucasus”** it is noted that, as a result of the changes on the world's political map in the early 1990s, the struggle for the restoration of sovereign rights began to intensify among the peoples of the North Caucasus, just as it did in the South Caucasus region.

³⁵Qasımlı, M. Azərbaycan Respublikasının xarici siyasəti (1991-2003) / M.Qasımlı. - Bakı: Mürtəcim, - 2015. - 648 s.

Historically, the North Caucasus has acted as a bridge between Europe and Asia and served as a contact zone between Islamic and Christian civilizations. In addition to functioning as the gateway to the Caucasus, the region's strategic location enabling control over both the region itself and areas such as the Eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf made it important not only for Russia but also for the United States³⁶.

In light of these realities, the developments in the North Caucasus did not escape the attention of official Washington. The steps taken by the U.S. in this direction and the measures aimed at addressing the security problems in the region are discussed in this subsection.

Chapter three, titled **“U.S. Economic Policy in the Caucasus,”** consists of two subchapters. The first subchapter, **“The U.S. trade-economic and energy security policy in the Caucasus,”** outlines the main directions of the United States’ economic policy in the region and analyzes its cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia during the relevant time frame, structured into different stages. It is noted that during the first stage (1991-1994), although several economic agreements were signed and negotiations held between the U.S. and the South Caucasus countries, this did not result in the broad development of economic relations between the U.S. and Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. In the second stage (the period after 1994), focusing especially on the “Contract of the Century” and the energy sector, the U.S. economic influence and involvement further strengthened.

The second subchapter, titled **“International and regional transport corridors in U.S. Caucasus Policy”** notes that after the Cold War, the emergence of Russia and China as new power centers especially China's rise as an economic competitor to the U.S. prompted official Washington to take additional strategic steps. The transition of newly independent countries to market economies provided the White House with access to broader international trade

³⁶Алиев, А. К. Современные этнополитические процессы на Северном Кавказе. // - Москва: Россия и мусульманский мир - 2010.- №11. - с.77-85.

and investment markets. In line with this reality, the U.S. began placing increased emphasis on the development of international and regional transport corridors both to strengthen its presence in the region and to ensure energy security.

The Caspian Basin's richness in energy resources opens up broad opportunities for the Caucasus region. The Caucasus as a whole serves as a potential transit corridor for exporting Caspian oil and natural gas to both regional and global markets. The region functions as a transit point within the Europe-Caucasus-Asia Transport Corridor (TRACECA) project, which is part of a developing transportation artery. TRACECA encompasses initiatives to rebuild the medieval Silk Road, including the construction of highways and railways, as well as oil and gas pipelines, and the targeted expansion of exports. However, during the mentioned period, four unresolved armed conflicts in the Caucasus (Chechnya, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict) posed significant challenges to the operation of these transit corridors³⁷.

Through the examination and comparative analysis of sources and materials in multiple languages, this research has enabled the identification of several significant **conclusions** concerning the United States' policy towards the Caucasus in the period between 1992 and 2000. These findings may be articulated as follows:

1. In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the U.S. adopted a series of comprehensive and strategic initiatives aimed at safeguarding and consolidating its military-political and economic interests in the Caucasus region across multiple spheres of engagement.

2. The U.S. policy in the Caucasus aimed to weaken Russian and Iranian influence in the region, expand comprehensive

³⁷Craig, R. Russia, The United States, and the Caucasus. February 2007, [Electronic resource]/URL:https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/32226/Russia_US_Caucasus.pdf

cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, and encourage their integration into the West.

3. The U.S. strategy served not only to align the foreign policies of regional states with U.S. interests but also to strengthen its own geopolitical position and turn the region into a space for strategic cooperation.

4. From the second half of the 1990s, official Washington began to devote particular attention to the Caspian basin. The Clinton administration, by establishing a Working Group on Caspian Policy and appointing a Special Advisor on Energy Diplomacy, aimed to contribute to the region's energy security.

5. Caspian oil and gas became central to U.S. strategic interests.

6. The U.S. supported the formation of modern military forces in the region's countries, aiming to enhance their security and help them reduce dependence on Russian and Iranian influence.

7. NATO's "Partnership for Peace" and similar programs played a crucial role in implementing the military-political objectives of the Clinton administration. Through these programs, the U.S. expanded military cooperation with South Caucasus countries, aiming to strengthen security and political stability in the region.

8. During the relevant time frame, official Washington, being cautious of the Armenian lobby and wary of escalating tensions with Russia, failed to take a decisive position in resolving the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. While the U.S. supported a resolution based on Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, it did not recognize Armenia as the aggressor, which contributed to the continuation of the conflict.

9. Due to lobbying efforts by the Armenian diaspora, the U.S. provided significant financial aid to Armenia across various sectors. Moreover, between 1991 and 1993, the U.S. supported Armenia's position in the conflict.

10. Despite Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani territories, the U.S. banned direct humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan during the second half of 1991–1993.

11. From the second half of the 1990s, Georgia became a close military partner of the U.S. in the Caucasus. With direct U.S. assistance, Georgia gained control over its border protection and negotiated the withdrawal of Russian military bases from its territory.

12. While Georgia's U.S. oriented foreign policy led to positive developments in several areas, it did not resolve the country's major territorial conflicts (Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

13. In the context of North Caucasus security issues, official Washington supported Russia's territorial integrity and recognized Chechnya as a part of the Russian Federation.

14. Although some U.S. officials criticized Russia regarding Chechen crisis, the Clinton administration overall acted cautiously towards Moscow and refrained from applying significant pressure regarding this issue.

15. The signing of the "Contract of the Century" led to major changes in U.S. policy towards the Caucasus.

16. Trade relations with the South Caucasus republics were expanded.

17. Steps were taken to ensure the secure transportation of energy resources.

18. The Baku-Supsa, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, and Trans-Caspian pipeline projects became key U.S. priorities.

19. The U.S. supported the East-West transport corridor and the Great Silk Road project.

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

1. "Çeçen xalqının azadlıq mübarizəsi və ABŞ-ın mövqeyi // - Bakı: Bakı Universitetinin Xəbərləri. Humanitar elmlər seriyası, - 2013. №3.- s.182-187.
2. ABŞ-Gürcüstan münasibətləri (1990-2001-ci illər). // - Bakı: Tarix və onun problemləri Nəzəri, elmi, metodik jurnal, - 2013. №4.- s.140-145.

3. ABŞ-ın Abxaziya və Cənubi Osetiya münaqişələri ilə bağlı mövqeyi (1992-2000-ci illər). // - Bakı: Geostrategiya, - 2014. №05 (23) sentyabr-oktyabr. - s.65-68.
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5. Налаживание отношений между США и Азербайджаном (1991-1994 г) // Материалы I Международный научно-практический конференции, - Пятигорск: 24-25 октября, - 2014, - с.185-188.
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15. The Caucasus policy of the US against the background of geopolitical reality after the Second Karabakh War // Proceedings International Congress-Changing Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus: Challenges and Prospects, İstanbul: -17-18 June,-2023,- p.21-22
16. The significance of the Caucasus to the United States in terms of transportation corridors (1992-2000) - Bakı: Geostrategiya, - 2025. №02 (86) mart-aprel. - s.124-127



The defense will be held on 16 October 2025 at 10⁰⁰ at the meeting of the Dissertation Council ED 1.30 of the Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at History and Ethnology Institute named after A.A.Bakikhanov of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

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Electronic versions of the dissertation and abstract are available on the official website of History and Ethnology Institute named after A.A.Bakikhanov of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

Abstract was sent to the required addresses on 04 September 2025.

Signed for print: 03.09.2025
Paper format: A5
Volume: 45766
Number of hard copies: 20