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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Sciences

**AZERBAIJANI - GEORGIAN RELATIONS
AT THE END OF THE 9th – EARLY 13th CENTURIES
(based on materials on the history of the Sheki realm)**

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I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

The relevance and degree of development of the subject.

Azerbaijan-Georgian relations in the late 9th-early 13th centuries come to the fore in the history of international relations of Azerbaijan. As a result of the political revival that began in Azerbaijan with the fall of the Caliphate, states of the same name ruled by dynasties such as Sajis, Salaris and Ravvadis replaced each other in the south, while in the north, the Shirvanshah state, the Sheki realm, and the Ganja Shaddadi Emirate were established and ruled for a relatively long time.

A similar process was observed in neighboring Georgia, where several feudal states were established. However, in the second half of the 10th century, the unified Georgian state formed as a result of the merger of the Abkhaz and Kartli kingdoms began to play an active role in regional interstate relations. Therefore, when studying the history of international relations of Azerbaijan in the late 9th-early 13th centuries, the investigation of its relations with the Georgian kingdom is of great scientific importance.

The relationship of the Sheki realm established in the northwestern lands of Azerbaijan, with the Georgian feudal states, occupies an important place in the history of Azerbaijan-Georgian relations. In the relevant period, the Sheki realm was distinguished by the fact that the majority of its population was Christian-Monophysite¹. This factor had a serious impact on the political-economic, religious-spiritual closeness of Sheki realm with Georgia. Unlike other Azerbaijani feudal states, which waged a *“holy war against infidels”*², along with the neighboring Christian states the Sheki realm was becoming the target of this policy. The fact that the Sheki realm had the same border with the Kakheti principality and the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom also made mutual relations inevitable.

¹ Ахмед ибн Лютфуллах (Мунаджим-Баши). «Джами ад-Дувал»; Ибн ал-Азрака ал-Фарики из «Истории Маяфаррика» / Перевод А.Д.Мамедова. – Баку: Труды института истории АН Азерб. ССР, – 1957. – т. XII. – с. 219.

² Минорски, В.Ф. История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков / В.Ф.Минорски. – Москва: Издательство Восточной литературы, – 1963. – с. 56.

In the relations of Sheki realm with the Georgian feudal states along with territorial disputes, regional competition, periodic armed clashes, the religious-ideological struggle of the Albanian Monophysite Church against the Georgian Diophysite Church, etc. joint struggle against foreign invaders, alliance, political unification, and inter-dynasty marriage played an important role. The alliance and political union between the Sheki realm and the Kakheti principality constituted a special stage among the listed directions of interstate relations. This political unity, stemming from the unification of efforts against foreign occupation, had a significant impact on their further development.

The history, socio-economic development, material and spiritual culture, ethnic and religious situation of Sheki realm have been neglected for a long time in our national historiography. At the end of the 20th century, favourable conditions were created for the investigation of the objective history of our historical lands within the framework of the scientific direction “History of the lands lost” put forward in Azerbaijan, which regained its independent statehood. Scholars on Caucasian studies of the neighboring country, who are trying to take advantage of the current gap, have made a serious attempt to falsify the history of this Azerbaijani feudal state³.

For certain reasons, a generation of “specialized” historians, who have gained great experience in Georgian historiography, were trained in the direction of falsifying the history of the historical Azerbaijani/Albanian lands, which were included in Georgia in the last two hundred years, and the history of the North-West region of Azerbaijan, which they claim, in accordance with their own interests. They also try to create a fictitious picture based on fabricated facts to show that the North-Western Azerbaijan lands had been part of the Georgian kingdom since ancient times, and sometimes from the early Middle Ages, and the proximity of ancient local tribes (Ingiloyls) to Georgians.

In recent times, some historians of Dagestan try to distort

³ Mahmudov, Y.M. İngiloylar barədə tarixi həqiqət // – Şirinhəy Hacıəli. Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan: İngiloylar, – Bakı: Təhsil, – 2007. – s. 8.

history of this region, to take possession of the rich culture historically created by the Turkic-Albanian ethnos, who are the primordial and eternal owners of these places. Armenian scholars of Caucasian studies, who are far away from this region, also intervene in historical research, whether they have relation or not. The dissertation work is very relevant from the viewpoint of clarifying many deliberately confused issues of region's history, the history of the Caucasus as a whole, on scientific grounds.

National leader, the founder of the concept of Revival of our history⁴, Heydar Aliyev, in his address to the world Azerbaijanis, precepted: *"The realization of the fateful issues for our independent state requires us to fully define our identity by uncovering many dark pages of our history, and to bring up the young generation with a new way of thinking about our national roots"*⁵.

According to academician Y.M.Mahmudov⁶, the author of the scientific direction "History of the lands lost", *"The history of Azerbaijan, which was deliberately falsified by historians of some neighboring countries who took refuge under Moscow's patronage, is being re-examined, objective truths about the historical lands of Azerbaijan are being revealed"*⁷.

As a whole, researching the political history and historical geography of the ancient and medieval period of North-West Azerbaijan, the history of the Sheki realm (kingdom) that arose in this region of Azerbaijan, which entered the Renaissance period after the Caliphate, and finally, clarifying the place and role of the Sheki realm in Azerbaijan-Georgian relations in the late 9th-early 13th centuries, which are directly related to the mentioned issues, is of great importance. Along with serving the creation of an objective scientific picture of the Azerbaijan history, which is an integral part

⁴ Mahmudov, Y.M. İlham Əliyev və Azərbaycan tarix elmi / Y.M.Mahmudov. – Bakı: Turxan NPB, – 2014. – s. 28.

⁵ Mahmudov, Y.M. Göstərilən əsəri. – s. 46.

⁶ Əliyev, Ş.H. Yaqub Mahmudov – Azərbaycan tarixşünaslığında "İtirilmiş torpaqlar" istiqamətinin müəllifidir // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyası Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2009. –30-cu cild. – s. 98-102.

⁷ Mahmudov, Y.M. İngiloylar barədə tarixi həqiqət, – s. 9.

of the mentioned historiographical problems, as well as the history of the Caucasus, to which is closely connected, it can make an important contribution to the elimination of existing gaps and, most importantly, numerous historical distortions.

When studying the history of Sheki realm, which arose in North-West Azerbaijani lands, the problem should be approached from the context of medieval Azerbaijani-Georgian interstate relations. This is inevitable from the viewpoint of investigating such issues as either an artificially invented “belonging to historical territories” and a response to those who put forward territorial claims by distorting the history of the Sheki realm, or an alliance and political unification between Sheki and Kakheti, arisen from objective necessity, the fall of the Sheki realm in the 12th century and the amalgamation of the occupied territories to the Georgian kingdom, etc.

Another factor that makes the subject of the dissertation relevant is the use of some fictitious “historical facts” (David Gareja cave-monastery complex, fictitious “historical Georgian Saingilo” raised from time to time, in order to disrupt the friendly and strategic cooperation relations observed in Azerbaijani-Georgian interstate relations in the modern era. In view of the fact that state and political figures do not show a position that could damage the existing relations under the influence of such false facts, it is one of the urgent problems facing our historiography to scientifically justify and reveal that the close neighborly relations between the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples have deep roots. Thus, the relevance of investigating the place and role of Sheki realm in Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the late 9th-early 13th centuries necessitates the comprehensive and deep research by covering the relevant primary sources and scientific literature.

The research work covers the period from the end of the 9th to the beginning of the 13th centuries. When determining the upper and lower limits of the chronological framework, qualitative changes of the historical processes taking place in Azerbaijan and in the region were taken as a basis. The Sheki realm (886-1117), which preserved statehood traditions of Albania, existed for about 230 years.

Significant changes took place in the history of the Caucasus as a result of the Mongol and the Khorezmian campaigns in the first half of the 13th century. It has been somewhat deviated from the chronological framework in order to clarify some issues in ancient and early middle ages related to the political history and historical geography of North-Western Azerbaijan, where the Sheki realm had emerged.

In terms of territory, this research work mainly covers the Sheki realm (including a part of Dagestan, Eastern Georgia) covering the northwestern lands of Azerbaijan (Albania) and neighboring feudal states.

Azerbaijani-Georgian relations at the end of the 9th - beginning of the 13th centuries have not been sufficiently studied in Azerbaijan historiography. Materials included in the existing scientific literature on the subject should be systematized and generalized. R.A.Huseynov's article⁸ on the historiography of this period only served to show the main directions of the Seljuk period historiography. The researches related to the dissertation subject can be grouped as follows 1) the history of Sheki realm, 2) the history and characteristic features of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations 3) the researches devoted to the investigation of the political history and historical geography of the north-western region of Azerbaijan (Albania).

1) The 18th century Georgian historian and geographer Vakhushti Bagrationi can be considered the first researcher who studied the history of Sheki realm. The third chapter of his "History of the Georgian Kingdom" is called "The creation and life of Kakheti and Hereti"⁹. Here, the author briefly systematizes information of "Kartlis tskhovreba", a collection of medieval Georgian sources related to Hereti/Sheki country. Vakhushti Bagrationi after geographical description using his traditional

⁸ Гусейнов, Р.А. Историография истории Закавказья XI-XII вв. // Тюркологический сборник, 1976. – Москва: Наука, – 1978. – с. 26-54.

⁹ Багратиони Вахушти. История царства Грузинского. Памятники грузинской исторической литературы / Перевел, снабдил предисловием, словарями и указателем Н.Т.Накашидзе. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1976. – с. 125-130.

principles and research method interprets historical processes. Trying to trace the history of the Hereti/Sheki country, the author tries to introduce all the rulers of the United State after the merger of Hereti and Kakheti in 1014 as “Kakheti rulers”. According to his concept, Vakhushti ignores historical facts and makes everything Georgian in the name of Kakheti. Thus, the foundation of the “great historical distortion” that continues to this day was laid. After Vakhushti, all researchers continued his concept and spared no effort to exaggerate the Kakheti factor and put the Hereti factor in the background.

The small but meaningful article¹⁰ by the prominent researcher A.Y.Krimsky, dedicated to Sheki, despite the fact that there are many points that cause scientific controversy, keeps its scientific value in terms of shedding light on future research. For the first time, A.Y.Krimsky systematized and analyzed the information he could get from ancient and medieval sources about Sheki. Beginning from Strabo and Ptolemy’s map, A.Y.Krimski, who tried to reconcile the extremely meager information about Sheki during the Sasanian and Caliphate periods, followed political history of the region relatively consistently from the beginning of the 9th century. His opinions about Sahl ibn Sumbat and his son Ader-Nerse, who reigned in Sheki in the first half of the 9th century, as well as the grandson of the former - Hammam, who “restored the decayed Albanian kingdom”, have caused debates that are still ongoing in scientific circles. Most of the ongoing debates about the history of Sheki are based on A.Y.Krimsky’s opinions.

Academician Z.M.Bunyadov in a special paragraph entitled “About the ruler of Sheki and Arran Sahl ibn Sumbat”¹¹ included in his work “Azerbaijan in the 7th-9th centuries” touched upon the processes taken place in the region on the eve of the establishment of an independent Sheki realm, the activities of the Sheki ruler Sahl

¹⁰ Крымский, А.Е. Страницы из истории Северного или Кавказского Азербайджана (Классическая Албания), II, Шеки // Памяти Н.Я.Марра, – Москва-Ленинград: Издательство Академии наук СССР, – 1938. – с. 369-384.

¹¹ Bünyadov, Z.M. Azərbaycan VII-IX əsrlərdə / Z.M.Bünyadov. – Bakı: Azərənəşr, – 1989. – s. 176-181.

ibn Sumbat in the first half of the 9th century, and then observing the historical continuity, the issue of “restoration of the Albanian kingdom” by prince Hammam the pious.

In the article “Sheki melikdom” co-authored by academician N.M.Velikhanly and Y.M.Nasibov the political processes taken place in this region from the mid 7th century up to the beginning of the 13th century¹² were traced. One of the most significant aspects of the article is that prominent Arabist scholar-researcher N.M.Velikhanly and researcher of medieval Georgian sources Y.M.Nasibov by using in a comparative manner Arabic and Georgian language sources shed light on the history of “Sheki melikdom”. The inclusion of a separate article on Sheki in the multivolume “History of Azerbaijan” for the first time increased its scientific and practical importance.

In his monograph “Sheki: an unshakable fortress of statehood in North-Western Azerbaijan” academician Y.M.Mahmudov explains the existence of “Sheki emirate, a continuation of the Azerbaijani Albanian state”¹³ from 886 to 1551 with interruptions, approaches conceptually to the struggle of the local dynasties of Sabir and Kipchak origin, who ruled the country, against the military-political, ethnic-religious expansion of the Georgians, the official adoption of Islam during the Seljuk campaigns, and the invasive marches of David IV.

Academician F.Mammadova’s monograph “The Caucasian Albania and Albanians” was not received unequivocally in academic circles. In the fifth paragraph of Chapter III dedicated to the “Revival of the Albanian kingdoms in the 9th-12th centuries”¹⁴, author states that in 886, prince Hammam the pious partially restored the Albanian kingdom and spread his authority to Cambichan-Shaki on the left bank and Arsakh-Khachen on the right

¹² Azərbaycan tarixi. Yeddi cildə. II cild (III-XIII əsrin I rübü) / Məsul redaktor akademik N. Vəlixanlı. – Bakı: Elm, – 2007. – s. 269-275.

¹³ Mahmudov, Y.M. Şəki: Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycanda sarsılmaz dövlətçilik qalası / Y.M.Mahmudov. – Bakı: Turxan NPB, – 2020. – s. 9-11.

¹⁴ Мамедова Ф. Кавказская Албания и албаны / Ф.Мамедова – Баку: Центр Исследований Кавказской Албании, – 2005, – с. 391-405.

bank, and in 910 his son Artnerseh II declared himself Tsar in Cambechani-Ereti. Then, based on the Georgian source, overviews the struggle of Artnerseh II against the Georgians, whom she called the Shaki Tsar, and the dogmatic disputes and Georgianization process in Cambechani-Ereti, where his son Ishkhanik was the ruler. Since F.Mammadova could not determine the issue of “Cambechani-Shaki-Ereti” for herself, she completely complicates the issues.

In the monograph on the history of Hereti¹⁵, his doctoral dissertation¹⁶, T.G.Papuashvili takes a view of the socio-economic and political history from ancient times to the first quarter of the 12th century, while his other monograph, dedicated to the “Kingdom of Rans and Kakhs”¹⁷ covers the 8th-11th centuries. Paying attention to the historical geography and ethnic composition of Hereti and Albania in his researches, T.G.Papuashvili tried to monographically study the main stages of the history of Hereti from ancient times to the 7th century, and the 8th-12th centuries separately, as well as issues of socio-economic development, towns and trade in antiquity and in the 4th-12th centuries, in a word, the entire history of Sheki/Hereti. T.G.Papuashvili’s researches and his attempts to create the history he wants to see by grossly distorting history have been subjected to serious scientific criticism by medieval researchers in Azerbaijani historiography.

M.Kh.Sharifli, a researcher of the history of the 9th-11th centuries of Azerbaijan, systematically studied the stages of the

¹⁵ პაპუაშვილი, თ. ჰერეთის ისტორიის საკითხები: ნარკვევები სოციალურ-ეკონომიური და პოლიტიკური ისტორიიდან. უძველესი დროიდან XII ს. I მეოთხედამდე/ თ.პაპუაშვილი. – თბილისი: მეცნიერება, – 1970. – 391 გვ. (Papuashvili, T. Ereti tarixinin məsələləri: Sosial-iqtisadi və tarixi öçerkləri. Qədim dövrlərdən XII əsrin I rübünədək / T.Papuashvili. – Tbilisi: Metsniereba, – 1970. – 391 s.).

¹⁶ Папуашвили, Т.Г. Вопросы истории Эрети. Очерки по социально-экономической и политической истории (с древнейших времен до первой четверти XII в.): / Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени доктора исторических наук. / – Тбилиси, – 1971. – 65 с.

¹⁷ პაპუაშვილი, თ. რანთა და კახთა სამეფო (VIII-XI სს.) / თ.პაპუაშვილი. – თბილისი: მეცნიერება, – 1982. – 291 გვ. (Papuashvili, T. Ranlar və kaxlar çarlığı (VIII-XI əsrlər) / T.Papuashvili. – Tbilisi: Metsniereba, – 1982. – 291 s.)

emergence and development of the feudal states of Azerbaijan, but did not include the Sheki realm that arose in the corresponding period in his research, and even admitted that “*its history has not been studied in detail*”¹⁸. However, the prominent researcher did not deny its existence by including some episodic information about Sheki realm in his fundamental work¹⁹, but despite this, he considered Sheki to be “*one of the important nahiyes (districts) and towns of Shirvan*”²⁰.

A number of historical-geographical and historical-ethnographic monographs were published under the name “Saingilo” in Georgian historiography²¹. The geographical term “Saingilo” (“Ingloistan”), which belongs only to modern Georgian historiography, covers the territories of Balaken, Zagatala and Gakh districts of the Azerbaijan Republic in modern times. In 1910, the prominent researcher M.G.Janashvili, who was originally a Gakh Ingiloy, published the first book “Saingilo” in Georgian language²². Monographs of the same name – by Z.Edili²³ in 1947, M.Dumbadze²⁴ in 1953, G.Gamkharashvili²⁵ in 1960,

¹⁸ Şərifli, M.X. IX əsrin ikinci yarısı–XI əsrlərdə Azərbaycan feodal dövlətləri / M.X.Şərifli. – Bakı: Elm, – 1978. – s. 295.

¹⁹ Şərifli, M.X. Göstərilən əsəri, – s. 70, 71, 167, 197, 212, 213.

²⁰ Yənə orada, – s. 295.

²¹ Əliyev, Ş.H. İngiloylar (tarixi-etnoqrafik tədqiqat): / Tarix elmləri namizədi alimlik dərəcəsi almaq üçün təqdim olunmuş dissertasiyanın Avtoreferatı. / – Bakı, – 2001. – s. 9.

²² ჯანაშვილი, მ.გ. საინგილო / მ.გ.ჯანაშვილი. - ტფილისი: ს.მ.ლოსაბერიძის სტ., – 1910. – 231 გვ. (Canaşvili, M.Q. Saingilo / M.Q.Canaşvili. - Tiflis: S.M.Losaberidze st, – 1910. – 231 s.)

²³ ედილი, ზ.საინგილო / ზ.ედილი. – თბილისი: საბჭოთა მწერალი, – 1947. – 181 გვ. (Edili, Z. Saingilo/ Z.Edili. – Tbilisi: Sabçota mtserali, – 1947. – 181 s.)

²⁴ დუმბაძე, მ. აღმოსავლეთ კახეთის (საინგილოს) ისტორიიდან (XIX ს. რეფორმამდელი პერიოდი) / მ.დუმბაძე. – თბილისი: საქ-ოს სსრ მეცნ. აკადემია, – 1953. – 282 გვ (Dumbadze, M. Şərqi Kaxeti (Saingilo) tarixindən (XIX əsr islahatlara qədərki dövr) / M.Dumbadze. – Tbilisi: Gürcüstan SSR Elmlər Akademiyası, – 1953. – 282 s.)

²⁵ გამხარაშვილი, გ. საინგილო: (მოკლე მიმოხილვა) / გ.გამხარაშვილი. – თბილისი: საბჭ. საქართველო, – 1960, – 30 გვ. (Qamxaraşvili, G. Saingilo: (qısa baxış) / G.Qamxaraşvili. – Tbilisi: Sabçota Sakartvelo, – 1960. – 30 s.)

G.Changashvili²⁶ in 1970, I.Adamian²⁷ in 1979, and finally by T.G.Papuaşvili²⁸ in 2013 were published. In these works, where serious historical distortions have been made, opinions derived from a subjective approach to certain ethnographic materials collected from places, and considerations without any scientific basis have been given, the aim was to falsify the history of the region, not to forget the fictitious “Ingiloy issue”, as well as to lay the ground for territorial claims to the territories of North-Western Azerbaijan.

2) Most of the existing studies in the field of Azerbaijani-Georgian mutual relations are devoted to scientific disputes about whether the state of Shirvan was subordinate or vassal to the Georgian kingdom in the 12th century. Y.A.Pakhomov, who is considered one of the first investigators of Shirvan-Georgian mutual relations, in a series of his works claims that Shirvan was in a vassal dependency of Georgia²⁹. Academician V.V.Bartold noted that the Shirvan state was in a vassal dependency of the Georgian

²⁶ ჩანგაშვილი, გ.საინგილო (გეოგრაფიულ-ისტორიული ნარკვევი) / გ.ჩანგაშვილი. – თბილისი: მეცნიერება, – 1970. – 65 გვ. (Çanqaşvili, G. Saingilo (tarixi-coğrafi oçerk) / G.Çanqaşvili. – Tbilisi: Metsniereba, – 1970. – 65 s.)

²⁷ ადამია, ი. ქართული ხალხური ხუროთმოძღვრება, წგნ. 3 (საინგილო) / ი.ადამია. – თბილისი: ხელოვნება, – 1979. – 259 გვ. (Adamia, İ. Gürcü xalqı memarlığı, c. 3 (Saingilo) / İ.Adamia. – Tbilisi: Xelovneba, – 1979. – 259 s.)

²⁸ პაპუაშვილი, თ. საინგილოს ისტორიის ნარკვევები: საქართველოს აღდგომისა და გამოხსნისათვის ბრძოლა კაკ-ელისენის გამო / თ.პაპუაშვილი. – თბილისი: არტანუჯი, – 2013. – 308 გვ. (Papuaşvili, T. Saingilo tarixinə dair oçerklər: Qax-Eliseni uğrunda Gürcüstanın diriliş və qurtuluş mübarizəsi / T.Papuaşvili. – Tbilisi: Artanuji, – 2013. – 308 s.)

²⁹ Пахомов, Е.А. Монетные клады Азербайджана и других республик, краев и областей Кавказа: [8 выпусков] / Е.А.Пахомов. – Баку: Издательство Академии наук Азербайджанской ССР, – Выпуск VII. – 1957. – с. 33; Пахомов, Е.А. Краткий курс истории Азербайджана. С приложением экскурса по истории ширваншахов XI-XIV вв. (На правах рукописи) / Е.А.Пахомов. – Баку: 1-ое тип. Труд. Т-ва, – 1923. – с. 32, 33, 36, 37, 45, 47; Пахомов, Е.А. Пайтакаран - Байлакан - Орен-кала. Труды Азербайджанской (Оренкалинской) экспедиции, том 1, 1953-1955 г. // [175 выпусков] – Москва-Ленинград:МИА СССР, № 67, – Изд-во АН СССР, – 1959. – с. 26.

kingdom³⁰, but on the coins of the Shirvanshahs was stated that they were only dependent on the Seljuk sultans of Iraq³¹. V.F.Minorski wrote that “*Shirvan was under Georgian influence for a hundred years until 1223*”³². M.A.Seyfeddini and A.M.Mirabdullayev based on numismatic materials wrote: “*Shirvanshah Manuchihr III did not depend on the Georgian tsars; he only maneuvered between them and the Seljuk sultans to protect his state*”³³.

A.A.Alizadeh in his article dedicated to Shirvan-Georgian relations³⁴, as well as in his review as the editor in charge to the “History of Shirvan and Derbent”³⁵ written by V.F.Minorski strongly objects to the fact that Shirvan was under Georgian influence and that the Georgian tsars added the title “sharvansha” to their titles, notes that Arabic and Persian sources do not confirm this. Academician Z.M.Bunyadov in his article “Shirvan and Georgia in the first half of the 12th century”³⁶ and in chapter IX of the “History

³⁰ Бартольд, В.В. Место прикаспийских областей в истории мусульманского мира // Сочинения: [в 9 томах] / В.В.Бартольд. – Москва: Наука, – т. II, ч. I, – 1963. – с. 692.

³¹ Бартольд, В.В. Ширваншах. Статьи из «Энциклопедии ислама» //Сочинения:[в 9 томах] / В.В.Бартольд. – Москва: Наука, – т. II, ч. I, – 1963. – с. 877.

³² Минорски, В.Ф. История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков / В.Ф.Минорски. – Москва: Издательство Восточной литературы, – 1963. – с. 180.

³³ Сейфеддини, М.А.Денежное обращение и монетное дело Азербайджана IX-XIV веков (при феодальном государстве Ширваншахов и Ильдегизидов) (по данным нумизматики) / М.А.Сейфеддини, А.М.Мирабдуллаев. – Баку: Nefta – Press, – 2004. – с. 52.

³⁴ Али-заде, А.А. К вопросу об освещении ширвано-грузинских отношений в XI-XII веках (статья первая) // – Баку: Известия АН Азербайджана. Серия истории, философии и права (СИФП), – 1977. № 4, – с. 73-85.

³⁵ Али-заде, А.А. От ответственного редактора. В книге: В.Ф. Минорский История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков // Минорски, В.Ф. История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков, – Москва: Издательство Восточной литературы, – 1963. – с. 8-12.

³⁶ Буниятов, З.М. Грузия и Ширван в первой половине XII века // – თბილისი: საქართველო რუსთაველის ხანაში: რუსთაველის დაბადების 800 წლისთავისადმი მიძღვნილი კრებული. – 1966. – გვ. 281-292. (– Tbilisi: Rustaveli dövründə Gürcüstan: Rustavelinin anadan olmasının 800 illiyinə həsr olunmuş topla. – 1966. – s. 281-292).

of Azerbaijan”³⁷ published under his editorship, dedicated to Shirvan-Georgian relations, clarified the relations of the Shirvanshahs with the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom. It was determined that S.Ashurbeyli, who partially touched on the relations of the Shirvanshahs and Georgia³⁸, none of the facts that she wanted to connect with the Georgians were related to the relations of the Shirvanshahs and the Georgian kingdom. Although the article by R.A.Huseynov and S.S.Aliyarov on the history of the allied relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia in the 12th century³⁹ is dedicated to the characteristic features of Shirvan’s relations with the Georgian kingdom, the title correctly emphasizes the allied relations of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

On the whole, mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia in the middle ages have not been comprehensively investigated, except for the state of the Shirvanshahs; the relations of other feudal states of Azerbaijan with Georgia have not become the object of special research. This can be considered as the first attempt to comprehensively investigate the mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia in the Middle Ages, the methodical materials for the history course of Azerbaijan diplomacy on the subject “Azerbaijan-Georgian relations in the second half of the 9th - the beginning of the 13th century”⁴⁰. Certain aspects of mutual relations of the Azerbaijani and the Georgian feudal states have been included to one degree or another in different types of investigations. In M.Kh.Sharifli’s work, a special place was given to the relations of

³⁷ Azərbaycan tarixi (ən qədim zamanlardan XX əsrədək). Ali məktələr üçün dərslik. / Red. heyəti. Z.M.Bünyadov, T.Ə.Bünyadov, Ə.Q.Səfərli və b.; Müəllif. Y.B.Yusibov və b. – I cild. – Bakı: Azərnəşr, – 1994. – s. 294-299.

³⁸ Ашурбейли, С. Государство Ширваншахов /С.Ашурбейли. – Баку: Элм, – 1983. – с. 116-117; Ашурбейли, С. История города Баку / С.Ашурбейли. – Баку: Азернешр, – 1992. – с. 89.

³⁹ Гусейнов, Р.А. Из истории союзных отношений Азербайджана и Грузии в XII в. / Р.А.Гусейнов, С.С.Алиyarov // Elmi əsərlər: tarix və fəlsəfə seriyası, – Bakı: – 1977. № 4, – s. 23-31.

⁴⁰ Əliyev, Ş.H. IX əsrin ikinci yarısı–XIII əsrin əvvəllərində Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan münasibətləri. “Azərbaycan diplomatiyası tarixi” kursu üzrə metodik vəsait /Ş.H.Əliyev – Bakı: Kitab aləmi, – 2007. – 48 s.

Ganja Shaddadi Emirate with the Georgian Tsardom⁴¹. In monograph “The Tiflis Emirate” by Rashad Mustafa, the place and role of the Tiflis Emirate in Azerbaijani-Georgian mutual relations has been clarified⁴². In his researches R.A.Huseynzadeh tries to clarify the nature of mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia in the 12th century⁴³, to show the characteristic features of Georgian-Shirvan relations, and presents the relations of the Azerbaijani Atabey state with Georgia from a general context⁴⁴.

In academician Z.M.Bunyadov’s researches great attention is given to the relations of the Atabey⁴⁵ and Shirvanshahs⁴⁶ with Georgians, is clarified the Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the second half of the 12th - beginning of the 13th centuries, and addressed the issues related to Georgians during Sultan Jalaladdin’s marches to Azerbaijan⁴⁷.

3) In the first paragraph of Chapter I of the dissertation, the researches dedicated to one degree or another to the investigation of the political history and historical geography of the northwestern region of Azerbaijan (Albania) are dealt in detail. Here, the modern researchers who interpreted the ancient sources confirming that the lands of North-Western Azerbaijan (Albania) extended to the Darial pass: works by Z.M.Bunyadov⁴⁸, F.J.Mammadova⁴⁹,

⁴¹ Şərifli, M.X. IX əsrin ikinci yarısı–XI əsrlərdə Azərbaycan feodal dövlətləri / M.X.Şərifli. – Bakı: Elm, – 1978. – s. 197-199, 211-212, 220-222.

⁴² Mustafa, R.Ə. Tiflis əmirliyi / Ə.R.Mustafa. – Bakı: Turan NPB, – 2019. – 412 s.

⁴³ Гусейн-заде, Р.А. Кавказ и сельджуки / Р.А.Гусейн-заде. – Баку: Кавказ, – 2010. – с. 108-124; Yənə onun: Сельджукская эпоха истории Кавказа/ Р.А.Гусейн-заде. – Москва: Kremlin Multimedia, – 2013. – с. 96-103.

⁴⁴ Гусейн-заде, Р.А. Коллизии на Кавказе: исторические очерки / Р.А.Гусейн-заде. – Баку: б. и., – 2013. – с. 96-107.

⁴⁵ Bünyadov, Z.M. Azərbaycan Atabəyləri dövləti (1136-1225-ci illər) / Z.M.Bünyadov. – Bakı: Şərq-Qərb, – 2007. – s. 58-66, 106-110, 116-118.

⁴⁶ Yənə orada, – s. 163-166, 173-178.

⁴⁷ Буниятов, З.М. Государство Хорезмшахов-Ануштегинидов (1097-1231) / З.М.Буниятов. – Москва: Наука, – 1986. – с. 166-169.

⁴⁸ Буниятов, З.М. Новые данные о местонахождении крепости Шаки // – Баку: ДАН Азерб. ССР, – 1959. – т. XV. № 9, – с. 869-872.

⁴⁹ Məmmədova, F.C. Azərbaycanın (Albaniyanın) siyasi tarixi və tarixi coğrafiyası / F.C.Məmmədova. – Bakı: Azərnəşr, – 1993. – s. 126-127, 134, 136-137.

G.A.Geybullayev⁵⁰, V.Z.Piriyev⁵¹, A.Yanovski⁵², S.T.Yeremian⁵³, K.V.Trever⁵⁴, M.Brosse, N.Bogomolov⁵⁵, B.A.Dorn⁵⁶, A.A.Tuallagov⁵⁷, I.Adamia⁵⁸, T.G.Papuashvili⁵⁹ and others were analyzed. Works by F.J.Mammadova⁶⁰, G.A.Geybullayev⁶¹, V.Bagratioti⁶², Y.S.Takayshvili⁶³, K.S.Kekelidze⁶⁴, B.S.Esadze⁶⁵,

⁵⁰ Гейбуллаев, Г.А. К этногенезу азербайджанцев, т.1 / Г.А.Гейбуллаев. – Баку: ЭЛМ, – 1991. – с. 34, 152-153.

⁵¹ Piriyev, V.Z. Azərbaycanın tarixi-siyasi coğrafiyası / V.Z.Piriyev. – Bakı: Müəllim, – 2006. – 148 s.

⁵² Яновский, А. О древней Кавказской Албании // – Санктпетербург: Журнал министерства народного просвещения (ЖМНП), – 1846. – ч. 52, № 10-12, – с. 97-136.

⁵³ Еремян, С.Т. Раннефеодальные государства Закавказья в III-VII вв. // – Очерки истории СССР (III-IX вв): [в 9 томах]. Под ред. Н.Дружинина. – Москва: Академия наук СССР, – т. 2 – 1958. – с. 303.

⁵⁴ Тревер, К.В. Очерки по истории и культуре Кавказской Албании IV в. до н. э. - III в / К.В.Тревер. – Москва-Ленинград: Издательство АН СССР, – 1959. – 391 с.

⁵⁵ Дубровин, Н.Ф. История войны и владычества русских на Кавказе: т.1. – Очерк Кавказа и народов, его населяющих, Кн. 3. – Библиографический указатель источников к первым двум книгам:[т. 1-6] / Н.Ф.Дубровин. – Санкт-Петербург: Типография Департамента уделов, т. I, кн. III. – 1871. – с. 4; Богомолов Н. Албанские ворота // – Кавказ. Газета политическая и литературная. – 1850. 8 феврал, № 11. – с. 42-43.

⁵⁶ Дорн, Б.А. Каспий: о походах древних русских в Табаристан, с дополнительными сведениями о других набегах их на побережья Каспийского моря / Б.А.Дорн. – Санктпетербург: Типография Академии наук, – 1875. – с. 336.

⁵⁷ Туаллагов, А.А. Дарьял - "ворота алан" // – Владикавказ: Известия СОИГСИ, – 2018. – Выпуск 27, – с. 15-30.

⁵⁸ ადამია, ი. ქართული ხალხური ხუროთმოძღვრება, წგნ. 3 (საიბგილო), – გვ. 167. (Adamia, I. Gürcü xalq memarlığı, c. 3 (Saingilo), – s. 167).

⁵⁹ Папуашвили, Т.Г. Вопросы истории Эрети, – с. 7.

⁶⁰ Məmmədova, F.C. Azərbaycanın (Albaniyanın) siyasi tarixi və tarixi coğrafiyası, – s. 123-124.

⁶¹ Гейбуллаев, Г.А. К этногенезу азербайджанцев, – с. 160, 163, 170.

⁶² Царевич Вахушти. География Грузии / Введение, перевод и примечания М.Г.Джанашвили. – Тифлис: Записки КОИРГО, – кн. XXIV, – вып. 5, – 1904. – с. 100-129.

N.A.Berdzenishvili⁶⁶, G.V.Tsulaya⁶⁷, M.G.Janashvili⁶⁸,
 G.A.Melikishvili⁶⁹, T.G.Papuaşvili⁷⁰, G.Changashvili⁷¹,
 D.L.Muskhelishvili⁷², G.Grigolia⁷³ and others who studied the
 information about the Sheki/Hereti country, its borders and
 inhabitants in medieval Georgian sources distinguished by their
 objectivity, were analyzed.

⁶³ Такайшвили, Е.С. Источники грузинских летописей. Обращение Грузии / Перевод с древнегрузинского Е.С.Такайшвили. – Тифлис: СМОМПК [в 46 томах], – вып. XXVIII, – 1900. – с. 8.

⁶⁴ კეკელიძე, კ.ს. ეტიუდები ძველი ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორიიდან: [14 ტომად] / კ.ს.კეკელიძე. - თბილისი: სახელმწ. უნივ., – ტ. II. – 1945. – გვ. 315-316. (Kekelidze K.S.Qədim gürcü ədəbiyyatı tarixinə dair etüdlər: [14 cildə] / K.S.Kekelidze. – Tbilisi: Dövlət Universiteti, – с. II, – 1945. – с. 315-316).

⁶⁵ Эсадзе, Б.С. Летопись Грузии. Юбилейный сборник к 300-летию Царствования Дома Романовых Державных Покровителей грузинского народа. 1613-1913 / Б.С.Эсадзе. – Тифлис: Издание кн. П.И. Туманова, – 1913. – Вып. 1 [и единств.], – с. 25.

⁶⁶ ბერძენიშვილი, ნ. საქართველოს ისტორიის საკითხები / ნ. ბერძენიშვილი. – თბილისი: მეცნიერება, – 1975. – წიგნი VIII – გვ. 623. (Berdzenişvili N. Gürcüstanın tarixi məsələləri / N.Berdzenişvili. – Tbilisi: Metsniereba, – 1975. – VIII cild, – s. 623.

⁶⁷ Мровели Леонти. Жизнь Картлийских царей / Перевод с древнегрузинского, предисловие и комментарии Г.В.Цулая. – Москва: Наука, – 1979. – с. 42.

⁶⁸ Царевич Вахушти. География Грузии, – с. 131.

⁶⁹ Меликишвили Г.А. К истории древней Грузии / Г.А.Меликишвили. – Тбилиси: Изд-во Акад. наук Груз. ССР, – 1959.– с. 123, 125, 297.

⁷⁰ პაპუაშვილი, თ. ჰერეთის ისტორიის საკითხები, – გვ. 68, 70. (Papuaşvili, T. Ereti tarixinin məsələləri, – s. 68, 70); პაპუაშვილი, თ. რანთა და კახთა სამეფო (VIII-XI სს.), – გვ. 287. (Papuaşvili, T. Ranlar və kaxlar çarlığı (VIII-XI əsrlər), – s. 287).

⁷¹ ჩანგაშვილი, გ. საინგილო (გეოგრაფიულ-ისტორიული ნარკვევი), – გვ. 26. (Çanqaşvili, G. Saingilo (tarixi-coğrafi oçerk), – s. 26).

⁷² Мухелишвили, Д.Л. Из исторической географии Восточной Грузии: Шаки и Гогарена / Д.Л.Мухелишвили. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1982. – с. 16-17.

⁷³ Григолия, К. О чем поведала “Картлис цховреба” / К.Григолия. – Тбилиси, Ганатлеба, – 1973. – с. 19-20.

Works by S.T.Yeremian⁷⁴, D.L.Muskhelishvili⁷⁵, G.A.Geybullayev⁷⁶, F.J.Mammadova⁷⁷ and others, who had analyzed data about North-Western Albanian provinces in medieval Armenian sources, were reviewed. Works by V.F.Minorski⁷⁸, Z.M.Bunyadov⁷⁹, N.M.Velikhanly⁸⁰, N.A.Karaulov⁸¹, S.A.Kovalevski⁸², M.I.Artamonov⁸³, Y.A.Pakhomov⁸⁴, A.R.Shikhsaidov⁸⁵ and others who researched the information about Filan kingdom and Sheki country in medieval Arab sources have been used.

In his work “From the historical geography of Eastern Georgia: Sheki and Gogarena”⁸⁶ D.L.Muskhelishvili actually tried to investigate the issues of the historical geography of the North-Western Azerbaijan region. The true intention of the author trying to

⁷⁴ Еремян, С.Т. Страна “Махелония” надписи Кааба и Зардушт // – Москва: ВДИ, – 1967. № 4, – с. 47-59.

⁷⁵ Мусхелишвили, Д.Л. Göstərilən əsəri, – s. 16-18.

⁷⁶ Гейбуллаев, Г.А., Göstərilən əsəri, – s. 156-157.

⁷⁷ Məmmədova, F.C. Göstərilən əsəri, – s. 141.

⁷⁸ Минорски, В.Ф. История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XIвков, – с. 137-138.

⁷⁹ Bünyadov, Z.M. Azərbaycan VII-IX əsrlərdə, – s. 40.

⁸⁰ Vəlixanlı, N.M. Azərbaycan VII-XII əsrlərdə: tarix, mənbələr, şərhlər / N.M.Vəlixanlı. – Bakı, Elm və təhsil, – 2016. – s. 195-198, 221-227, 272-273.

⁸¹ Сведения арабских писателей о Кавказе, Армении и Азербейджане: I, ал-Истахрий / Перевод и примечания Н.А.Караулова. – Тифлис: СМОМПК [в 46 томах], – вып. XXIX, – 1901. – с. 15-16, 66; II, Ибн ал-Факих / – вып. XXXI – 1902. – с. 11, 15, 41; III, Ибн Хордабех; IV, Кудама; V, Ибн Рустэ; VI, ал-Якуби / – вып. 32, – 1903. – с. 15-17; VII, ал-Мукаддасий; VIII, Масуди; IX, Ибн Хаукал / – вып. 38, – 1908. – с. 52, 53.

⁸² Ковалевски, С.А. “Книга Птолемея” в свое исторической географии прикаспия / - Ленинград: Известия Всесоюзного географического общества, – 1953. № 1, – с. 33.

⁸³ Артамонов, М.И. История хазар. Под редакцией и с примечаниями Л.Н.Гумилёва / М.И.Артамонов. – Ленинград: Издательство Государственного Эрмитажа, – 1962. – с. 227.

⁸⁴ Пахомов, Е.А. Закатальская “Длинная стена” / – Баку: Труды Азербайджанского университета, серия историческая, – 1950. – вып. I, – с. 68-90.

⁸⁵ Шихсаидов, А.Р. К вопросу о локализации Филана // – Махачкала, Ономастика Кавказа, –1976. – с. 79-81.

⁸⁶ Мусхелишвили, Д.Л. Из исторической географии Восточной Грузии: Шаки и Гогарена / Д.Л.Мусхелишвили. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1982. – 101с.

present “Sheki as Eastern Georgia” is clear from the name of the work. D.L.Muskhelishvili’s attempts to present the historical northwestern provinces of Azerbaijan (Albania) Sheki and Cambysene, as well as the southwestern provinces of Girdiman and Sakasena as “ancient Georgian lands” were thoroughly exposed by F.J.Mammadova⁸⁷.

S.A.Suleymanova also dedicated several articles on the ethno-political history of the northwestern region of Azerbaijan (Albania). As one of the co-authors of the monograph “The history of North-Western Azerbaijan”, she viewed the historical geography and ethno-political history of North-Western Albania⁸⁸, and conducted important research on the ethno-political history of North-Western Albania⁸⁹, as well as the northwestern border region of Albania in the light of the archetypes of local sources⁹⁰.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the research is to elucidate the place and role of Sheki realm in medieval Azerbaijani-Georgian relations based on the materials on the history of Sheki realm in the late 9th-early 13th centuries. The subject of the research is the investigation characteristic features of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the relevant period, history and relations with the neighbors of the Sheki realm, which arose in the northwestern region of Azerbaijan, as well as the historical geography of the ancient and medieval period of the northwestern Azerbaijan.

⁸⁷ Мамедова, Ф. Политическая история и историческая география Кавказской Албании (III в до н.э.–VIII в н.э.) / Ф.Мамедова. – Баку, Элм, – 1986. – с.127-143.

⁸⁸ Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan tarixi / Layihənin rəhbəri və ön sözün müəllifi Y.M.Mahmudov, Müəlliflər: Ş.Əliyev, S.Əliyeva, S.Süleymanova [və b.]. – Bakı, Şərq-Qərb, – 2011. – s. 16-41.

⁸⁹ Сулейманова, С.А. Этнополитическая история северо-западной Албании в свете архетипов в местных источниках // – Баку: Известия НАНА (история, философия и право), – 2004. № 4, – с.52-82.

⁹⁰ Süleymanova, S.Ə. Albaniyanın şimal-qərb sərhəd bölgəsi Lpiniya-Ereti // – Bakı: AMEA Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2007. – 20-ci cild, – s. 56-75. Yənə onun: “Каспийские ворота” в албанской области Лпиния. //Материалы Международной конференции “Дорога Страбона как часть Великого Шелкового пути”. МИЦАИ под эгидой ЮНЕСКО. – Баку, – 2008. – с.127-132.

The goals and objectives of the research. The purpose of the research is to clarify the place and role of Sheki realm in Azerbaijani-Georgian relations at the end of the 9th-beginning of the 13th centuries, to justify the characteristic features of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations, to study the issues directly related to this problem - the history of Sheki realm, and as a whole, the political history and historical geography of the North-Western Azerbaijan in the ancient and middle ages.

Taking into account the goal during the research, based on a wide range of sources and special literature materials the following specific tasks were fulfilled:

- ✓ Investigation of the objective history of our historical lands in the north-west of Azerbaijan within the scientific direction "History of the lost lands". The place and role of Sheki realm in Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the late 9th-early 13th centuries, as well as the elimination of gaps in our national historiography in the field of researching the history of Sheki realm. Clarification of the artificially created complicated scientific problem in Caucasian studies in the last two hundred years and exposition of the attempts of some foreign researchers to falsify the history of Azerbaijan;

- ✓ Analysis of data on the historical geography of North-Western Azerbaijan from ancient Greek, Roman, medieval Albanian, Arab, Armenian, Georgian sources and obtaining correct, objective scientific results;

- ✓ To create a general picture of the processes related to the northwestern provinces in the context of the political history of Azerbaijan (Albania) from ancient times to the mid of the 9th century;

- ✓ To show the stages and intensity of the spread of Christianity in Albania from the 1st century to the 6th century. To analyze the reasons and consequences of the Christian population remaining anti-Chalkidonian (Monophysite) in North-western Albania until the 11th century. A critical approach to the traditional presentations full of distortions regarding dogmatic differences and disagreements in Sheki realm and providing objective historical reality.

✓ To examine the process of creating semi-independent small kingdoms along the northern mountain passes during the Sasanian period. Proposing a new concept in the issue of Filan kingdom or “mysterious Filan” in historiography.

✓ North-western region of Azerbaijan (Albania) - the target of Caliphate armies: to investigate the process of Sheki, Cambysene rulers and Filanshah being able to maintain their nominal power by obeying the Arabs in the new political conditions.

✓ In the conditions of the caliphate’s collapse, “Restoration of the decayed state of Albania” by Prince Grigor Hammam the pious, a new view on the dynastic concept of M.Kalankatuklu (Movses Kaghankatvatsi) regarding Hammam’s successors.

✓ To clarify the struggle of Sahag, the great prince of Albania, called Sevada, for the right-bank Albanian provinces.

✓ To shed light on the issues related to the beginning of the invasive marches of the Georgian rulers towards the East and threatening the Sheki lands.

✓ Clarifying the issue of the end of the power of Adarnerseh dynasty in the left-bank Albanian provinces (Sheki realm) with the restoration of the long-lost state through Senekerim.

✓ To clarify the process of unification of the Sheki realm and the Kakheti principality into a single state and the relations with the neighbors during the reign of Kvirike III the Great and based on numismatic materials to elucidate the important aspects of political, economic and ideological history of the country.

✓ Unraveling the essence of the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti policy against the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom in the struggle for the declining Tiflis Emirate.

✓ To investigate the consequences of Sultan Alp-Arslan’s march to the Caucasian countries, including Sheki, the high political activity of the ruler Akhsartan I and the process of his rise to regional leadership.

✓ Investigation of the stages of the spread of Islam in North-Western Azerbaijan in the early Middle Ages.

✓ To reveal the essence of the aggressive policy of the Georgian king David IV, his achievement in the occupation of Sheki

realm, to analyze the results of his first victory in the battle of Ersukhi.

- ✓ The formation of the border Sheki/Hereti eristavty within the Georgian kingdom, the Sheki eristavs, to study the causes, course and results of the 1178 year's Sheki rebellion.

- ✓ Tracing the processes taken place in Sheki region during the campaigns of the Mongols and the Khorezmians.

- ✓ To make suggestions based on the final propositions arising from the research.

Methods of research. Historical, logical and systematic methods are taken as the basis among general scientific methods. In the research work, the evolutionary process of all events and objects was analyzed within the defined space (logical method) and time (historical method), and the transition from the concrete to the abstract (the transition to essence-content and formal-quantitative models, as well as the transition to creation of deductive-integral models) was important. Systematic approach and analysis, methods of cause-and-effect analysis, traditional types of specific historical methods: historical-genetic, historical-comparative, historical-typological and structural-functional analysis were used during the research. The principles of scientific character, objectivity and historicity were used as the methodological and theoretical basis of the research in the dissertation.

The main source for writing the dissertation was various specific written sources and literary materials. When researching the ancient and early medieval political history and historical geography of the region, the ancient authors (Strabo, Plutarch, Ptolemy, Cornelius Tacitus, Pliny), early medieval Albanian (M.Kalankatuklu, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Mkhitar Gosh), Armenian (7th century Armenian geography, Vardapet Gevond, Ovanes Drashkhanakertsi, Stepanos Asokhik of Taron, Vardan the Great, Vardapet Aristakes Lastivertsi, Monk Magakia), Georgian (Yakov Tsurtaveli, Leonti Mroveli, Sumbat Davitisdze and Kartlis tskhovreba collection), Muslim (Al-Baladhuri, Ibn Khordadbeh, Yaqubi, Ibn al-Faqih, Ahmad ibn A'sam al-Kufi, al-Mas'udi, Ibn Havqal, al-Muqaddasi, Ibn al-Asir, Yaqut Hamawi, Ibn Rusta,

Shihabaddin Muhammad al-Nasawi, Ahmad ibn Lutfullah (head astrologer), Sadreddin Ali al-Huseini) and other sources have been widely used. Along with using a wide range of sources on the subject, for the first time the author formed a new attitude to medieval Georgian sources in national historiography and analyzed them thoroughly.

In writing the dissertation the researches carried out in the fields of archaeology, anthropology, numismatics, etc., as well as modern scientific-theoretical researches, were also used.

The main provisions of the defence are the following:

- Ancient sources confirm that the lands of North-Western Albania extended to the Darial pass (Sarmatian gates) and that these gates formed the border between Iberia and Albania. From this viewpoint, the northwestern borders of Azerbaijan (Albania) in antiquity cannot be limited to Hereti/Sheki province.

- The western borders of Albania were determined through a written map drawn up by the ancient Greek author K.Ptolemy based on special coordinates. Ptolemy's map of the region has been restored by arranging latitude and longitude coordinates for hydronyms that have remained unchanged for millennia.

- Accurate and clear scientific conclusions have been reached about the country of Hereti and its ancient inhabitants, the Hers /Heretins, known to us from medieval Georgian sources. It has been determined that the presentation of Hereti/Hers by some researchers as Ereti/Ers is incorrect and lies at the basis of a major distortion related to the history of the region.

- Based on Georgian sources, the western and northwestern borders of the Sheki/Hereti country in the direction of Kartli have been determined: the border line from the mouth of the Debed-Khrami River (Khunani) to the mouth of the Samebis River, the Samebis River to the Shuamta Mountains, the Turdos River to Gulgulaya, along the Shtoris River to the Greater Caucasus; In the direction of Tusheti the Lopotis River, Didoeti, Dagestan and the Greater Caucasus Mountains.

- It has been determined that Hereti belonging to Her tribes mentioned in medieval Georgian sources and Filan kingdom

belonging to Filan tribes mentioned in Arab sources are the same.

- It has been proven on the basis of Georgian sources that the missionary territory of Saint Nino, who popularized Christianity in Iberia, did not include the lands of Hereti/Sheki. It has been determined that as a result of the reforms of Vachagan III the Pious, Christianity began to be spread rapidly among the North-Western Albanian tribes from the end of the 5th century to the beginning of the 6th century.

- In the face of attacks first by the Sassanians, then by the Arabs, Javanshir, the first great prince of the country, tried to strengthen himself in the left-bank Albanian provinces. The north-western region of Azerbaijan (Albania) also became the target of the Caliphate armies, and the warlord Salman ibn Rabia captured Gabala and made peace with the Shakkan and Camiberan rulers and the people of Filan on the condition of paying tribute.

- Arabs also used passes in the territory of Sheki and Filan in their campaigns against the Khazars and the kings of the mountains. North-western Azerbaijani tribes also took an active part in Arab campaigns against the Khazars. The resettlement policy of the Arabs included the transfer of a part of the mountain tribes to the vicinity of Sheki and Khayzan. The Arab-Khazar conflict prevented the rapid spread of Islam in the region.

- The issue of Sheki, the estate of Sahlin, and the existence of two Shekis in Azerbaijan has been clarified: one of them is Sheki province, located in the left-bank Albania, and the other is Shakesene, one of the important administrative units of the Uti province, which was located on the right-bank and consisted of nine provinces. “Sahl’s property Sheki” should not be considered a fortress or a town, but a large province with a length of approximately 70 farsakhs, covering the area from Gabala to Telavi.

- Prince Grigor Hammam the pious managed to restore the decayed state of Albania, became an active participant in the political processes taking place in the region at that time as the ruler of the country where Islam and Christianity came together and coexistence was ensured.

- In Albania, after the ruler, the grand prince played an

important role in ruling over the country. Sahag, the great prince of Albania, called Sevada, who had troops of more than eight thousand men consisting of well-armed and armored infantry and cavalry regiments, had extensive civil and military power as the owner of the right-bank provinces and the Girdiman fortress.

- During Yusuf ibn Abu-l-Saj's campaigns in 907-914, Albania, the Sheki realm which was in close relations with the Sajis, was not troubled; on the contrary, the Albanian princes became the only force supporting the Sajis in the region. Albanian princes also took an active part in the splitting policy carried out by the Sajis in relation to the Armenian principalities.

- Interests of the Albanian princes clashed with the Armenian and Georgian princes in the matter of possession of Dzorapor region and Uti province. Later, as a result of the insidious policy of the Armenian prince, the dispute stemming from this led to the taking hostage together with the great prince of Albania Grigor, the son of Sahag and blinding, and attack of the Kakheti chorepiscopo together with the Abkhaz tsar on Sheki realm.

- In 918, with the war against the Sheki/Hereti realm together with the chorepiscopo of Kakheti and the Abkhaz tsar, the invasive marches of the Georgian rulers to the East began. The fact that Adarnerseh, the ruler of Sheki/Hereti, was related to the prince of Tao-Klarjeti and held the title of patrician indicated his close ties with the Byzantine Empire.

- During the reign of Sheki/Hereti ruler Ishkhanik, dogmatic disputes and disagreements between Monophysites and Diophysites caused great confusion in the country. Some members of the ruling dynasty together with the Albanian Catholicoses tried to spread Chalcedonism among the population, anti-Chalcedonism was re-established with the struggle of the Monophysite- disposed Albanian princes and the active intervention of the Armenian Catholicos.

- Senekerim, who restored the long-lost state in relation to the right bank and the left bank, and was in power until 1003, strengthened and waged successful wars against the Abkhaz tsar and the Shirvanshahs, was supported by the neighboring states.

- During the wars started by the Abkhaz-Kartli tsar Bagrat III

in order to seize the Kakheti and Sheki/Hereti lands, the rulers of Sheki/Hereti united with chorepiscopo David. This unification was a joining of forces and efforts against a common enemy by the will of the people and rulers of Sheki/Hereti.

– In 1014, Kvirike, the son of David, who separated from the Georgian kingdom and was freed from captivity after a while, was enthroned by the rulers of Sheki/Hereti and Kakheti as the first ruler of the United State with title of the ruler of the Albanians/Rans and Kakhs. It is completely wrong that some researchers distort the historical facts and present this event not as a political unification, but as the annexation of the Sheki realm by the Kakheti principality.

– The United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti ruler, whom the Georgian source calls Kvirike the Great, organized with his allies a military campaign against the Ganja Emirate, defeated the Ossetian tsar Urduren, who invaded Kakheti, was killed and he himself became a victim of blood revenge as well.

– Gagik, ruler of the united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti, many times marched with his troops around Tiflis and prevented the city from being captured by the Georgian king Bagrat IV. He skilfully used the Bagrat IV-Liparit confrontation, which had lasted for many years in the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, and regularly sent his troops to help his ally the eristavi of Kldekar.

– Faced with virtual three-sided military aggression during the Seljuk campaign, the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti ruler Akhsartan I was greatly weakened and lost territories from all directions. Akhsartan I, who obeyed Sultan Alp Arslan, undertook to pay annual tribute, converted to Islam, and accompanied him during the sultan's campaign against the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom.

– Akhsartan I, who skilfully used the emir of Ganja, whom he had captured accidentally, returned the southern lands of the country, including the fortresses of Khornabuj and Aradeti, which were under the control of the Shaddadis, and then, in exchange for giving the emir, he took over the town - fortresses of Bochorma and Ujarma, which are considered the center of Kakheti, from the Georgian tsar.

– After passing under the patronage of the Sultan, Akhsartan I

became much stronger, and the regional leadership again passed to the United State. The Georgian tsar, unable to suppress the uprisings in the country, in 1073, was forced to give the fortresses of Rustavi and Losobanni to Akhsartan I, and entered into an alliance with the United State in the fight against the opponents and the Seljuks. Under increasing pressure from the Seljuks, Akhsartan gradually began to distance himself from the sultan, and together with the Georgian tsar in the Battle of Parskhisi he was able to defeat the new ruler of Arran, Savtekin Alkhas. Akhsartan I was able to organize resistance against the Seljuks in the fortress of Vejin, after that he obeyed the sultan and was recognized as the ruler of the United State.

- The rulers of the country of Sheki, where Islam and Christianity junced, where coexistence was ensured, not only kept their Christian religion, but also adopted Islam.

- The start of the war by David IV against Kvirike IV, the brave ruler of the united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti and the capture of the Zedazadeni fortress was his first attempt to take over the United State and was of a local or reconnaissance nature. The capture of the last ruler of the united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti, Aksartan II by the Baramoguls of Sheki/Hereti feudal kin and handing him over to David IV, reveals the important and leading role they played in the country's political life.

- David IV, who tried to invade the Sheki realm and the Shirvanshah state, had to clash with the Seljuk armies. The Georgian tsar, who was able to win the victory over the Seljuks in the battle of Ersukhi, faced strong resistance in a part of the country - in the city of Sheki and the Kish fortress, and after 13 years of struggle - in 1117, the rulers of the Kish fortress breaking the resistance of the Grigologullary family captured the fortress. The intention of David IV, who received real strength from the Kipchaks, to subjugate the Shirvan dynasty to Georgia had failed by his death.

- In connection with the occupation of Sheki/Hereti lands and beginning of Georgianization policy, the Sheki/Hereti military-administrative district (eristavty) was created. Although the names of the first Sheki/Hereti eristavs are not known, it is identified from Georgian sources that the first generation of eristavs was the sons of

Kolonkel that held this position at least from 1161 to 1184, after which the second generation of eristavs, rulers of the Kish castle, the sons of Grigol held this position.

– In 1178, in the uprising against the occupation, the people of the former Sheki realm acted under the leadership of local rulers and appealed to the neighboring mountain tribes for help. The rebels, supported by neighboring Caucasian peoples, were defeated in a decisive battle with Georgian troops. Despite this, it is known that the excitement in the Sheki/Hereti eristavity had continued for another 6 years, that this struggle was led by the rulers of Kish castle Grigolougullary, and in the end they seized the position of eristav by force.

–Sheki lands avoided from the first reconnaissance expedition of the Mongols to the South Caucasus. The Khorezmians had plundered the coasts of Cambysene and Iori for five years, and were soon expelled from Sheki and Gabala, which they captured. During the second campaign of the Mongols, the Sheki region was also invaded and seriously destructed. Shota Kupari, the Eristav of Sheki/Hereti, personally entered into an agreement with the Mongols and obeyed, and as one of the four high official envoys of the Georgian kingdom.was sent to the Mongols to negotiate. With the consolidation of the Mongols in the South Caucasus, the Georgian kingdom declined, and the territories of Sheki/Hereti and Kakheti were kept as a whole within a single tumen.

Scientific novelty of the research.For the first time in our national historiography –

– As one of the priority lines in the investigation of the history of Azerbaijan's international relations, based on the materials on the history of Sheki realm the Azerbaijani-Georgian relations at the end of the 9th – beginning of the 13th centuries were comprehensively investigated as an independent research object, and the characteristic features of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the relevant period were revealed.

– The history of Sheki realm, which arose in the northwestern region of Azerbaijan after the caliphate, has been studied comprehensively and in-depth in the context of medieval

Azerbaijani-Georgian feudal interstate relations.

- The historical geography and political history of the ancient and early medieval period of North-Western Azerbaijan, which is directly related to the study of the history of Sheki realm, were investigated.

- On the basis of Leonti Mroveli's "Life of the Georgian tsars", as well as the information of Vakhushti Bagration, who gave the political geography of Georgia, it was possible to create a fairly accurate and perfect picture of the borders and population of Sheki/Hereti country.

- A new concept of Filan kingdom was put forward, and concluded that it was located in South Dagestan and North-Western Azerbaijan, in the southern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains. Based on the Arab sources of the time, it was concluded that the residence of the Filanshahs was a city called Khayzan, and therefore, Khayzan is sometimes used in the meaning of Filan.

- During the ecclesiastical crisis caused by the attempt of the Albanian Catholicos Bakur Nerses to subjugate the country to Chalcedonism, it was determined that unlike Gabala and Cambycene, the Sheki parish did not have Diophysite tendencies.

- A number of issues related to Prince Grigor Hammam the pious, who restored the Albanian state, and his dynasty have been clarified. The state founded by Grigor Hammam did not fall after his death and Adarnerseh replaced him in power. The dynasty that started with Grigor Hammam in Sheki realm was in power until about 1010.

- The 886-919 years are defined as the period of the local dynasty's struggle for the restoration of the declined state of Albania. The struggle of the local Albanian rulers, who tried to consolidate themselves in the Albanian provinces on the right bank from the time of Grigor Hammam, failed in 919. Following this, the power of the Grigor Hammam dynasty continued in the left bank areas, under the rule of Sheki realm.

- It was determined that aggression was prevented as a result of the military and political steps taken by Adarnerseh, the ruler of Sheki/Hereti, to eliminate the threat at the beginning of the invasive

marches of the Georgian rulers towards the East.

– According to the information of the Georgian source “Matiane Kartlisa” about the fact that all Hereti were pagans and Monophysites until the reign of Ishkhanik, contrary to the fictional concepts of the political, ethnic and religious history of modern Eastern Georgia of the researchers who wanted to see Hereti as a part of Iberia since ancient times confirms that until the 11th century, Hereti had nothing to do with Iberia.

– With the restoration of the long-lost state through Senekerim, it was determined that the rule of the family by the line of Adarnerseh in the left-bank Albanian provinces (Sheki realm) came to an end.

– It was noted that the complex process leading to the unification of the Sheki realm and the Kakheti principality into a single state ended in 1014. It is justified that among the main factors influencing the development of political relations and the unification of these two countries into a single state is the joined efforts in the fight against the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, which threatened the neighboring lands in the mentioned period.

– It was investigated the role of the “Shakis and Sanars” who came to the aid of the Georgian Tsar defeated and persecuted by the emperor, in which the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state was involved in the struggle against the Byzantine Empire, which began to become active in the 20-30s of the 11th century.

– Based on the study of numismatic materials from the era of Kvirike the Great important aspects of the country’s political, economic, and ideological history have been highlighted. The evolution of coinage and money emission in the country ultimately led to the creation of the original type of Christian and Muslim coins.

– It has been defined that the throne of Kvirike the Great was owned by his nephew Gagik as the legal heir on the female line, during his reign the relations with the Abkhaz-Kartli tsar were again strained, he opposed the claims of the Georgian rulers to take possession of the Tiflis Emirate by all means, and after the failed siege of Tiflis, the Georgian tsar marched to Kakheti.

– The united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti ruler Akhsartan I succeeded in defending his country by making important political moves against the Seljuks and Georgian rulers, maneuvering between powerful rival countries and approaching one of his rivals and fighting against the other, he officially converted to Islam and taking refuge under the sultan's protection had risen to the leadership in the vie for the region.

– Despite the majority of its population being Christian-Monophysite, Sheki realm became one of the countries where Islam and Christianity juncted as a result of the penetration of Islam in the region in the 7th-12th centuries and coexistence was ensured. The inability of the new religion to spread successfully in the North-Western Azerbaijani lands during the Caliphate was caused by both foreign intervention in the face of the Khazar Turks and the policy of the Arabs towards the Christian population. The next wave of Islam reached the tribes of North-Western Azerbaijan as well during the Seljuk marches to Azerbaijan in the mid of the 11th century.

– At the end of the 11th - beginning of the 12th centuries, as a result of the invasive marches of Georgian rulers towards the East against the backdrop of the temporary weakening of the Islamic-Turkish/Oghuz military-political factor in the region, and the strengthening of the Kipchak-Turkish factor the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state collapsed.

– Despite the fact that the territories of the former Sheki realm became a border military-administrative district within the Georgian kingdom, the Sheki/Hereti eristavty was distinguished by its activity in interstate relations. The most glorious page in the struggle of the people of Sheki/Hereti eristavty for the restoration of statehood is the 1178 year's uprising against the occupation.

– Processes taken place in Sheki region in the first half of the 13th century, during the campaigns of the Mongols and the Kharazemshah Jalaladdin under the name of organizing resistance against the Mongols and their consolidation in Azerbaijan were traced.

– The author included numerous and previously unused valuable materials from the collection "Kartlis tskhovreba" into the

scientific circulation.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research.

Materials that were revealed and involved in the scientific circulation and the scientific results obtained from them in connection with the clarification of the place and role of Sheki realm in the Azerbaijani-Georgian relations at the end of the 9th - beginning of the 13th centuries, can be used to create an objective scientific picture of the relevant period of the Azerbaijan history, as well as the history of the Caucasus, to which it is organically connected, also can make an important contribution to the elimination of numerous historical distortions. The materials and conclusions of the dissertation can help in the preparation of general works and textbooks on the history of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus, and in depth study of the historical geopolitical processes that took place in Azerbaijan and the Caucasus during the Renaissance. Besides, it can be used in the preparation of monographic works and collections dedicated to the history of the northwestern region of Azerbaijan.

The results of the research can serve to further expand and deepen the relations of friendship and strategic cooperation observed in Azerbaijani-Georgian interstate relations in modern times. The results of the dissertation work can be used in the instructive-teaching process, in the teaching of the history of international relations of Azerbaijan. Higher and secondary school teachers can use the research work as the main material in the preparation of lecture texts on history, courses on regional studies, and Caucasian studies, as well as in conducting special courses and seminars.

Approbation and application. The main propositions of the dissertation have been reflected in the monographs of the author “North-Western Azerbaijan: Ingiloy” (17.5 print units.), “Sheki: from the ancient times to the present day” (p. 96-120), which he co-authored, and 20 articles (including 7 of them were published abroad). On certain issues, the author gave reports at scientific sessions and conferences (12 conference materials and theses) held at Baku Slavic University, Institute of History of ANAS, Kayseri, Ordu and Istanbul in Turkey, Tiflis, capital of Georgia, Bishkek,

capital of Kyrgyzstan.

The organization where the dissertation work was performed. The dissertation was prepared, discussed and approved at the Department of International Relations of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Baku Slavic University.

The total volume of the dissertation. The total volume of the dissertation is 570605 characters (including the bibliography, additions and abbreviations). Including Title page - 426, Contents - 3653, Introduction - 62677, Chapter I - 135975, Chapter II - 87329, Chapter III - 130006, Chapter IV - 85960, Conclusion - 25603 signs.

II. THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

In the **Introduction**, the relevance of the subject is substantiated, the degree of development is analyzed, the object and subject of the research, goals and tasks, research methods, the main propositions and scientific innovation that are defended, the theoretical and practical importance of the research, the approval and application of the work, the organization where it was carried out, the structural divisions of the dissertation are noted, and the volume is indicated in the characters.

Chapter I of the dissertation entitled “**Historical geography of North-Western Azerbaijan and relations with neighbors in the ancient and early medieval ages**” consists of two paragraphs. In the first point of the first paragraph called “**Historical geography of North-Western Azerbaijan in ancient and early medieval sources**”, which consists of four points, the sources of antiquity (Strabo, Pliny the Great, K.Tacitus) confirming that the northwestern lands of Albania extended to the Darial pass, are analyzed. According to K.Ptolemy, who gave full and detailed information about the ancient borders of the Caucasian states, the Sarmatian gates formed the border between Iberia and Albania. So, in all cases it is wrong to limit the north-western borders of Albania to Hereti/Sheki province. Archaeological excavations (Yaloylu tepe culture), typical Christian monuments belonging to Albanian

Christian architecture, anthropological and other facts also prove that the land of modern Eastern Georgia in question entered Albania in ancient times.

In the **second point** of the first paragraph, the question of the borders and neighbors of North-West Azerbaijan was studied based on medieval Georgian and Armenian sources. The purposeful presentation of the Hereti country and its inhabitants Hers/Hernies by Georgian researchers in the form of “Ereti-Ers” in Georgian sources is unacceptable and stands in the basis of major distortions initiated in Caucasian studies regarding the history of the region. All Georgian sources of the 5th - 11th centuries deal with “Hereti province” and “Hereti border” outside the borders of Kartli. While it is possible to easily specify Sheki/Hereti territories based on the information provided by the 11th century Georgian chronicler Leonti Mroveli and the 18th century Georgian historian Vakhushti Bagrationi, the existing disagreements and artificially created problem between modern researchers actually stem from the attempts to expand the historical Georgian lands to the east at the expense of Albania. The scanty information obtained from Armenian sources, which are not directly related to the region, about the provinces and tribes of North-Western Azerbaijan is of some importance in terms of comparison with other source materials.

In the **third point** of the **first paragraph** Filan kingdom, the new concept put forward regarding the “mysterious Filan” is based on the localization of the country of Filan in South Dagestan and North-Western Azerbaijan, which became a part of Albania⁹¹. Information about the location of 250 out of the 360 fortifications (castles) built in the Caucasus passes from Derbent to Darial, in Filan and Sahib al-Sarir, the name of one of the important passes “Bab-Filanshah”, and the location of Filan to the west of Lakz, indicates that the Filan kingdom was located on the southern slopes of the Caucasus mountains. In Arab sources, it is known that the country of Filan was located on the border with the kingdoms of

⁹¹ Əliyev, Ş.H. Bir daha Filanşahlığın tarixinə dair // – Bakı: Azərbaycan Milli Elmlər Akademiyası. Xəbərlər. İctimai elmlər seriyası, – 2018. № 3, – s. 14-22.

Tabasaran, Zirehqiran and Lakz in the northeast, with Sahib al-Sarir in the northwest (later Qoloda, Sakhur or Daghlig mahal (Mountainous district)). According to our concept of the identity of Hereti, which is the ethnic territory of Her (Ger) tribes according to Georgian sources, and the Filan kingdom belonging to Flan/Jilan tribes in Arab sources, it was concluded that the territories of Alazan valley along the Caucasus barrier are also included in the territory of Filan kingdom. The secret of the “mysterious Filan” country originates from Arabic-language sources that provide information about the Filan kingdom and the Sheki kingdom. Arab authors of the early 9th-10th centuries do not provide information about the Sheki kingdom; on the contrary, the Filan dynasty is not mentioned in the 10th century Arab sources. All this indicates that the lands of Filan were included in the composition of the new kingdom called Sheki in the Islamic East, and that the name of Filan was gradually forgotten and left the scene of history.

And in the **fourth point** of the **first paragraph**, based on medieval Georgian sources, attempts to distort the issues related to the political history and historical geography of Hereti/Sheki in Georgian historiography have been proved. Those who deliberately distort the historical reality, fake “history creators” specifically, from the 2nd-1st centuries BC, the lands of Hereti supposedly became part of the Iberian state, allegations regarding the reunification of the Kakheti and Hereti lands to Iberia in the 1st-2nd centuries AD, the alleged inclusion of the Hereti lands in the missionary area of Saint Nino, the fact that they consider the existing Christian monuments in Eastern Georgia and the Sheki-Zagatala zone (the historical Hereti area) to be part of the Georgian material culture, the Sixth World Ecumenical Council supposedly subjugated all the mountainous provinces, along with Sheki and Shirvan, to the Patriarchate of Mskhet, the intentional localization of the historical Suketi region of Iberia (Kasri, Laukasti valley and Nukhpati fortress) in the territory of Gakh-Sheki regions, the legend about the three brothers who came from Taron and settled in Sheki, etc. have been exposed and the objective truth has been revealed.

In the **first point** of the **second paragraph** called

“Northwestern provinces of Azerbaijan and relations with neighbors in the ancient and early medieval ages”, which consists of three paragraphs, the events occurred in North-Western Azerbaijan during the period of the Albanian monarchy were highlighted. During the Roman campaigns to the Caucasus, the northwestern provinces of Albania were also encroached on. In the battle taken place between Gnaeus Pompey and Oroys, ruler of Albania, on the banks of the Alazan River in 65 BC, groups gathered from the local population took an active part. Emperor Nero’s intention to send selected troops to the Caspian gates, to the war he started against the Albanians, was not successful. The Caucasian gates (Darial pass), which the ancient authors mistakenly called the Caspian gates, were located on the border of Iberia and Albania. It has been concluded that worship to the temple of Ay-Selena near Iberia was located not at Sheki/Hereti, but west of it, near the Iberian border of Albania (perhaps the area of Alaverdi/Alvan temple). In Albania under the influence of the Achaemenies and Parthians, as well as in Sheki/Hereti, fire worship was spreading rapidly. Despite the fact that the village of Kish was “the beginning of all the churches and towns of the East”, in the 1st century, it was not possible to Christianize the northwestern Albanian tribes. As a result of the reforms of Vachagan III the pious, in the late 5th - early 6th centuries Christianity began to spread rapidly in North-Western Albania. At the beginning of the 7th century, under the influence of Byzantium, the Georgian church joined the Chalcedonian (Diophysite) sect, and thanks to the active help of the Sasanians the Monophysite trend won in Albania. An important part of the “Caucasian wall” built by the Sassani shahs in order to close the northern mountain passes passed through North-Western Albania and the territory of the Filan kingdom. The Sassani shahs created semi-independent small kingdoms from the tribes settled along the wall and pursued a policy aimed at dividing the country.⁹²

In the **second point** of the **second paragraph**, the situation in

⁹² Hacıəli, Ş. Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycan: İngiləylər / Ş.Hacıəli. – Bakı: Təhsil, – 2007. – s. 59-93.

the region and the relations with the neighbors during the reign of the Mehrani dynasty was reviewed. Javanshir, who gained great prestige in the fight against Arab wars of aggression, ascended the throne as the first grand prince of Albania and rebelled against the Sassanians. Arriving in the province of Cambysene and his ancestral estate on the other side of the Kur, Javanshir won several victories over Sassani troops and concluded an “unbreakable union” with the Georgian prince Adarnarseh. In the face of the attacks of the Sassanians and later the Arab troops on his country, Javanshir tried to strengthen himself in the provinces located on the left bank of the Kura River.

The northwestern region of Azerbaijan (Albania) also became the target of the Caliphate armies. Salman ibn Rabi'a captured Gabala and made peace with the rulers of Shakkan and Camiberan and the people of Filan on the condition of paying tribute. The rulers of Sheki and Cambysene, the Filanshah whose residence was in the town of Khayzan were able to maintain their power because they obeyed Arabs. As a result of the killing of Javanshir, who had successfully defended his country in the conditions of Arab, Byzantine and Khazar invasions, the country was left defenseless. During the repeated marches of the Khazars, mainly the provinces located in the southern foothills of the Caucasus, as well as the northwestern region of Azerbaijan (Albania) were seriously damaged.

The struggle of the Monophysites against the attempt of the Albanian Catholicos Bakur Nerses to subjugate the country to Chalcedonism led to a church crisis and the intervention of the caliph and the Armenian Catholicos in the process. As a result, the Albanian church was subordinated to the Armenian Church and a serious blow was inflicted on the Diophysite forces in the country. In contrast to Gabala and Cambysene in the mentioned period, we witness the absence of Diophysite tendencies in the Sheki parish.

And in the **third point** of the **second paragraph**, the issues related to Sheki and Filan Shah in the context of the Arab-Khazar wars at the beginning of the 8th century - the mid of the 9th century were clarified. It has been concluded that in some Arab sources, the

town of Khayzan, the population of Khayzan is used as a synonym of the kingdom of Filan, and the population of Filan. Contrary to the assumptions about the location of the town of Khayzan to the north of Derbent, it has been proven that the Arab authors mention the town of Khayzan, located in the neighborhood of Sheki, on the Khunzakh-Gazikumukh-Sakhur-Gakh-Sheki road, in Filan, the ethnic territory of the ancient Gels. Filanshah, who had to participate only in Muslim attacks, due to his care, military prowess, selflessness and praiseworthy actions towards the Muslim army, was not taxed. During the great campaign of the Khazars under the leadership of Raju-Tarkhan, the “border town of Islam” up to Tiflis, the provinces of Albania and Kartli from Kur River to the north were captured and plundered. The last information about the Filanshahs dates to the 40s of the 9th century, and it is related to the sending of the translator Salamen to the Khazar Tarkhan with the help of the Filanshah. It is clear that Filan was also included in the restored state, when the Albanian state was restored in a part of Albania at the end of the 9th century. The resettlement policy of Arabs envisaged the relocation of the population to the North-Western provinces of Azerbaijan, around Sheki and Khayzan. It is known that during this period, certain sections of the population adopted Islam.

In the first half of the 9th century, the Arab troops had to suppress the revolt of the disobedient population in Sheki, the province of Sahl ibn Sunbat. In the fight against the Arabs, Prince Sahl ibn Sunbat got close to Babek, but later betrayed him to the Arabs. It was also possible to clarify the issue of “Sheki, the property of Sahl” and “the presence of two Shekis in Azerbaijan”: one of them is the Sheki realm, located in the left-bank Albania, the object of our research, and the other is Shakesene, located in the right-bank Albania, one of the important administrative units of the Uti province, which consisted of nine provinces; in fact, when saying “Sahl’s property Sheki” it should not be understood as a fortress or a town, but a large province with a length of approximately 70 farsakhs, covering the area from Gabala to Telavi.

Chapter II of the dissertation entitled **“The struggle for the**

restoration of the Albanian state and the relations of the Sheki realm with its neighbors” consists of three paragraphs. In the **first paragraph**, entitled **“The emergence of Sheki realm in the North-Western Azerbaijani lands and its relations with the neighbors”**, a number of issues related to Prince Grigor Hammam the pious, who restored the Albanian state, and his dynasty were clarified. Grigor Hammam, the grandson of Sahl ibn Sunbat, the medieval ruler of Sheki, and later of all of Arran, the son of Adarnarseh, the ruler of Khach, acted as the legitimate and perhaps the only force that could restore the decayed state⁹³. Along with being an able head of state, Hammam was one of the leading figures of his time with a broad outlook as an author of religious and scientific works. The dynasty that started with Grigor Hammam in Sheki realm was in power until about the year 1010⁹⁴.

The second paragraph, called **“The struggle for the right-bank Albanian provinces”**, is dedicated to the struggle of local Albanian rulers trying to gain a foothold in the right-bank Albanian provinces from the time of Hammam. The state founded by Hammam did not fall after his death and he was replaced in power by Adarnarseh. In Albania/Sheki realm, after the ruler, an important role in the governance of the country played the grand prince. Sahag, the great prince of Albania, called Sevada, had extensive civil and military power as the owner of the right-bank Kur provinces and the Girdiman fortress. Sahag, who had more than eight thousand-troops consisting of well-armed and armored infantry and cavalry regiments, in the fight against his political rivals was able to subjugate the provinces of Girdiman, Parisos and Jorayget⁹⁵.

⁹³ Əliyev, Ş.H. Azərbaycan Albansünashlığında “albanların hökümdarı Qriqor Hammam” məsələsinə dair // Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin 90 illik yubileyinə həsr olunmuş “Azərbaycansünashlığın aktual problemləri” IV Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları. – Bakı: – 1-4 may, – 2013. – s.190-193.

⁹⁴ Алиев, Ш.Г. Благочестивый князь Григор Хаммам в борьбе за возобновление царство Албанское // – Москва: Вестник Московского государственного лингвистического университета. Общественные науки, – 2017. – Выпуск 3(787), – s. 105-114.

⁹⁵ Əliyev, Ş.H. Sağsahil Alban vilayətləri uğrunda mübarizədə Şəki çarlığı // – Bakı: AMEA Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2016. – 61-ci cild, – s. 275-289.

During the campaigns of Yusuf ibn Abu-Saj in 907-914, Albanian/Sheki realm was not touched; on the contrary Albanian princes became the only force supporting the Sajis in the region. Albanian princes also took an active part in the policy of division carried out by the Sajis in order to keep the Armenian provinces in a dependent state. At the time, when the Sajis were focused on the struggle against the Caliphate, the great prince of Albania Sahag started a war against the Armenians. In fact, the great Ishkhan Sahag, who actively participated in the war characterized as a struggle for power between the relatives of the Georgian prince, the eristavt-eristavi Qurgen took Dzorapor province together with the Kayean fortress, and freed the political prisoners held captive and hostage there. As a result of the insidious policy of the Armenian prince, the dispute stemming from this led to the taking hostage and blinding of the great prince of Albania together with his son Grigor and the chorepiscopo of Kakheti together with the Abkhaz king attacked the Sheki realm. The struggle of the local Albanian feudal lords, who tried to strengthen themselves in the right-bank Albanian provinces, failed in 919. After that, the power of the Grigor Hammam dynasty continued in the areas of the left bank, in the Sheki realm, which had already stable territories north of Kur.

In the **third paragraph**, called **“Invasive marches of Georgian rulers to the East and the Sheki realm”**, along with the beginning of the marches to the East, the history of the Sheki realm until the beginning of the 11th century was clarified. When the marches of the Georgian rulers to the East began, before the allies could capture the strategically important fortress of Vejin on the border, they were forced to sign a truce and be content with their meager achievements due to the arrival of the Sheki/Hereti ruler Adarnasen with additional forces. Ruler Adarnerseh, who maintained close relations with the Sajis, was soon able to regain his power in the lost territories. Adarnerseh married Princess Dinar, the sister of the eristavt-eristavi Gurgen, and established relations with the Tao-Klarjeti royal family. The fact that Adarnerseh, the ruler of Sheki/Hereti, had the title of patrician indicated his close ties with

the Byzantine Empire⁹⁶.

Adarnerseh's reign ended in the years 944-955 and his son Ishkhanik mounted the throne. Along with other provinces under the Salari state, which replaced the Sajis, a million dirhams tax was collected from the Sheki realm. Information of the Georgian source "Matiane Kartlisa" about the fact that "*everyone in Hereti was an infidel*⁹⁷ *from the beginning until the reign of Ishkhanik*", in other words, a Monophysite, refute the "concepts of the ethnic, political and religious history of Eastern Georgia" of modern Georgian researchers who consider the Sheki/Hereti lands "a part of Iberia since ancient times", and proves that it remained outside the borders of Iberia from ancient times up to the 11th century.

Prince Dinar tried to spread Chalcedonism among the population with the help of his son Ishkhanik, as well as the Catholicoses of Albania, Sahag and later Gagik. Sahag and Gagik, who were elected Catholicos without the permission of the Armenian throne, were inclined towards Chalcedonism in order to completely separate the Albanian Church from the Armenian Church. Armenian Catholicos Ananias Mokasi was called to a local church council in Khachin and had to leave because of serious dogmatic disputes. However, in 958 (or 961), as a result of the struggle of Monophysite-disposed Albanian princes and the population against Chalcedon-Diophysitism, as well as with the active intervention of Armenian Catholicos Ananias Mokasi anti-Chalcedonism was re-established in Albania.

With the restoration of the long-disappeared state through Senekerim, the rule of the line of Adarnerseh in the left-bank Albanian provinces (in the Sheki realm) ended. Senekerim, who

⁹⁶ Əliyev Ş.H.Gürcü feodallarının Şərqə doğru ilk yürüşü və Şəki hakimliyi // – Bakı: ADPU, Tarix, insan və cəmiyyət, – 2020. № 3 (30), – s. 75-84.

⁹⁷ Летопись Картли / Перевод, введение и примечания Г.В.Цулая. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1982. – s. 53; Матиане Картлиса / Перевод, введение и примечания М.Д.Лордкипанидзе. – Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1976. – с. 34; Багратиони Вахушти. История царства Грузинского. Памятники грузинской исторической литературы / Перевел, снабдил предисловием, словарями и указателем Н.Т.Накашидзе. –Тбилиси: Мецниереба, – 1976. – с. 127;

fought successful wars against the Abkhaz king and the Shirvanshahs, strengthened himself and seized the surrounding territory which was welcomed by some neighboring states. The third part of the “History of Albania”, which follows the events until 999, was written while Senekerim still being in life. And it is known from the Armenian source that he was in power until 1003.

Chapter III of the dissertation “**The United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state in the history of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations**” consists of five paragraphs. In the first paragraph, entitled “**Military-political relations of Sheki realm and Kakheti chorepiscopate**”, the process leading to the unification of these two feudal states and ending in 1014 was clarified. During the campaigns of the Abkhaz-Kartli king Bagrat III, the Sheki/Hereti rulers united with the Kakheti chorepiscopo David in the fight against him. This unification was a joining of forces and efforts against a common enemy by the will of the people and rulers of Sheki/Hereti. Chorepiscopo David, who was deprived of his principality, tried to fight against Bagrat III with the help of Sheki/Hereti rulers⁹⁸. It is completely wrong to present this not as a political merger, but as the annexation of the Sheki realm by the Kakheti principality. The information of the Georgian source about the next stage of the Georgian rulers’ invasive marches to the East in 1008-1012 is episodic in nature but notable for its contradictory points. The invasive marches of the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom to the East caused the intervention of the Shaddadis, the new rulers of Arran, to the process. After the Shamkir war or the unsuccessful siege of Shamkir, the parties made peace⁹⁹.

In 1014, the rulers of Sheki/Hereti and Kakheti revolted against the Georgian tsardom, and after a while, Kvirike III, freed

⁹⁸ Алиев, Ш.Г. Из истории политического объединения Шекинского царства и Кахетинского княжества // – Москва: Вопросы истории, ежемесячный журнал, – 2016. № 10. – с. 162-168.

⁹⁹ Əliyev, Ş.H. Gəncə Şəddadilər Əmirliyinin xarici siyasətində gürcü feodal dövlətləri (X-XI əsrlər) // Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 87-ci ildönümünə həsr olunmuş “Azərbaycanşünaslığın aktual problemləri” I Beynəlxalq elmi konfrans, – Bakı-Naxçıvan-Gəncə: – 3-8 may, – 2010. - s. 197-205.

from captivity, was enthroned as the first ruler of the United State with the title “ruler of the Albanians/Rans and Kakhs”. As in Sheki/Hereti, the ruling dynasty in Kakheti was related to the Girdiman dynasty. After the Sanars in the principality of Kakheti, from 827, a new chorepiscopo dynasty (Donauri dynasty) with roots from the Gardabani/Girdiman dynasty took over the power. The fictions of modern Georgian researchers about the coming to power of the new Arevmaneli dynasty in 881 in Kakheti have no scientific basis. The amalgamation of the Sheki/Hereti realm and the Kakheti principality conditioned the consolidation of Albanian and Georgian cultures. Kvirike III implemented administrative reforms in order to strengthen his power in the united state, and tried to get the support of the Georgian church.

In the **second paragraph** called **“Relations of the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state with its neighbors during the time of Kvirike the Great”**, the relations of the first ruler of the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state, Kvirike the Great, with its neighbors were investigated¹⁰⁰. In the 20s - 30s of the 11th century, forces of the united state, involved in the war between the Byzantine Empire and the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, which began to become active in the East, came to the aid of the defeated and persecuted Georgian tsar. A Georgian source calls him “Kvirike the Great” to express the power and glory of Kvirike III¹⁰¹. In 1032, he and his allies organized a successful military campaign against Fazlun, the emir of Ganja, entered Tianeti and fought with Ossetian tsar Urdure, who devastated Kakheti. Ossetians were defeated in a fierce battle, and Urdure was killed in the battle. In 1037, Kvirike the Great became a victim of blood revenge and was killed by an Ossetian slave while

¹⁰⁰ Алиев, Ш.Г. Взаимоотношения Шеки-Кахетинского царства с соседними государствами в период правления Великого Квирика // – Kyiv: Hileya. Naukovyy visnyk. Zbirnyk naukovykh prats, — 2017. – Vypusk 127 (№ 12), – с.136-141.

¹⁰¹ Əliyev, Ş.H. Orta əsr Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan qarşılıqlı əlaqələrdə müttəfiqlik münasibətləri (Şəki dövlətinin materialları əsasında) // – Bakı: AMEA Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2007. – 20-ci cild, – s.76-85.

hunting¹⁰².

Four silver coins of three types discovered from his time were written in Arabic according to Muslim religious canons. These coins, officially called “dirham”, are a visible indicator of the cultural and economic dependence of the United State on the Islamic world, located at the crossroads of Christian and Muslim civilizations. The evolution of coinage and money emission in the country ultimately led to the creation of the original type of Christian and Muslim coins.

In the **third paragraph** entitled “**The united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti State in the struggle for the Tiflis Emirate**”, the issues of the united state’s actions against the claims of the Georgian Tsar Bagrat IV to take possession of the Tiflis Emirate, which was experiencing a period of decline, is considered. After a two-year unsuccessful struggle for Tiflis, the Georgian tsar, who was trying to disrupt the plans of his rivals, made peace with the Emir of Tiflis, gave up the siege, and succeeded in dividing the second ruler of United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state Gagik’s forces by drawing the princes who were opposed to him, to his side. The Georgian tsar, who brought his armies into Kakheti, was able to defeat the army of the United State in the battle on the Malaikeler (Angels’) Mountain in 1040, but due to the turmoil in his country he could not continue the campaign¹⁰³. The burning of the famous Bodoji palace during the campaign was a clear indication of the irreconcilable enmity between the parties, resulting from the desire of Bagrat IV to establish him as the new leader in the regional rivalry. Trying to take revenge for the defeat, Gagik also sent his troops to help the united forces on the front against the Georgian tsar. In 1046, Gagik, who had to act again against the Georgian tsar regarding Tiflis,

¹⁰² Əliyev, Ş.H. Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan mütəffiqlik münasibətləri tarixində Şəki-Kaxeti çarlığı // Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 89-cu ildönümünə həsr olunmuş “Azərbaycanşünaslığın aktual problemləri” III Beynəlxalq elmi konfrans. – Bakı-Gəncə: – 2-5 may, – 2012. – s. 191-195.

¹⁰³ Əliyev, Ş.H. XI əsrin 30-40-cı illərində Tiflis əmirliyi uğrunda mübarizədə Şəki çarlığı // “Gürcüstanda İslamiyyətin dünəni, bugünü, sabahı” mövzusunda beynəlxalq sempoium, – İstanbul: – 06-08 may, – 2016. – s. 27-33.

negotiated and succeeded in making him withdraw. Gagik, who intended to prevent Tiflis from being fully controlled by Bagrat IV and to maintain his claim to the left bank, achieved another military-diplomatic success. Relations of the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state with the Shaddadis and Shirvanshahs remained strained during the afore-said period.

In the **fourth paragraph** called “**United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state during the Seljuk campaigns**”, attention is focused on the processes taken place in the region during the Seljuk campaigns. Akhsartan I, the third ruler of United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state, behaved cautiously in the extremely sensitive matter - taking possession of Tiflis, and skillfully used the Alan tribes in the fight against his rivals.

Akhsartan I, who faced actually three-pronged military aggression during the Seljuk campaign, was greatly weakened and faced territorial losses from all directions: Kakheti was again under the control of the Georgian Tsar, and the southern lands between Kur-Iori went under the control of the Shaddadis. Akhsartan I was forced to submit to the great march of the Seljuks under the leadership of the Sultan. Akhsartan I, who renounced his faith and became a Muslim, went down in history as the first and last Muslim ruler of United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state. Thanks to the great confidence and generosity of the Sultan, Akhsartan had strengthened his weakened position by recapturing all the fortresses that had been lost or abandoned by their owners. Akhsartan I joined with his army the march of Sultan Alp-Arslan against the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom¹⁰⁴.

Akhsartan I, who skillfully used the emir of Ganja captured by chance, first returned the southern lands of the country, including the fortresses of Khornabuj and Aradeti, which were under the control of the Shaddadis, and then, in exchange for the emir, he took from the Georgian Tsar the town-fortresses of Bochorma and Ujarma,

¹⁰⁴ Aliyev, Ş.H. Selcukların Şeki ve Kaheti seferleri orta çağ gürcü kaynağı “Matiani Kartlisa”da // Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Himayelerinde, Erciyes Üniversitesi Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Merkezi. I.Uluslararası Selcuklu Sempozyumu. Bildiri Özetleri, – Kayseri: – 27-30 eylül, – 2010. – s. 18-19.

which were considered the center of Kakheti.

Two historical facts, which were distorted by the researchers about the history of Shirvan, at the same time created conditions for the distortion the history of Sheki. One of the distortions is related to supposed use of Georgians (actually hired fighters) by Shirvanshah in suppressing the rebellion in the capital Yazidiya in April 1066, and the other one is related to the collision of the Georgian king (actually the commander who rebelled) with Shirvanshah in April 1067¹⁰⁵.

After passing under the patronage of the Sultan, Akhsartan I became much stronger, against the background of the weakening of the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, the regional leadership again passed to the united state. The Georgian tsar, unable to suppress the rebellions inside the country, was forced to give the fortresses of Rustavi and Losobanni to the United State in 1073, and entered into an alliance with the United State in the fight against the opponents and the Seljuks. In the battle of Parskhisi in 1075, Akhsartan I together with the Georgian king was able to defeat the new ruler of Arran, Savtekin Alkhas. In the next Seljuk campaigns, the Georgian Tsar obeyed the Sultan; moreover, he had to participate in the campaign against his ally Akhsartan I as part of the Seljuk army. The Seljuk army, which did not succeed in the battle that had lasted for several months under the fortress of Vejin, had to settle peace with Kakheti. Akhsartan I, able to organize a strong resistance in the fortress of Vejin, was greatly strengthened in the presence of the Sultan. After that, Akhsartan I, who showed obedience to the Sultan, was recognized as the ruler of United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state¹⁰⁶.

In the **fifth paragraph** entitled “**Islam in Northwest Azerbaijan in the mid of the 7th - the beginning of the 12th centuries**”, the religious situation in North-Western Azerbaijan and the issues related to the spread of Islam have been clarified. The

¹⁰⁵ Əliyev, Ş.H. XI əsr Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan münasibətlərində Şirvanla bağlı iki tarixi təhrif haqqında // – Bakı: AMEATarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2009. – 28-ci cild, – s. 61-67.

¹⁰⁶ Əliyev, Ş.H. Səlcuq yürüşləri dövründə Şəki çarlığı // – Bakı: Strateji təhlil, SAM, – 2017. – Say 3-4 (21-22), – s. 299-310.

inability of the new religion to spread successfully in the lands of North-Western Azerbaijan during the Caliphate was caused by both foreign intervention in the face of the Khazar Turks and the policy of the Arabs towards the Christian population. In the conditions of the Arab-Khazar conflict, the inability of the Arabs to consolidate in North-Western Azerbaijan and the corresponding lands regularly falling under the control of the Khazar Turks, at the same time, the Christian population was free in matters of religion and paid a tax called *jizya*, patronage of churches, and release from taxes of special local units that provided armed assistance to the Arabs in their military campaigns, and other factors hindered the rapid spread of Islam in the region¹⁰⁷. For this reason, the majority of the population of Sheki realm was Christian - Monophysite. Islam was spreading rapidly in towns (among merchants and artisans) than in villages, where mosques and Muslim quarters were established. The rulers of the country of Sheki not only kept their Christian religion, but also adopted Islam. Unlike them, the sources present the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti rulers as “true Christians”¹⁰⁸. In the mid of the 11th century, during the Seljuk marches to Azerbaijan, the next wave of Islam reached the tribes of North-Western Azerbaijan, and the ruling aristocratic clans, including the ruler Akhsartan I, officially adopted Islam.

Chapter IV of the dissertation entitled “**Sheki lands in the occupation policy of David IV**” consists of three paragraphs. In the first paragraph called “**The invasive policy of David IV regarding Sheki and Shirvan lands: the fall of the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state**”, the effect of the invasion and fall of the United State on regional processes was traced. The united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti ruler Kvirike IV at the end of his 20-year rule succeeded in preventing the new march of Georgian rulers to the East. The

¹⁰⁷ Əliyev, Ş.H. IX-X əsrlər Şimal-Qərbi Azərbaycanda islamın yayılması məsələsinə dair // Ümummilli lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 88-ci ildönümünə həsr olunmuş “Azərbaycanşünaslığın aktual problemləri” II Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları. I hissə. – Bakı-Gəncə: – 4-7 may, – 2011. – s. 309-315.

¹⁰⁸ Aliyev, SH.H. Islam in North-Western Azerbaijan in the early medieval ages // – Torun: Nowa Polityka Wschodnia, – 2018. – nr 2 (17), – p. 45-56.

capture of the border fortress of Zedazade by David IV in 1101 was his first attempt to invade the United State and was of a local or exploratory nature. The last ruler of the United State, Akhsartan II, was soon captured by the Sheki/Hereti feudal dynasty Baramogullari and handed over to David IV.

Atabey of Ganja, trying to stop David IV, brought his army into Kakheti. However, in the battle of Ersuhi, David IV was able to win his first victory over the Seljuks. David IV faced strong resistance in a part of Sheki/Hereti country, including Sheki town and the Kish castle, and after 13 years of struggle - in 1117, the rulers of Kish castle, Grigologullari, broke the resistance of the feudal dynasty and managed to seize the Kish castle. Against the backdrop of the temporary weakening of the Islamic-Turkish/Oghuz military-political factor in the region, as a result of the invasive marches of Georgian rulers to the East the United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state fell, its territory was included in the Georgian kingdom, and the troops formed from its population were included in the Georgian army. After the invasion, David IV added to his titles the title of “ruler of the Rans/Albanians and Kakhs”. In Muslim sources, he was mentioned as “the king of kings of Abkhaz, Sheki and Alan”¹⁰⁹.

David IV, who tried to implement the occupation policy of Sheki and Shirvan lands, had to face the Seljuks. David IV, strengthened by a 45-50 thousand, highly combat-power Kipchak army, began active military operations to subjugate the neighboring states. With the exception of Derbent, the Georgian tsar, who took control of Shirvan, placed troops consisting of “Hers and Kakhs” in important fortresses and towns. With the death of David IV, who intended to subjugate the Shirvan dynasty to the Georgian kingdom forever, his invasive plans for Shirvan were left unfinished¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁹ Əliyev, Ş.H. Gürcü Çarı Qurucu Davidin İşğalları Dövründə Şəki Torpaqları // – Osmaniye: Akademik Tarih ve Düşünce Dergisi. Academic Journal of History and Idea. Академическая История и Мысль, – 2018. – cilt 5, – sayı 18, – s. 442-455.

¹¹⁰ Aliyev, Ş.H. Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan ilişkilerinde Şirvanşahlar devleti (XII-XIII. Y.Y. başları) // Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ordu Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Güney Kafkasya dil-tarih-kültür ilişkileri uluslararası bilgi şöleni bildirileri, – Ordu:

In the **second paragraph**, entitled “**Georgianization policy in Sheki/Hereti lands**”, the history of borderland Sheki/Hereti eristavty within the Georgian kingdom was studied. After the collapse of the United State and its annexation to the Georgian kingdom, a separate border Sheki/Hereti eristavty (military-administrative district) was created¹¹¹. It has been confirmed that there is no scientific basis for the attempts to separate “Sheki eristavty” in Armenian sources and “Hereti eristavty” in Georgian sources. It was possible to create a coherent picture of the Sheki/Hereti eristavs with wide powers in the management of the military-administrative district. Although the names of the first eristavs are not known, it is well established that the sons of Kolonkel held the position of eristav of Sheki/Hereti from at least 1161 to 1184, after which this position was held by rulers of Kish Castle - the Grigologullari¹¹².

According to the Armenian author Vardan, with the help of the Sheki eristav the Georgian tsar punishes the ruler of the town of Ani, who betrayed him, and the Georgian sources, which show others as “some didebuls”, along with mentioning the names of the Sheki/Hereti eristavs, consider it necessary to list their positive qualities as well, and then accuses them of being in enmity and envy of the tsar and undermining him.

The activation of Monophysite - desposed forces in the Georgian kingdom led to the uprising of the population in Sheki eristavty in 1178¹¹³. The population of the Sheki/Hereti eristavty acted under the leadership of local rulers and appealed to the neighboring mountain tribes for help. Although the rebels fought

– 27-30 eylül, – 2010. – 2011. – s. 43-51; Yenə onun, XII-XIII əsrin əvvəllərində Şirvanşahlar dövlətinin xarici siyasətində Abxaz-Kartli çarlığı// – Bakı: Bakı Slavyan Universitetinin Elmi əsərləri: İctimai-siyasi elmlər seriyası, – 2010. № 2, – s. 110-117.

¹¹¹ Əliyev, Ş.H. Şəki hakimliyi (XII-XIII əsrlər) // – Bakı: AMEA Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri, – 2008. – 26-cı cild, – s. 47-60.

¹¹² Aliyev, S. Shaki Eristavate // – Bakı: Azerbaijan & Azerbaijanis, – 2007. – p. 155-162.

¹¹³ Əliyev, Ş.H. 1178-ci il Şəki üsyanı // – Bakı: Bakı Universitetinin xəbərləri, Humanitar elmlər seriyası, – 2001. № 2, – s. 83-86.

bravely, in a decisive battle they were defeated by the Georgian Tsar's select troops. However, the population's struggle against foreign rule continued¹¹⁴. The descendants of the Kish castle rulers, Grigologullari, led the unrests in Sheki/Hereti eristavty that continued for another 6 years, and in the end they seized the eristav's position by force. The Georgian palace had to reconcile with the fact that the local feudal generation, which stubbornly fought against them, made a coup d'état. The Sheki/Hereti eristavs took an active part in holding grandiloquent ceremonies in the Georgian palace, planning military marches, and especially had the right to be represented with special privileges in the state council called Darbazi¹¹⁵.

In the **third paragraph**, called **"Sheki/Hereti lands during the Mongol campaigns"**, processes taken place in the Sheki region in the first half of the 13th century were investigated. The first exploratory expedition of the Mongols bypassed Sheki lands. Then, during the march of the Kipchaks to Shirvan, the lands of Gabala and Sheki suffered some damage. The Khorezm people who fled from the Mongols captured the coasts of Cambysene and Iori and had plundered them for five years. Tsarina Rusudan, who fled to Kutaisi as a result of Jalaladdin's campaigns, completely lost her power over Eastern Georgia. Although Jalaladdin's forces seized Sheki and Gabala, the local forces soon besieged both towns and forced the Khorezmians to flee. Following this, forces of the Sheki/Hereti eristavty took part in the battle against Jalaladdin's army as part of the Georgian army and suffered a heavy defeat¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁴ Əliyev, Ş.H. Azərbaycan-Dağıstan xalqlarının yadellilərə qarşı birgə mübarizəsi tarixindən: 1178-ci il Şəki üsyanı // "Azərbaycan-Dağıstan: qardaşlıq münasibətləri tarixi, müasirlik, perspektivlər" mövzusunda Seyid Qurbanovun xatirəsinə həsr olunmuş beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları (29-30 aprel 2010). – Bakı: AMEA Tarix İnstitutunun Elmi əsərləri. Xüsusi buraxılış, – 2010. – 33-cü cild, – s. 44-54.

¹¹⁵ Əliyev, Ş.H. XII əsrin sonları-XIII əsrin əvvəllərində Azərbaycan-Gürcüstan münasibətlərində Şəki eristavlığı // – Bakı: Tarix və onun problemləri. Nəzəri, elmi, metodik jurnal, 3. – 2018. – s. 5-10.

¹¹⁶ Aliyev, Ş.H. Moğollar Devrinde Azerbaycan'ın Şeki Bölgesi // – Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Stratejik Araştırma Merkezi. YENİ TÜRKİYE, 72, – 2015. – Kafkaslar özel sayısı – II, – s. 377-381.

During the second campaign of the Mongols, Shota Kupari, the eristav of Sheki/Hereti, personally entered into an agreement with the Mongols and obeyed them, was sent to the Mongols as one of the four envoys chosen to negotiate on behalf of the Georgian kingdom, and successfully carried out his mission. The Georgian kingdom, which was deprived of all vassals within the High Mongol khanate, declined, and 8 tumens were created in the country. The territories of Sheki/Hereti and Kakheti as a whole were kept within a single tumen.

In the “**Conclusion**” section of the dissertation, the results and conclusions reached in connection with the research are summarized and certain suggestions are made. The place and role of Sheki realm in Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the history of international relations of Azerbaijan at the end of the 9th - beginning of the 13th centuries, characteristic features of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations in the afore-studied period, the history of the Sheki realm that arose in the northwestern region of Azerbaijan (Albania) after the Caliphate, the political history and historical geography of this region in the ancient and middle ages have been comprehensively clarified on the basis of reliable historical sources, and objective reality has been provided on scientific grounds:

- In the 3rd BC - 2nd centuries AD, to the west and north-west of the Iberian border from Hereti/Sheki province lived ethnic Albanians, Sods, Didurs, Lupens and other tribes. It has been defined that most of the information about Albania given by the authors of antiquity is related to the tribes of North-Western Albania, which were included in the Albanian tribal union.

- Based on Georgian sources, the borders of Sheki/Hereti country have been specified: in the west, the boundary line extending from the confluence of the Debed River with Khrami to Kur (Kura) on the opposite side of Khunan to the confluence of the Samebis River with Iori, along the Samebis River to the Shua-mta Mountains, on the opposite side of the mountain along the Turdos-khevi River to Gulgula, the Shtoris-khevi River; in the east, the mouth of the Iori River, the Alazan River, the Eyrychay; Caucasus mountains along Dagestan, Didoeti, Tusheti in the north; the Kur

River in the south.

– Filan kingdom, the new concept put forward regarding the “mysterious Filan” is based on the localization of the country of Filan not in the North Caucasus, but in South Dagestan and North-Western Azerbaijan, which became a part of Albania, in the southern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains, in the passage of the Caucasus barrier called “Bab-Filanshah”. The main target of the Arab-Khazar wars was the territory of Albania. Arabs also used the passes in Sheki and Filan in their campaigns against the Khazars.

– Prince Grigor Hammam the pious, who managed to restore the state in a part of Albania in 886, became an active participant in the political processes taking place in the region, and established close relations with the Sajis as the ruler of the country where Islam and Christianity joined. The years 886-919 should be regarded as the period of the local dynasty’s struggle for the “restoration of the decayed Albanian state”.

– The interests of the Albanian princes clashed with the Armenian and Georgian princes in the matter of having the province of Uti located in the right-bank Albania. In 918, when the chorepiscopo of Kakheti and the Abkhaz tsar started a war against the Sheki/Hereti realm, began the march of the Georgian rulers to the East.

– During the reign of Ishkhanik, dogmatic disputes and disagreements between Monophysites and Diophysites caused great confusion. The rulers of the country of Sheki, where Islam and Christianity joined and where coexistence was ensured, not only kept their Christian religion, but also adopted Islam.

– The establishment of alliance relations between the Sheki/Hereti realm and the Kakheti principality, their unification in a single state, resulted from the joining of efforts in the fight against the aggressive policy of the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom. For the first time in the history of Christian states in the East, Kvirike the Great used Arabic script to present his titles.

– During the reign of Gagik, who was brought to power as the second ruler of the united Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state, the legal heir through the female line, relations with the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom

were again strained. Akhsartan I, the third ruler of United Sheki/Hereti-Kakheti state, took a cautious position in relation to the Seljuks and the Abkhaz-Kartli kingdom, and by making the right political decisions, he succeeded in maintaining the existence of his country. In 1072-1082, Akhsartan I, who renounced the Seljuk rule, was at the forefront of the struggle against the Seljuks.

- The decision of the Sheki/Hereti feudal clan to end the existence of the United State once again revealed the important and leading role they played in the country's political life. The Sheki/Hereti aristocracy was so active in interstate relations that it attracted attention of various-language sources.

- The people of the former Sheki realm, especially the local rulers, depending on the circumstances fought openly or secretly for the restoration of statehood. During the second campaign of the Mongols, the Sheki region, whose population fled to the mountains and forests, was also invaded and severely destroyed.

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

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