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Note from the Editor-in-Chief

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Reconstructing the Past: Journal of Historical Studies aims to foster the recovery of the historical past without fear or favor, based not only on the historical methods and methodology, but also on an interdisciplinary approach.

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Kind regards,
Professor Hussein Baghirov
Founder of the Western Caspian University

"WESTERN PILGRIMS" IN THE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE 1930S–1950S: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The article presents a historiographical review of the phenomenon of "Western pilgrims" – Western intellectuals, writers, journalists, and public figures who visited the Soviet Union in the 1930s–1950s as part of the cultural diplomacy of the Stalinist regime. Based on historiographical analysis, the study traces the evolution of research approaches to this phenomenon: from ideologized assessments in the spirit of the Cold War to comprehensive institutional and cultural analysis, made possible by the "archival revolution" of the 1990s–2000s. Special attention is paid to the historiographical re-evaluation of key Western figures, whose published diaries and archival materials have radically changed our understanding of the motivations and perceptions of Soviet reality by Western intellectuals. The conclusion highlights promising directions for further research.

Keywords: cultural diplomacy, "Western pilgrims," political pilgrimage, USSR, historiography, Stalinism, Cold War

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of the "Western pilgrims," i.e., Western scholars, writers, journalists, and public figures who came to the USSR between the 1930s and 1950s and sought to personally evaluate this "great experiment," has never failed to attract researchers' attention. Hundreds of thousands of Western tourists visited the "country of Soviets": some saw it as a utopia, while others thought of it as a totalitarian state, and yet there were people who adopted positions in between. Visits of Western tourists were not just an expression of hospitality but also a part of the cultural and diplomatic policy of the Soviet state aiming at legitimizing its regime in the international arena (Golubev, 2004, pp. 7–12; David-Fox, 2012, pp. 5–10; Shabasova, 2023, pp. 236–237).

However, while there is no shortage of studies dedicated to the individual visitor and his/her perception process, a systematic historiographical analysis that would consider the development of views on this issue in connection with the changing political circumstances, archival accessibility, and the evolving methodology in the humanities is still absent. This paper provides such an analysis, focusing on “western pilgrims” as one of the main features of Stalinist cultural diplomacy.

Nevertheless, although there have been many attempts to explore the topic in terms of the visitor and his/her perception, a historiographical analysis of the evolution of such perceptions within the context of the political situation, archival availability, and methodology of the humanities has not yet appeared. This paper is devoted to such an analysis, specifically to “western pilgrims” as one of the main characteristics of Stalinist cultural diplomacy.

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2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to the research is defined by the use of complementary methods that include historiographical analysis as a main methodology, the concept of the theory of political pilgrimage, and the concept of cultural diplomacy.

Historiographical analysis represents a methodology for conducting research. In practice, it means that historiographical analysis cannot be reduced to just listing available studies; it implies a critical review of the development of methodologies used in the research, their advantages and disadvantages, and also the transformation of interpretations caused by either the emergence of new materials or changes in the historical and ideological context.

The theory of "political pilgrimage," formulated by P. Hollander, highlights the psychological and ideological features of Western intellectuals' understanding of Soviet reality. The concept of "political pilgrimage" was introduced by Hollander in order to characterize Western intellectuals' trips to other countries with alternative political systems in which, instead of searching for facts, they were trying to confirm their ideological preconceptions.

The notion of cultural diplomacy, suggested by M. David-Fox, plays a key role in analyzing how the Soviet state made use of its cultural contacts with the Western world in order to gain legitimization and construct a positive image of the "new civilization." According to David-Fox, the central metaphor of cultural diplomacy is the "showcase" – a planned space where all the elements of the program of Soviet foreign guests' trip were carefully organized and subjected to the propaganda tasks. Nevertheless, as the author stresses, cultural diplomacy does not imply merely one-sided propaganda; on the contrary, it is a system of communications in which the interests of the state, the intelligentsia, and the Western intellectuals intertwine, and the process of cultural exchange is bidirectional.

Therefore, the combination of historiography, the theory of political pilgrimage, and the notion of cultural diplomacy will help us develop a multi-level methodology for a comprehensive and analytical study of the phenomenon of "Western pilgrims."

3. THE EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH APPROACHES: FROM SOVIETOLOGY TO CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

The evolution of research approaches to the phenomenon of "Western pilgrims" directly reflects the general shifts in the development of historical scholarship in the second half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, from the ideological frameworks of the Cold War to interdisciplinary and institutional research. The first stage of historiographical understanding of this phenomenon developed within the framework of Western Sovietology and was closely linked to the political context of the confrontation between the two systems. It was then that the fundamental concepts and typologies were established that would long-term shape the study of Western visitors to the USSR.

Phenomenon of the 1930s. An important place in early historiography is occupied by the works of W. Chamberlin, a correspondent for The Christian Science Monitor, who in his book *Russia's Iron Age* (1934) presented one of the first sober views of Soviet reality, anticipating many of the conclusions of later critics (Chamberlin, 1934). Unlike the apologists, Chamberlin recorded repressions, famines, and restrictions on freedom, and in a later work, Collectivism: A False Utopia (1937), he expressed complete disillusionment with the Soviet experiment (Chamberlin, 1937). Among other writers from the West who came to the USSR during the 1920s and 1930s, it would be worth mentioning Theodore Dreiser (A Russian Diary, 1928) (Dreiser, 2018) and Stefan Zweig; his stay in the USSR in 1928 was studied by K.M. Azadovsky (Azadovsky, 2011). However, these visits were not given such extensive coverage as the visits of Rolland or Gide, which can be explained by the lower political involvement of the authors themselves as well as by the lower propaganda activity of the Soviet regime. (Kulikova, 2013, pp. 78–85).

Within the field of Western Sovietology and in particular within the American school of research, the phenomenon of "Western pilgrims" was understood as a significant threat to the West as an "attack on the Western world (offensive)" (Belyakova, 2019, p. 168). Among the concepts that emerged in the 1950s and which gained popularity due to the research conducted by D. Cauté (Cauté, 1988), there is the concept of "fellow travelers." The author defines fellow travelers as the representatives of the Western intellectual elite who were not officially part of the communist parties but supported the Soviet government and justified the repression carried out by it, participating actively in propaganda campaigns. The monograph "The Fellow Travelers: Intellectual Friends of Communism" (1988) describes the development of this phenomenon from the 1920s to the 1950s, demonstrating how gradually fellow travelers started to lose their faith in the Soviet experience (Cauté, 1988, pp. 15–30). Nevertheless, Cauté's study is based only on the publications and does not consider any archival sources.

Together with Cauté there worked P. Hollander whose book “Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, 1928–1978” (1981) became an absolute classic of the genre. Hollander used the notion “political pilgrimage” and made an attempt to outline the typology of attitudes to the reality of the USSR expressed by Western intellectuals. There were several types of “pilgrims”: “apologists” (believing in the “new civilization”), “critics” (getting disillusioned and breaking up with communism publicly), “pragmatists” (regarding the trip as a professional necessity) and “useful idiots” (consciously or not ignoring the repressive aspects of the regime) (Hollander, 1981, pp. 45-67). It is noteworthy that Hollander became the first one to formulate the issue of the psychology of the “pilgrimage”, wondering why so many Western intellectuals, people with a high level of education and critical approach, became the victims of self-deception (Hollander, 1981, pp. 120–135).

The studies conducted by Barghoorn from the beginning of the 1960s gave the institution of analysis a framework. According to The Soviet Cultural Offensive (1960) and Soviet Foreign Propaganda (1964), authored by Barghoorn, the cultural diplomacy of the USSR was not just an accidental occurrence but rather a systematic process of external legitimization of Soviet power (Barghoorn, 1960; Barghoorn, 1964). One of the first scholars who paid attention to the role of VOKS (All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) and other institutions in the organization of the tours, Barghoorn relied solely on published literature and Western intelligence sources (Barghoorn, 1960, pp. 15–30).

One notable contribution to historiography is represented by works by P. Filene (Filene, 1967) and S. Margulies (Margulies, 1968) concerning visits of Americans to the USSR. Filene studied the formation of the image of the Soviet state in the years 1917–1933 by American intellectuals and politicians, proving that it was highly ideological and connected with American politics (Filene, 1967, pp. 10–20). Margulies analyzed institutions; he looked into the organization of reception of foreigners in the USSR, and changes occurred in the years 1924–1937. Margulies, 1968, pp. 45–60).

Military cultural diplomacy and “people’s diplomacy”. Traditionally, the history of the “Western pilgrims” paid little attention to the war years; the historiography was dominated by the 1930s. Nevertheless, according to M. Honegger (Honegger, 2020), during the war, VOKS unexpectedly gained great popularity: its cultural and diplomatic activities were perceived as a “patriotic duty” of the cultural elite, similar to entertainment activities at the front (Honegger, 2020, pp. 10–15).

“Public diplomacy” became especially important during the war; it included non-state cultural exchange channels. In particular, according to the results of S. I. Kogan’s research titled Public Diplomacy as a Form of Cultural Cooperation between the USSR and Great Britain during the Second World War and in the Postwar Period (2024), a number of committees and funds for helping the USSR appeared in Great Britain. Among these organizations, the most remarkable one was the British Red Cross Russian Aid Fund headed by Winston Churchill’s wife, Clementine Churchill. The total amount of donations in the first three months exceeded one million pounds (Kogan, 2024, pp. 8–10). The British Society for Cultural Relations between the British Commonwealth and the USSR provided moral support, collected funds, and conducted exhibitions and concerts of Russian and Soviet music (Kogan, 2024, pp. 12–14).

Specific cultural figures played an important role, becoming informal ambassadors of the USSR to the West. In October 1943, the renowned Soviet theater director and actor Sergei Mikhoels and the poet Igor Feffer visited Manchester. They were received by the Lord Mayor of Manchester and the conductor of the famous Hallé Orchestra, John Barbirolli (Kogan, 2024, pp. 18–20). However, as Kogan notes, despite the common goals in the fight against Nazism, cultural ties remained a field of ideological confrontation. Stalin remained suspicious of the Allies, and the deepening ideological chasm between the Soviet regime and Western democracies hindered the expansion of cultural contacts (Kogan, 2024, pp. 22–25).

The post-war years: from visits to isolation. The post-war years (1945-1953) turned into years of Cold War and cultural isolation. The "Iron Curtain" deprived Western intellectuals of visiting the USSR. According to M. David-Fox, cultural diplomacy reached a new stage – propaganda without person-to-person contacts (David-Fox, 2012, pp. 85-95). When Western writers and journalists made their visit, it was carried out in the framework of carefully organized delegations within "closed" programs with no chance of independent research. (Golubev, 2004, pp. 120–130).

John Steinbeck's visit in 1947, which is discussed in his book A Russian Journal (1948) (Steinbeck, 1948; Steinbeck, 2017), is a rare example. Steinbeck and a photographer, Robert Capa, visited Moscow, Kyiv, and Stalingrad, but the itinerary was strictly controlled by the Soviet administration. Almost no political criticism is mentioned in Steinbeck's diary; on the contrary, he mentions many daily things rather than the political reality (Steinbeck, 1948, pp. 45-60). A Russian Journal got controversial feedback; it was either considered "objective" or "too soft" due to the developing confrontation between countries (Tolts, 2006, pp. 3-5). V. Tolts, who analyzed Steinbeck's diary fifty years after the events, concluded that A Russian Journal is unique evidence of its epoch – not about the USSR, but about the Western intellectuals' perception of the Soviet reality at the very beginning of the Cold War. (Tolts, 2006, pp. 6–8).

The Thaw and the Revival of Pilgrimage.With the passing away of Stalin (1953), the phenomenon of "pilgrimage" took another shape. Analysis of the post-Stalin period indicates that beginning in the mid-1950s, the USSR started developing new ways of communication with Western intellectuals. An article dedicated to the contacts between Jean-Paul Sartre and the USSR in 1953–1956 proves that the schedule for each of Sartre's three visits was elaborated and approved at the highest level (Tsyganov D.M., 2025, p. 3–5). The approach to the problem of communication with Sartre demonstrated by the Soviet government was pragmatic; the French philosopher was used as an intermediary to increase the influence of the USSR among the European "left" intelligentsia (Tsyganov D.M., 2025, p. 8–10). The researcher claims that "specific practices of 'thaw' cultural diplomacy" appeared in this period and served as a base for the future policy of communication with Western intellectuals (Tsyganov D.M., 2025, p. 12–13). This finding is critical for the analysis of continuity and discontinuity of the Stalinist and post-Stalinist policies of cultural diplomacy. From 1953, the control did not disappear but became more flexible

Archival revolution and new sources. A qualitative breakthrough in the study of "Western pilgrims" occurred in the post-Soviet period, when the discovery of previously inaccessible archives and the introduction of these materials into scholarly circulation allowed for a shift from studying the ideological attitudes of the "pilgrims" to an analysis of the institutional mechanisms that the Soviet state built to organize and control cultural contacts with the West. This new approach was most consistently implemented in the works of M. David-Fox. As E. Dobrenko notes in a review of M. David-Fox's monograph, this author's book offers "the first comprehensive analysis of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the interwar period since the discovery of previously inaccessible Soviet archives" (Dobrenko, 2013, p. 3).

The central event of this period was the publication of previously unknown diaries and memoirs. In 1989, Romain Rolland's *Moscow Diary* (Rolland, 1989) was published, radically changing perceptions of the writer: it turned out that Rolland had witnessed repression and restrictions on freedom but had consciously chosen to remain silent, justifying himself with "historical necessity" (David-Fox, 2005, pp. 20–25). In 2012, Walter Benjamin's *Moscow Diary* (Benjamin, 2012) was published, testifying to the aesthetic perception of Moscow by the German philosopher, who was not politically committed but captured the atmosphere of the time. In 1990, a translation of André Gide's *Return from the USSR* (Gide, 1990), which had previously been banned in the USSR, was published.

The most important published archival document was the collection *The Great Censorship: Writers and Journalists in the Land of the Soviets, 1917–1956* (2005), which for the first time published correspondence between Soviet officials, transcripts of conversations with Stalin, and documents on the authorities' response to criticism (The Great Censorship, 2005). Among them is the transcript of Stalin's conversation with Feuchtwanger (January 8, 1937) (The Great Censorship, 2005, pp. 444–460), which was kept in the Kremlin archive until the late 1990s and became key evidence of how the Kremlin used Western intellectuals to justify the Great Terror.

A key figure in modern historiography was M. David-Fox, whose monograph *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921–1941* (2011; Russian translation 2015) became "the first comprehensive analysis of Soviet cultural diplomacy in the interwar period" (David-Fox, 2015, p. 7). David Fox attempted to see cultural diplomacy not as a mere addendum to propaganda, but rather as a complicated communication system in which the interests of the state, the intelligentsia, and Western intellectuals coincided.

In his metaphorical analysis, David Fox introduced the term "showcase", since the Soviet state created various "showcases" to demonstrate its successes, but at the same time, those "showcases" were "a script", a performance where each step of the visit had its own symbolic meaning (David Fox, 2012, pp. 15-20). In his analysis, David Fox showed that the Soviet government did not just "show" everything it wished to show its guests, but also influenced their perceptions, using guide interpreters, rehearsed meetings with "ordinary Soviet people", and controlled paths (David-Fox, 2012, pp. 45–60).

Fox was interested in the "amateur diplomats," people who belonged to the cultural sphere and, although not being diplomats, took an active part in communication with the West. Thus, he proved that while in the 1920s cultural units of VOKS had relative independence, in the 1930s this independence became minimal (David Fox, 2012, pp. 65-80). Fitzpatrick, in her article "Foreigners Observed: Moscow Visitors in the 1930s under the Gaze of Their Soviet Guides" (2008), developed the idea put forward by David Fox and proved that guide-interpreters, in addition to being in control of their guests, were in control themselves, since reports made about them by guide-interpreters were analyzed by the NKVD. (Fitzpatrick, 2008, pp. 220–230).

The archival revolution provides an opportunity to reconsider such "pilgrims" in a new way. The figure of Romain Rolland, known for a long time as the "apostle" of Soviet culture, is revealed, in view of his published diary is revealed as a highly inconsistent personality. M. David Fox, in his article "The 'Heroic Life' of a Friend of Stalin's: Romain Rolland and Soviet Culture" (2005), revealed the fact that Rolland had seen the repressions and limitations of freedoms but chose to keep silent about this situation, using the reasons of "historical necessity" and belief in a "bright future" (David Fox, 2005, pp. 20–25). M. A. Arias Vigil, in her article "'Such Is the Logic of Power': Some Aspects of the Question of Repression in the USSR in Romain Rolland's 'Moscow Diary'" (2013), proved these conclusions, revealing the fact that Rolland recorded repressions but did not allow himself to criticize them publicly (Arias Vigil, 2013, pp. 5–8).

Another person who attracted the attention of N. Yu. Kharitonova, who, in a series of articles (Kharitonova, 2016; Kharitonova, 2017), examined the history of the book's publication and the Kremlin's reaction. Kharitonova showed that Gide was not received by Stalin (unlike most of the "pilgrims"), and this predetermined his critical position (Kharitonova, 2016, pp. 185–188). V. Z. Paperny, in his article "Faith and Truth: André Gide and Lion Feuchtwanger in Moscow" (2003), conducted a comparative analysis of the two "pilgrims," demonstrating that their different perceptions of Soviet reality were connected not only with their personal qualities but also with the Kremlin's different strategies (Paperny, 2003, pp. 3–5).

January 1937, which became the Kremlin's attempt to justify the Great Terror, was examined in detail by L. Maksimenkov in his series of articles, *Essays on the Nomenklatura History of Soviet Literature.*

Western Pilgrims at Stalin's Throne (2004). Maksimenkov showed that Feuchtwanger, a renowned humanist, faced a difficult choice: he could not believe in "conspiracies" and "espionage," but as an anti-fascist, he was afraid of weakening the USSR's position in the face of the Nazi threat (Maksimenkov, 2004, no. 2, pp. 242–250). The transcript of his conversation with Stalin, published in *The Great Censorship*, shows how the leader convinced the writer of the "necessity" of the trials (The Great Censorship, 2005, pp. 444–460). Feuchtwanger, despite his own inner reservations, described the repressions carried out in his novel Moscow 1937 as a "hard but necessary measure" (Feuchtwanger, 1937). In his article "They Praised Stalin (Lion Feuchtwanger and others)" (2008), A.S. Vorontsov went into more detail about this analysis, demonstrating that Feuchtwanger's justification was one of several ways to develop Stalin's image in the West. (Vorontsov, 2008, pp. 220–230).

Institutions of Cultural Diplomacy. The next stage in historiography is associated with a closer look at specific institutions of cultural diplomacy. Researchers turned to the study of VOKS, created in 1925 and existing until 1958 (Golubev, 2004, pp. 45–60; David-Fox, 2012, pp. 25–40). It is noteworthy that the first head of this "public" organization was Olga Davydovna Kameneva (widow of L. B. Kamenev), who from the very beginning understood the fictitious nature of VOKS's "public" status. In a letter to D. B. Ryazanov from 1924, she wrote: "Do you consider it expedient to create a 'public organization'?"—characteristically, according to M. David-Fox, putting the word "public" in quotation marks (David-Fox, 2015, p. 56). And in a letter to V. V. Kuibyshev, she explained: "These scientific, literary and other sections give the work an outwardly social character" (David-Fox, 2015, p. 57), which made it possible to involve leading specialists in the work of VOKS and give the initiatives more credibility in the West.

In Russian historiography, the institutional approach was developed by A. V. Golubev, who in his monograph *"A Look at the Promised Land: From the History of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy in the 1920s–1930s"* (2004) showed that cultural diplomacy was a systemic policy implemented through many agencies: VOKS, the United Information Bureau under the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee (OBI), Mezhrabpom, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, the foreign department of the GPU, and the agitprop of the Comintern (Golubev, 2004, pp. 45–50). In collaboration with V. A. Nevezhin, in the monograph *Formation of the Image of Soviet Russia in the World Around Us by Means of Cultural Diplomacy* (2016), the authors expanded the chronological framework to the first half of the 1940s and introduced new archival materials into circulation, showing the evolution of the institutional mechanisms of cultural diplomacy (Golubev, Nevezhin, 2016, pp. 10–20).

In a series of articles, G. B. Kulikova (Kulikova, 2003; Kulikova, 2013) focused on the mechanisms for selecting guests, organizing "demonstration" visits, and monitoring programs for foreigners' stays in the USSR. She demonstrated that VOKS not only organized visits but also performed censorship functions, filtering information that could reach the West (Kulikova, 2003, pp. 43–59). It is significant that already in the VOKS work plan for 1929–1930, the need for a monopoly on external cultural relations was motivated by an analogy with the monopoly on foreign trade: "The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries should serve as a prism reflecting abroad those areas of the cultural life of the peoples of the Union that are useful for us to show from the perspective of our political objectives" (GARF, f. 5283, op. 1, d. 112, l. 3–5).

In his article *"Fighters on the Ideological Front: Training Guide-Interpreters in the USSR"* (2013), I. Orlov examined another important aspect of the institutional system—the training of personnel who accompanied foreign guests. Orlov showed that guide-translators carried out not only linguistic, but also control tasks – they noted down all the statements uttered by guests, evaluated their reactions, and informed about "undesirable" questions. (Orlov, 2013, pp. 85–90).

Biographical Works. In addition to institutional studies, there emerged studies about individual "pilgrims." The first biographical studies, written in the 1980s and 1990s, were about those prominent personalities. S. Taylor, in his book Stalin's Apologist: Walter Duranty, the New York Times's Man in Moscow (1990), described the biography of Walter Duranty, who was a correspondent of The New York

Times and consciously concealed the famine in Ukraine and explained repressions. Taylor proved that Duranty was not a "useful idiot," but a professional journalist who consciously chose to be an apologist (Taylor, 1990, pp. 10–20). His work became a subject of a fierce dispute: some researchers called Duranty a cynical conformist, while others a sincere "fellow traveler" (Tikhiy, 2008, pp. 203–214; Yuzefovich and Ignatyeva, 2015, pp. 260–267).

In the book The Webbs and Soviet Communism (2005), K. Morgan described the development of the views of the Webbs, the authors of the book Soviet Communism—A New Civilization? (1935). Thus, Morgan demonstrates that the Webbs, famous Fabian socialists, were not "useful idiots," as they had sincere faith in the Soviet system, which was based on an extensive and deep intellectual analysis, but it did not include the repression of the regime (Morgan, 2005, pp. 45–60). In the book Angels in Stalin's Paradise: Western Intellectuals in Soviet Russia, 1917–1937 (1982), J. Crowl pays separate attention to Louis Fischer and Walter Duranty in order to describe the development of their views. Nevertheless, these works cannot provide answers regarding the mechanism of visits to the "pilgrims" because these books were created without access to closed Soviet archives.

4. METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS AND PROSPECTS

Modern historiography is faced with the controversial character of its own conceptual framework. In the words of N. A. Belyakova: "the issue of defining the very concept of culture, of distinguishing propaganda from cultural diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy from public diplomacy." (Belyakova, 2019, p. 168) Recent literature makes the distinction between propaganda, which "tries to convince people what to think," and public diplomacy, which "also listens to what people say" (Belyakova, 2019, p. 169).

The term "useful idiots," which has been widely used in journalistic circles, is a controversial one. It was M. Malia (Malia, 1999) and R. Conquest (Conquest, 2001) who used the term when describing Western intellectuals who either intentionally or unwittingly defended Stalinist terror. Nevertheless, as it is evident from L. Stern's study (Stern, 2007) their motivations were rather complicated. They encompassed not only ideological, but also professional, career, and psychological aspects of belief in a "bright future." In her monograph "Western Intellectuals in the Soviet Union, 1920-1940: From Red Square to the Left Bank," L. Stern suggested a classification of intellectuals into "ideological apologists," "professional observers," and "cultural mediators," which helps not to make oversimplified judgments. (Stern, 2007, pp. 10–20).

The problem of sources: trust and interpretation. Methodological difficulty continues to be dealing with the sources written under severe censorship. One and the same event can be understood quite differently by various researchers, based on their views. One good example is "Moscow Diary" by Romain Rolland (Rolland, 1989). This source, written by the author himself, was not released in the author's lifetime. It would not have been allowed by the Soviet censorship. Yet the publication of the book in the late 1980s in France and the USSR revealed the true character of Rolland as a writer, a complex personality and internally contradictory individual who had been witnessing oppression and restrictions but remained silent (David Fox, 2005, pp. 20–25). Thus, the books written by the "pilgrims" were just the tip of the iceberg, and other sources like diaries, letters, and other materials not published could alter the interpretations.

Theoretical Approach. A.M. Etkind presents an explanation of the peculiarities of travel writing in general and of travelogues as a specific genre in his book "Interpretation of Travel: Russia and America in Travelogues and Intertexts" (2001) by discussing how travel writing creates the "Other" and how this "Other" is conditioned by the author's own cultural background (Etkind, 2001, pp. 45-60). This theoretical framework enables going beyond the opposition "apologist versus critic" and treating the texts of "pilgrims" as a cultural product that combines personal observations, ideology, and literature of travelogues.

5. RESEARCH PROSPECTS

One may claim that the historiography of "Western pilgrims" has made considerable progress, especially in the institutional aspect (Nagornaya (ed.), 2018, pp. 5–10). Still, there are issues that need to be investigated.

However, at the same time, there are some problems that have not been sufficiently researched. Firstly, it is a comparative study of national models of the perception of the Soviet Union by the representatives of various nations, the significance of non-state types of cultural diplomacy, and the integration of the Soviet experience into the global history of the international intellectual and cultural exchanges of the twentieth century. The issues were raised by L. Stern (Stern, 2007) and D. Cauté (Cauté, 1988), but there is no systematic comparison yet. One can find much research potential in the analysis of the similarities between the Soviet experience in the organization of visits by foreign intellectuals and other countries' cultural diplomacy mechanisms.

The people's diplomacy as another channel of cultural exchange is not sufficiently researched: friendship societies, trade unions, tourism, and the delegation exchanges on the non-governmental level (Kogan, 2024, pp. 3–5).

A methodological problem persists concerning the relationship between "intention" and "perception." Scholars increasingly note that cultural diplomacy is not only what the Soviet state attempted to do, but also how it was perceived in the West. As M. David-Fox writes, "cultural diplomacy is not one-way propaganda, but a two-way process in which both the sender and the receiver of the message participate" (David-Fox, 2012, p. 5). This requires the study not only of Soviet archives, but also of Western sources — newspapers, journals, diaries, and memoirs of those who encountered Soviet cultural diplomacy (Belyakova, 2019, pp. 175–176).

5. CONCLUSION

The historiography of "Western pilgrims" in the USSR in the 1930s–1950s has undergone a complex journey from ideologically driven Cold War-era assessments to a comprehensive institutional and cultural analysis made possible by the opening of archives and the development of interdisciplinary approaches. Three key stages in the evolution of this research can be identified.

The first stage (1940–1980s) was marked by the dominance of Western Sovietology, which perceived "pilgrims" as "fellow travelers" and "useful idiots" (Cauté, 1988; Hollander, 1981). The focus was on state institutions and their propaganda functions, and the phenomenon itself was studied primarily through the prism of ideological confrontation. Researchers of this period laid the foundations for the study of institutional mechanisms, but their approaches were limited by closed archives and the established political framework.

The second stage (1990–2000) is associated with the "archival revolution," which made it possible to move on to the study of everyday practices, interdepartmental conflicts, and the role of "amateur diplomats" among cultural figures (David-Fox, 2015; Golubev, 2004; Maksimenkov, 2004). New sources were introduced into circulation — the diaries of Rolland (Rolland, 1989), Benjamin (Benjamin, 2012), and transcripts of conversations with Stalin (Great Censorship, 2005). This made it possible to reconsider established assessments and to see the "pilgrims" as complex, internally contradictory figures, and not simply as "apologists" or "critics."

The third stage (2010s-present) is defined by the focus on an interdisciplinary approach which considers not only the institutional aspects, but also cultural, social, and global factors. More and more attention is paid to "people's diplomacy" (Kogan, 2024), "sports diplomacy" (Glushich, 2023), and a gender approach (Panov, Panova, 2018). All these factors allow widening the notion of "cultural diplomacy." The collective monograph by O. Nagornaya (2018), where a systematic analysis of Soviet cultural diplomacy during the Cold War period and the inner logic of the Soviet bureaucratic system (Nagornaya (ed.), 2018) is a significant landmark.

Regardless of the diversity of the approaches in historiography, it should be noted that "the Western Pilgrims" phenomenon was not an episode in the intellectual history, but one of the key factors of cultural diplomacy of the Stalinist period.

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EVALUATING THE SMART CITY AND SMART VILLAGE CONCEPT IN AZERBAIJAN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 11

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ABSTRACT

Smart cities and smart villages in Azerbaijan are explored in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11 – sustainable cities and communities. The primary goal of the study is to investigate how digitalization, new technologies, green energy, post-conflict reconstruction, and regional planning can help achieve sustainable development, both in urban and rural environments. The research uses scientific literature, as well as the approach of comparing the experience of Azerbaijan's smart city and smart village policies in the Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur economic regions with international experience. It is based mainly on empirical data on reconstruction, resettlement, renewable energy, smart infrastructure, and regional development projects in these territories. The results show that the smart city and smart village models are crucial in optimizing the use of resources, expanding infrastructure facilities, enhancing digital services, ensuring environmental sustainability, and establishing safe living conditions during the post-conflict phase. The study also underscores the importance of enhancing inter-institutional coordination and monitoring and evaluation systems, community involvement, waste management systems, and the use of financial resources.

Keywords: smart city, smart village, sustainable development, SDG 11, digitalism

1. INTRODUCTION

The four drivers of rapid urban growth, population growth, growing space demands, and climate change are of central importance for achieving sustainable development in urban and rural areas in the world and are interlinked. Goal 11 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals is focused on inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements. To achieve this objective, urban growth needs to be tackled, as well as a radical paradigm shift in lifestyle behaviour in relation to social, economic, ecological, and institutional determinants. In addition to the concept of smart cities and smart villages, concepts of digital technologies have also become important strategies in modern development models.

The smart city approach seems to be designed to ensure optimal performance of urban services, to optimally integrate transportation and infrastructure systems, and to enhance access to public services. It also aims to improve the quality of life through information and communication technologies (ICT) (Huseynova & Mazanova, 2023). This is because the smart village has been proven to have a significant impact on rural economic development. It enhances access to digital services, fosters regional equity, and supports local communities' participation in sustainable development (Somvanshi et al., 2016, p. 395–408; Aziiza & Susanto, 2020). Smart city and rural policies are among the key priorities of public policies in recent years in Azerbaijan. The battle for reconstruction and restoration, particularly in liberated areas,

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offers an opportunity to implement these concepts. Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur: reconstruction activities are centred around infrastructure reconstruction and regional development, as well as settlement planning, socio-economic reintegration, the provision of safe housing, green energy supply, and digital governance. Moreover, the works of Narmin Ahmadova on reconstruction in the liberated territories highlight the significant relationship between reconstruction in post-conflict Azerbaijan and regional development, sustainable planning, energy transition, and managing infrastructure (Ahmadova, 2025).

The concepts of smart cities and villages in Azerbaijan are a process of modernization (technological) and an essential factor in territorial sustainability management after the conflict. The projects in the liberated territories will play a key role in returning people to their homes, building new buildings, developing and rebuilding the social infrastructure, and reviving the economy in the localities. Assessment of smart city/village models in the context of SDG11 is of scientific and practical interest. Experience from other countries shows that smart city and village solutions can bring value to sustainable development; however, the value of smart city and village solutions is not limited to the use of technology. Social inclusivity, community engagement, institutional cooperation, environmental sustainability, and continuous monitoring can provide a pathway for achieving more lasting results through these models (Zhang & Zhang, 2020; Renukappa et al., 2024, pp. 1386–1407). In addition to the technological aspects, the concept of a smart city/village has other aspects that should not be neglected in studying Azerbaijan's ideas: regional planning, population repatriation, provision of social services, environmental management, participation of citizens, etc. For this study, the use of the principles of smart city/village in Azerbaijan regarding SDG 11 is planned to be studied. It will examine and discuss its connection with post-conflict recovery and regional planning, the current status of benefits and challenges, as well as evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the operationalization and implementation of these plans.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, a systematic comparison of the smart city and smart village applications in Azerbaijan was conducted, and they were assessed in the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11. The research method employed was a systematic review of scientific publications, strategic document analysis, state-approved program analysis, international experience analysis, and conceptual analysis of cases of local implementation. In the first stage, we looked at the theoretical aspects of the smart city and smart village concepts, their development paths, and their connection to sustainable development based on scientific sources. This study examined the relationship between the smart city model and digital technologies, the impact of the smart village model on rural development, and their socio-economic indicators (Huseynova & Mazanova, 2023; Somwanshi et al., 2016, p. 395-408; Aziiza & Susanto, 2020).

Alongside, the paper examines the evolution of approaches to rural development and the integrated rural development model, which are sensitive to climate (Aggarwal et al., 2018; Majumdar, 2020, pp. 2–17). In the second phase, the researchers studied the projects of smart city and smart village in Azerbaijan. Their efforts were directed towards the economic regions of Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur in terms of restoration and reconstruction. In this context, they focused on the activities of smart villages, construction technologies, new energy sources, digital governance systems, and new residential area development (p. 260-261, Mammadova & Akbarova, 2024). 18–31; Gasanov, 2024, pp. 19–29).

In the framework of the article, the regional planning strategies applied in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan were also taken into account. In this context, the integration of the SDGs in the reconstruction process of a post-conflict area, green energy and smart solutions, the integration of new energy resources in the context of the provision of utility services and equipment, infrastructure management, strengthening community participation, and the establishment of monitoring systems appear to be the priority areas of integration (Ahmadova, 2025).

This is because this approach allowed the article to delve into the idea of smart city and smart village, not only as a technological concept, but as a perception of the reconstruction and integration of regional reconstruction actions in post-conflict situations. The linkage of the key components of SDG 11 with the smart city and the smart village models was assessed using a conceptual assessment. The following were identified as key criteria for this assessment: Infrastructure accessibility, creating safe and inclusive living environments, environmental sustainability, efficient resource use, access to public services, regional balance, institutional coordination, and monitoring mechanisms.

3. CONCLUSION

The analysis reveals that the smart city and smart village concepts implemented in Azerbaijan are in line with the key components of SDG 11. These models offer many benefits such as access to digital technologies, innovative infrastructure, alternative energy sources, and access to public services. The smart city approach supports the rationalization of urban services and the optimization of the work of institutional management (Huseynova & Mazanova, 2023). The trends of state policy are oriented towards a high level of smart city development and smart village development with the national economic development in Azerbaijan (Gasanov, 2024). 19-29).

The Smart village projects play an important role in rural sustainable development, regional equality, and social well-being. According to the international literature, the smart village model is a combination of technology, local resources, and social services in rural areas (Somvanshi et al., 2016, pp. 395-408; Aziiza & Susanto, 2020). In the liberated territories, these programs might help develop innovative models of settlements and development using innovative construction technologies, digital services, and green energy (Mammadova & Akbarova, 2024, pp.). 18-31).

Such an approach is crucial for the safe return of IDPs and to promote local socio-economic integration. The reconstruction in the liberated territories is not only about the reconstruction of infrastructure, but it is a process of long-term transformation in the region, sustainable planning, and social reintegration (Ahmadova, 2025). Smart City and smart village, in this context, can be the basis for creating a safe space of living in the post-conflict environment socially equitable and environmentally friendly. It has been revealed that such models can only be successfully implemented with the use of technical solutions (Ahmadova, 2025). Thus, the development of institutional coordination, administration, monitoring and evaluation systems, community participation, waste management, and recycling facilities is significant. From the experience of international smart villages, it is necessary to connect with social and environmental aspects to make a smart village more sustainable (Zhang & Zhang, 2020; Renukappa et al., 2024, pp. 1386-1407).

Resource-efficient development, local economic opportunities, and environmental management are other important factors that determine the sustainability of smart village model (Aggarwal et al., 2018; Majumdar, 2020, pp. 2-17). Therefore, the smart city and smart village models can be used as a tool to achieve SDG 11 in Azerbaijan. Technological infrastructure must be developed incrementally, synchronously with the involvement of communities, institutional cooperation, environmental management, and monitoring for the long-term development and maintenance of this potential.

4.RESULTS

It also shows that there are some limitations in the use of the concepts. Some of the most significant factors influencing the success of these projects are incomplete technological infrastructure, lack of financial resources, and institutional coordination. The need of the hour is to address these challenges in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

Some key recommendations are outlined below: Extend the implementation of smart city and smart village projects and strengthen their implementation at the regional level; Digital infrastructure and use of innovative technologies; Boost cooperation between the public and the private sector; Study international experience and adapt it to local contexts; Improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the indicators of SDG 11

In conclusion, the concept of smart city and smart village is one of the key measures to guarantee sustainable development in Azerbaijan. In order to support the country's achievement of long-term socio-economic development, it is important to continuously enhance policy in this area.

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DEMETRIUS OF PHALERUM AND OURANOPOLIS OF ALEXARCHUS

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ABSTRACT

The main object of attention in the article is one of the most mysterious and obscure plots of early Hellenistic history – the foundation of the utopian city Ouranoupolis on the Thracian coast, near the Athos peninsula, by Alexarchus, the illegitimate son of Antipater and, accordingly, brother of Cassander. The information preserved in history about the initiator and implementer of an undertaking so uncharacteristic for the era of the Diadochi is extremely scarce and in no way can satisfy the researcher. However, indirect data allow us to connect the emergence of Ouranopolis with the circumstances of the end of the Lamian War and the rule of Demetrius of Phalerum in Athens. Moreover, the author doesn't exclude the possibility that Demetrius took a very active or even decisive part in the project. Such a conclusion, which actually has no precedents in Classics, is argued in detail by the author. The article also makes an attempt at an approximate reconstruction of the worldview attitudes of the founders of Ouranoupolis and the features of their embodiment in a utopian project unique in all of antiquity.

KEYWORDS: Demetrius of Phalerum, Alexarchus, Antipatros, Apollo, Cassander, Helios, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Theohrastos

1. INTRODUCTION

The existence of any connections between Demetrius of Phalerum and the utopian city of Ouranoupolis, located on the Athos Isthmus, far removed from Athens and Thebes, is more a theorem than an axiom. However, they are not entirely improbable, even if we place Demetrius' move to Alexandria 6-8 years earlier, contrary to traditional chronology. W. Tarn's caveat that Alexarchus ***"under Cassander's protection was in the same position as Demetrius of Phalerum in Athens at the same time"***[1] is quite revealing in this regard. The problem is that the current, rather deplorable state of the sources leaves too much room for various versions, from which it is difficult to select even the most plausible.

We are aware of how shaky a speculative construction can appear when built on a foundation of assumptions and suppositions. Nevertheless, an examination of the circumstances of Ouranoupolis' emergence leaves no other possibility. For what we believe are natural reasons.

Let's return almost to the very beginning – to the defeat of Athens in the Lamian War. One of the main conditions for the Athenian capitulation, set by Antipater was the introduction of a 2,000 drachma census and the resettlement of the city's declassed residents to Thrace: *"The number of people deprived of the right to vote due to their poverty exceeded twelve thousand, and some of them, who remained in the city, considered themselves unfortunate and disgraced, while others, who left Athens because of this and resettled in Thrace, where Antipater granted them land and a city, became like vanquished people driven from their homeland by a victorious enemy"*.[2]

The problem of "exiles" in Greece at that time became particularly acute in Mytilene, Ephesus, the Athenian Samos and elsewhere. To neglect it would have been an unaffordable luxury. However, Antipater

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[1] Tarn, W. W. (1933), 430.
[2] Plutarch, *Phocion,* XXVIII, 4; Bernadotte Perrin, Ed. Diodorus gives a different figure: 22,000.

addressed it quite differently than Alexander or, say, Polyperchon. The exact location of the Athenian "land and city" remains unknown, though speculation has been offered. For example, Paul McKechnie[3] has casually suggested that it could have been Ouranoupolis, whose founding by Alexarchus is usually dated to around 316 and paralleled by other urban development initiatives of Cassander—such as the restoration of Thebes and the founding of Cassandria (on the site of Potidaea, destroyed by Philip) and Thessalonica (on the shores of the Thermaic Gulf). However, Alexarchus was not only Cassander's illegitimate brother but also the illegitimate son of Antipater. The latter (not yet regent without Alexander at the time), having learned from the bitter experience of rebellions in the Upper Satrapies, where Greeks and mercenaries were given utterly neglected wastelands for settlement, was forced to choose this " land and city precisely" for the Athenian outcasts. In this scenario, the city could have been either Ouranoupolis, or still Sani,[4] to which Alexarchus later expanded his Ouranoupolis. This is, of course, assuming Sani[5] survived Philip II's invasion, which ended disastrously for the settlements in the area. And, by all accounts, the majority of Ouranoupolis' population became Athenians.

We don't know for sure who in Phocion's "government" handled the "displaced persons" (or at least oversaw this task). Although this, like all external relations of the polis, could have been entrusted to Demetrius of Phalerum,[6] given Phocion's advanced age and the obvious inclination of Demades, who was also far from a boy, toward intrigue rather than the daily, painstaking, menial tasks that didn't promise him some tangible material benefit.

McKechnie immediately stipulates that he is unable to confirm his guess with sources. But at least it has basis, including some that the author himself failed to grasp. It's not just that Alexarchus had to somehow recruit his "Uranians" from somewhere—unless Cassander came to his aid with his custom of populating newly rebuilt cities synoekically, as in the case of Thebes, Cassandria, and Thessalonica. And it's not that Antipater had traversed these regions for Philip II two decades earlier.[7]

McKechnie overlooked one circumstance that could explain the choice of Ouranoupolis with a completely different—more mundane, everyday, but no less effective—logic. Antipater, like probably Cassander and possibly Alexarchus, came from Palioura. Its exact location is unknown.

Today, a village by that name exists at the very south of the first "finger" of Chalkidiki—Kassandria, which was then called Pallene, and even earlier, according to Herodotus and Pliny, Phlegra. But today's Palioura was also Theramvos back then. Herodotus mentioned it[8] in a list of settlements in Pallene, recounting Xerxes's invasion to Greece. The conqueror destroyed the city and incorporated its male population into his army. At the excavation site near the present-day village, which, like the cape on which it stands, is named for a thorny shrub used to create living hedges, artifacts (mostly pottery shards) dating back to Roman times were discovered. It appears that the resort town of Palioura in Kassandra is a red herring in the search for Antipater's birthplace.[9]

But it's not the only possible candidate for the role we're interested in. Dimitrios Kanatsoulis[10] is

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[3] Mckechnie, P. (1989), 55–56.
[4] Another spelling, Sane, is often encountered.
[5] Incidentally, it was founded, like Stagira and Akanthos, by people from Andros (according to Belokh – Belokh Yu. (2009), 184). According to other versions – for example, that of Donald Bradeen (Bradeen, Donald W. (1952), 377-378) – the emergence of these cities was the result of a joint (and not at all conflict-free) expedition of Andrians and Chalcidians under the leadership of the former.
[6] This is the opinion of Stephen Hughes, apparently based on Demetrius' participation in the embassy to Antipater after the Lamian War – Hughes, S. (2008), 64, 161.
[7] More precisely, in 342/1. This is already the argument of Elisabetta Poddighe (citing Ellis, J.R., 20142 [1976], Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism, Princeton, p. 282) – Poddighe, E. (2020), 247–263.
[8] Herodotus, VII, 123.
[9] We owe its inclusion in this discussion to Stanley Casson - Casson, S. (1926) Macedonia, Thrace and Illyria, Oxford, p. 59 – cited by Heckel, W. (2016), 31.
[10] Kanatsulis, D. (1942), 1 n. 2.

inclined to associate Antipater's Palioura with the Paleochorium mentioned by Pliny the Elder. Indeed, in the list of settlements on the coast of Chalkidiki cited by the author of "Natural History," Paleochorium appears immediately after Ouranoupolis – *"There was formerly upon its summit the town of Acroathon*[59]***:*** *the present towns are Uranopolis*[60]*, Palæorium, Thyssus, Cleonæ*[61]*, and Apollonia!"*[11]

Paleochorium, whose history presumably extends back to Hellenistic times, is also present on the modern map of Chalkidiki. Remnants of military equipment from that period and Roman coins have been found there. The village now belongs to the municipality of Aristotelis and is located in 15 kilometers from present-day Stagira and about thirty kilometers, through rather rugged terrain, from modern-day Ouranoupolis.

We don't know whether Pliny's Paleochorium was adjacent to Ouranoupolis or was located so far away. It's hardly possible—not even because of the "Roman" quality that distinguishes archaeological finds here—that the settlement now known as Paleochorium may have changed its name for various reasons. After all, Akanthos, destroyed by the Romans around 200, became Ierissos.[12] And Eladiava was first called Provlakas, and then, after the Greeks migrated from Turkish Roda (Routia) in the early 20th century, Nea Roda.

But if we proceed from the phrase "upon its summit," nothing prevents us from assuming the close proximity of these two settlements. Incidentally, it's worth noting that Apollonia borders them there. Formally, we have no reason to consider this coincidence significant. However, taken at face value, it would shed some light on obscure historical facts.

First, the reasons for choosing this corner of Thrace for the Athenian resettlement. The coast of Chalkidiki had experienced the war between Macedonia and the Chalkidiki League and the Thracian campaigns of Philip II. Many of the local cities were destroyed by the Macedonian conqueror as revenge and edification—not only Olynthus, but also its allies, of whom there were more than three dozen. Not all of them anticipated the fate of Thebes; some survived. But Antipater's choice was limited to the lands near the Isthmus of Athos. If Pliny the Elder's Paleochorium was indeed Antipater's Palioura (as well as, perhaps, Cassander and Alexarchus), this may explain why Philip spared its surroundings. He did restore Aristotle's native Stagira, though he left neighboring Galepsos and Apollonia in ruins.[13]. Another Apollonia. Not far from Athos.

Secondly, the connection between Alexarchus and Demetrius of Phalerum. Following the decree on exiles issued by Polyperchon in 319, some of the Athenian settlers of Sani/Ouranoupolis returned to their homeland, changing the city's history, among other things, by ending Phocion's earthly life. Two years later, after the capture of Athens by Cassander and the rise of Demetrius of Phalerum, Antipater's census was restored, but at half the rate.[14] After this, the new "extra" Athenians were likely to depart the city along the route determined five years earlier by the father of Cassander and Alexarchus. In his new capacity,

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[11] Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, IV, 17; John Bostock, M.D., F.R.S., H.T. Riley, Esq., B.A., Ed.
. In the original – ***"Oppidum in cacumine fuit Acrathoon, nunc sunt Uranopolis, Palaehorium, Thyss, Cleonae, ApThe name Ierissos appears in sources from the late 9th century AD.ollonia, cuius incolae Macrobi cognominantur".***
[12] The name Ierissos appears in sources from the late 9th century AD.
[13] ***"Here Alexarchus, the son of Antipater, built the city Uranopolis, 30 stadia in circumference… there is a promontory forming a gulf with Athos, on which is the city Apollonia. First in the gulf, after the harbour of Acanthus, is Stagira, now deserted: it was one of the Chalcidic cities, and the birth-place of Aristotle. Caprus was the harbour, and there is a small island of the same name. Then comes the Strymon, and Amphipolis, at the distance of 20 stadia up the river. In this part is situated an Athenian colony, called Ennea-Odoi (the Nine-Ways). Then Galepsus and Apollonia, which were destroyed by Philip"*** - Strabo, VII, 35; H.C. Hamilton, Esq., W. Falconer, M.A., Ed.
[14] Diodorus, XVIII, 74, 3.

Demetrius could not have remained silent on these matters.[15] Did he communicate with Alexarchus about the emigrants? More than likely.

The episode is omitted from the writings not only of Diodorus but also of Plutarch, whose Phocion, by common consent, relied heavily on the works of Demetrius of Phalerum (particularly, it is believed, on "On the Decade," sometimes called "Memoirs," although it should be "Denunciation of the Athenians") and Duris of Samos. However, Duris, chronologically and geographically, was clearly further removed from the moment and epicenter of events than Demetrius, and could at best—and even then, it's not certain—attest only to how many former Athenian cleruchs from Samos accompanied the original Athenians in exile in Thrace.

A connection between Antipater and Cassander with the Lyceum is also highly probable. The former was appointed by Stagirite as his executor under his will, while the latter at least corresponded with Aristotle. Alexarchus may have had no connection to the Peripatos and may not have been Demetrius of Phalerum's classmate there—but most likely only theoretically. Lacking direct evidence of their close and intimate acquaintance, are we free to proceed from logical assumptions alone, including Antipater as the starting point and Demetrius of Phalerum as a full participant in the project? Let's try to understand whether Demetrius of Phalerum's relationship to Alexarchus's project was entirely indirect, indifferent, and driven solely by official duties and the needs of the moment.

Among the principles guiding us in this work, one of the most important is to place our protagonist within the broadest possible context of his era, which we want to see as a full-fledged character in the book. And this era consisted of more than just the contests between Alexander's heirs for primacy in his empire. Beyond these, the end of the fourth century also contained remarkable manifestations of the human spirit and intellect. Alexarchus's project was certainly one of them. Alexander carried representatives of the Greek scientific and cultural intelligentsia—philosophers, chroniclers, artists, and sculptors—in his train. But not all of his successors emulated him in this regard.

Neither Antigonus Monophthalmus and Demetrius Poliorcetes nor Ptolemy Soter in Egypt distinguished themselves by notable achievements in cultural development or significant cultural initiatives. Strong-willed, powerful, and talented as administrators and organizers, they managed to build and defend their empires amidst the heat of internecine strife. They mastered the art of governing people and the state better than anyone else of their time. Determined to forge coalitions against rivals for hegemony in the Greek world, inventive and resourceful in their choice of methods and means to achieve their goals, tireless in battle, cool-headed and calculating in the most difficult situations, they proved to be mediocre when it came to philosophers, writers of various genres, artists, and musicians.

Before Demetrius of Phalerum's appearance in Alexandria, the first Lagid could only boast of Hecataeus of Abdera, whose arrival in Egypt he had no particular credit for, and Deinocrates of Rhodes, whom he "inherited" from Alexander. Poliorcetes, in his interactions with representatives of the ancient intelligentsia, is generally known for only one episode—Protogenes' painting of Ialysus (during the siege of Rhodes). His father, a one-eyed Diadochi, ruler of Asia Minor and the border regions, also showed no particular interest in philosophy or the fine arts. Antigonus declared himself a disciple of Menedemus of Eretria and invited Zeno to join him, only this time it was a different Antigonus—Gonatas. But Zeno instead sent Perseus, his fellow countryman from Kition, and Philonides of Thebes.

Lysimachus, in appearance, seemed the most advantageous patron of the arts. He built new cities and

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[15] However, various theories have been put forward regarding the property census under Demetrius of Phalerum. For example, that the census restrictions under him applied only to the staff of city-government bodies, including various magistrates – O'Sullivan, L. (2009), 66–68. Or that 1,000 drachmas was considered the upper, not the lower, threshold – Faraguna, M. (2018), 457–467.

invited renowned philosophers and artists to his court.[16] It seems that it was with him that Theodore the Atheist found refuge after his expulsion from Athens—judging by the episode with Hipparchia, the wife of Crates of Thebes, who "cut him down" during a debate at a symposium. The comedian Philippides of Cephalia later counted among the "friends" of the king of Thrace, a circumstance that proved a boon for his native Athens.

But Lysimachus is an atypical and not entirely complete exception. Even with money and resources, the Diadochi failed to find ways and means to develop science and art in their empires. Can the flourishing of the latter under Demetrius of Phalerum—first in Athens and then in Alexandria—be simply a coincidence? No, of course, he owed his existence largely (if not entirely) to the native of Phalerum, with his constant inclination to patronize philosophical schools and creative individuals in various fields of art. In his policy toward them, he was pleasantly eclectic and did not favor, say, the Cynics over the Cyrenaics, or "his" Peripatetics over "foreign" academics. Cassander, it seems, was more receptive than Ptolemy and the Antigonids to more subtle matters than bivouac life and the clash of swords, shields, and sarissas. He could quote Homer by heart and commission a painting from Philoxenus of Eretria.

But encouraging utopian thought in his own domains seems a bit much for Cassander. Even allowing for his ambitious urges to patronize the arts and thereby achieve historical fame. We know of no evidence that would give us the reason to justify Cassander's essentially philanthropic impulses (even to the point of allowing for Alexarchus to mint his own coins) at such an inopportune moment with warm family feelings and a special affection for his younger and illegitimate brother. Unless, of course, we consider Ouranoupolis' proximity to Palaeochorium. And the fact that Ouranoupolis was born under its shadow.

Alexarchus' undertaking was initially dubious in all but its geography, and could hardly have promised any benefits to his royal (or not yet royal) brother. But at least we have material traces of this semi-mythical city- for example, numismatic ones. These are coins depicting, on opposite sides, the eight-rayed sun (obverse) and Aphrodite Urania with a scepter (reverse)[17] – the celestial hypostasis of the goddess.[18] And a fleeting mention by Strabo.[19] And also a funny anecdote from Athenaeus about the Newspeak invented by

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[16] This is not an uncontroversial assumption. One can also cite evidence to the contrary. For example, Carystus of Pergamon in his Historical Notes, if we are to believe Athenaeus XIII, 92 610 e, even speaks of Lysimachus's expulsion of philosophers. But ***"the value of Carystius' evidence is hard to assess; though the extant fragments of his work hardly inspire confidence,29 it should be remembered that they are preserved out of context, in Athenaeus' Deipnosophistae; Athenaeus' selection may create an unbalanced picture of Carystius' writings"*** - Lund, Helen S. (1992), 9. However, on the whole, modern times seem to be more favorable to the passage of Carystius: ***"He knows the value of money; he accumulates great treasures, without squandering them on reckless luxury, like Demetrius, or indulging in patronage of the arts and sciences, like Ptolemy"*** – Droysen, I. – G. (2011), 492.

[17] However, Olga Palagia – Palagia, O. (2018), 77 – believes that ***"the chlamys and the stretch lines between the legs indicate male garments"***, which would be more appropriate for either Helios or Alexarchus himself. She also notes a curious similarity in the reverse imagery between Alexarchus's coins and later ones – those of Demetrius Poliorcetes! And she's not alone. ***"One of the earliest rulers to have adopted sun-related iconography within the western tradition is Demetrius Poliorcetes... Nonetheless, it is clear that imagery of the sun and of the heavenly bodies was employed of Demetrius in the representations of his status and power. The most explicit instance belongs to an ithyphallic hymn performed in Athens in 291/90 BC,3 in which Poliorcetes was hailed as the sun"*** – O'Sullivan, L. (2008) "Le Roi Soleil: Demetrius Poliorcetes and the Dawn of the Sun King", 78.

[18] Ouranoupolis had its own mint. Silver drachms, didrachms, and tetradrachms tend to fluctuate in weight, and their authenticity is questionable. Bronze coins of the same type, however, are quite common and do not arouse skepticism among numismatists and collectors. In addition to its own coins, the mint also minted "alexanders" (Cohen, G.M. (1995), 105–106).

[19] ***"Here also, at Acanthus, is seen the canal, which Xerxes is said to have made, and through which he is said to have brought the sea from the Strymonic Gulf, across the isthmus. Demetrius of Skepsis is of opinion that this canal was not navigable; for, says he, the ground is composed of deep earth, and admits of being dug for a distance of 10 stadia only: the canal is a plethrum in width; then follows a high, broad, and flat rock, nearly a stadium in length, which prevents excavation throughout the whole distance to the sea. And even if the work***

Alexarchus, recounted by Heraclides Lamb in his "History".[20]

Other references to Alexarchus or the city he founded – by Plutarch ("*a letter of Alexarchus, in which it is recorded that Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Isis, and is called not Osiris, but Arsaphes, spelled with an 'a,' the name denoting "virility*"),[21] Clement of Alexandria[22] and Pliny the Elder[23] – give us little information. Nor do the suspicions of modern writers regarding Alexarchus' "split mind." However, we'll recall the quote from Plutarch in passing. The founding of Ouranoupolis is often dated to 316/5, likely to synchronize it with Cassander's other urban development projects, which, incidentally, involved Athens.

It is known that the Athenians, and Demetrius of Phalerum personally, played a significant role in Cassander's restoration of Thebes (most notably, in the outer perimeter of the city walls). It's possible that the early history of another "new building," Cassandria, also involved Demetrius. At the very least, the presence of nomophylakoi there may indicate this. However, it is noted only during the Antigonid era,[24] which is extremely odd. This institution is characteristic of city-state organization, not royal power. In Athens, under Demetrius of Phalerum, it became the core of his legislative reforms. Most likely, they simply

could be carried on so far across, yet it could not be continued to a sufficient depth, so as to present a navigable passage. Here Alexarchus, the son of Antipater, built the city Uranopolis, 30 stadia in circumference» - Strabo, VII, 35; H.C. Hamilton, Esq., W. Falconer, M.A., Ed.

[20] ***"And Alexarchus was a man of the same sort, the brother of Cassander, who was king of Macedonia, who built the city called Uranopolis. And Heraclides Lembus speaks concerning him in the seventh book of his Histories, and says, "Alexarchus, who founded the city Uranopolis, imported many peculiar words and forms of speaking into the language: calling a cock ὀρθροβόας, or he that crows in the morn; and a barber βροτοκέρτης, or one who cuts men; and a drachm he called ἀργυρὶς, a piece of silver; and a chœnix he called, ἡμεροτροφὶς, what feeds a man for a day; and a herald he called ἀπύτης, a bawler. And once he wrote a letter to the magistrates of the Cassandrians in this form:
᾿αλέξαρχος ὁ μάρμων πρόμοις [p.165] γαθεῖν. τοὺς ἡλιοκρεῖς οἰῶν οἶδα λιποῦσα θεωτῶν ἔργων κρατήτορας μορ σίμῳ τύχᾳ κεκυρωμένας θεοῦ πόγαις χυτλώσαντες αὐτοὺς, καὶ φύλακας ὀριγένεις." But what that letter means think that even the Pythian Apollo himself could hardly tell. For, as Antiphanes says, in his Cleophanes,—
What is it then to be a tyrant, (or
What would you call pursuing serious things,)
In the Lyceum with the sophists; by Jove,
They are but thin and hungry joyless men.
And say the thing does not exist if now
It is produced; for that is not as yet,
Nor can already be produced, which now
Is caused afresh. Nor if it did exist
Before, can it be now made to exist.
For there is nothing which has no existence.
And that which never yet has taken place,
Is not as if it had, since it has not.
For it exists from its existence; but
If there is no existence, what is there
From which it can exist? The thing's impossible;
And if it's self-existent, it will not
Exist again. And one perhaps may say,
Let be; whence now can that which has no being
Exist, what can become of it? What all this means
I say that e'en Apollo's self can't tell»*** - Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists,* III, 54 98d–99b; C. D. Yonge, B.A., Ed.

[21] Plutarch. *De Iside et Osiride*, 37, 365 E.
[22] ***"Why should I speak of Alexarchus (who, a grammarian by profession, as Aristus relates, played Helios)?"*** – Clement of Alexandria. Exhortation to the Pagans. Who of the Rich Will Be Saved?
[23] See above – note 11.
[24] See: Hatzopoulos, Miltiades V. (1996), 133, n. 2; 143; 144; 146; 157; 158; 164.

inherited the nomophylakoi from Cassander, for whom Demetrius wrote this "cheat sheet." Naturally, the Athenians and their enlightened ruler could not ignore Ouranoupolis—a rough approximation of their apoikia—the foundation of which occurred at the same time.

There is logic to this. However, it's important to recognize the fundamental differences between Thebes, Cassandria, and Thessalonica, on the one hand, and Ouranoupolis, on the other. The former fit within the framework of the typical Diadochi policy and had its own specific and clear function. As for the latter, it in no way corresponded to pragmatic principles. Such a purely utopian project was self-sufficient, self-directed, and for Cassander during this period could have meant a needless and aimless diversion of forces and resources from pressing problems. Indeed, Alexarchus' very undertaking could have been destroyed by any military contingent that happened to be nearby—either by accident or as a result of the objectives dictated by the logic of the Diadochi rivalry—regardless of its affiliation with one or another of them. Simply in passing, out of suspicion, and just in case something bad happened. It's unlikely that Ouranoupolis declared itself a "sacred" place free from military action. Firstly, this status was not considered normative by the Greeks and was not necessarily recognized or voluntarily observed by all outside forces. Secondly, the first instances of such sacred demilitarization appear to date back much later: *"Various cities now sought to get themselves and their territories "holy" i.e., immune from war, by the consent of the Greek world and the Hellenistic kings; Smyrna came first about 240, followed by Magnesia on the Maeander, Alabanda, Teos, Miletus and others... The influence of Delphi and the Amphictyons counted for much in the movement and gave it a religious basis"*.[25] Most likely, Ouranoupolis was saved by its location, somewhat isolated from the theater of military operations and the lack of political and economic benefits from control of the region. Especially since virtually all settlements in the area were destroyed by Philip II. Besides Potidea (which became Kassandria), there was also Akanthos (now Ierissos). This area (around the village of Sani) is now part of the Stagira-Akanthos municipality.

The end of Cassander's reign, to which other scholars date Alexarchus's project, seems logically unacceptable to us. The victory at Ipsus in 301 did not relieve Cassander of the need to defend his position in Macedonia and Greece against the encroachments of the "wounded" Demetrius Poliorcetes, and therefore he most likely could not afford his brother's eccentricities. Perhaps it was at this time, given the unfavorable circumstances, that Alexarchus abandoned the project and moved to the region of Pamphylia to try to implement it there.[26] It is unlikely that this decision, if it took place, was made by Alexarchus at random and haphazardly, without any expectation of finding support in the new region. At that time, Pamphylia, along with Caria and Lycia, was part of the short-lived (301–299) entity ruled by Cassander's other brother, Pleistarchus. Either Cassander's death deprived Alexarchus and his Ouranoupolis of protection (though how much greater security could one have hoped for in Pamphylia without Pleistarchus?), or he and his "subjects" were overtaken by insurmountable difficulties. In any case, it's impossible to imagine that a utopian city on lands contested by Alexander's heirs would survive for long.

There's another unexpected parallel, though apparently coincidental. The city founded by Alexarchus was called Ouranoupolis (the Heavenly City), and its inhabitants were called Uranidae. This isn't to say that the canal dug by Xerxes effectively transformed Athos (Mount Athos) into an island, like Euhemerus's Panchaia (like Homer's Scheria and Syra, Iambulus's Island of the Sun, Theopompus's Meropia, and Hecataeus of Abdera's Hyperborea), especially one that was difficult to access due to its mountainous terrain.[27] Nor is it that in Panchaia, like Athos for Ouranoupolis, a mountain called the Throne of Uranus

[25] Tarn, W. W. (1927), 72.
[26] Ouranoupolis in Pamphylia is mentioned by Claudius Ptolemy in his "Geography" – Claudius Ptolemy, *Geography*, V, 5, 6. However, Georges Radet, in his "Cities of Pamphylia" – Radet, G. (1890), 203–224 – overlooks this fact.
[27] It is often overlooked that Ouranoupolis was not on the "island" side of the Xerxes Canal, but on the mainland, closer to the present-day village of Nea Roda.

towered in the center.[28] These analogies are purely superficial. It is far more accurate to associate the city's name with Aphrodite Ourania, the heavenly daughter of Uranus, who was depicted on the obverse and reverse of numismatic finds in this region. Moreover, she has repeatedly made her mark in the history and evolution of the socio-literary utopias of antiquity.

As Maria Teresa Schettino rightly noted, *"Ouranoupolis pointed to the descent of 'Heaven' to earth; therefore, in this utopian experiment, the celestial model is taken as the starting point. Alexarchus was not the first to do this. Another Greek city, Thebes, was associated with Uranus. Indeed, Cadmus, their mythical founder, was considered one of the "city builders" who gazed at the stars, like Meton, the architect of the City of Birds, and Hippodamus of Miletus, an expert on celestial phenomena. Nevertheless, the city founded by Alexarchus, impregnable and elite, is the only one that can be imagined as the embodiment of heavenly perfection on a land where harmony reigns"***.**[29]

A passage from Pausanias partially fits the French researcher's assessment of the issue: *"At Thebes are three wooden images of Aphrodite, so very ancient that they are actually said to be votive offerings of Harmonia, and the story is that they were made out of the wooden figure-heads on the ships of Cadmus. They call the first Heavenly, the second Common, and the third Rejecter. Harmoina gave to Aphrodite the surname of Heavenly to signify a love pure and free from bodily lust"*.[30]

Athens, too, could not do without an Aphrodite Urania: *"Above the Cerameicus and the portico called the King's Portico is a temple of Hephaestus… Hard by is a sanctuary of the Heavenly Aphrodite… Among the Athenians the cult was established by Aegeus, who thought that he was childless (he had, in fact, no children at the time） and that his sisters had suffered their misfortune because of the wrath of Heavenly Aphrodite. The statue still extant is of Parian marble and is the work of Pheidias. One of the Athenian parishes is that of the Athmoneis, who say that Porphyrion, an earlier king than Actaeus, founded their sanctuary of the Heavenly One"*.[31]

And further: *"Concerning the district called The Gardens, and the temple of Aphrodite, there is no story that is told by them, nor yet about the Aphrodite which stands near the temple. Now the shape of it is square, like that of the Hermae, and the inscription declares that the Heavenly Aphrodite is the oldest of those called Fates"*.[32]

In the latter case, Pausanias was speaking – another coincidence – of the Lyceum. And, therefore, of the proximity to the temple of Apollo Lyceum, where the Peripatetics of Aristotle and then Theophrastus gathered.

Judging by the state of surviving sources, Alexarchus emerged from nowhere. However, some assumptions are still possible. Apparently, he was a grammarian by previous occupation, since he composed his own Esperanto for the residents of Ouranoupolis, one of the first in world history. The likelihood that Alexarchus received his initial training in the subject at the school of Aristotle or Theophrastus should be considered fairly high, although not close to absolute.

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[28] ***"In ancient times, Uranus, when he reigned over the world, spent his time pleasantly in this place and from the summit gazed upon the sky and the stars therein"*** – Diodorus, V, 44, 5–6.

[29] ***"Ouranoupolis indiquait la descente du «Ciel » sur la terre: dans cette expérimentation utopique, c'est donc le modèle céleste qui est assumé comme point de référence. Alexarque ne fut pas le premier. On peut remarquer qu'une autre cité de la Grèce était assimilée à Ouranos : il s'agissait de Thèbes. En effet, Cadmos, le fondateur mythique de Thèbes, était considéré parmi les « urbanistes » qui regardaient les astres, comme Méton, architecte de la cité des Oiseaux, et Hippodamos de Milet, expert des phénomènes célestes75. Néanmoins la cité fondée par Alexarque, inaccessible et élitaire, est la seule à être présentée comme la réalisation de la perfection céleste sur la terre, où règne l'harmonie"*** – Schettino, M.-Th. (2012), note 34..

[30] Pausanias, IX, 16, 3–4. English Translation by W.H.S. Jones, Litt.D., and H.A. Ormerod, M.A.

[31] Ibid., I, 14, 6.

[32] Ibid., I, 19, 2.

When this happened and who was the scholarch of Peripates at the time are not so important. Similarly, in the final analysis, it doesn't matter much whether Cassander favored his younger brother out of family ties or out of respect for Antipater's will (otherwise, it's difficult to interpret the ruler's consent to the founding of an independent city within his domain, and even with the right to mint its own coin). If Alexarchus was indeed connected to the Lyceum, he and Demetrius of Phalerum would hardly have been separated. What interests could have brought them together? For example, a mutual interest in the "solarity" of Apollo or Helios?

In Alexarchus' case, the answer is obvious.

In Demetrius' case, perhaps the same.

Firstly, Apollo was not considered a "foreign" deity by the Athenians. The "Athenian Constitution" states that Ion, the mythical king who first united all of Attica, was the son of Apollo and Creusa.[33] Quite the contrary: "at Athens… Apollo should be honoured there, since he was a patron deity of the Athenians and was said to have been the founder of their race".[34]

Secondly, Demetrius was a native of Phalerum, which lies at the very beginning of the coastal strip stretching from Piraeus to Cape Sounio and now called the Athenian Riviera or the "Aegean balcony" of Athens. But from ancient times—perhaps even in Demetrius's time—it was called the "Coast of Apollo." Most likely, this was due to the deity's temple at Zoster, which stood about fifteen kilometers further away. Today, it lies beyond the resort villages of Voula (in the period we're studying, the dem of Exoneia—the same one responsible for the famous 317 BC honorary decree to Demetrius of Phalerum) and Vouliagmeni—at the narrowest point of the cape jutting into the sea. On one side of the temple's remains is the beach of Paralia Astera, and on the other, a road named Apollonia runs along the sea. According to one version—a recessive one, to be fair—Apollo was born there.[35] According to another, more compromised version, Leto only suffered labor in Zoster,[36] but gave birth on Delos.

Ultimately, according to Pausanias, the Athenians agreed to recognize Delos as Apollo's birthplace and even sent a sacred embassy to the island, but its starting point was another temple of Apollo—in Prasia (now Porto Rafti) on the eastern coast of Attica, approximately 25 kilometers from the center of Athens.[37]

This may be questioned, and we are far from alone in our disbelief. The ship used for the sacred embassy to Delos—the theoria—was the same one Theseus sailed on from Knossos after slaying the Minotaur.[38] According to Pausanias, he departed for Crete from Phalerum.[39] However, he also returned to Athens via Phalerum,[40] not forgetting to stop at Delos and perform the "crane dance" there.[41] In fact, it could not have been otherwise—in those mythological times, Piraeus had not yet replaced Phalerum as the city's main port. Themistocles was born much later.

Phalerum, whether associated with this myth or not, had its own sanctuary to the Delian Apollo from around 429.[42] It was less well known, because the founding of the cult of Apollo in this place happened during difficult times for the city, and the external simplicity of the sanctuary is largely associated by

[33] Aristotle. The Athenian Constitution, 41, 2.
[34] Plutarch. Demetrius, XL.
[35] ***"Semos the Delian writes: "Some say the birth of Apollo took place in Lycia, others Delos, others Zoster in Attica, others Tegyra in Boeotia"*** – Stephanus of Byzantium. Εθνικά, § T611.3 Tegyra.
[36] "at Zoster on the coast is an altar to Athena, as well as to Apollo, to Artemis and to Leto. The story is that Leto did not give birth to her children here, but loosened her girdle with a view to her delivery, and the place received its name from this incident" – Pausanias, I, XXXI, 1.
[37] Pausanias, I, XXXI, 1.
[38] Plato. Phaedo, 58a–b.
[39] Pausanias, I, 1, 2.
[40] Plutarch. Theseus, 22.
[41] Ibid., 21.
[42] IG2 310, 218–19.

researchers with the austerity regime of Pericles-Callias.[43]

Athens also had other buildings dedicated to Apollo, both small sanctuaries and altars, and actual temples. For example, the Pythian Apollo behind the Temple of Olympian Zeus. The Father Apollo (Patroos) in the northwest of the agora, between the Hephaestion and the Stoa of Zeus, so named precisely because of Ion. However, it was built around 320 BC and simply didn't have time to acquire its remarkable history by the time of Demetrius of Phalerum. Nearby, but in reverse, to the northeast of the Acropolis, stands the Delphinium Apollo. Demetrius of Phalerum, the author of Aristotle's "The Athenian Constitution," knew it well as the place where the ephetes judged.[44] The temple of Apollo Lyceum was outside the city walls, opposite the "wolf" hill of Lycabettus and near the Ilissus and Eridanus rivers.[45] Beyond Athens itself, cult buildings associated with Apollo were found almost everywhere in Attica—for example, in the Mesogean village of Phlia,[46] in the deme of Acharnae,[47] on Hymettus,[48] in Oropus (if we consider it Attic);[49] on the banks of the Cephissus on the road to Eleusis.[50]

We have listed all the places in which Demetrius had no merit or personal involvement. We note only that the temple of Apollo Lyceum in the grove of the same name, home to Aristotle's Lyceum, must be associated with his personality in more than just an indirect way. We are referring to Apollo's connection with the cult of Muses. The famous Alexandrian Museum, the brainchild of Demetrius, which has left his name for centuries, began there, among other things.[51]

As for the Athenian episodes in the life of Demetrius of Phalerum, which have a much more direct and conscious connection to the theme of Apollo on his part, the most interesting are those recounted by his bitterest enemies – Duris of Samos and Demochares of Leuconoe, Demosthenes' nephew.

Duris: *" And in the procession of the Dionysia, which he celebrated when he was archon at Athens, a chorus sang an ode of Siromen the Solensian, addressed to him, in which he was called, Like the Sun:*

And above all the noble prince
Demetrius, like the sun in face,
Honours you, Bacchus, with a holy worship".[52]

Demochares: *"A snail, spitting out saliva, moved at the head of the procession he organized, while donkeys were driven through the theater".*[53]

With the quote from Athenaeus, everything is clear. A. F. Losev, along with the undoubted masters of ancient Greek belles-lettres, explains Polybius: *"Pindar (Pyth. X 29–47) writes of this Hyperborean life:*

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[43] Lewis, David M. (1960).
[44] Aristotle. Athenian Constitution, 57, 3.
[45] ***"The Lyceum received its name from Lycus, son of Pandion, but even in ancient times, as in my time, it was considered a temple of Apollo, and here the god was originally called Lycean"*** – Pausanias, I, XIX, 3.
[46] Ibid., I, XXXI, 2.
[47] Ibid., I, XXXI, 3.
[48] Ibid., I, XXXII, 2.
[49] Ibid., I, XXXIV, 2.
[50] Ibid., I, XXXVII, 4.
[51] We will point out one more possible Egyptian association, namely, the dedicatory inscription to Apollo Lycaeus on the statue of a lion in Thebes. We nominate the Thebaid as the final refuge of Demetrius of Phalerum. Although, most likely, Philadelphus exiled him, as he had earlier exiled his wife Arsinoe I, to Coptos, located fifty kilometers north of Thebes. But Coptos also contained a dedicatory stele to Apollo Ileus (a locality in Boeotia, now Oungra, or Cyprus) – Henri, O. (2012), 339. And Hathor, whose temple was nearby in Dendera, according to some versions, was revered in Egypt as the wife of the sun god – for more details, see, for example, Blackman, Aylward M. (1923), 500. And the Luxor temple was "solar" – ibid. So, coincidentally, Apollo accompanied Demetrius of Phalerum from birth until his death.
[52] Athaeneus, XII, 60 542d–e
[53] Polibius, XII, 13.

"You will find no marvelous route to the land of the Hyperboreans, either by sea or land. Perseus, the ruler of the peoples, once feasted among them, having come to their dwellings and encountered them as they were offering glorious hecatombs of donkeys to the god".

"According to Callimachus (frg. 187), "among the sacred Hyperboreans, Phoebus rejoices in asses" and (frg. 188) "fat donkey sacrifices delight Phoebus". That donkey sacrifices were especially significant in the land of the Hyperboreans is mentioned in Antoninus Liberalis. Here, Cleinias, a Babylonian and a favorite of Apollo and Artemis, "often went with these gods to the Hyperboreans' temple of Apollo and watched as donkeys were sacrificed in Apollo's honor." Once, he, too, wanted to offer Apollo a similar sacrifice, but the god "threatened him with death," since "donkey sacrifices are pleasing to him only among the Hyperboreans". Cleinias submitted to the god, but his sons insisted on such a sacrifice. ***Apollo, in his*** *anger, drove the donkeys into a frenzy, and they devoured Cleinias and all his loved ones".*[54]

Hyperborea, *"beyond these [Rhipaean Mountains], beyond Aquilon"*,[55] is Leto's homeland, a winterless land sacred to Apollo, to which he returns from Delphi[56] once every nineteen years and where the sun shines for half the year. And the Hyperboreans are Apollo's fortunate people.

"The suns rise there only once a year, at the summer solstice, and set only at the winter solstice. This land is entirely sunny, with a balmy climate and free from any harmful wind. Groves and forests are the homes of these inhabitants; the cult of the gods is carried out by individuals and the whole community; discord and disease are unknown there. Death comes there only from satiety".[57]

A similar scenario for the procession at the Great Dionysia, which took place from the 10th to the 16th of Elaphebolion (the very end of March), clearly required a certain amount of audacity from its organizer. Demetrius's introduction of Apollo or related themes (donkeys instead of goats, as well as a spitting snail[58]) into the script for the Great Dionysia festival seems somewhat unclear and therefore somewhat surprising. We find it difficult to interpret. The problem lies not in the opposition between Apollonian and Dionysian principles—that, after all, is of much later, contemporary origin. There were already plenty of unifying ties between the gods. Not only a familial relationship—they were considered brothers under Zeus—but also a meaningful likeness—based on the mythologem of eternal return.

Demetrius' "sun-likeness" risked being seen not as mere poetic hyperbole from Seiron, a mere visiting Cypriot hymnwriter, but as grounds for accusations of self-deification. Athenian demagogues were quick to exploit it, but only after the overthrow of one Demetrius by another, of Phalerum by Poliorcetes , in 307. The latter was officially honored by them with a similar hymn fifteen years later.[59]

But let's return to Alexarchus. It's more likely that Theophrastus was the figure he was looking for, since Aristotle, even having evolved from the premise of the necessity of servile status for barbarians to the assumption of a certain degree of civilization among some of them, still fell short of the more radical judgments found in Theophrastus. Like the one Tarn emphasizes—*"All men are one family and related to one another"*[60]—and which Alexarchus tried to put into practice in Ouranoupolis.

Tarn's interpretation of Alexarchus' commitment to the idea of universal human brotherhood does not seem to us an unquestionable axiom. Asking questions about the influences on Alexarchus, Tarn arrives at

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[54] Losev, A. F. (1996), 463.
[55] Gaius Plinius Secundus, IV, 89.
[56] Less commonly, from Lycia, as in Apollonius of Rhodes – Apollonius of Rhodes. Argonautica, II 674–676:
"By this same son of Latona, who was returning from Lycia
To the Hyperboreans, a people innumerable in number,
Suddenly became visible".
[57] Losev, A. F. (1996), 466.
[58] See further – note 90.
[59] See our note 17.
[60] Tarn, W. W. (1933) *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind*.

a different answer than our assumption. It was not Aristotle or Theophrastus, but Alexander with his idea of homonoia!

We do not intend to engage in a scholarly debate on this topic. It has been waged, in absentia and post hoc, by, for example, E. Badian in his article,[61] and by other opponents of Tarn's viewpoint, along with its supporters like, say, André Bonnard with his "Greek Civilization" and Charles A. Robinson, Jr. It lies beyond our narrow interests. Moreover, there may not be any conflict here. It's enough that the Peripatetic scholars and Alexarchus could have reached their own conclusions, but with Alexander's influence.

First, we shouldn't underestimate the creative potential of Alexarchus' thinking. In Jotapata, any Jew could theoretically have been Joseph ben Mattathias' replacement; however, it's unlikely anyone else would have dreamed of declaring the Roman emperor the messiah of the Jewish people.

Second, the foundation stones for the project could have been laid from other quarries, not necessarily just Alexander's. For example, Isocrates already spoke[62] of homonoia[63] (though not as broadly and universally understood as during the Macedonian conquest of Asia and later, but rather as the unification of the Greeks against Persia under the auspices of a strong leader) in his Panegyric as early as 380. And earlier, at the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries, Socrates: *"agreement is deemed the greatest blessing for cities: their senates and their best men constantly exhort the citizens to agree, and everywhere in Greece there is a law that the citizens shall promise under oath to agree, and everywhere they take this oath".*[64]

And after Isocrates, Aristotle. Although he was largely referring to a somewhat different meaning of this concept—unanimity. It is no coincidence that Stagirite begins to discuss it in those sections of the Nicomachean Ethics that consider friendship and related categories of human relations:

"Beginning of form
End of formConcord also seems to be a friendly feeling. Hence it is not merely agreement of opinion, for this might exist even between strangers. Nor yet is agreement in reasoned judgements about any subject whatever, for instance astronomy, termed concord; to agree about the facts of astronomy is not a bond of friendship. Concord is said to prevail in a state, when the citizens agree as to their interests, adopt the same policy, and carry their common resolves into execution".[65]

By reasoning in this way, the Stagirite arrives at unanimity of a higher level. He himself calls it friendship among states, following in a sense Plato's logic,[66] which he himself distilled into the thesis of man as a "naturally political being"[67]:

"there is discord; since men are not of one mind merely when each thinks the same thing (whatever this may be), but when each thinks the same thing in relation to the same person: for instance, when both the common people and the upper classes wish that the best people shall rule; for only so can all parties get what they desire.

Concord appears therefore to mean friendship between citizens, which indeed is the ordinary use of

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[61] Badian, E. (1958), 425–44.
[62] In principle, these same ideas, to varying degrees, also permeate his famous "Philip", "Areopagiticus" and "Panathenaic Oration".
[63] For a more detailed discussion of the idea of homonoia, though not from a perspective quite similar to ours, see Thériault, G. 3–250.
[64] Xenophon. Memoirs of Socrates, IV, 4, 16; E. C. Marchant, Ed. The translator renders ὁμόνοιά, ὁμονοεῖν, and ὁμονοήσειν as "agreement" and cognates.
[65] Aristotle. Nicomachean Ethics, IX, VI, 1167a; 22–31; H. Rackham, Ed. The translator uses another synonym for "unanimity".
[66] Cf. Plato. Republic, II, 368e; VIII, 544d–e, IV, 441c–d.
[67] Aristotle. Politics, I, 1, 9, and 12.

the term; for it refers to the interests and concerns of life".[68]

It is easy to see that the homonoia of Socrates, Isocrates, and Aristotle is not extraterritorial; it is assigned a specific topos and a national-state dimension. Unlike the homonoia of Alexander (if we agree with Tarn), Theophrastus, and Alexarchus.

But was Alexander a paragon of humanity, an internationalist, a champion of universal human brotherhood that knew no borders or fundamental differences between people? The heir to the Macedonian throne, whose first mentor was a warrior named Leonidas, who forced him to march until late and work up an appetite for a meager breakfast, so ravenous at lunch that he would be ravenously hungry, lest he endure another evening of drill? Not long before, he had enslaved the entire Theban people, and then razed their home city to the ground—the birthplace of Heracles, whom he had once considered his ancestor. He harassed not only the Thebans but all Greeks in general.[69] He even sent Greek contingents home during the first years of the Persian campaign.

And this king-commander, conqueror of Asia, pierced with a spear one of his closest companions, who not only shared bivouac life and the heat of many difficult battles with him, but also somehow deflected the king's savage Persian blade. And out of a petty, vindictive grudge against his former mentor, he sentenced his nephew, Callisthenes, to death. And in general, ***"the philosophers, too, no less than the mercenaries, gave him trouble, by abusing those of the native princes who attached themselves to his cause, and by inciting the free peoples to revolt. He therefore took many of these also and hanged them"***.[70]

So—to borrow a hint from Ian Worthington—how great was Alexander the Great? Was there even a hint of a herald of universal human brotherhood in his greatness? We seriously doubt it. Alexander's Homonoia didn't have a sister, Arete. It's an unjustified journalistic idealism to think and assert, as Tarn does, that *"on the day - one of the critical moments of history, on the day - when, at the banquet at Opis, Alexander prayed for the union of hearts (homonoia) and a joint commonwealth of Macedonians and Persians; he was the first to transcend national boundaries and to envisage, however imperfectly, a brotherhood the first to suggest the idea of a human brotherhood of man in which there should be neither iGreek nor barbarian"*.[71]

No, by recruiting 30,000 Persian youths for military training, he was merely following his father's example, who, having finally pacified the mountaineers hostile to Macedonia (Illyrians to the west, Lyncestians and Paeonians to the north, and Thracians to the east), accepted them into his army, deliberately flouting their nationality. By arranging a mass marriage in Susa between his officers and women of the Persian nobility, Alexander pursued a pragmatic goal: to smooth over national differences and contradictions in order to imbue his empire with vitality and flexibility. By marrying Stateira, daughter of Darius III, and Parysatis, daughter of Artaxerxes III, Alexander was least of all concerned with noble service to humanity or the establishment of the most ideal human community. No, by right of succession, he became the legitimate ruler and autocrat of the Achaemenid East, previously alien to the Hellenes. This was the simplest way to tame it, leading to a fusion through absorption rather than synthesis. Alexander was guided not by a hypertrophied, ahead-of-his-time humanity, but by simple political and administrative expediency. Did he seriously consider himself the son of a god if he spent so long meticulously choosing whom—

[68] Aristotle. Nicomachean Ethics, IX, Vi 1167a35–1167b 5.
[69] A simple example: of the 52 satraps in Alexander's empire, 24 were natives of Asia, including Persia, 23 were Macedonians, and only five were Greeks (the Cretans Nearchus and, it seems, Sibyrtius, the Cypriot Stasanor, Thoas from Magnesia-on-the-Meander, and the Naucratisian Cleomenes. And not a single "mainland" Greek! – Borza, E. (1995), 149-58.
[70] Plutarch. Alexander, 59; Bernadotte Perrin, Ed.
[71] Tarn, W. W. (1927), 69.

Heracles, Dionysus, Zeus, or someone else—to include among his divine ancestors?[72]

Alexander did not create his own Nygdeia, did not transgress the national-state boundaries he himself had drawn with the Macedonian sarissa. The sarissa is perfectly suited to such a "drafting" task, with Cleitus the White as a target to be struck in a moment of passion, but it is an unsuitable instrument for the affirmation of universal human brotherhood and equality.

Others did it for him. First, the Cynics, who largely disdained papyrus and stylus. And then, on "dog's tail",[73] following in the footsteps of Zeno, Chrysippus, Cleanthes, and other Stoics, who, unlike the Cynics, were more inclined to give objective theoretical form to their essentially revolutionary ideas, emphatically expressed in behavioral responses.[74] And also authors who preferred moralizing through historical examples—like Eratosthenes or Plutarch with his panegyric "De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute" (an early one, mind you).[75] If Alexander had never existed—no, not the cosmopolitan, who reeked of individualistic Cynicism a mile away, but the internationalist—someone would have had to invent him. Even with more than good intentions. But the East, even if it became a bit Macedonian, remained the East. Alexander was not destined to become a Diogenes. And they cannot come together, no matter how much Tarn and other scholars, inclined to idealize the unidealizable, would like to.

So, speaking of Alexarchus, we come back to Theophrastus. In conquering Persia, Central Asia, and India, Alexander, wittingly or unwittingly, reproduced on a new level the great-power Athenian imperialism of previous eras, so familiar to the Greeks. To break with it, to reject its birthmarks and embrace the idea of universal homonoia, one would have to become a metic in Athens, like Diogenes, Crates, and Theophrastus, or even a citizen, but only in the second generation, like (maybe) Demetrius of Phalerum. Not to throw a symbolic spear from a ship onto the shore of Asia Minor, but to live homeless in a barrel, to wander, copulating with one's wife in the squares, for there was nowhere else; Acquiring a garden in the Lyceum by almost roundabout means, going under the γραφή ἀσέβεια, being sentenced to death, and being expelled from the city. Only in this way could one become a citizen of the world and understand the necessity of transforming the polis into a cosmopolis, the essence of the need for true homonoia, granted by belonging to the human race, and not by conquering new lands.

However, in bringing Alexarchus closer to Theophrastus and Peripatos in general, we encounter a serious external difficulty. The somewhat paradoxical fact is that the first two scholarchs of the Lyceum did not create—unlike, for example, Plato, who had plenty of "fun" in this field—their own clearly defined utopian models. And they limited their efforts not so much to an abstract theoretical search for the ideal or most acceptable system of government, but rather to the descriptive accumulation of empirical knowledge and relevant examples. Their views in this area can be established by us most often indirectly, "by contradiction"—from criticisms (almost exclusively by Aristotle) of the projects of Plato, Hippodamus of Miletus, and Phaleus of Chalcedon. And only to a small extent—from the outline of an essentially aristocratic, but never explicitly named, "true state," which we find in the "Politics".[76] Nevertheless, even Aristotle's concept of this "true" middle state, a mixed politeia,[77] appears to be a purely speculative construct, divorced from reality, for *"owing to these causes the middle form of constitution either never comes into existence or seldom and in few places"*.[78] This is easy to explain. Aristotle, like his

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[72]Speaking of Heracles's divine nature is not entirely accurate. It is possible that Alexander took a similar consideration into account when making his decision.
[73] Diogenes Laërtius, VII, 1, 4.
[74] However, in antiquity, Diogenes of Sinope's treatise of the same name was cited as Zeno's main source of inspiration for the composition of the Republic.
[75] This treatise, reminiscent of a rhetorical exercise-declamation in form, was sometimes considered spurious—either both parts or only the second.
[76] Аристотель. Политика, V, 11.
[77]***"in which the middle class is numerous, and preferably stronger than both the other two classes, or at all events than one of them"*** - ibid., IV, 9, 8 1295b37-38.
[78] Ibid., IV, 9, 12 1296a36-38.

predecessors—the ideologists of polis-based institutions and regulations—had no historical precedents expressing a decisive breakdown of the main foundations of polis organization and the emergence, on the resulting ruins, of fundamentally new forms of government, outside the usual and familiar set. The polis utopia faded along with the decline of polis statehood—and even Aristotle's mighty intellect was no longer enough to revive the concept, which had suddenly become recessive. Only in isolationist Sparta, a little later, under Cleomenes, with the assistance of the Stoic Spherus of Borysthennis, did it temporarily gain a semblance of a "second wind." But already under Theophrastus, who dedicated one of his many political works to Cassander, and among the academics, it gradually began to undergo "monarchization".

Demetrius of Phalerum, both a theorist and a practitioner, emerging from the quiet of the classroom to the experimental field, a legislator-administrator at the intersection of polis and empire, could overcome the *"tension between idea and the world of experience"*[79] and, in one way or another, "assist" Alexarchus.

We will not dwell in detail on the specifics of Aristotle's prototype of the ideal state structure, since, while extremely interesting in itself, it is, in our case, no more than optional. How does the implicit narrative-theoretical and purely social utopia of Aristotle (and, perhaps, Theophrastus, whose numerous political writings we unfortunately do not know) relate to Alexarchus' attempt to practically realize the solar utopia of the "island of the blessed"? Perhaps only indirectly. However, we do not have all the necessary information on this matter.

It's curious that before Ouranoupolis, a city could have been built in this location by. Alexander the Great! His architect, Deinocrates of Rhodes, who later designed Alexandria, even proposed carving his figure on the mountaintop,[80] but Alexander rejected Deinocrates' idea. His refusal is sometimes explained by his having heard of the lack of fertile soil in the area around Mount Athos. The practical Alexander couldn't count on Hesiod's "fruits from the grain fields" in this mountainous region. He left such futile hopes to the future founder of Ouranoupolis. Although Alexarchus, of course, could have hoped for trade revenues if the Diadochi were reconciled and a lasting peace was concluded. And he could have hoped that Cassander would continue to rebuild the cities on the coast of Chalkidiki destroyed by the Argeads. Alexarchus likely mulled over his plan for quite some time, and when Cassander succeeded in consolidating his position in Macedonia and Greece, he eagerly seized the opportunity to implement it on Mount Athos, where sunrise is visible earlier than on other coasts.

Alexarchus wasn't planning to build a city on a completely empty site. A sanctuary of Apollo already existed here, according to local archaeologists and historians, dating back to approximately the sixth century. They are inclined to identify the remains of some structure discovered during excavations with it. It resembles a sacred structure due to the numerous decorative elements characteristic of southern Greece, particularly Corinth, whose influence in the region during this period is acknowledged to be undeniable. However, it's difficult to say whether this refers to Apollo or Helios. And to determine precisely when Apollo began to functionally replace Helios at this site,[81] as happened almost everywhere else in Greece.[82]

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[79] Werner Jaeger's expression.

[80] ***"Stasicrates addressed the king and said that Athos in Thrace, more than any other mountain, could be given the form of a human figure, and that, by Alexander's command, he was ready to transform Athos into the most immovable and most majestic statue of the king, embracing the populous city with its left hand, and pouring a full-flowing stream into the sea with its right"*** – Plutarch. Alexander, LXXII, 4. Plutarch mistakenly calls Deinocrates Stasicrates.

[81] Pierre Boyancé believes that the complete identification of Apollo and Helios took place no earlier than the time of the Stoic Cleanthes of Assos – Boyancé P. (1966), 165–166; Boyancé, P. (1960), 129–130; Naumova, E. S. (2017), 17. Other researchers believe the process began with the fusion of Apollo with local gods—the patrons of cities. This is considered typical, for example, of coastal areas like Abdera, Maroneia, and the like – Goceva, Z. (1992), 164.

[82] For greater clarity on this issue, one can refer to A. A. Tacho-Godi's notes to the Russian-language edition of Plato's Republic, published by Academichesky Proekt, Moscow, 2014, pp. 234–6: ***"The idea of the Sun as the highest good was extremely symptomatic of the pre-Hellenistic period. Late antiquity saw the Sun as a unifying***

Demetrius of Phalerum, as has already been mentioned, was clearly drawn to Apollo by virtue of his origins. Athens, it seems, did not have a separate temple to Helios. And this was typical of all of Greece as a whole—except Rhodes with its Colossus and, as we have already mentioned, Corinth.[83]

But Helios, with his chariot emerging from the ocean, did appear on the main, eastern pediment of the Parthenon,[84] there to witness the birth of Athena[85]—a probable reference to the Homeric Hymn to Athena (28:4–16). This is a rather remarkable detail, for ***"no other artistic version of the birth of Athena includes the sun god among the attending divinities".***[86] This is the earliest known sculptural depiction of Helios. Should we see any contradiction in this between Demetrius and the founder of Ouranoupolis?

For, at first glance, in the latter's case, we should rather be talking about Helios. Corinth, along with Rhodes, was the main center of Helios worship at that time. Moreover, Alexarchus is said to have declared himself Helios in his city, and called its inhabitants the Uranides—children of Heaven. Besides the sun, the moon and stars were especially revered in the city. And, of course, the daughter of Heaven—Aphrodite Urania. The Uranides (instead of the more appropriate Heliads) seem out of place. Furthermore, veneration of the sky is more clearly expressed in the cult of Apollo than Helios: ***"Hesychius (Aithria) reads, citing the comedian Cratinus: 'The Hyperboreans revere the firmament. Indeed, Hyperborean sacrifices, in accordance with their ancestral sacred custom, are kept not under a roof, but in the open air".***[87] Although the snail, about which Demochares wrote with indignation, seems to point to Helios.[88] However, according to another version, there were no chariots or Poseidon, and Nerites was punished by Zeus for refusing to accompany Aphrodite to Olympus by metamorphosing into a mollusk.

So does this contradiction really exist? We're not sure. This corner of Thrace isn't known for its preference for Helios—the two nearby Apollonias mentioned confirm this.[89] In fact, there were more Apollonias in this region at that time. It's hard to say exactly how many. They've been localized near Thermae (present-day Thessaloniki) and Polygyros, in Mygdonia (both in its entirety and more specifically, in the vicinity of Lake Bolbe/Volvi, where there were at least two Apollonias—old and new/Nea) and Pieria—from Xenophon, Strabo, and Pseudo-Scyllacus to modern researchers.[90] Although it may be

and organizing force for the entire world, in contrast to the archaic Mother Earth and the early classical four elements (water, air, earth, fire) of natural philosophers...
The association of the Sun-Helios with Phoebus-Apollo, the great organizing and shaping principle, contributed to the concept of the Sun as a universal world force. This association, which began in the pre-classical era, developed into a direct identification in the literature and philosophy of the Hellenistic era".

[83] Paradoxical as it may seem, the cult of Helios became more widespread, especially in the Peloponnese, in later times. Thus, in the second century AD, when Pausanias lived and wrote, temples, altars, and cults of the deity were found there almost everywhere. Besides Corinth (II, III, 2; II, IV, 7), these are Sicyon (II, XI, 2); Mycenae (II, XVIII, 3); Methana (II, XXXIV, 1), Hermione (II, XXXIV, 10), Troezen (II, XXXI, 8) in Argolis; Taygetus near Briseis (III, XX, 5) and Thalamus (III, XXVI, 1) in Laconia; Olympia (V, XI, 3) and Elis (VI, XXIV, 5) in Elis, Mantinea (VIII, IX, 2) and Megalopolis (VIII, XXXI, 4) in Arcadia. In the rest of Greece, Pausanias mentioned only Helios on the pediment of a temple in Phocis (X, XIX, 3).

[84] Hurwit, Jeffrey M. (2017), 527–558.

[85] Nevertheless, in July 1970, during excavations in the agora near Hephaestion—the very site of the ancient temple of Apollo Paterini—a marble statue of Helios was discovered.

[86] Shear, T. Leslie Jr. (2016), 114.

[87] Losev, A. F. (1996), 468. Reference to Hesychius's Lexicon—Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon. Aithria, Jenae, Sumptibus Hermanni Dufftii (Libraria Maukiana), 1867, 57. It is unclear which Cratinus Hesychius had in mind—the elder, who never lived past the fifth century, or the younger. Some believe the younger lived until 324. Others place him during the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. For us, certainty in this case is unimportant.

[88] Claudius Aelianus recounts the legend of how the sun god transformed Nerites into a snail out of jealousy at Poseidon, whom he preferred over him—Claudius Aelianus. In the Animal Kingdom, XIV, 28. But in Aelianus, the angry sun is Helios, not Apollo!

[89] Moreover, in the century before last, the theory of Apollo's Thracian origin enjoyed some (though far from obvious) popularity among researchers – Graf, F. (2008), 12.

[90] Offhand, these are Hammond, N. G. L.; Griffith, G. T. (1979); Hatzopoulos, M. (1994), 159–188.

sufficient that the head of Apollo and the lyre (incidentally, the emblem of the Chalcidian League under Olynthus) appeared on its silver coins—hemidrachms and tetradrachms.

Ultimately, by the beginning of the Hellenistic period, Apollo and Helios, in their solar aspects, may have merged. Of course, the former ultimately gained greater importance due to his Olympian status. Perhaps for this reason, Alexarchus, even as the ktystos of Ouranoupolis, found it unsuitable to be called Apollo there.

"Alexarchus' utopian aspirations are clearly expressed in his identification with the Sun—Helios, long regarded by the Greeks as the protector and guarantor of justice, bringing to light any evil and crime. The idea of the Sun as the personification of justice is deeply rooted in the culture of the peoples of the Mediterranean. In the reforms carried out in Egypt by the 18th Dynasty Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten, 1372–1354), associated with the establishment of the solar cult of Aton-Ra, the concept of the Sun as a universal deity, common to all peoples, came to the forefront, rejecting their division into "barbarian" and "civilized". This same range of ideas is also evident in the famous Egyptian prophecy of Isaiah, which predicted the emergence of the "City of the Sun" on the day when the Lord of hosts judges Egypt (Isaiah 19:18).[91]

We agree with this quote in general, but not in its details. The excess of Egyptian history, such as the coup of Amenhotep IV, and the eschatological beliefs of the ancient Jews, can certainly, to some extent, illustrate the spread of solar cults and their development in the Mediterranean, but their direct influence on Alexarchus specifically seems extremely doubtful. Before Alexander's campaign, Egypt was Persian and could have become a pan-Greek granary at best under Cleomenes of Naucratis. Therefore, it's hardly possible to take into account the developed economic exchange and trade that usually pave the way for broad cultural and other ties between such diverse and distant regions as an established fact. Their interpenetration and mutual influence in various spheres by the time of Alexarchus' founding of Ouranoupolis (or, more precisely, by the time he formulated the plan and prepared for its implementation) had not become a natural observation, that very "rooting" with a common denominator. After all, the most tangible and visible fruits of such ties, as applied to the subject of our attention, are the Corpus Hermeticum and the Chaldean Oracles. And this is already the new chronology (1st-3rd centuries). Such cultural transfer could probably have occurred on a personal level as well—of, say, Solon, Pythagoras, and Plato, each of whom, with varying degrees of probability, visited Egypt.

As did Demetrius of Phalerum. He certainly deserves mention in connection with this attempted transfer—when the Greco-Macedonian Ptolemaic Empire was forming on Egyptian soil, and the need for such interpenetration and mutual influence with the indigenous population arose.

Let's recall his Great Dionysia with its Hyperborean slant. Apollo and Dionysus are a direct path to Serapis, whom Demetrius, with the help of the Egyptian Manetho of Sebennytos and Timotheus Eumolpides of Eleusis, "invented" in Alexandria. It's difficult to say for certain who, in Demetrius' composite hypostasis of the new deity of the Greeks and Egyptians, was responsible for "solarity"—the Greek Zeus, Apollo, or the Egyptian Horus-Apollo[92]—and who was perceived as such in later accretions. Did Demetrius have a direct hand in the founding of Ptolemais? The capital of the Thinite nome—the birthplace of the legendary Menes, pharaoh of the First Dynasty, who unified the country? Whether the close proximity of Memphis, which he founded, to the capital of the solar cult of Iunu-Heliopolis, which also served as the political center of predynastic Egypt, was entirely coincidental is impossible to say.

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[91] Gutorov, V. A. (1989), 223–224.

[92] ***"the rulers of Egypt were gods, but none had been contemporary with the human priests. Of these gods one or another had in succession been supreme; the last of them to rule the country was Osiris' son Horus, whom the Greeks call Apollo; he deposed Typhon,[1] and was the last divine king of Egypt. Osiris is, in the Greek language, Dionysus"***—Herodotus. II, 144. The similarity between Horus and Apollo is evidenced by the inscriptions of Edfu, Buto, and Sais—Henri, O. (2012), 340, also note 16. There, Henri specifically points to the existence of an oracle of Apollo in Alexandria, although it may have belonged to a later period.

Incidentally, the previously cited quote from Plutarch's treatise "On Osiris and Isis" (note 21) is also noteworthy in that it demonstrates Alexarchus's interest in the Egyptian pantheon.

However, we are inclined to choose Apollo. For several reasons. Firstly, Demetrius was definitely involved in developing and formulating the "technical specifications" for the Serapeions—temples of Serapis. Oracles were established at them almost everywhere. But we remember that prophecy was Apollo's defining characteristic, evident almost from his earliest days. As soon as he was born,

"Forthwith Phoebus Apollo spoke out among the deathless goddesses:

“The lyre and the curved bow shall ever be dear to me, and I will declare to men the unfailing will of Zeus".[93]

Secondly, Apollo is a god of healing. And, incidentally, he was the father of Asclepius,[94] to whom he ceded or entrusted his healing skills. Dream incubations were practiced at the Serapeions. Sufferers were hypnotically induced into a deep sleep for the sake of oracle-given revelations—upon awakening—about the future, deduced from the sleeper's visions. And as we know from Artemidorus' famous dream book, Demetrius of Phalerum, along with Hemippus of Tyre, Artemon of Miletus, and Artemidorus himself, was one of the pillars of ancient Greek oneirocriticism (divination by dreams).

Thirdly, Laërtius writes that Demetrius was cured of a serious eye ailment in Egypt by the grace of Serapis. This account should hardly be taken at face value; it closely resembles a common, even today, but not particularly demanding advertising ploy. However, on the occasion of his miraculous healing, Demetrius supposedly composed paeans in honor of the merciful deity. Paeans, as we know, are a genre of choral lyric poetry intended almost exclusively for Apollo and Artemis.[95] We don't know exactly when Dionysus, Asclepius, and Helios began to be included among the addressees.

We confess that we firmly believe in the inseparable connection between Demetrius of Phalerum and Alexarchus' utopian Ouranoupolis. However, we understand that none of the arguments we've presented can be considered complete proof, no matter how logical they may seem. Apollo "domesticated" in Athens, his related Egyptian Serapis, a possible acquaintance with Alexarchus from the Lyceum, Thracian settlers from Athens, the transfer of the music cult to the other half of the Mediterranean, a passion for the idea of "solarity," as well as other themes that somehow connect Demetrius of Phalerum with Apollo and any forms of heliotropism in the social and other life of the Greeks and Macedonians—all of these are of an intermediate, indirect nature and do not transform the theorem into an axiom, nor Demetrius of Phalerum into an equal initiator of utopian undertakings on the Isthmus of Athos with Alexarchus. We know nothing else about this project—neither about the architecture of Ouranoupolis nor about the constitution Alexarchus gave its inhabitants.

We probably have nothing more to say about the subsequent fate of Alexarchus and his project for a "city of the Sun". As we've already mentioned, closer to the turn of the century, he apparently moved to Pamphylia, where he intended to repeat his attempt.

Pamphylia borders Lycia and, through it, Caria—historical regions possibly responsible for the birth of the cult of Apollo. During Alexarchus' time, an oracle of Apollo Phyrxaeus seems to have existed in Lycian Cyaneus (the region of today's Yavu district, approximately halfway between Kaş and Demre).[96] However, surviving sources are silent on the results and consequences of Alexarchus' efforts in the new location. It's

[93] Homer, 130–132.
[94] Ischius, son of Elathus, according to the recognized classical version of the myth, had nothing to do with the conception of Asclepius.
[95] Demophilus and Eurymedon's formal complaint against Aristotle was that he composed paeans in honor of Hermias of Atarneus. A simple poetic praise would not have provoked such an uncompromising reaction. However, the paean is a poetic form, by definition, addressed to Apollo. Or perhaps—in the case of Aristotle, who belonged to the Asclepiad family—to Asclepius.
[96] Pausanias, VII, XXI, 13.

unlikely that his idea could have been realized there without hindrance. If it had, we would likely not have been left in the dark.

The military and political situation and Cassander's preoccupation with fortifying and defending his possessions prevented Alexarchus from continuing in the previous location, if we completely discount the factors of Athens and Demetrius of Phalerum. But it's possible that the internal flaws in the structure Alexarchus erected also played a role. Since the destruction the area suffered at the hands of the Macedonians, it hadn't had time to return to its former habitable and developed state. The mountainous terrain around Athos was not particularly fertile and was suitable only for meager harvests of a few crops—grapes and olives. Grain was out of the question. The development of livestock farming was out of the question in the face of external instability. However, oddly enough, Alexarchus and his Uranids were most hampered by his homonoia. Indeed, the city was not supposed to have slaves, whose labor and exploitation in Greece, Thrace, and Macedonia during Alexarchus' time were the backbone of the economy and an essential condition for material well-being. Even a temporary abandonment of his proclaimed principles would hardly have helped Alexarchus – there was no one and nothing with which to conquer new lands and enslave their inhabitants.

It seems that the fundamental flaw in Alexarchus' construction – to use the terminology of Kautsky, who commented from his perspective on the utopian features of Aristophanes' comedies – was that he attempted to establish a communism of consumption, rather than a communism of production, on the soil of Athos.

* * *

Be that as it may, by the time of the Thracian expulsion of the Athenian exiles, Greek utopian thought had already reached a certain height in its development. Ouranoupolis represented, it seems, the first attempt in human history to practically create an ideal city from scratch, following utopian models. Alexarchus' utopia was not architectural, like the Hippodamian projects of the Furies and Miletus. It was not purely astral-solar, despite many outward signs. It is unlikely to have been based entirely on Pythagoras' Crotonian acusmata or the image of the ideal urban barracks, as seen in Plato. No, Alexarchus attempted to combine features of several of the most common models in his project. But he most likely failed. For his Ouranoupolis did not last long—at least, on the lands of Cassander near Mount Athos.

There certainly exists another set of citations, geographically much closer to Alexarchus, a different narrative context than the one we have used previously to explain Alexarchus' choice of methods for the organization and development of his city. However, history has left us no precise clues. The current general deplorable state of the sources deprives our view of this matter of proper perspective. It will inevitably be speculative, even conjectural.

But we do have some certainty. It seems clear to us that Cassander had no direct interest in the birth of Ouranoupolis. For the ruler of Macedonia, the city did not justify its existence in any respect—strategic, economic, or other practical one. It served a utilitarian purpose during his father's regency—as the final component of the forced "disarmament" of Athens by the census. The only convenient feature was that the garrison of Palioura and the units attached to it, tasked with protecting the ancestral home of Antipater and his offspring, could keep an eye on the exiled settlers from Attica and neutralize the potential threat of their rebellion. But that was all. It's unlikely that warm feelings for his illegitimate brother were more than just empty words for Cassander.

In fact, the extent of the family's close bonds with Antipater's entire family shouldn't be exaggerated. Its head, on the threshold of his death, handed over to Cassander only the chiliarchy over the cavalry, passing over the regency in favor of Polyperchon, his valiant but ultimately incompetent and worthless comrade. A different Antipater—Cassander's son—a couple of years after his father's death would murder Thessalonica, his father's wife and his own mother, the sister of Alexander the Great, and then himself would fall victim to the vengeance of his younger brother, also Alexander, who summoned Demetrius

Poliorcetes to carry it out. The founder of the short-lived Antipatrid dynasty, it seems, spared his relatives.[97] However, the more than unenviable fate of Roxana and her son, the scion and heir to the Macedonian throne after Alexander the Great, as well as Olympias, the mother of the founder of the vast empire, and other similarly inflexible and cruel acts (such as the executions of Demades, Aristonous, and others) leave no doubt that, if necessary, Cassander would have acted without hesitation or sentimentality.

Most likely, the actual overseer of the Ouranoupolis project, who took it to heart more than anyone else, was Demetrius of Phalerum, the governor of distant Athens (until his exile). His concern for the fate of the Athenians' unexpected apoikia was not solely driven by official duties and the implied consideration of the needs and requirements of his compatriots, who were afflicted by Antipater's restriction on civil rights. Demetrius's personal solar-Apollonian predisposition also played a role. As was his involvement in the most diverse processes of Greek intellectual development and his constant, repeatedly demonstrated inclination to oversee them, be it Homer's diorthosis, oneirocriticism, mirabilia and paradoxography, the development of aphoristics and the fable genre. A writer, philosopher, political journalist, born "under the sign of Apollo" and carrying this accidental characteristic of his biography throughout his life, it is unlikely that he could remain indifferent to the opportunity to actively participate in the practical realization of the Athos utopia. Although, given his circumstances, Demetrius was naturally lacking for a more substantial role.

It is not surprising that Alexarchus abandoned his Ouranoupolis project long before the death of his royal brother and nominal patron, Cassander. This occurred almost immediately after the expulsion of Demetrius of Phalerum from Athens[98] and was no mere coincidence. A direct connection between these two events seems undeniable to us. The umbilical cord that nourished Alexarchus' Ouranoupolis with its lifeblood was severed. Demetrius of Phalerum's role in the founding, development, and life of Ouranoupolis turned out to be far more significant than is commonly believed, based on isolated and loosely consistent fragments of information in the works of Strabo, Pliny, Eusebius, and Athenaeus.

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[97] However, according to one version, Nicanor, the frurarch of the Munichian garrison in Athens, who was killed by Cassander, was his nephew.

[98] Furthermore, it is logical to take into account the move of Demetrius of Phalerum to Alexandria to join Ptolemy, which the author of this article dates to 305-304. However, this point of view a) is still recessive for the classical studies of early Hellenism; b) when considered in relation to the circumstances concluding the history of Ouranoupolis, it requires a justification too extensive for the scope of this article, which would therefore be an irrelevant and superfluous addition.

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THE FİRST TURKOLOGY CONGRESS: HİSTORY AND MODERNİTY

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ABSTRACT

Turkic peoples—possessing a centuries-old history and a rich path of development, and having taken shape across a vast geography amidst complex socio-political and cultural processes—occupy a significant and distinctive place among the peoples of the world. The scientific study of the state-building, socio-political, and cultural experiences of Turkic peoples, as well as their rich heritage, enables the restoration of historical memory and a deep exploration of their shared roots and mutual ties. In this context, conducting research on Turkology and its institutionalization is of great importance for the systematic study of the historical heritage of Turkic peoples. In the modern era, the successful implementation of language policy and the preservation and transmission of national-moral values to future generations are among the priority areas for the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. The First Turkological Congress, held in 1926, was a cultural-historical event that reflected the unity, language, culture, system of thought, and development of the Turkic nation. The presented article examines and extensively analyzes the First Turkological Congress—which played a pivotal role in the development of Turkism—and its historical significance for the Turkic world.

1.İNTRODUCTİON

The issues of language and alphabet have always held special significance in the formation of the national and spiritual identity of the Azerbaijani people. Socio-political changes occurring at various stages of history, along with the development of statehood traditions and cultural values, have ensured that the Azerbaijani language and its writing system remain a constant focus of attention. Significant events that took place, particularly in the early 20th century—including the holding of the First Turkological Congress—had a major impact on the formation of national language policy and the strengthening of cultural integration among Turkic-speaking peoples.

Having entered the 21st century as a legal, democratic, secular, and civilized state, the Republic of Azerbaijan is taking confident steps toward integrating its national and moral values into the modern international community within a globalizing world. The preservation and transmission to future generations of national-spiritual and moral values, as well as customs and traditions—which constitute a priority within the framework of independent Azerbaijan's principles of statehood—are matters of particular significance.

In this regard, the decree signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, on October 22, 2025, concerning the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the First All-Union Turkological Congress in 2026, is of great importance. The Order states that the First Turkological Congress is an event of exceptional importance, marking a significant milestone in the cultural integration of Turkic peoples who share a rich common past and an ancient heritage. At this unique international scientific forum, the most pressing issues in Turkology were subjected to extensive and systematic discussion, important decisions regarding the future of the Turkic world's language, history, ethnography, literature, and culture were adopted, and particular emphasis was placed on the transition to a unified common Turkic alphabet based on the Latin script (Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidenti, 2025).

The First Turkological Congress of 1926 marked a turning point for the history of Turkology, for Turkish-Russian relations, and for the future of the peoples of Turkestan: Although at first glance the congress was marked by the decision of Turkic-speaking peoples to switch to the Latin script, it

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simultaneously represented a collaboration of strategic importance between Russia and Turkey—vis-à-vis the West—spanning the cultural, military, and political spheres, as well as the field of Turkology. In a speech delivered on July 7, 1922, at a banquet held in honor of the Soviet ambassador S.I. Aralov and the Iranian ambassador Ismail Khan, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk stated: “It is true that the events recorded in existing histories do not reflect the true thoughts, aspirations, and actions of nations. The peoples of the East did not act according to their own will or feelings.” At their head stood a number of despots, arbitrary tsars, and rulers. Most historical events were the result of actions taken to satisfy their greed. "We will tear them all up; we will write a new history" (Atatürk, 1997, p. 44).

The alphabet plays a major role in the development of the national language—particularly the literary language, which is considered the fundamental symbol of a people's national identity and mindset—as well as in the formation of traditions of independent national statehood. Above all, it is instrumental in the cultural advancement of the people, the cultivation of their intellectual potential, and the flourishing of science, enlightenment, education, and culture—in short, in the overall process of cultural development. It is no coincidence that our national intellectuals—who highly valued the exceptional importance of education and culture in the cultural progress and national awakening of our people—began a struggle for alphabet reform in Azerbaijan starting in the second half of the 19th century. Renowned enlighteners and thinkers from Azerbaijan and the broader Turkic world—such as Mirza Fatali Akhundov, Ismail Gaspirali, Ahmed Baitursunov, Uzeyir Hajibeyli, Mahammad Agha Shahtakhtinski, Huseyn Javid, Firidun Bey Kocharli, Vali Khuluflu, and others—raised the issue of modernizing, reforming, or replacing the Arabic script with the Latin script at various times. Although the national enlightenment movement advocating for alphabet reform gained momentum in the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries—led by M.F. Akhundov, the idea's originator, ardent proponent, and great herald—the historical and political conditions of the time did not allow for its realization. From that time onwards, Azerbaijani ideologues of the national Enlightenment movement—which shaped the development of Azerbaijani culture—campaigned for the idea of a new alphabet based on the Latin script. This leading role had transformed Azerbaijan into the center of Turkology, both in terms of ideas and practical work. The first historic step among Turkic-speaking peoples regarding the transition to the Latin alphabet was taken in Azerbaijan—specifically during the era of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918–1920), which is considered the first legal-democratic state in the Turkic world and the East. The establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic created a historic opportunity to realize the alphabet reform that enlightened intellectuals had long aspired to. The extensive public discussions organized by the *Azerbaijan* newspaper during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic’s activity once again demonstrated the relevance of this process to society.

By a special resolution adopted on March 21, 1919, the Parliament of Azerbaijan established a Government Commission on Alphabet Reform under the Ministry of Public Education, chaired by Khudadat bey Malik-Aslanov. The alphabet reform served to realize the ideas held by the national government regarding enlightenment and the nationalization of public education. In the 1919 Baku textbook titled *Son türk əlifbası* ("The Latest Turkic Alphabet")—authored by Abdulla bey Efendizade, a member of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic parliament and a renowned educator—the Arabic and Latin alphabets were compared for the first time, and the incompatibility of the Arabic script with the phonetic system of the language was demonstrated through a wealth of evidence. In the book’s “Introduction,” while discussing the importance of the Latin alphabet, the author wrote: If schoolchildren learn this alphabet, no one can deny how easy it would be for them to read Latin, French, German, and Russian. Therefore, if we were to teach that alphabet alongside the Arabic alphabet in primary schools, we would bring great benefits to the population. “It was precisely with this consideration that I created that work, so that it would be possible to teach both alphabets together” (Mərdanov, 2003, pp. 59-63).

This fact demonstrates that the national government implemented concrete practical measures regarding alphabet reform, established the appropriate legal framework for realizing this historical-cultural process, initiated the phased teaching of the Latin alphabet in educational institutions, and ensured the preparation of teaching materials.

Following the establishment of Soviet rule, initiatives regarding alphabet reform were pursued within a specific ideological framework, marking the entry of Turkological research activities into a new phase. Following discussions of a report by the socio-political and state figure Nariman Narimanov at the First Congress on Regional Studies held in Baku in 1924 and at meetings of the Turkology section of the Society for the Study and Investigation of Azerbaijan, a decision was adopted regarding the necessity of convening a Turkology congress to address a number of scientific and practical issues related to Turkic culture. As early as 1922, a committee on the "transition to the Latin alphabet" was established in Baku under the chairmanship of N. Narimanov, and this issue became a focal point for Turkologists working in the scientific centers of the USSR. N. Narimanov, a victim of the Soviet totalitarian system, was one of the first proponents of the idea of holding a Turkology congress.

Research shows that although the First Turkological Congress was initially intended to be held in Leningrad (Saint Petersburg) and Moscow, it was subsequently deemed appropriate to organize it in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. There were a number of historical factors that led to the adoption of this decision. First of all, the idea of switching to the Latin alphabet or reforming the Arabic alphabet was first put forward by Azerbaijani enlighteners. Secondly, the issue of alphabet reform was first raised at the state level during the period of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, and certain practical measures were implemented in this regard. Thirdly, the New Turkic Alphabet Committee regarding alphabet reform was established specifically in the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic; compared to other Turkic-speaking peoples, more systematic preparatory work—particularly concerning the transition to the Latin script—was carried out in Azerbaijan. Fourthly, sufficient scientific potential and prominent Turkologists capable of guiding this process were concentrated in Azerbaijan. Finally, the Society for the Study and Investigation of Azerbaijan—which later played a pivotal role in the formation of the Academy of Sciences—established an institutional foundation in this field by rallying strong scientific forces around itself. All these factors provided the basis for holding the First International Turkological Congress in Baku.

Although the political leadership of the former USSR made serious attempts to obstruct the transition to the Latin alphabet on various pretexts in the run-up to the congress, it proved impossible to halt these initiatives. Thus, the First International Turkological Congress (later designated the 1st All-Union Turkological Congress)—held in Baku with the aim of organizing a scholarly discussion on language-building efforts in Azerbaijan and the former USSR, and of summarizing the results of the long-term work carried out by the New Turkic Alphabet Committee regarding alphabet reform—holds immense historical and cultural significance. It should also be noted that the congress serves as an important methodological and ideological foundation for contemporary Turkological research.

The First Turkological Congress, convened based on a joint decision by the New Turkic Alphabet Committee and the Society for the Study and Research of Azerbaijan, was held in Baku from February 26 to March 5, 1926, in the historic Ismailiyya building—where the Society was based and which currently houses the Presidium of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS). In addition to 131 delegates, numerous guests also attended the congress. The group of representatives included prominent Turkologists not only from the territory of the USSR but also from a number of European countries and Turkey. Prominent scholars and literary figures held a special place among them—such as Ali Bey Huseynzade, a renowned thinker, writer, and distinguished representative of Azerbaijani-Turkic public thought, and Mehmed Fuad Köprülüzade, a Turkish politician, historian, and literary scholar.

During the 17 sessions of the congress, 38 scientific papers dedicated to the history, ethnography, culture, languages, and literatures of Turkic peoples were presented, and corresponding resolutions and recommendations regarding these papers were adopted. (Mutanov, 1926, p. 72). Although the congress was held under the auspices of the newly established Soviet government, its initiators, organizers, and leaders were all Turks (Cəfərov, 2026, p. 15).

One of the defining features of the Turkology Congress was the active participation of Azerbaijani state and socio-political figures in its organization and opening ceremony, as well as the extensive involvement of local intellectuals; this demonstrated that the congress held not only scientific but also political-ideological significance. Opening the congress's first ceremonial session, Samad Aghamalioghlu, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan, emphasized that Azerbaijan was entering a new historical stage and stated that the people had the opportunity to determine their own destiny for the first time. At the same time, he noted that the Azerbaijani people regard the holding of the first-ever global Turkological Congress on their own soil as a major historical event.

In his opening remarks, emphasizing the importance of the congress, he said: "…We must derive maximum benefit from this congress." It seems to me that I would not be mistaken in saying that no scientific congress to date has attracted the attention of the broad masses of working people to such an extent… However, for the Congress to respond appropriately to this natural sentiment of the masses, it is necessary to work as productively as possible." (Cəfərov et al., 2026, p. 7). This speech held great socio-political significance for its time. Samad Aghamalioghlu emphasized that the Congress did not remain within a narrow academic framework but evolved into a broad public event that captured the attention of the masses of working people. This approach was also significant in terms of strengthening the connection between science and society, demonstrating its link to real life, and bringing its ideological function to the forefront.

It is noteworthy that the second session of the Congress featured the presentation of a seminal paper by the eminent Orientalist and historian Academician Vasily Bartold titled "The Current State of the History of Turkic Peoples and Immediate Tasks for Its Study," alongside presentations by Gavriil Chursin ("Immediate Tasks for Studying the Ethnography of the Caucasus Turks"), Ivan Borozdin ("Latest Discoveries in the Field of Tatar Culture"), Y. Messarshan ("The Current State and Immediate Tasks of Studying the Ethnography of Anatolian and Balkan Turks"), and A. A. Müller ("On the Visual Arts of Turkic Peoples"); furthermore, the sixteenth session included a presentation by Sergey Oldenburg titled "Methods of Regional Studies Among Turkic Peoples." In these reports, the historical past, current situation, and future scientific tasks of the Turkic peoples have been analyzed from a conceptual perspective.

It should be noted that the issues raised in the reports presented at the congress were investigated to a certain extent during the 20th century, particularly by historian-Turkologists active within the territory of the former USSR. However, for a long time, those studies were unable to fully break free from the influence of Soviet ideology and its methodological stereotypes.

Only after the collapse of the USSR in the late 20th century did favorable conditions emerge for a more objective study of the history of Turkic peoples and for its widespread teaching in higher education institutions.

Although numerous papers on history, ethnography, and culture were presented at the First Turkological Congress, the congress—in line with its primary objective—prioritized issues regarding the alphabet, orthography, terminology, and methodology. In this regard, discussions concerning the transition to the Latin-based alphabet, in particular, have played a central role, and important decisions have been adopted in this direction.

At the congress, presentations by prominent Turkologists regarding the issues in question became the subject of extensive discussion. Thus, presentations such as Mehmed Fuad Köprülüzadə's "The Development of the Literary Languages of Turkic Peoples," Aleksandr Samoylovich's "The Current State and Immediate Tasks of Turkic Language Studies," Bekir Çobanzadə's "On the Close Affinity of Turkic Dialects" and "On the System of Scientific Terminology," A. P. Zifeldt-Simumyagi's "On the Principles of Forming Scientific Terminology in Turkic Languages," Sergey Malov's "The Study of Ancient Turkic Languages," C. Məmmədzadə's "On the Alphabet Systems of Turkic Peoples," and F. Ağazadə's "Correct Writing in the Turkic Language"—among others—were heard, and extensive, intensive scientific discussions were held regarding these topics.

The representation of Russian-Soviet scholars at the First Turkological Congress was quite extensive. Academician Nizami Jafarov writes about the reasons for this in the book *The Turks at the First Turkological Congress*: The scientific and cultural reason was that, at the time, there were very few highly qualified Turkologists among Turkic peoples, and there was a great need for Russian-Soviet specialists in Turkological discussions; the political-ideological reason, as is well known, stemmed from the fact that the Soviet authorities exercised control over Turkic peoples through their trusted scholars, steering their thoughts and actions in the "correct" direction. However, it seems a third reason should also be mentioned. Thus, no matter to what extent any significant historical assembly discusses national issues, it is compelled to take international opinions and relations into account." (Cəfərov, 2026, p. 20).

The most significant outcome of the congress was the adoption of a definitive decision regarding the transition of Turkic-speaking peoples to the Latin alphabet. However, one reality must not be overlooked: the decisions and recommendations of the congress did not remain merely at the level of ideas and directives requiring short-term implementation; they also encompassed future strategic directions of great long-term significance (Mutanov, 1926, p. 72).

A full transition to the Latin alphabet was implemented in Azerbaijan starting from January 1, 1929. In accordance with the decisions of the First Turkological Congress, the implementation of the Latin-based alphabet was initiated in the Republic of Turkey, alongside other Turkic-speaking peoples and republics. This transition played a significant role in eradicating illiteracy among the general public and, at the same time, gave impetus to the strengthening of cultural and intellectual ties among Turkic-speaking peoples. However, starting in the mid-1930s, the political leadership of the former USSR decided to reconsider the policy regarding the Latin alphabet—one of the key instruments of cultural integration among Turkic peoples—and to change direction in this area.

The implementation of the decisions adopted by the First Turkological Congress faced various administrative and ideological constraints in subsequent years, and initiatives aimed at strengthening cultural integration among Turkic-speaking peoples were undermined by political agendas. A large number of the Azerbaijani Turkologists—linguists, historians, and literary scholars—who drove this process fell victim to the repressive policies of the 1930s.

In 1939, a decision was adopted in Azerbaijan to transition from the Latin script to the Cyrillic alphabet, and the implementation of the Cyrillic alphabet began on January 1, 1940. Consequently, the writing culture that emerged over a brief period in the 1920s and 1930s underwent successive changes. At the same time, for many years, the name of the First Turkological Congress was excluded from scholarly and public discourse, and references to it were restricted during certain periods. This situation only began to gradually disappear after the mid-20th century.

Despite certain challenges, the Azerbaijani language has preserved its lexical and grammatical purity throughout this period and demonstrated its high expressive potential in scientific, literary, and journalistic discourses. At the same time, Azerbaijan has affirmed its position as a key center for Turkological research and development—both within the post-Soviet space and the international scholarly community—and has maintained its status as a leading nation in upholding and advancing the scientific traditions rooted in the First Turkological Congress.

A new phase in revisiting the decisions and recommendations of the First Turkological Congress began in the 1960s. It is no coincidence that in 1966, a scientific-practical conference marking the 40th anniversary of the First Turkological Congress was held in Baku with the participation of prominent Soviet Turkologists, and the publication of scientific-theoretical and practical articles regarding the Congress's role in the cultural advancement of Turkic-speaking peoples began.

In this regard, it is appropriate to recall the following remark made by Turkologist Tofiq Hajiyev concerning the First Turkological Congress: "To use industrial terminology, the congress's recommendations actually reach 'design capacity' in the 1950s and 60s; they are implemented precisely in the form envisaged by the congress ” (Hacıyev, 1987, p. 259).

With the rise of National Leader Heydar Aliyev to political power in Azerbaijan in the late 1960s, the recommendations of the First Turkological Congress regarding language policy and language development began to be implemented systematically in the republic. Indeed, from the very first years of his leadership of the Azerbaijan SSR, Heydar Aliyev consistently addressed the socio-political and ideological issues surrounding the native language—as well as language policy as a whole—and ensured the accomplishment of historically significant work within a short period.

The Great Leader had already expressed his stance on the language issue—through the bold views he voiced regarding the USSR Constitution—even before the Constitution of Azerbaijan was drafted. When speaking about the USSR Constitution, the leader of Azerbaijan particularly emphasized that the Constitution granted citizens the right to education. This right is ensured by the opportunity to study in one's native language. Such a stance was, in fact, aimed at averting the anticipated threat regarding the language issue and preserving the mother tongue's status as the state language under difficult circumstances.

The Azerbaijani language was enshrined as the state language in the 1978 Constitution of the Azerbaijan SSR, and consistent efforts were undertaken to ensure it fully attained the status of a state language. On October 31, 1995, Heydar Aliyev stated at a meeting of the Constitutional Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan: However, this article (Article 73 – I.H.) sparked a massive outcry in Moscow. They used to explain that this does not exist in other republics, and that there is no need for it... However, at that time, I held very tense negotiations with the leadership of the Soviet Union and the leadership of the Communist Party. “I tried to prove that we must—and will—also enshrine in our constitution that the state language is the Azerbaijani language.” (Hüseynova, 2004, p. 60).

It should be noted that, unlike in other republics, the status of the Azerbaijani language as the primary language of instruction within the education system was preserved, and priority was given to conducting education and instruction in the mother tongue.

During this period, every form of care and support was provided for the advancement of the press, science, culture, and literature in the Azerbaijani language. The Azerbaijani language was studied on an unprecedented scale and with remarkable consistency, resulting in the production of multi-volume scholarly and educational publications; notably, the four-volume university textbook *Modern Azerbaijani Language* and the monograph *Fundamentals of Azerbaijani Dialectology* were awarded the State Prize of the Azerbaijan SSR.

The all-Union—and effectively international—journal *Soviet Turkology* (published in Russian) began regular publication in Azerbaijan in 1970; in other words, it was once again confirmed that Baku was the center of Turkology, just as it had been during the First Turkological Congress.

The preservation and development of the purity of the Azerbaijani literary language held a special place in Heydar Aliyev's attitude towards the mother tongue. The leader of Azerbaijan clearly and directly stated his principled position on this issue, even at official meetings. For instance, in his speech at the 7th Congress of Azerbaijani Writers, Heydar Aliyev spoke out boldly and unhesitatingly about the mother tongue: Language is a great treasure of the people. The progress of spiritual culture is impossible without the progress of the literary language (Əliyev, 1981).

The Azerbaijani language has ascended to unprecedented heights and evolved into a comprehensively developed language of modern poetry and prose, science and technology, administrative practice, and active socio-political life. We can state with full confidence that never in our centuries-long history has the Azerbaijani language been so rich, prestigious, and respected. However, as the level of culture and science rises and the pace of life accelerates, greater attention must be paid to the refinement, development, and enrichment of the language, as well as to the expansion of its vocabulary.

The importance of knowing and deeply mastering one's native language held a significant place in

Heydar Aliyev's national language policy. Regarding this as a primary duty, he used to say: “Every Azerbaijani must, first and foremost, have a good command of their native language—the state language.” (Azərbaycan qəzeti, 1997).

It was precisely thanks to the National Leader that state awards were conferred upon several linguists for the first time. The prestige of Azerbaijani linguists rose. The awarding of prizes gave impetus to the expansion of the mother tongue's sphere of use. Heydar Aliyev did not stop there; he also showed care for scholars who had been subjected to certain pressures in previous years. As a result of the attention and care shown by the leader of Azerbaijan toward the native language, the print runs of books published in the native language within the republic increased. For example, in 1979, out of 13.8 million copies of books across 1,300 titles published in Azerbaijan, 11.1 million copies were in the native language (Azərbaycan qəzeti. 2022).

The strengthening of the socio-political prestige of the native language in Azerbaijan during the late 1980s and early 1990s was a direct result of the policy previously pursued by Heydar Aliyev. However, during those years, work in the sphere of language policy and development in Azerbaijan—particularly the transition to the new alphabet—was initiated without adequate preparation. Having returned to power in Azerbaijan on June 15, 1993, in response to the people's demand and the verdict of history, Heydar Aliyev succeeded within a short period in establishing political and economic stability and rectifying errors in cultural life—particularly regarding language policy and development—culminating in the designation of the state language as the "Azerbaijani language" in the Constitution (1995) (Azərbaycan Respublikasının Konstitusiyası, 1995).

In his speech at the 3rd Congress of Writers of the Turkic World, held in November 1996, the prominent statesman and political figure Heydar Aliyev stated... Our historical roots run very deep, as our peoples are bound—by their own free will—to a shared language, a shared spirituality, and a shared religion... "I am proud that the Azerbaijani language, which belongs to the Turkic languages, is so rich and filled with such artistic expressions, and that we can express our thoughts regarding all spheres of life in our native language." (Əliyev, 1998, pp. 10-11).

Throughout history, the Azerbaijani people have preserved their language, religion, national customs and traditions, and shared system of moral values. Azerbaijanism forms the basis of the national ideology of the independent Azerbaijani state. The core pillars of this concept are statehood, national-spiritual values, and universal values. Universal values are reflected in our Constitution, adopted on November 12, 1995. The prominent statesman and political figure Heydar Aliyev considered it one of the most vital duties for every citizen and every segment of society to live and act guided by a consciousness of statehood, a guiding ideology, and a sense of patriotism, and to safeguard Azerbaijan's independence and territorial integrity. Our national and spiritual values encompass our mother tongue—the Azerbaijani language—as well as our religion, customs and traditions, and spiritual-moral mentality. During his leadership of independent Azerbaijan, the National Leader Heydar Aliyev rendered unparalleled services toward the formation and development of a national ideology rooted in historical traditions and foundations; he ensured the development of national thought along the right path and succeeded in safeguarding the system of traditions and values inherent to the people against the harsh impacts of globalization (Hüseynova, 2020, p. 248). The National Leader, contemplating the future of independent Azerbaijan, restored our history and spiritual wealth to us and raised the idea of *Azerbaijanism* aloft forever, like an invincible banner (Hüseynova, 2024, p. 123)

The national leader said in his speech at a solemn meeting dedicated to the sixth anniversary of the establishment of the New Azerbaijan Party: "Our national and spiritual values are our native language, the Azerbaijani language, our religion, and our customs and traditions." Every citizen should feel a sense of national pride for their homeland, for their nation, for their people, for their native language, and be proud of being an Azerbaijani... National patriotism and a sense of national pride are one of the most important factors for the survival of our statehood. Azerbaijani intellectuals, progressive people, great personalities, political and state figures, great scientists, and cultural figures have created the national and spiritual values of the Azerbaijani people. "These are our customs and traditions. This is our national moral mentality." (Əliyev, 2006, pp. 244-246).

The process of complete transition to the Latin script was also implemented with the Decree "On Improving the Implementation of the State Language," signed by Heydar Aliyev on June 18, 2001, and August 1, the day of the completion of that transition, entered our national history as the "Day of the Azerbaijani Alphabet and Azerbaijani Language" by the Presidential Decree. Thus, one of the main recommendations of the First Turkological Congress found its historical solution. Heydar Aliyev's strategy on language policy and language development in Azerbaijan found its comprehensive solution in the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the State Language in the Republic of Azerbaijan" (September 30, 2002). This Law: a) protects the Azerbaijani language as a state language; b) provides a legal and normative basis for the comprehensive development of the Azerbaijani language as a state language (Hüseynova, 2006, p.16).

The development of the Azerbaijani language, the preservation of its purity, and the application of the status of the state language are globally significant events in the development of our national and spiritual resources. The Great Leader's decree "On improving the use of the state language" dated June 18, 2001, aimed at implementing the process of full transition to the Latin script, the establishment of the State Language Commission under the President, the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the state language in the Republic of Azerbaijan" dated September 30, 2002, and the transition of all correspondence and publications in the country to the Latin script from August 1, 2001 are a vivid expression of the head of state's attention and care for our native language. By decree of the national leader, August 1 is celebrated annually as the "Day of the Azerbaijani Alphabet and Azerbaijani Language" (Hüseynova, 2005, p.390).

The cultural construction strategy founded by the National Leader Heydar Aliyev in the field of national language policy and language construction in independent Azerbaijan is being consistently and successfully continued by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev. Thus, the decrees of the head of state “On the implementation of mass publications in the Azerbaijani language with Latin script” dated January 12, 2004 and “On approval of the list of works intended for publication in the Azerbaijani language with Latin script in 2005–2006” dated December 27, 2004 are essentially a logical continuation of the language policy determined by Heydar Aliyev and are of great importance for the development of the Azerbaijani language, its widespread use based on the Latin script, and the transmission of national and cultural heritage to future generations (Azərbaycan qəzeti. 2005). It should be noted that the holding of the aforementioned events also confirms once again that the decisions of the Turkological Congress are relevant, have historical significance, resonate with our modern times, and show that they arose from objective necessity.

On February 18, 2016, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, signed an order to ensure the celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Congress at the state level. The order emphasized that with the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence at the end of the 20th century, the status of the Azerbaijani language as the official state language was strengthened, which created a favorable basis for the successful implementation of the decisions and recommendations previously put forward by the Turkological Congress in modern conditions (Məmmədli, 2026, p.304). The decree specifically mentioned issues such as the formation of new concepts in Turkological studies, the recognition of Azerbaijan as one of the world's influential centers of Turkological studies, and the creation of a scientific and theoretical basis for the cultural and spiritual unity of the Turkic peoples. Also, the decree was considered a sign of respect for the success of the organizational work of the Congress in a short period of time and the memory of the brilliant Turkologists who were repressed shortly after. The 90th anniversary of the First All-Union Turkological Congress was celebrated in Azerbaijan at the state level.

In 2023, the intergovernmental Joint Turkic Alphabet Commission began its activities with the initiative and coordination of the International Turkic Academy, as well as the support of the Organization of Turkic States. Within the framework of the Commission's work, the Academy has closely collaborated with various partner institutions, including linguistic institutes, the Turkish Language Association, and renowned linguists. As a result of this activity, the Common Turkic Alphabet, consisting of 34 letters in the Latin script, was adopted at the third meeting of the Commission held in Baku on September 11, 2024 [22]. This important step can be assessed not only as a success achieved in the modern era towards a common alphabet, but also as a continuation of the ideas of the First Turkological Congress of 1926, and as an expression of the value given to the heritage of intellectuals who worked for the enlightenment of the Turkic peoples and the development of their national culture at that time.

As we mentioned at the beginning of the article, in 2025, Mr. Ilham Aliyev signed a decree on the 100th anniversary of the First All-Union Turkological Congress to be held in 2026 (Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidenti, 2025). The decree states that many of the ideas put forward by the First Turkological Congress are being successfully implemented in modern conditions. Remarkable achievements have been made towards reforming the Turkic world into a unified family. The decisive steps taken towards strengthening the spirit of brotherhood and alliances between Turkic countries and deepening mutual cultural cooperation are now ongoing.

The fact that the call to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the First Turkological Congress was reflected in the Declaration of the 12th Summit of the Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States, held in Gabala on October 6-7, 2025, is another manifestation of this. In his speech at the 12th Summit of the Council of Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States in Gabala, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said: "Today, the Organization of Turkic States is not just a cooperation platform, but is shaping up as one of the serious geopolitical centers. The increasing influence of our organization at the international level is gratifying. Our common historical and ethnic roots, our common national and spiritual values unite us as a family."(Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin rəsmi saytı).

It should be noted that the principle of historical-political succession is clearly reflected in the language policy of Independent Azerbaijan. The value given by national leader Heydar Aliyev to the classical heritage, our national language, and the preservation, development, and enrichment of the purity of our native language are among the priorities of President Ilham Aliyev's statehood activities. Thus, at a meeting dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, President Ilham Aliyev said: "Azerbaijani is a very rich language. Today, Azerbaijani is the mother tongue of more than 50 million people." But we are the protectors of the pure, pure, literary Azerbaijani language - the independent Azerbaijani state. For every nation, every people, its native language is the main factor of its national identity, and in this direction, all public activists, the entire public, should reach a common point... Protecting the purity of the Azerbaijani language should be the job of every Azerbaijani citizen. In other words, the state, scientists, linguists, writers, poets, journalists, and those involved in politics should pay great attention to this issue (Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin rəsmi saytı, 2025).

Thus, history and time have once again confirmed the correctness, vitality, and scientificity of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the First International Turcological Congress. As it was 100 years ago, the Republic of Azerbaijan is one of the leading centers of Turkology today, a meeting point of Eastern and Western civilizations, a geopolitically important cultural space with rich intellectual potential, a secular, sovereign state based on democratic values. The First Turkological Congress is a glorious chapter in history that stood at the center of the interaction between Turkish linguistics and the Soviet state system, and at the same time determined the directions of future language policy with its scientific and ideological results, reflecting our nationality, richness, and national identity. The protocols of the congress show that not only scientific arguments but also political interests played an important role here. The alphabet change was not just a technical matter, but an important event related to the future and rich historical culture of the Turkic peoples.

Throughout their centuries-old history, Turkic peoples have lived in a large part of the Eurasian continent since ancient times, making great contributions to world culture and enriching it with their language, literature, culture, and history. These people have been strengthened in struggles and battles, and have been able to preserve their common roots, history, language, spiritual values, and statehood traditions. Today, the Turkic world is developing on that rich heritage and uniting around common values. The fact that the historic decisions of the Turkological Congress are still relevant today is once again one of the main factors determining the importance of the unity of the Turkic world.

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GEOPOLITICAL PROCESSES IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS IN THE 80S–90S OF THE 18TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The 80s–90s of the 18th century were one of the periods in the history of the South Caucasus characterized by complex and contradictory political processes. Due to its important strategic position in the system of international relations, the region was at the center of attention of major powers. In particular, the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Qajar state were engaged in political, military, and diplomatic struggle for the South Caucasus. The region's rich economic resources, its location on important trade routes, and its military-strategic significance further intensified this competition. After the collapse of the Afsharid Empire, centralized authority weakened in the South Caucasus, and a number of small feudal states emerged in the region. The absence of a unified political entity created favorable conditions for the intervention of foreign powers. Individual khanates formed alliances with various great powers to ensure their own security, which further complicated the political situation in the region.

Keywords: South Caucasus, Azerbaijani khanates, Kartli-Kakheti kingdom, military-political situation, geopolitical competition

1.INTRODUCTİON

At the turn of the 18th–19th centuries, on the eve of the occupation of the South Caucasus by Tsarist Russia, the internal and international situation in the region was extremely grave. The fragmentation of the South Caucasus, including the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, into small feudal state entities – khanates, the ongoing struggle among khans for control over the territories of neighboring khanates, the intensifying contradictions between feudal lords and peasants, and economic decline were characteristic of the region's internal situation during that period.

During this period, the main goal of the Russian Empire was to strengthen its position on the shores of the Caspian Sea, penetrate the South Caucasus, and expand its access to warm seas. During the reign of Catherine II, Russia began to pursue its Caucasian policy more actively. Russian diplomacy established relations with the khanates in the region and, in some cases, sought to bring them under its protection.

The Ottoman Empire, another major regional power, sought to maintain its positions in the South Caucasus. The Ottoman state paid particular attention to its relations with the Georgian and Azerbaijani khanates. However, the internal political and economic problems of the Ottoman Empire in the late 18th century weakened its ability to exert influence in the region. Nevertheless, Ottoman ruling circles viewed Russia's strengthening in the South Caucasus as a threat and took various diplomatic steps against it.

In the 1790s, one of the states that played an important role in the political life of the region was the Qajar state. After Agha Mohammad Shah Qajar came to power, he began consistent military-political activity aimed at restoring the borders of the former Safavid state and strengthening his position in the South Caucasus. Uniting the Azerbaijani khanates under his political rule and re-establishing control over

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Georgia constituted the main directions of the shah's Caucasian policy.

Thus, in the 1780s–1790s, the South Caucasus turned into an arena of international rivalry. The struggle among regional powers had a serious impact on the political map of the region and its future historical development. The events of this period laid the foundation for the South Caucasus to enter an entirely new political situation in the 19th century.

The main objectives set in the article are: to scientifically analyze the political processes that took place in the South Caucasus during the 1780s and 1790s; to examine the impact of the 1783 Treaty of Georgievsk on the subsequent political development of the region and the system of international relations; to evaluate the political and military activities of Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar aimed at restoring the historical borders of the Safavid state; and to determine the causes, course, and consequences of the Russian campaign led by General Valerian Zubov in 1796, which influenced the future political fate of the South Caucasus.

The main tasks set in the article are as follows:

- The comprehensive analysis of the military-political situation that had formed in the South Caucasus during the 1780s, as well as the balance of forces and geopolitical processes in the region;
- To analyze the political circumstances that led to the signing of the Treaty of Georgievsk, the content of the treaty, and the nature of the relations that developed between Kartli-Kakheti and Russia;
- To determine the impacts of the Treaty of Georgievsk on the system of international relations in the South Caucasus and on the subsequent political development of the region;
- To examine the geopolitical strategy of the Russian Empire concerning the South Caucasus in the 18th century, its expansionist objectives, and the main directions of its military-political activities aimed at consolidating its position in the region;
- To assess the causes, objectives, and impact on the political situation in the region of the Russian military campaign conducted in 1796 under the command of General V. Zubov.

2. POLİTİCAL PROCESSES AND BALANCE OF FORCES İN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS İN THE 1780S

The 1780s were also marked by internal rivalry between Fatali Khan of Quba and Ibrahimkhalil Khan of Karabakh, both of whom sought to unify the Azerbaijani lands under a single political authority. Erekle II played a significant role in the deterioration of relations between these two rulers. Viewing Fatali Khan and Ibrahimkhalil Khan as the principal obstacles to the realization of his political objectives in the region, he attempted to prevent their rapprochement and ultimately succeeded in winning Ibrahimkhalil Khan over to his side (History of Azerbaijani-Georgian Relations, 2013, p. 29–30).

Ibrahimkhalil Khan’s rapprochement with the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti in the 1780s was driven by clear political considerations, as he viewed Fatali Khan of Quba with growing concern. By that time, Fatali Khan had succeeded in bringing the Tarki Shamkhalate, the Shamakhi Khanate, the Baku Khanate, and several other feudal entities under his influence. In this context, the occupation of Ganja in cooperation with Georgian forces and the tactical alliance with Erekle II constituted only one aspect of Ibrahimkhalil Khan’s broader efforts to counter Fatali Khan’s policy of political unification. His rapprochement with the Georgian ruler was also influenced by the fact that, during Fatali Khan’s campaign against Karabakh earlier that year, Erekle II had dispatched a sizeable military detachment under the command of his sons, George and David, to assist Ibrahimkhalil Khan (Butkov, 1869, p. 74).

At the end of the 18th century, the ruler of Georgia, Irakli II, faced both external and internal problems. He wanted to turn Georgia into a strong and independent state, but the political fragmentation in the country prevented him from achieving this goal. In particular, the nobles of Kartli were dissatisfied with Irakli's rule and wanted Kartli to be governed separately. Taking advantage of this discontent, Prince Alexander Bakarovich, from the House of Vakhtang, laid claim to the throne of Kartli (Romanovsky, 1902, p. 263).

In his fundamental work, Butkov provides information about Alexander's activities and writes: "Prince

Alexander, requesting the Shamkhal to help him seize the throne of Kartli, tried to convince him that the Tsar of Imereti, Solomon II, the nobles of Kartli, and the Dagestanis were also ready to support this initiative. He promised to give 50 rubles to each of the Shamkhal's men, and to repeat this payment once Tiflis was captured. Although the Shamkhal showed some inclination toward Alexander's proposal, he stated that it was necessary to discuss the matter with the ruler of Derbent (Khan of Quba - A.A.), Fatali Khan. For this reason, on August 27, 1782, Prince Alexander, accompanied by Prince Alexander Amilakhvari, set off for Derbent. Amilakhvari had already left Georgia and taken refuge in Russia back in 1771 due to Tsar Irakli's harsh treatment of his lineage; now, he had come from Petersburg to Prince Alexander's side and joined him in the hope of taking revenge for Irakli's insults against him" (Butkov, 1869, p. 116-117).

During this period, Georgia suffered from continuous Lezgin raids. Since Irakli did not have a sufficient regular army, he relied on mercenary forces. However, these detachments frequently plundered the population, further destabilizing the country. As a result of wars, internal strife, and heavy taxation, the country's economic situation had severely deteriorated. Consequently, realizing that he could not defend the country on his own, Irakli turned to Russia for protection (Romanovsky, 1902, p. 265).

In 1783, the Treaty of Georgievsk was signed between Russia and the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti. By the Treaty of Georgievsk, the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti accepted the protectorate of the Russian Empire and renounced its dependence on Iran and other states. According to the treaty, Russia undertook to guarantee the territorial integrity of Georgia and the security of its ruling dynasty; in return, Georgia's foreign policy, military activity, and the confirmation of its rulers came under the control of the Russian Empire. At the same time, the Georgian church and nobility were integrated into the imperial administrative system, significantly restricting Georgia's political and religious independence. Thus, while the treaty was formally aimed at ensuring the security of Georgia, it actually established the legal foundations of its political dependence on the Russian Empire (Butkov, 1869, p. 122–127; Baumer, 2024, p. 135; Rayfield,2012, p. 250).

Additionally, the treaty included four secret supplementary articles. The first article regulated the relations between Erekle II and King Solomon I of Imereti, with Empress Catherine II acting as a mediator and calling upon the parties to maintain peace. The second article provided for the deployment of two Russian battalions on Georgian territory, thereby confirming Russia's permanent military presence in the Caucasus. The third secret article stipulated that the King of Kartli-Kakheti would receive all possible military assistance in the event of war. Under the fourth article, Russia undertook not only to provide military support but also to back Erekle II's territorial claims through diplomatic means (Butkov, 1869, p. 127–128; Baumer, 2024, p. 135).

With the establishment of direct diplomatic relations between Saint Petersburg and Tiflis, an important stage began in the process of Georgia's integration into the Russian Empire. Within this framework, Colonel Stepan D. Burnashev was appointed as the first permanent Russian plenipotentiary representative to Georgia. Furthermore, two sons of King Erekle II—Prince Mirian and Prince Teimuraz—visited Russia and were received at the Imperial Court. Later, Erekle II appointed Prince Garsevan Chavchavadze as ambassador to Russia (Gvosdev, 2000, p. 60).

However, the expected results were not fully achieved after the treaty. Internal discipline and order within Georgia remained weak. Local nobles were unwilling to submit to the central authority, and many of those called up for military service deserted the battlefield. Russian military leaders also assessed the situation in Georgia as severe.

When the issue of accepting the Kingdom of Georgia under the supreme authority of the Russian Empire came to the fore, the Christian feudal lords of Karabakh reached out to the Russian court through secret representatives to declare their loyalty. They hoped to be liberated from the yoke of foreign rulers through Russian intervention and promised that they could provide material support to the Russian troops. In an appeal signed by archbishops and meliks on March 2, 1783, it was stated that it would be easy to sustain 30,000 Russian troops on their fertile lands for 5 years. With the approval of Empress Catherine II, Prince Grigory Potemkin created hope that this appeal would receive a positive response (Butkov, 1869, p. 142).

The complex political processes unfolding in the South Caucasus during the 1780s were characterized by both internal strife and the strategies of foreign powers to establish themselves in the region. Faced with Fatali Khan of Quba's attempts to unify the Azerbaijani lands under a single state, the insidious policy pursued by King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti fueled separatism among the khanates.

Unable to cope with both the dynastic struggles and feudal disobedience within Kartli, as well as the continuous Lezgian raids, Erekle II was compelled to seek the protection of Tsarist Russia. Although the Treaty of Georgievsk, signed in 1783, was formally intended to guarantee the security of Georgia, it in fact undermined the country's internal and external sovereignty and legitimized Russia's permanent military and political presence in the South Caucasus.

At the same time, this treaty prompted the Christian subjects of the region, especially the Armenian meliks of Karabakh, to integrate more closely with the Russian court and to bring their separatist activities against the local Muslim khanates into the open. Thus, the Treaty of Georgievsk and its geopolitical consequences brought stability neither to Georgia nor to the South Caucasus as a whole.

3. THE RISE TO POWER OF AGHA MUHAMMAD SHAH QAJAR AND HIS MILITARY-POLITICAL STRUGGLE FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE HISTORICAL BORDERS OF THE SAFAVID EMPIRE

After the death of Karim Khan Zand, as a result of the struggle for power between the Zands and the Qajars in Iran, Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar managed to come to power. Having assumed the title of Shah, Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar subjugated the khanates of South Azerbaijan and then decided to attack the territory of North Azerbaijan. His main goal was aimed at restoring the historical borders of the Safavid Empire.

Meanwhile, while Agha Muhammad Khan was in Tehran, in May 1795, in Ardabil, under the leadership of Nurali Khan, the gathering of troops began—according to some sources numbering 50,000, and according to others 100,000, along with artillery under the direction of the French (Mammadova, 2003, p. 6).

Academician P.G.Butkov, noting that the main intention of the Qajar in coming to the north of Azerbaijan was to subjugate all the rulers to himself, either by force of arms or by agreement, and then to direct his forces against the Georgian king, states that the Qajar, in early 1795, addressed all the khans of Azerbaijan, including Shirvan, demanding that they submit to him and send hostages (Butkov, 1869, p. 332).

As early as 1794, Ibrahimkhalil Khan of Karabakh and the Khan of Erivan sent their envoys to Istanbul. They hoped that, remaining faithful to the friendship that had existed since ancient times, the Ottoman state would not withhold its help against Agha Muhammad Khan. However, the Ottoman government refused to assist the khans, citing its treaty with Iran.

P.G.Butkov notes that the Karabakh Khan’s refusal to comply with Agha Muhammad Khan’s demands, despite having renewed his alliance with Erekle II, was motivated by the fact that the Qajar ruler had executed his nephew, whom he had previously sent as a hostage (Butkov, 1869, p. 332). Ahmad Bey Javanshir likewise reports that Abdulsamad Bey, whom Ibrahimkhalil Khan had dispatched as a hostage, was put to death together with all his attendants. Consequently, although Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar demanded that another hostage be sent in his place, Ibrahimkhalil Khan refused to comply with this request (Huseynov, 2012, p. 146).

In relation to the Qajar ruler, who had sent his envoys to the rulers of the South Caucasus, the local rulers adopted different positions. Thus, Javad Khan, the ruler of Ganja, who was wary of a possible alliance between the Georgian king Erekle II and Ibrahimkhalil Khan of Karabakh, assessed that rapprochement as a direct threat to his own political power and therefore showed inclination towards the Qajar ruler. Muhammadhasan Khan of Shaki also demonstrated a similar position, believing that Agha Muhammad Khan would be victorious.

Butkov, providing information about Sheikhali Khan's appeal to Gudovich, writes: "*In July 1793, Sheikhali Khan of Derbent (the Quba khan) sent his highest official, Mirza Hasan, to Dagestan with a request to accept him, together with the peoples living in Derbent, Quba, Kulaghan, Mushkur, Shabran, Baku, Salyan, and Lankaran, into eternal subjection. The envoy, on behalf of the khan and with full authority granted to him, swore an oath of allegiance.*" (Butkov, 1869, p. 294).

However, since Agha Muhammad Khan, through his envoys, had promised Sheikhali Khan that if he submitted, he would appoint him as the ruler of all Shirvan, Sheikhali Khan also took the side of Agha Muhammad Khan. Because Sheikhali Khan, who was under pressure from Russia, considered the threat coming from the north to be more dangerous for his rule than Agha Muhammad Khan (Dubrovun, 1886, p. 19).

Huseyngulu Khan of Baku, who intended to protect the Baku Khanate from Sheikhali Khan by becoming a Russian subject, was hesitant despite having applied for Russian subjection, and occasionally inclined towards Agha Muhammad Khan (Butkov, 1869, p. 295).

Mir Mustafa Khan, the Khan of Lankaran, who incurred the wrath of Agha Muhammad Khan for granting asylum to Agha Muhammad's brother, Murtuzgulu Khan, and for his father's ties to the Russians, refused to submit. In order to seek Russian protection, he sent his close relative, Zaman Bey, to General Gudovich with this request. Despite being turned back by Sheikh Ali Khan of Quba, the Khan's envoy arrived in Astrakhan on a warship in October and requested to be taken under Russian protection (Butkov, 1869, p. 333).

In the summer of 1795, Agha Muhammad Khan sent a detachment from Gilan against Mir Mustafa Khan, the Lankaran khan. This force devastated many areas of the Lankaran Khanate, and most of the mulberry trees in Lankaran were destroyed. Mir Mustafa Khan, together with his family, first fled to Salyan, and then sought refuge from the Russian troops stationed on Sari Island. The ship's captain, acting on the instructions of the Russian state, granted the khan asylum (Mammadova, 2005, p. 98). According to Butkov, at this time one of the khan's wives, his mother, sister, and son were taken captive. At the same time, although Agha Muhammad Khan sent troops in 60 kirjims (small vessels) from Anzali and Mazandaran with the intention of landing on the coast of Lankaran, a Russian frigate (warship) prevented this. Butkov reports that Mir Mustafa Khan soon regained his possessions, but never submitted to Agha Muhammad Khan (Butkov, 1869, p. 333-334).

At a time when the internal and external situation had become tense not only in Azerbaijan but throughout the South Caucasus, Kelbali Khan, who came to power in Nakhchivan, did not have sufficient forces to resist Agha Muhammad Khan. Therefore, he sent his cousin Abbasgulu Khan, who aspired to seize power in the khanate, as a hostage to Agha Muhammad Khan. Although Agha Muhammad Khan was aware that Kelbali Khan had sent Abbasgulu Khan away with the aim of removing him from his own presence, he nevertheless accepted the hostage from Nakhchivan (Nakhchivan History, 2014, p. 73).

T.Mustafazade, grouping the khans of North Azerbaijan according to their relations with Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar, notes that Javad Khan of Ganja, Sheikhali Khan of Quba, and Muhammadhasan Khan of Shaki pursued a policy inclined towards Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar, while the khans of Karabakh, Erivan, Shamakhi, and Lankaran harbored hostile relations towards Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar. The khans of Baku and Nakhchivan, however, were undecided (Mustafazade, 2005, p. 168). The Qajar army, which launched a campaign in three directions, was to capture Erivan and Nakhchivan with one part, Karabakh and Georgia with another, and Shirvan and Dagestan with the third.

In the late summer of 1795, Agha Muhammad Khan launched a campaign into the South Caucasus with an army of approximately sixty thousand men. His primary objectives were to bring the Karabakh Khanate under his control and to punish Erekle II, who had refused to submit to his authority and had instead sought closer relations with Russia. However, despite besieging Shusha, the capital of the Karabakh Khanate, for a month, he failed to capture the fortress. Consequently, the Qajar ruler turned his forces toward Tiflis and began his march against the Georgian capital. According to Butkov, Agha Muhammad Khan demanded that Erekle II recognize the supreme authority of the Qajar state, return the large diamond that had been taken from Azad Khan by the Georgian king and was regarded as part of the family treasury of Nader Shah Afshar's descendants, send one of his sons to him as a hostage, and hand over the watch that had been presented to the Georgian monarch by G.Potemkin. (Butkov, 1869, p. 341). However, Erekle, who found himself in a desperate situation, was discouraged from entering into negotiations with Agha Muhammad Khan by I.V.Gudovich, the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in Georgia. Gudovich advised him to prolong the negotiations through various pretexts, assuring him that Russian military assistance would soon arrive.

Cavad Khan, the ruler of Ganja, and Malik Majnun also participated in the campaign against Georgia as guides for Agha Muhammad Khan's army. The main reason for Javad Khan's participation in this campaign was Erekle II 's interference in the internal affairs of the Ganja Khanate and his claim to occupy it (Huseynov, 2012, p. 152). The Georgian historian Teimuraz Bagrationi, in his book "The History of David Bagrationi," notes that Kelbali Khan of Nakhchivan also took part in the campaign against Georgia, and writes that the commander of Agha Muhammad Khan's army, Kelbali Khan Kengerli of Nakhchivan, did not allow the destruction of the city's places of worship and royal tombs (Guluyev, 2013, p. 21).

In the battle that took place between 8 and 11 September 1795, the combined forces of the Kartli-Kakheti and Imereti kingdoms, which had failed to receive the promised aid from Russia, were routed by the troops under the command of Agha Muhammad Khan, and the eastern part of Georgia was temporarily incorporated into the Qajar state. On this matter, researcher G.Mammadova notes that the cabinet of Catherine II, having sacrificed Georgia in the prevailing political circumstances, essentially began to implement an eastern policy aimed at entering the South Caucasus and seizing the western coast of the Caspian Sea (Mammadova, 2003, p. 8).

Academician P.G.Butkov provided a detailed account of the events that took place during the capture of the city. Having rapidly advanced from Ganja to Tiflis with cavalry forces accompanied by contingents from Ganja and Erivan, Agha Muhammad Khan seized the city without encountering significant resistance, plundered it, and set it on fire. The stone bridge over the Kura River connecting Avlabari with Tiflis was destroyed. During the sack of the city, the crown sent by the Russian court and twelve cannons presented by Catherine II were captured, while nearly 10,000 people were taken prisoner. (Butkov, 1869, p. 339–340)

Erekle II's reliance on Russia did not yield the expected results, and the forces of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti and Imereti were defeated by the army of Agha Muhammad Shah. The occupation and destruction of Tiflis temporarily shifted the balance of power in the region in favor of the Qajar state, while simultaneously triggering the beginning of a new phase in Russia's South Caucasus policy.

4. THE STRENGTHENİNG OF RUSSİA'S GEOPOLİTİCAL POSİTİON İN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS AT THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY

The events of 1795 influenced not only the fate of Georgia but also the geopolitical future of the South Caucasus as a whole, laying the groundwork for the deepening of open competition between the Qajar state and the Russian Empire over the region. This process ultimately resulted in a more active intervention by the Russian Empire in the South Caucasus and a fundamental transformation of the region's political map.

P.G.Butkov notes that "*The Russian government did not expect such weakness from the Georgians, and such audacity from Agha Mohammad Khan*." Upon receiving information about the destruction of Tbilisi, Catherine II instructed General Gudovich to send two cavalry detachments to Georgia (Butkov, 1869, p. 343-344). Aiming to conquer the South Caucasus, the Russian government set a goal to establish Russian administration over Dagestan and the entire Caspian littoral territory up to the Aras River, including the Shirvan region (Butkov, 1869, p. 367).

General Gudovich, the commander of the Russian forces in the Caucasus, sent messengers to the rulers of Dagestan and Azerbaijan, attempting to assure them that Russian assistance would be dispatched shortly. One such envoy, Abdulla Sadykhov, visited Derbent in late October and delivered Gudovich's letter to Sheikh Ali Khan, who was in Quba at the time. Claiming that Russian troops would soon be sent to Dagestan, Gudovich demanded that Sheikh Ali Khan seek the protection of Russian aid. In response, Sheikh Ali Khan requested that the Russians send money to enable him to gather mercenary forces from among the highlanders (Butkov, 1869, p. 261).

At such a time, the Russian forces under the command of Major General Savelyev, which had set out from Kizlyar, approached Derbent in mid-February 1796. Savelyev sent envoys to Sheikh Ali Khan, who had arrived in Derbent, and proposed a defensive alliance against Agha Muhammad Khan, but his offer was rejected. T.T.Mustafazade, a researcher of the history of the Azerbaijani khanates period, explained this by the fact that Sheikh Ali Khan had managed to improve his relations with Huseyngulu Khan of Baku at that time (Mustafazade, 2005, p. 174). In addition to reconciling with Huseyngulu Khan of Baku, Sheikh Ali Khan had also, as P.G.Butkov wrote, improved his relations with the rulers of the Tabasaran estates adjacent to Derbent—the Qadi of Tabasaran, as well as Surkhay Khan of Gazikumukh (Butkov, 1869, p. 274).

Intending to realize the colonial ambitions that Russia had been striving for since the time of Peter I, the Tsarist government aimed to reinforce Baku, which was considered the most important port on the Caspian Sea, as well as other strongholds in this area. Concerned about the entry of Qajar troops into the South Caucasus, which could threaten Russia's southern borders, and also intending to seize this region, the government of Catherine II sent an army to Azerbaijan under the command of V. Zubov in April 1796. To this end, the instructions sent by Catherine II to V.A.Zubov on February 19, 1796, stated that the purpose of the campaign was to establish political order and stability in Iran (Butkov, 1869, p. 274-276). Meanwhile, Agha Muhammad Khan, wishing to avoid a clash with the Russian troops, left the South Caucasus with a vast amount of booty.

Before the campaign, Zubov addressed the Azerbaijani khans with a special letter, calling on them to submit to the Russian Tsar. Regarding this campaign, the Russian military historian V.A.Potto wrote that after V.Zubov settled matters with Qajar Iran, he was to seize Anatolia and, from there, threaten Istanbul (Potto, 1899, p. 290).

As we know, the organization of the Russian army for the military campaign to the South Caucasus under the leadership of Count V.A.Zubov took place in February 1796. The attack plan was prepared in three different directions: 1) the Caspian fleet was to head to the shores of Baku and Lankaran; 2) the troops in Georgia were to advance toward Ganja and Karabakh; 3) and the main forces were to pass through Kizlyar and launch an attack in the direction of Derbent and Baku (Butkov, 1869, p. 360).

In the instructions issued by Catherine II to Zubov on 19 February 1796, the principal objective of the campaign was presented as the restoration of peace and political stability in Iran. P.G.Butkov, who personally participated in the expedition, provided extensive information regarding its aims and objectives in his account of the campaign. According to these instructions, V. Zubov was tasked with putting an end to political fragmentation in Georgia, expanding the authority of Erekle II from the Aras River to the Ottoman frontier, facilitating the incorporation of the Ganja and Erivan Khanates into the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, capturing Baku on the Caspian coast and transforming it into a logistical base for Russian forces, and destroying the military power of Agha Muhammad Khan in order to enable the landing of troops in Gilan with the support of Murtuzgulu Khan (Butkov, 1869, p. 360–364). By emphasizing that the campaign was intended to liberate Georgia and strengthen the authority of the Georgian kingdom, the Karabakh meliks, and Ibrahimkhalil Khan of Shusha, who had resisted Agha Muhammad Khan, Butkov effectively sought to obscure the expansionist and aggressive character of the expedition.

On April 29, at a distance of 18 versts from Derbent, the Caspian Corps, led by Zubov himself, merged with Savelyev's detachment and approached the city on May 2, demanding that Sheikh Ali Khan surrender the city without bloodshed. However, the Khan rejected this proposal and began to fight, offering resolute resistance until May 10 (Butkov, 1869, p. 380-384).

On 10 May, Russian forces began bombarding Derbent through a breach that had opened in one of the city's towers. Part of the population, acting through Khizir Bey, whom they had chosen as their representative, urged Sheikh Ali Khan to surrender in order to save the city from destruction. Having no alternative, Sheikh Ali Khan, accompanied by the leading notables of Derbent and Quba, presented himself before Count Zubov and submitted to Russian authority. Subsequently, Fatali Khan's daughter, Perijahan Khanum, was appointed temporary ruler of Derbent and Quba (Bakikhanov, 1991, p. 176).

Leaving three infantry battalions, 200 Cossacks, and four field guns in Derbent under the command of Savelyev, Zubov proceeded toward Quba. Encountering no resistance, he occupied the city on 6 June and subsequently advanced in the direction of Baku (Mustafazade, 2013, p. 220–221). Realizing the futility of resistance, Huseyngulu Khan also surrendered Baku. On 13 June 1796, the keys to the Baku fortress were formally presented to Zubov. After dispatching Major General Rakhmanov to Baku with a detachment consisting of three infantry battalions, two cavalry squadrons, and three field guns, Count Zubov continued his advance into the territory of the Shamakhi Khanate.

Regarding the capture of Derbent, Butkov notes that Russian troops advancing into Azerbaijani territory encountered strong resistance at the fortress of Derbent. In order to prevent further bloodshed, Sheikh Ali Khan was compelled to open the gates of the city, which had been subjected to continuous bombardment by the enemy's numerous artillery pieces (Butkov, 1869, p. 358–359). Following this success, General Zubov occupied several khanates of Northern Azerbaijan and began preparations for an advance toward Qajar Iran. In September 1796, Ibrahimkhalil Khan dispatched his son, Abulfat Khan, and his vizier, Vagif, to V.A.Zubov. Through these envoys, he requested that the Russian command accept the Karabakh Khanate under Russian protection (Butkov, 1869, p. 405). In reality, this decision represented a pragmatic diplomatic measure that Ibrahimkhalil Khan considered necessary under the prevailing political and military circumstances.

Soon, a substantial part of the Shamakhi Khanate also came under the control of Russian forces. During this period, Sheikh Ali Khan, who was accompanying the advancing Russian army as an honorary prisoner, managed to escape near Shamakhi (Potto, p. 289). Returning to Quba, he took refuge in the village of Gryz and subsequently traveled to Shaki to seek the support of Salim Khan. Failing to secure the assistance he desired, he then proceeded to Dagestan to assemble an armed force (Butkov, 1869, p. 395).

The situation in the Ganja Khanate was likewise extremely tense, as the khanate had been under siege by the forces of Erekle II and Ibrahimkhalil Khan since the beginning of 1796. Finding himself with few alternatives, Javad Khan appealed to Zubov in September, requesting that Russian troops be dispatched to Ganja to counter the threat posed by Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar (Butkov, 1869, p. 406). In reality, Javad Khan was compelled to seek Russian protection in order to safeguard his khanate from the ambitions of Erekle II and Ibrahimkhalil Khan. According to Butkov, Javad Khan voluntarily surrendered the city to the Russian forces advancing on Ganja under the command of Rimsky-Korsakov and presented him with the keys to the fortress gates (Butkov, 1869, p. 412).

Confident that the Russian government would protect them from the Iranian threat and reinforce their political authority, the khans sought to place themselves under Russian suzerainty, believing that such a step would guarantee the continued existence of their khanates.

Likewise, Kelbali Khan engaged in negotiations with Valerian Zubov and corresponded with the Russian General Nesvetayev with the aim of preserving the independence of the Nakhchivan Khanate (Guliyev, 2013, p. 68).

During the summer and autumn of 1796, Sheikh Ali Khan, in alliance with Surkhay Khan of

Gazikumukh and the Akushans, conducted military operations against Russian forces in the Derbent and Quba regions (Butkov, 1869, p. 391). The extent of this resistance is evident from the Battle of Alpan, which took place on 1 October 1796 between the allied forces commanded by Sheikh Ali Khan and Russian troops. During the battle, the detachment under Lieutenant Colonel Bakunin suffered a crushing defeat, with seven officers and 245 soldiers killed (Butkov, 1869, p. 402).

From the very outset of the campaign in Azerbaijan, V. Zubov's decision, taken in accordance with the instructions issued to him on 19 February 1796, to replace "stubborn and unfaithful" khans with rulers more loyal to Russia, led to a sharp deterioration in his relations with the local khans. This hasty policy prompted the Azerbaijani rulers to distance themselves from Zubov and unite in opposition to the advancing Russian forces. According to the conclusion reached by the researcher G.Mammadova, this development ultimately determined the fate of the campaign (Mammadova, 2003, p. 27).

Following the death of Catherine II, the four-year reign of Paul I represented a distinct stage in the realization of Russia's interests in the Caucasus. During this period, both the direction and the substance of Russian policy differed significantly from those pursued under Catherine II, and the empire's Caucasian policy was no exception. One of Paul I's first acts upon ascending the throne was to order the withdrawal of the troops that Catherine II had dispatched to the South Caucasus.

The instructions issued to Zubov stipulated that those rulers of the territories occupied by Russian forces who remained loyal to Russia would be permitted to withdraw into the borders of the Russian Empire together with their close followers under the protection of Russian troops. Accordingly, the last units of the Caspian Corps left the South Caucasus in March 1797 and, under the command of Lieutenant General Bulgakov, passed through Baku before reaching the Terek River in June 1797. Another part of the Caucasian Corps withdrew from Ganja to Georgia. Furthermore, an order issued to Count Gudovich on 9 March 1797 instructed the evacuation of Russian troops stationed on Sari Island. According to the directive, only one or two warships were to remain there (Butkov, 1869, p. 423–424).

In conclusion, V. Zubov's campaign, undertaken at the initiative of Catherine II's government, ended without producing the results expected by Russia. Despite the considerable military and financial resources invested in the expedition, its objectives remained unfulfilled. According to Leviatov, the total cost of the campaign amounted to approximately 1.7 million rubles in contemporary currency (Leviatov, 1948, p. 188).

In the spring of 1797, following the withdrawal of Russian troops from the South Caucasus, Agha Muhammad Shah launched another campaign into the region with a large army. Entering Karabakh, he succeeded in capturing the fortress of Shusha. Describing these events, Butkov notes that while Agha Muhammad Shah was in Ardabil, he received information that Ibrahimkhalil Khan intended to leave Karabakh. Consequently, he advanced toward Karabakh with an elite cavalry force of 12,000 men. Meanwhile, Ibrahimkhalil Khan departed for Jar-Balakan together with his close followers. As a result, Agha Muhammad Shah entered the undefended fortress of Shusha without encountering any resistance. After establishing himself in Shusha, he appointed Ibrahim Khan's nephew, Muhammad Bey, as khan. At the same time, a detachment of his troops stationed in Mughan crossed the Kura River with the intention of occupying the site previously used as a Russian military camp. Javad Khan of Ganja, who had been summoned to Shusha by Agha Muhammad Shah, was subsequently arrested (Butkov, 1869, p. 428).

Butkov reports that, after notifying the Azerbaijani khans of his intended campaign in Georgia and Azerbaijan, Agha Muhammad Shah followed his customary policy of demanding hostages and sent his brother, Aligulu Khan, to Erivan. He further notes that the economic conditions in the Azerbaijani khanates were extremely difficult at the time. In Ganja, for example, a quarter of a loaf of bread reportedly cost 30 silver rubles. Despite these hardships, the Azerbaijani khans nevertheless found the means and determination to resist Agha Muhammad Shah (Butkov, 1869, p. 427).

Agha Muhammad Shah further accused Muhammad Khan of Erivan of corresponding with Zubov and imposed upon him a fine of 500,000 manats. Unable to pay the full amount, Muhammad Khan managed to provide only 200,000 manats and was compelled to sell his possessions to cover the remainder (Aliyev& Hasanov, 2007, p. 104). However, according to Butkov, Muhammad Khan was nevertheless arrested on the Shah's orders and taken to Qazvin together with his family (Butkov, 1869, p. 428). Thereafter, Agha Muhammad Shah advanced with a cavalry force of 12,000 men and captured the fortress of Shusha.

Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar sent decrees to the rulers of Azerbaijan and Dagestan, threatening them and demanding their submission. The commander dispatched to Nakhchivan was instructed to deport the population of the Nakhchivan Khanate to Iran and to destroy its villages. According to P.G.Butkov, Kelbali Khan, the ruler of Nakhchivan, personally appeared before the Shah bearing gifts in an attempt to obtain his mercy. Although Agha Muhammad Shah accepted the gifts, he ordered Kelbali Khan to be blinded as punishment for maintaining contacts with the Russian command and seeking Russian protection (Butkov, 1869, p. 427–428).

Javad Khan of Ganja appeared before Agha Mohammad Shah in Shusha, but the Shah ordered his arrest for having surrendered the city to the Russians during Zubov's Caucasian campaign (Bakikhanov, 1991, p. 178). Agha Muhammad Shah also dispatched a messenger to summon the Baku Khan, Huseyngulu Khan, to his court. He too was arrested for having surrendered Baku to Russian forces without resistance. A decree was subsequently issued placing Baku under the administration of Sheikh Ali Khan. Huseyngulu Khan's family and relatives were taken to Tehran, while an indemnity was imposed on the population of Baku (Butkov, 1869, p. 429–430).

When examining the political situation in the South Caucasus on the eve of the Russian conquest, it should be noted that plans to resettle Armenians from Qajar Iran to the South Caucasus and to establish a Christian stronghold in the region had already formed part of Russian imperial policy during this period. Thus, while in Saint Petersburg, the Karabakh meliks Jamshid and Fridon submitted a petition requesting permission to settle, together with their subjects, on Georgian lands under Russian control, specifically in the territories designated for the resettlement of Armenians from Qajar Iran. According to Butkov, the Tsar, considering that "*the establishment of a new Christian society in Georgia corresponded to the interests of imperial policy*," instructed Kovalensky to allocate land to the meliks on the most favorable terms (Butkov, 1869, p. 450).

5. CONCLUSİON

As can be seen, the events that unfolded in the South Caucasus during the second half of the 18th century reshaped the political map of the region and altered the balance of power among the Russian, Ottoman, and Iranian empires. Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar's campaign to the South Caucasus was, on the one hand, a manifestation of the Qajar state's attempt to restore its historical rights over the region, and on the other, it became one of the primary pretexts for Russia's military-political expansion in the South Caucasus. The course of events demonstrates that during those years, the South Caucasus became a battleground not only for local political forces but also for major empires, which significantly impacted the political stability and social development of the region.

Overall, the closing decades of the eighteenth century, on the eve of the Russian conquest of Northern Azerbaijan, constituted a critical turning point in the history of the South Caucasus. The gradual shift in the regional balance of power in favor of the Russian Empire enabled it to adopt a more assertive policy toward the region. Exploiting the political fragmentation and instability that characterized the South Caucasus during this period, Tsarist Russia significantly intensified its military and political expansion, thereby laying the foundations for its subsequent domination of the region.

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RELATIONS OF THE BA'TH GOVERNMENT WITH THE SHI'A COMMUNITY DURING THE YEARS OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S RULE IN IRAQ

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the interaction between the Shia community and the state under the leadership of Saddam Hussein in its historical context. The ideology of the Baathist regime, the security policy followed by it, and the impact on the dynamics of the power equation between the citizens and the state are analyzed in this paper. The Shiite population, who adhered to the Jafari sect of Islam, formed the majority in Iraq since the beginning of the twentieth century. During the latter part of the twentieth century, the proportion of the Shiites in the population of Iraq was as high as 60%. Despite professing secular Arab nationalism as an official doctrine of its regime, the Saddam Hussein administration consistently practiced marginalization and oppression of the Shia majority. The security considerations strengthened with the advent of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979, leading to mistrust of the Shia community and resulting in persecution politically, economically, and socially. However, the harsh repression of the Shia uprising that took place after the Gulf War of 1991 heightened the tensions to an unprecedented level. Hence, in this study, an attempt is made to understand the impact of discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities under the rule of Saddam Hussein on the social structure of Iraq and the subsequent course of instability. The historical-analytical and comparative-analytical approaches have been adopted for this research purpose. An examination is also carried out in this paper regarding the independent stance adopted by the Shiites despite the antagonism between the government and the Shiites that existed due to the Iran-Iraq war.

Keywords: Iraq, Saddam Hussein, Baath Party, Shiite community, opposition, uprising

1. INTRODUCTION

The Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, or Ba'ath Party, which came to power in Iraq in 1968, emerged as a party strongly committed to Arab nationalism. The Ba'ath Party, which sought to instill a nationalist ideology in the people through its policies, began implementing measures to reduce the influence of religion in society in the 1970s, in line with its declared principle of secularism.(Bağırova, 2000, p.97) These measures included restricting the activities of religious figures and banning the holding of certain religious ceremonies. For one thing, not only did the Ba'ath not attend to the situation it inherited from its predecessors, but it adopted - at the outset -certain policies which further antagonized the Shi'is. These were: the persecution of the Shi'i Ulama and spiritual leaders; and the 'sunnization' of the upper echelons of the Ba'ath party. It should be noted that the Baath regime went further than its predecessors and took steps such as attempting to destroy holy shrines and starting the sale of alcoholic beverages in cities such as Najaf, which have important spiritual value for Shiites and where the vast majority of the population is religious.

When the Ba'ath Party first seized power in 1963, there were conflicts with the Shiite community, but the immense respect and love shown to the influential Shiite scholar Mohsen al-Hakim by the people during his month-long journey to the shrine cities showed the power of the Shiite marjas to the government and forced them to take a step back. After the Ba'ath Party regained power in 1968, the government's first contact with the Shiite community was a surprise visit by President Hassan al-Bakr to the home of Mohsen al-Hakim.(Abbas, 2013,p.207) The purpose of this visit was not to show respect for the Shiite marjas, but to create the impression that they supported the Baathist government. The visit was organized suddenly, knowing that Mohsen al-Hakim would not accept the visit if informed in advance. It was later reported in the press that the visit was not planned in advance, at the request of Mohsen al-Hakim.

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Within a short period of time, the government began extorting religious donations in Najaf, closing religious schools, canceling Islamic lessons in public schools, and even banning the recitation of the Quran on radio and television. In response to these events, Shiites began their first demonstrations against the government in Najaf and Basra. The culmination of the events was the fatwa issued by Ayatollah Mohsen al-Hakim prohibiting membership in the Baath Party. (Abbas, 2013, p.208) In addition to problems with the religious segment of society, the Ba'ath regime's economic policies were also met with strong opposition from non-religious Shia groups. Thus, four main areas of conflict developed under the Ba'ath regime. First, the state's secularization drive was essentially directed at the autonomous Shia religious institution. Second, the totalitarian Ba'ath state reproduced ethnic, religious, and communal imbalances, both in terms of political representation and participation, and in the unequal distribution and allocation of economic profits. Third, there was the ideological-cultural conflict between the ruling Ba'ath's statist, pan-Arab, social-nationalist ideology and the localist Islamic discourse developed by Shia Islamic groups in the Da'wah model. The fourth area was regional politics; that is, Iraqi-Iranian relations, which, except for a brief period of cooperation (1975-1988), were strained and eventually led the parties to an extended eight-year war.

2. METHODOLOGY

Studies on the relations between the Ba'ath regime and the Shi'a community during the reign of Saddam Hussein show that the ideological policies of the Ba'ath party, the sectarian dynamics of the country, and regional geopolitical factors seriously influenced these relations. Studies by authors such as Yitzhak Nakash, Ziya Abbas, and James Wiley show that the Ba'ath regime officially promoted Arab nationalism and the principle of secularism, excluding Shi'as from the country's governance, and either arresting or exiling those who objected. (Nakash, Y. (1994). The Shi'is of Iraq. Princeton University Press. Wiley, J. (1992). The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shi'as. Lynne Rienner Publishers. Abbas, Z. (2013). Irak'ta Şii Merciiliğin Siyasi Rolü. Önsöz Yayıncılık. These studies emphasize that the government pursued a somewhat moderate and cautious policy during the Iran-Iraq War, but after the war ended, it began to oppress the Shiites more severely than before, and this, together with increasing economic problems after the 1991 Gulf War, led to a major Shiite uprising. Existing studies show that the relationship between the Baath government and the Shiite community was not static, but developed over time, characterized by stages of limited adaptation, strategic co-optation, and harsh repression. Unlike previous studies, this article specifically analyzes the relationship between the Shiite community and the state during the years of Saddam Hussein's rule, analyzing the fact that the policy implemented by Saddam Hussein was harsher than that of his predecessors and its impact on the socio-political and social life of Iraq.

3. RELATİONS WİTH THE SHİİTE COMMUNİTY İN THE EARLY YEARS OF SADDAM HUSSEİN'S RULE

The Baath regime's neglect of the Shia community, keeping them away from the government despite them constituting approximately 60 percent of the population, strained relations between the regime and the community. Undoubtedly, this was due to the feeling of betrayal of the government among the Shia community that supported it during the founding stages of the party, and the socialist ideology promoted by the Baath regime; the nationalist and socialist rhetoric emphasized by the regime was unacceptable to the Shias. On the other hand, in the context of these grievances, the government was concerned about the possibility of the Shiite community approaching the Iranian Shiites. The 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution further increased this concern. The Iranian government's policy of exporting the revolution and Iran's invitation to Iraqi Shiites to revolt against the existing government under the leadership of Khomeini further inflamed these tensions, and 35,000 Iranians were even deported from the country.(Wiley, 1992, p.78) At such a time, General Hassan al-Bakr, who led the Baath regime, was forcibly removed from power and replaced by his deputy, Saddam Hussein. The rise to power of Saddam Hussein, who was distinguished by a more rigid political line than Hassan al-Bakr, further complicated the relations between the Shiite community and the government.(Bengio, 1985, p.4) Indeed, during this period, many representatives of the Shiite community were subjected to persecution, torture, and some were killed. These measures led the Shiites to begin a political and ideological struggle against the regime, and this movement was led by two of the most famous and influential scholars of the time, Mohsen al-Hakim and Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr. Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was a member of the Sadr family, the most famous family of scholars in Iraq, and he was known not only as a religious scholar but also as a philosopher. His works, such as "Iqtisaduna" and "Falsafatuna," were among the most famous books written at that time. Al-Sadr's message after the Iranian Islamic Revolution reflects the essence of the events: "In the current situation, Islam does not need reform, but revolution, and it is necessary to fight against the real enemy." This message of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was addressed not only to Shiites, but to all Muslims in the country. Thus, during this period, the regime faced two leaders with both charisma and political influence - al-Hakim, who was the symbolic leader of the world's Shiites, and al-Sadr, who had great influence over the "Dawa" party. (Aziz, 1993, p.210) The "Dawa" party was established in 1957 with the aim of organizing the fight against the spread of communism and a number of anti-Islamic ideologies in society. When it comes to the question of who founded the party, there are two different opinions. According to Hussein Baraka al-Shami, one of the leading figures of the party, the founder was Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, while according to Muhammad Mehdi al-Hakim, one of the leading founders of the party, the party did not have a specific founding leader. The first step of the government against Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Mohsen al-Hakim was to restrict their religious activities. The confiscation of land and funds allocated for the construction of the Jawadein primary and secondary schools in Baghdad and the University of Kufa, the expulsion of hundreds of non-Iraqi students from the Najaf Scientific Seminary, and the adoption of a law requiring Iraqi students studying in the seminary to join the army served to implement this policy. (Aziz, 1993, p.212) In August 1979, al-Sadr was arrested by the Ba'ath regime. At that time, his sister Amina al-Sadr made a fiery speech in Najaf, calling on the people to fight, and after public protests, Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was released. However, in 1980, he was arrested again, this time with his sister Amina, and they were executed in April of that year. (Jibouri, 2014, p.43) After that, al-Sadr's supporters were persecuted, and about 500 of his supporters were killed. On June 6, 1980, an assassination attempt was made against Saddam Hussein, led by Ibrahim Tahir. Saddam Hussein, who survived this attempt, took advantage of the incident to further intensify the process of deporting representatives of the Shiite community to northern Iran, and from July 1980 to 1982, 23,672 people were deported to the northern regions of Iran. (Wiley, 1992, p.82).

4. SADDAM HUSSEİN'S ATTİTUDE TOWARDS THE SHİİTE COMMUNİTY DURİNG THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR

In 1980, the Iran-Iraq War, one of the most devastating wars in history, began. The eight-year war caused unprecedented damage to the economies of both Iraq and Iran, as well as to the living standards of the population. (Tripp, 2007, p.216) At the start of the war, Saddam Hussein's plan was to overthrow the Iranian regime through war, prevent the regime from influencing the Shiites in his own country, resolve the long-standing border dispute over the Shatt al-Arab waterway in Iraq's favor, and incite an uprising among Sunni Arabs in Iran's Khuzestan region to annex these territories to Iraq. To achieve his goals, he first had to ensure stability within the country. In order to ensure that the Iraqi people fought together against the enemy, Saddam tried to normalize relations with the Shiite community and the Kurds. The regime promoted the idea that everyone, regardless of religion, sect, or ethnic identity, was a representative of the Iraqi people and that they should resist the enemy in order to protect the homeland. During this period, Saddam Hussein took a number of steps to win over the Shiite community. Some restrictions on religious activities were lifted, funds were allocated for the renovation of shrines in Najaf and Karbala, which are important religious centers for Shiites, and Saddam Hussein himself personally visited these shrines. Saddam Hussein also implemented a number of social and economic concessions to economically bind the Shiites to the regime. Expanded public sector jobs and increased the recruitment of some Shiites into the military and government offices, although restrictions on senior positions remained. Schools and universities were expanded in Shiite areas, and students were given state scholarships. On the other hand, roads, hospitals, water, and electricity projects were being implemented in these regions, both to support the war economy and to reduce discontent in the region. As a result, the war, which was a success for this policy of the Baath regime, was very difficult for Iraq and brought with it economic difficulties. However, this “softening” policy never created real equality. Shiites were very limitedly represented in high political and military positions. In particular, the security structures were almost entirely under the control of the Sunni elite, who were considered the most loyal to the regime. In Shiite regions, a strong control system was established; informant networks, constant surveillance, and an atmosphere of fear made open organization virtually impossible. Another important point was the lack of a unified position within the Shiite community. Some religious and political groups, such as the Dawa Party, opposed the regime and maintained ties with Iran. However, the broad masses preferred to remain passive. This made the regime’s work easier: it mainly targeted the active opposition, but kept the general population under control through fear and limited social security. Although the economic situation worsened towards the end of the war, a large-scale Shiite uprising did not occur. This was due both to the strength of the harsh repressive apparatus and to a certain sense of national solidarity that arose within society under war conditions. Overall, the relationship between the Shiites and the Saddam regime during the Iran-Iraq War can best be described as "forced cooperation in a climate of mutual distrust."On the other hand, Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War in 1991 further aggravated the situation. Conditions were created for the Kurds in the north of the country and the Shiites in the south to begin their uprisings against the government. However, unlike the political demands of the Kurds, the Shiite groups remaining in Iraq never acted with political intentions such as violating the territorial integrity of Iraq or seeking autonomy or self-determination.

5. SHİİTE UPRİSİNGS AGAİNST THE GOVERNMENT İN THE 1990S

The first demonstrations of the 1991 uprising began on 10 February. A crowd of mostly Shia Muslims gathered in the city of Diwaniyah to protest against Saddam Hussein and the Baath Party. The insurgents included disaffected Iraqi army soldiers. On March 1, 1991, a day after the ceasefire in the Gulf War, a T-72 tank returning home after Iraq's defeat in Kuwait fired a shell at a giant portrait of Saddam Hussein hanging over Basra's main square, and the soldiers and onlookers cheered. The uprising in Basra was initially led by army officer Muhammad Ibrahim Wali, who gathered a force of military vehicles to attack government buildings and prisons in the city; he was supported by the majority of the population. The uprising in Basra was completely disorganized and spontaneous. On the other hand, US President George H.W. Bush addressed the Iraqi people, urging them to overthrow the regime.(Nakash, 1994, p.274) Although the rebels viewed this speech as a message of support, no overt support from the United States was observed after the uprising began. A few days later, a demonstration near the Imam Ali shrine in Najaf turned into a gun battle between army deserters and Saddam's security forces. Within days, the uprising had spread to all the major Shiite cities in southern Iraq - Amarah, Diwaniyah, Hillah, Karbala, Kut, Nasiriyah and Samawa. The insurgents in the region included thousands of members of the Iran-based Badr Brigade, members of the rebel Sunni army, leftists such as the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), anti-Saddam Arab nationalists, and even disaffected Baathists. What was disastrous for them was that all the various revolutionary groups, militias, and parties were united only in their desire for regime change, because they had no common political or military program, no integrated leadership, and little coordination among themselves. On March 7, in an attempt to calm the uprising, Saddam Hussein offered Shiite and Kurdish leaders a share in the central government in exchange for loyalty, but the opposition groups rejected the offer. At the height of the uprising, the government lost effective control over 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces. One of the most important clerics in the uprising was Ayatollah Khoyi. Khoyi, considered the most influential mujtahid of the time, addressed the insurgents and urged them to be careful not to harm innocent people and to refrain from inhumane actions.

The rebels' advantage did not last long, and regime forces quickly counterattacked and began to regain control of the cities. Brutal methods were used at this time, and even chemical weapons were allegedly used against the rebels in Basra. True, the United Nations, after an investigation, determined that there was no evidence that the Iraqi authorities had used chemical weapons to suppress the uprisings, but it did not rule out the possibility that phosgene gas, which could not be detected after the attack, was used. In the south, Saddam's forces had suppressed only part of the resistance by the end of March. On March 29, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim admitted that the Shiite rebels had withdrawn from the cities and that fighting was limited to rural areas. Thus, by the end of March, the regime had almost completely suppressed the uprising. The regime's swift suppression of the rebellion also caused disillusionment among the opposition. In March and early April, an estimated two million Iraqis, 1.5 million of them Kurds, fled the cities where the rebellion had been suppressed, into the mountains along the northern border, the southern swamps, Turkey, and Iran. In southeastern Iraq, thousands of civilians, deserters, and insurgents sought dangerous refuge in the remote Hawiza marshes along the Iranian border. The uprising was followed by widespread reprisals against the Marsh Arabs, which resulted in the ecologically disastrous draining of the Iraqi marshes and the large-scale and systematic forced displacement of the local population. On 11 August 1992, at a special meeting of the UN Security Council, the United Kingdom, France and the United States accused Iraq of conducting a "systematic military campaign" against the marshlands, warning Baghdad of possible consequences. On 22 August 1992, President Bush announced that the United States and its allies had established a no-fly zone south of the 32nd parallel for all Iraqi aircraft, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 688, to protect the opposition from government attacks. (Tripp, 2007, p.230)

After the uprising, Saddam Hussein's repression of Iraqi Shiites continued to intensify. In addition, a new faction emerged within the Islamic Dawah Party: the Islamic Dawah Cadres. This faction began publishing a newspaper called Fajr al-Iraq (Dawn of Iraq), declaring its goal of establishing a "human state" using democracy and the "call" to Islam. In addition, the mention of the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmens, which was formed as an ally of the Dawah Party during the Kuwait War in 1991 and has offices in the Iranian cities of Shiraz, Qom, and Isfahan, also suggests that the Dawah Party has gained support among Iraqi Shiite Turkmen.

The Iraqi government's post-Gulf War policies further reduced religious activity in Najaf and Karbala, damaging the fabric of Shia culture and society in Iraq. While much of the damage to the shrines was repaired by May 1992, the surrounding bazaars were not rebuilt. The "project to expand and develop the area around the holy shrines" involved transforming much of the Iranian-influenced architecture and many of the bazaars in Karbala. (Nakash, 1994, p.278) In Najaf, the decline in the position of Shia Islam is also evident in the United Nations Human Rights Commission report written by former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoel, who visited Najaf in January 1992. Stoel reported that parts of the famous Shia holy cemetery of Wadi al-Salam had been destroyed and that construction of a highway was underway, passing over the graves. This was one of the deliberate acts of desecration of the holy sites by the government. Stoel wrote that libraries containing manuscripts, which formed part of the Islamic tradition, were being deliberately destroyed. He stated that while there were several thousand students and clerics in Najaf in 1970, their numbers had fallen to eight hundred during the Gulf War. After the uprising in March 1991, these remaining students also disappeared. The destruction of libraries, along with the emigration and arrests of religious students and clerics, could further diminish the importance of the Shia seminaries still operating in Najaf, potentially favoring those in Qom, Iran. The brutal destruction of much of Karbala and Najaf by forces loyal to Saddam demonstrated the extent of his hatred for the Shiites, while his project to divert the Euphrates River attracted considerable attention at the time. The Hindiye Canal, branching off from the Euphrates at Musayyib, a few miles upstream from Karbala, aimed to bring water to Najaf. The strongest symbol of Iraq's determination to rebuild after the war is the "Third River" project, also known as the Saddam River Irrigation Project. It's an excavation project that United Nations human rights observers in Iraq have described as "the environmental crime of the century." Essentially a canal, the project is planned to flow 350 miles from Mahmudiya, above Musayyib, into the Persian Gulf. The canal aimed to circumvent international sanctions by increasing Iraq's cultivated land starting in the summer of 1993. Some experts suspect that the canal also aimed to drain swamps near Shiite-populated areas, allowing the Iraqi army easier access to the south. Indeed, American satellite photos taken in March 1993 show that a third of the Amara swamp had already been drained. (Khadduri & Ghareeb,1997, p.75)

After the Gulf War, another spiritual blow for the Shiites was the death of Ayatollah Khoyi. After

Khoyi's death in 1992, Sayyid Ali Sistani and Muqtada al-Sadr's father, Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, were the most prominent mujtahids in Najaf. However, in the second half of 1992, Baghdad still had not given any indication of which marja it considered the head of the Najaf region. The event that surprised everyone occurred in January 1993. Saddam's regime issued a decree appointing Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr as the first "official marja" of Najaf. Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr was the cousin of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Amina al-Sadr, who had been executed in 1980. However, at this time, disagreements also arose among the scholars of the Najaf seminary, since Khoyi's supporters saw Sayyid Ali Sistani as his successor, and he was even entrusted with leading Khoyi's funeral prayer. On the other hand, al-Sadr was supported by the authorities, and even organized a trip for him to the remote southern regions of the country, where he held meetings with the population. The southerners were very impressed to see a marja visiting them for the first time and advising them in the local Iraqi dialect. However, this period of relative calm did not last long, and relations between Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr and the government soon deteriorated, as from 1998 onwards al-Sadr began to criticize the regime in his Friday sermons. This can be partly explained by the fact that he had chosen a quiet position, waiting for the right conditions to arise, and during this time he had increased his influence among the Shiite community in the south of the country, and the main issue he criticized in his sermons was the obstacles created by the regime regarding the pilgrimage to Karbala and the restriction of religious freedom of the people. He issued a statement saying that "even if the government prohibits such a visit, the public must undertake it", after which relations between the regime and the government became even more tense. After that, the Kufa Mosque was surrounded by regime forces to prevent al-Sadr from delivering the Friday sermon, and clashes broke out between the population and security forces.

The situation was further complicated by the authorities' new wave of arrests in February 1999. Therefore, Sayyid Sadr announced in his sermon that if the authorities did not release the detainees, he would order the imams leading the Friday prayers to mobilize against the government. The government sent a messenger to Sayyid to reconsider his threat, but he refused and remained stubborn. Therefore, al-Sadr was placed under house arrest, but he violated the order to stay at home and, after leaving his house accompanied by his sons Mustafa and Mu'ammad, as well as his son-in-law, was assassinated on the road and shot dead along with his two sons. At that time, Saddam Hussein claimed that the incident was organized by Iran to prevent public discontent, but this claim was met with skepticism in society and failed to prevent the start of a wave of protests. Clashes broke out between security forces and protesters in Baghdad and other cities, and a significant number of people were killed or injured. Opposition groups even managed to seize several police stations and Baath Party offices, which they held until the morning of March 18, but then withdrew due to circumstances. After the suppression of the demonstrations, mass arrests by the Baath regime continued.

After the death of many influential mujtahids in Iraq, the most influential scholar was Seyyed Ali Sistani. He was born in 1930 in the Iranian city of Mashhad, and in his youth he came to the city of Najaf to receive religious education, where he received lessons from important scholars such as Ayatollah Khoyi. Seyyed Sistani is mainly distinguished by his non-interference in politics and his calm position. Although the Baathist government came to the conclusion that Seyyed Ali Sistani, who had completely isolated himself from politics, would not pose a threat, it did not recognize him as the leader of the basin. It should be noted that Sistani strongly condemned the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. (Marr, 2012, p.200).

6. CONCLUSİON

Relations between the Ba'ath Party, which seized power in Iraq in 1968 following a coup, and the Shiite religious authority were strained from the beginning, and the Ba'ath regime soon began implementing sanctions against the Shiite religious authority. In addition to the pressure from the Ba'ath Party, the Shiite religious authority also experienced internal divisions. In less than twelve years, the Ba'ath regime had cornered the Shiite Marja'iyya, executing tens of thousands of Dawa Party members. Among those executed were Grand Marja Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, as well as numerous clerics and seminary students. With al-

Sadr's execution, the government dealt a fatal blow to the Islamic movement. Severely weakened by the Ba'ath regime's brutal and savage attacks, the Shiite Marja'iyya, after al-Sadr's execution, withdrew into itself in order to survive and interfered less in Iraqi political life.

Following the Iraqi army's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and its swift defeat by the US-led international coalition in the First Gulf War, which began in January 1991, the Shiite community in southern Iraq revolted. Finding themselves in a leadership crisis, they sought help from the Shiite Marja'i (religious authority). The Supreme Marja'i, Grand Ayatollah Abul-Qasim al-Khoyi, was forced to accept leadership of the uprising in response to the community's demands. However, after the Ba'ath regime brutally suppressed the uprising, it targeted the Shiite Marja'i again. In this context, al-Khoyi was arrested, tortured, and, due to his advanced age (over 90 years), sentenced to house arrest. This punishment did not stop there; it led to the execution of approximately 200 people close to him, including his sons.

After witnessing the experiences within the Shiite religious authority and the institution itself, the Saddam regime understood that it would be very difficult to undermine religious unity within the Shiite community in Iraq. In an effort to maintain control over the Shiite Marja'iyya and the Hawza, he asked some religious leaders and Marjas to govern the seminary openly and amicably, but most religious leaders rejected this request. However, the Shiite religious authority, which must always adapt to evolving events in order to maintain its continuity, did not miss this opportunity. Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, a cousin of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, seemed to accept the leadership of the Hawza on the condition that the government would not interfere in any way.

Saddam Hussein's brutal treatment of the Shiites stemmed from his view of them as a constant source of concern for his regime. The Shiites constituted a vast majority; if they united against a government whose legitimacy they did not recognize, they could overthrow it. Unable to communicate their grievances to the international community, the Shiites were forced to fight Saddam's tyranny alone. They understood that Saddam's regime would never make peace with them. They never forgot the ruthless destruction and burning of holy Shiite cities by Saddam's armed forces. The oppression and suffering they endured at the hands of forces sharing their homeland remained etched in their memories. Indeed, in the post-2003 reconstruction of Iraq, political bans were imposed on members of the Ba'ath Party at certain levels, the Iraqi army was disbanded, and high-ranking Ba'ath officials who had participated in massacres against the people were tried, with many, including Saddam Hussein, sentenced to death.

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REACTION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN TO THE 44-DAY PATRIOTIC WAR OF THE AZERBAIJAN PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan demonstrated its commitment to the principle of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and emphasized the solution of the current issue only on the basis of the principle of Azerbaijan's sovereignty. The article substantiates Pakistan's position in this regard and notes its solidarity with Azerbaijan in the negotiations held at the international level. During official and business visits by Pakistan to the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Karabakh problem was repeatedly brought to the agenda, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan demanded an immediate end to Armenia's occupation policy in resolving the current issue. Pakistan has always stood by the Azerbaijani state and people during the Second Karabakh War. The article examines the reaction of the Pakistani state to the 44-day patriotic war of the Azerbaijani people in historical facts, analysis, and analytical form. At the same time, the article reflects Pakistan's unchanging and justified position since the formation of the conflict, and its reactions demanding an end to Armenia's aggressive policy. In particular, Pakistan's demonstration of solidarity with Azerbaijan during the Second Karabakh War, and the speeches made by Pakistani official representatives during the 44-day Patriotic War are extensively commented on in the study.

Keywords: Republic of Azerbaijan, Pakistan, UNO, House of Representatives, Khojaly Genocide

1. INTRODUCTION

After Azerbaijan gained its historical independence, one of the friendly countries with which it established a partnership was the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, one of the influential states of the Muslim world. Azerbaijan and Pakistan have been connected by close friendly relations since ancient times. On December 12, 1991, Pakistan became one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on June 9, 1992. On April 30, 1993, Pakistan chaired the meeting held to adopt UN Security Council Resolution No. 822 on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In general, Pakistan has always supported Azerbaijan's fair position in the UN, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and other international platforms. Also, Pakistan has not established diplomatic relations with Armenia to this day because it subjected Azerbaijan to military aggression. Azerbaijan, in turn, does not spare its support for a fair solution to the Kashmir problem on all international platforms. The statement of the Commander of the Pakistani Land Forces, Army General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who visited Azerbaijan shortly after the war, "Azerbaijan's victory in the Karabakh war and the restoration of its territorial integrity is a magnificent event for every Muslim, every Pakistani" - in general, fully explains Pakistan's attitude towards Azerbaijan (Guliyev, 2024). Pakistan supports Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue because this is a matter of occupation and aggression against the country. Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, the Chairman of the Kashmir Committee of the Pakistani Parliament,

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told journalists back in 2012. "There are a number of UN resolutions confirming Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, and Azerbaijan's position is internationally recognized and accepted," he said. He also said that Azerbaijan has always supported Pakistan's position on the Kashmir issue. "Azerbaijan has an international position, and it is recognized. We believe that Azerbaijan should provide moral and political support to the principled position on the Kashmir issue," he noted. He added that Azerbaijan is a very important country in Central Asia and the Caucasus and is the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Azerbaijan has become a different country, transformed, changed and developed almost beyond recognition. "I have seen significant progress and development in Azerbaijan. And I do not feel like a stranger here, because culture, history, heritage and religion unite us," he added (Azernews, 2012).

In 2012, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate of Pakistan and in 2017, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly adopted resolutions recognizing the Khojaly genocide and condemning Armenia’s aggression against Azerbaijan. In addition, Pakistan supported Azerbaijan during the 44-day war with Armenia in 2020. In October 2020, the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously approved a resolution condemning Armenia’s attack on Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan and Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding on military cooperation during the fifth meeting of the relevant working group held in Islamabad in 2014. Over the past 10 years, more than a hundred Azerbaijani military officers have been trained by Pakistani military specialists. Pakistan and Azerbaijan have negotiated the sale of JF-17 Thunder multi-role fighter aircraft. Plans for joint military exercises were approved by President Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister Sharif in October 2016 (Khalilov,2022)

On 21 February 2017, the spokesperson for the Pakistani Foreign Office denied media reports that the Pakistani government had not sent any observers to the so-called referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh. The spokesperson reiterated Pakistan’s position on the conflict and expressed support for Azerbaijan’s position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. At the same time, the statement noted that Pakistan’s position was for the complete return of Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia, the withdrawal of the Armenian army from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas, and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees to their homes, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions (Pakistan Foreign Office, 2020)

On 27 September, the day the hostilities began, Pakistan’s Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafiz Chaudhry expressed deep concern over the deteriorating security situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region following the firing on the civilian population of Azerbaijan. The Foreign Office statement said that Pakistan considers the attack by Armenian forces on villages in Tartar, Agdam, Fuzuli and Jabrayil regions as a “regrettable and most regrettable incident.” “Pakistan stands with the brotherly people of Azerbaijan and supports their right to self-defense,” the Foreign Ministry said (AFP & Web Desk, 2020).

Responding to questions about a media report on October 2, 2020, which claimed that the Pakistani army was fighting alongside Azerbaijani forces against Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh, the Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesperson described it as speculative and baseless. Reiterating Pakistan’s position on the issue, the spokesperson expressed deep concern over the deteriorating security situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The spokesperson noted that the intensive firing by Armenian forces on the civilian population of Azerbaijan was condemnable, adding that it could undermine the peace and security of the entire region and that Armenia should immediately cease military operations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). In a statement issued in Islamabad, Foreign Ministry spokesman Zahid Hafiz Chaudhry said, “The Armenian Prime Minister’s transcript of an interview with Russian television on October 15 strongly refuted some unfounded reports alleging that Pakistani Special Forces were involved in the ongoing conflict alongside the Azerbaijani army.” He also conveyed to the public that Azerbaijani forces were strong enough to defend their homeland and did not need the help of foreign forces. “Pakistan will continue to stand by the brotherly Azerbaijani people and support their right to self-defense against any aggression,” the ministry spokesman concluded. At the same time, Pakistani Ambassador to Baku Bilal Haye visited Ganja along with the diplomatic corps on the same occasion (Dispatch News Desk, 2020).

Also on October 20, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi expressed Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's position on Nagorno-Karabakh. The Minister, in a telephone conversation with the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister, stated that Pakistan stands with the leadership and people of Azerbaijan during this difficult time. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan congratulated the President and people of Azerbaijan on Azerbaijan's Independence Day and reiterated his support for Azerbaijan. Prime Minister Imran Khan tweeted on October 18, 2020, praising the Azerbaijani army for protecting its territorial integrity and sovereignty in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The Prime Minister's statement came after the Armenian Prime Minister claimed that Pakistani forces were involved in the fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh (Khan, 2021).

In a resolution unanimously adopted by the House of Representatives of Pakistan on October 28, the Republic of Azerbaijan expressed its deep concern over the deteriorating situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The resolution reaffirmed Pakistan's full political, diplomatic, and moral support to the brave people of Azerbaijan and called on the UN and the international community to play their role in restoring peace and security in the region (Radio Pakistan, 2020).

Pakistan on September 21, 2023, reaffirmed its unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Thus, in response to a journalist's question regarding the anti-terrorist operation launched by Azerbaijani forces in the Karabakh region this week, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch stated that Islamabad considers Karabakh to be a sovereign territory of Azerbaijan. She also added that "Pakistan expresses its deep condolences to the people and government of Azerbaijan for the loss of lives in mine explosions in Azerbaijani territory." She stated that Islamabad's position is firmly in line with numerous UN Security Council and OIC resolutions, as well as international law, citing the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. He added, "We hope that Azerbaijan's legitimate claim to sovereignty and territorial integrity will be accepted by all parties and a path to lasting peace in the region will be paved." At the same time, he stated that Azerbaijan remains committed to counter-terrorism measures and to launching anti-terrorist operations to protect the provisions of the trilateral peace agreement with Russia and Armenia to end the 2020 conflict (Pakistan Foreign Office, 2023).

At an event held on the occasion of Pakistan's 78th Independence Day on August 14, 2025, Pakistani Ambassador to Azerbaijan Qasim Mohiuddin expressed Pakistan's constant appreciation for the support of the Azerbaijani state and people. The Ambassador recalled that in May, the Pakistani Armed Forces resolutely responded to the Indian attack. Mohiuddin stated that "after Pakistan's resolute response to India's provocation, everyone saw our strength, and this success was celebrated by the leaders of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Turkey in Lachin". He highly appreciated the far-sighted policy of President Ilham Aliyev for the liberation of Karabakh and expressed his hope that Pakistan would one day liberate the territories occupied by India. Mohiuddin stressed that Pakistan does not intend to change its policy towards Armenia without prior consultations with Azerbaijan. He reminded the audience that Pakistan did not recognize Armenia as an independent state due to the illegal occupation of Azerbaijani territories and called this position an expression of love, respect and solidarity with brotherly Azerbaijan. He noted that this policy has been going on for thirty years and that any change will only occur after consultations with Baku. Commenting on the agreement reached between Azerbaijan and Armenia in Washington, the ambassador described it as a very positive development for bilateral relations. He stressed that the Washington meeting was a historic summit between US President Donald Trump, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, adding that Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had called President Ilham Aliyev to congratulate him on this achievement. Mohiuddin also stated that Azerbaijan and Pakistan could hold another round of inter-ministerial political consultations early next year, while the 9th meeting of the intergovernmental commission is scheduled in two years. He explained that although the commission meets annually, the extensive agenda sometimes requires several years of preparation, noting that the 8th meeting was held on January 24 of this year, alongside the political consultations. He stressed the importance of mutual high-level visits, but noted that none were expected in the near future (Caucasus Watch, 2025).

2. CONCLUSİON

In the fall of 2020, Azerbaijan liberated several cities, villages, and settlements from Armenian occupation during 44 days of clashes. The war ended with a ceasefire brokered by Russia. As a result, Pakistan, which considers Azerbaijan a brotherly country defending its homeland from the invaders, justified this position with the principles of international law and sovereignty. Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan in the 44-day Patriotic War was conditioned by the strategic partnership between the two countries, mutual political support, a systematic institutionalized attitude against Armenia's occupation policy, and Islamic solidarity. Pakistan has fully supported Azerbaijan in all diplomatic negotiations on the Karabakh issue and has always defended Azerbaijan's rightful position at international conferences and summits of international organizations. This was especially evident during the Second Karabakh War. During the 44-day Patriotic War, the Azerbaijani people displayed the flags of Pakistan along with the flags of Azerbaijan and Turkey.

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RUSSIA'S SOUTH CAUCASUS POLICY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY: THE GEORGIYEVSK TREATY

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ABSTRACT

The second half of the eighteenth century marked a decisive change in the balance of power in the Black Sea region and the Caucasus. Russia's victory in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768–1774, its consolidation of the Caucasian Line, and its annexation of Crimea in 1783 created the strategic setting in which the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti sought Russian protection. The Treaty of Georgievsk, signed on 24 July (4 August, New Style) 1783, restricted the kingdom's independent foreign policy while promising to preserve its territorial integrity, internal government, and ruling dynasty. This article examines the treaty as an unequal protectorate arrangement shaped by the different objectives of its signatories. Erekle II sought a credible security guarantee against Ottoman and Iranian pressure, whereas the Russian imperial court sought a dependable military and political foothold south of the Caucasus range. The withdrawal of Russian troops in 1787 and Russia's failure to protect Kartli-Kakheti during Agha Mohammad Khan's invasion in 1795 exposed the gap between the treaty's guarantees and their enforcement. The later incorporation of Kartli-Kakheti into the Russian Empire in 1801 therefore represented a repudiation of the autonomy and dynastic continuity promised in 1783.

Keywords: South Caucasus; Kartli-Kakheti; Russian Empire, "Treaty of Georgia"

1. INTRODUCTION

Owing to its strategic position between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus occupied an important place in the policies of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Russian empires from the sixteenth century onward. Control of routes through the region offered military access, commercial advantages, and political influence over local kingdoms, principalities, and khanates. By the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the regional balance was changing. Russia had become capable of projecting sustained military power toward the Black Sea and the Caucasus, while Ottoman influence was under increasing pressure. Iran remained an important source of political and military power in the South Caucasus, although the period between the death of Karim Khan Zand in 1779 and the consolidation of Qajar rule was marked by internal competition.

The Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti occupied a particularly exposed position within this changing environment. Erekle II sought to protect his kingdom from Ottoman and Iranian pressure while strengthening royal authority and preserving the Bagrationi dynasty. Russia, by contrast, viewed eastern Georgia as a strategic partner that could support operations beyond the Caucasus range and extend imperial influence into the South Caucasus. These different objectives converged in the Treaty of Georgievsk of 1783. The agreement offered Kartli-Kakheti external protection, but it also subordinated the kingdom's foreign relations to the Russian crown. Its political significance therefore lies in the tension between the security guarantees it formally provided and the unequal structure of dependence it created.

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2. RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC ADVANCE TOWARD THE CAUCASUS

The foundations of Russia's eighteenth-century policy in the Caucasus were laid during the reign of Peter I. His government regarded the region as a corridor linking the northern Black Sea, the Caspian basin, Iran, and the Ottoman frontier. Russian campaigns on the Caspian coast and diplomatic contacts with Christian rulers in the South Caucasus established precedents that Catherine II's government later developed on a larger scale. By the late eighteenth century, Russian strategy combined military expansion, fortified frontier lines, and alliances with local rulers. The reinforcement of the Kizlyar-Mozdok sector and the wider Azov-Mozdok line improved Russia's capacity to move troops and supplies toward the central Caucasus (Bushuev, 1955; Glasheva, 2019).

Under Catherine II, this regional policy was also connected with broader projects directed against the Ottoman Empire. The so-called Greek Project envisaged a major reordering of Ottoman territories under Russian influence. Although its most ambitious objectives were never realized, it encouraged the imperial court to treat the Caucasus as part of a wider Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean strategy. Kartli-Kakheti acquired particular importance because the Georgian Military Road offered a potential line of communication between the North and South Caucasus. A protected Georgian kingdom could function as a military partner, a logistical base, and a political counterweight to Ottoman and Iranian influence (Bocharnikov, 2013).

Russia's victory in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768–1774 materially strengthened this policy. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, signed on 21 July 1774, recognized the independence of the Crimean Khanate from the Ottoman Empire, transferred important Black Sea fortresses to Russia, and expanded Russian commercial navigation. The agreement also altered the strategic environment of the northern Black Sea and brought Russian power closer to the Caucasus (Türker & Soofizadeh, 2015). Its provisions concerning territories occupied during the war required Russia to return several places in Georgia and Mingrelia to their former holders and required the Ottoman government not to oppress the Christian population there. The treaty did not, however, create a general Russian right to protect all Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Such a broad interpretation developed later in Russian diplomatic practice.

For the Georgian rulers, the settlement produced mixed results. Russian withdrawal from occupied territories removed an immediate military presence, but it did not provide a durable security arrangement for the politically divided Georgian lands. Erekle II had already observed both the possibilities and the limitations of Russian assistance during General Gottlob Totleben's campaign of 1769–1772. His later approach to Russia was therefore not simply an expression of religious solidarity. It was a strategic decision made under conditions in which the kingdom lacked sufficient military resources to deter its more powerful neighbors.

The formal annexation of Crimea, Taman, and the Kuban by Catherine II in April 1783 transformed the regional context. It weakened the Ottoman position on the northern Black Sea and enabled Russia to devote greater attention to the Caucasus. At the same time, the imperial court anticipated that the annexation might provoke another war with the Ottoman Empire. Russian planners therefore examined how Georgian forces and local Christian communities could support operations on the Ottoman eastern frontier (Volkhonsky, 2018).

Grigory Potemkin and officials under his authority developed networks of agents and intermediaries in the South Caucasus. Armenian merchants and clergy, including Archbishop Joseph Argutinsky, provided information about political conditions in Kartli-Kakheti, the Erivan and Karabakh khanates, and neighboring territories. These networks helped the Russian government evaluate the military resources of local rulers and the feasibility of creating friendly political formations south of the Caucasus range (Tabuashvili, n.d.). Plans for Georgian and Armenian buffer entities were not humanitarian projects detached from imperial strategy; they were intended to reduce Ottoman and Iranian influence and to support Russia's military position.

The document known as The Highest Guidelines for the Conclusion of a Russo-Georgian Treaty, drafted by Alexander Bezborodko, shows that the Russian court carefully directed the negotiating framework (Tabuashvili, n.d.). Erekle II's position was stronger than it had been during earlier negotiations in 1771–1772, and Russia accordingly moderated some proposed obligations. The court abandoned or reduced certain financial demands, described the Georgian ruler as an ally under imperial protection, and promised to station two infantry battalions with artillery in the kingdom. Nevertheless, the proposed relationship was unequal from the outset. Russia offered military protection in exchange for decisive influence over the kingdom's external policy and for Georgian military cooperation in future conflicts.

The negotiations also reflected Russia's desire to coordinate the eastern Georgian kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti with the western Georgian Kingdom of Imereti. Russian mediation between Erekle II and Solomon I was expected to reduce internal conflict and make Georgian forces more useful in a possible war with the Ottoman Empire. Bezborodko explicitly connected the protectorate project with the prospect of such a war. The treaty was therefore both a response to Erekle II's search for security and an instrument in Russia's regional military planning.

3. THE TREATY AND ITS POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The Treaty of Georgievsk was signed at the fortress of Georgievsk in the North Caucasus on 24 July (4 August, New Style) 1783 by representatives of Catherine II and Erekle II. The Georgian delegation was headed by Prince Ioane Bagration-Mukhraneli and Garsevan Chavchavadze; Erekle II himself did not attend the signing. The treaty contained thirteen principal articles and four separate articles, commonly described as secret articles, and was ratified in 1784 (Dzhakhiyeva, 2017; Volkhonsky, 2018).

The agreement established a Russian protectorate over Kartli-Kakheti. Erekle II renounced dependence on Iran or any other power and accepted the Russian monarch as the kingdom's supreme protector and suzerain. He undertook not to conduct independent diplomatic relations without Russian consent and promised military assistance to Russia when required. Successive Georgian kings were to receive imperial confirmation of their accession. These provisions substantially restricted the kingdom's external sovereignty and made dynastic legitimacy partly dependent on approval from Saint Petersburg.

In return, Catherine II guaranteed the territorial integrity of Kartli-Kakheti, recognized the hereditary rule of the Bagrationi dynasty, and promised not to interfere in the kingdom's internal administration. Russia also undertook to treat attacks on Kartli-Kakheti as attacks on Russia and agreed to maintain two infantry battalions with artillery in the kingdom, with reinforcements to be supplied in wartime (Dudayti, 2013; ERTÜRK, 2021). The agreement extended reciprocal privileges to nobles, clergy, and merchants. It also defined a relationship between the Georgian Church and the Russian Holy Synod, although later imperial policy would go far beyond the treaty's provisions (Türker & Soofizadeh, 2015).

The separate articles sought to preserve peace between Erekle II and Solomon I and provided for Russian mediation in disputes between them. The commander of the Caucasian Line was instructed to take measures for the defense of Kartli-Kakheti in the event of attack. These clauses reveal the treaty's central bargain: the Georgian crown exchanged freedom of action in foreign affairs for a Russian security commitment while retaining formal authority over domestic government. It was therefore neither a treaty between fully equal allies nor an act of immediate incorporation. It created a protectorate whose durability depended on Russia's willingness and ability to enforce its obligations.

Political Significance and Consequences

For Erekle II, the treaty was an attempt to solve an immediate security problem. The kingdom faced raids from the North Caucasus, pressure from the Ottoman frontier, and the continuing possibility that an Iranian ruler would seek to restore effective suzerainty over eastern Georgia. Alignment with a powerful Orthodox empire also offered diplomatic advantages, but confessional affinity alone does not explain the decision. The king expected Russian troops and the treaty's deterrent effect to compensate for Kartli-

Kakheti's limited military resources. His policy was therefore rational in its short-term objective, even though it exposed the kingdom to a new form of dependency.

For Russia, the treaty produced several advantages at relatively low initial cost. It established a recognized political presence south of the Caucasus range, restricted the diplomacy of a strategically located kingdom, and secured the prospect of Georgian assistance in wars against the Ottoman Empire. Kartli-Kakheti could serve as a base for intelligence, logistics, and future military operations toward the Caspian and Iranian frontiers. The treaty also provided a legal and diplomatic language through which Russia could present expansion as protection requested by a local Christian monarch. In this respect, the protectorate served as an intermediate form of imperial control: it extended Russian influence without requiring immediate annexation or full administrative occupation.

The arrangement nevertheless contained a fundamental asymmetry. Kartli-Kakheti's obligations, especially the restriction of its foreign policy, took effect immediately. Russia's most important obligation, military protection, depended on changing imperial priorities. This weakness became evident when the Russian battalions stationed in Georgia were withdrawn in 1787 at the beginning of a new Russo-Ottoman war. Erekle II consequently sought to reduce tensions with the Ottoman frontier and negotiated with Süleyman Pasha of Akhaltsikhe in 1786–1787. These contacts did not erase the Georgievsk relationship; rather, they demonstrated the practical need for regional diplomacy when Russian protection was uncertain (Dzhakhiyeva, 2017).

The gravest test came in 1795. Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar demanded that Erekle II abandon the Russian alliance and recognize Iranian authority. When the king refused, Iranian forces defeated the Georgian army at Krtsanisi and devastated Tbilisi. Russia did not provide the timely protection promised under the treaty. The destruction of the capital exposed the central contradiction of the protectorate: Kartli-Kakheti had limited its diplomatic autonomy but could not compel Russia to honor its security guarantee. Russian forces entered the region in the following year, but the expedition did not reverse the immediate consequences of the 1795 invasion.

The events of 1800–1801 must therefore be treated as a consequence of the altered power relationship created after 1783, not as a clause or automatic outcome of the treaty itself. After Erekle II's death in 1798, dynastic disputes and renewed external insecurity further weakened the kingdom. George XII sought additional Russian assistance, but the imperial government moved from protectorate to incorporation. Paul I issued an annexation manifesto in December 1800, and Alexander I confirmed the incorporation of Kartli-Kakheti into the Russian Empire in 1801. The abolition of the Georgian monarchy violated the treaty's guarantee of Bagrationi dynastic continuity and the kingdom's internal autonomy.

This limited nineteenth-century aftermath clarifies the treaty's historical significance. The annexation of Kartli-Kakheti gave Russia an administrative and military base for further expansion in the South Caucasus, but the subsequent incorporation of other Georgian polities occurred through separate processes and should not be presented as the direct legal operation of the Treaty of Georgievsk. Nor did the treaty by itself eliminate Ottoman or Iranian influence throughout the region. Russian dominance emerged through later wars, annexations, and administrative consolidation. The treaty's importance lies instead in its creation of an unequal institutional relationship that narrowed Georgian sovereignty and made later imperial intervention easier.

4. CONCLUSION

The Treaty of Georgievsk resulted from a temporary convergence of interests between two unequal states. Erekle II sought an enforceable guarantee that would protect Kartli-Kakheti from Ottoman and Iranian pressure and preserve the Bagrationi monarchy. Catherine II's government sought a strategic foothold south of the Caucasus range, a dependable regional ally, and a framework for extending Russian influence without immediate annexation. The treaty met Russia's objectives more effectively than Georgia's: Kartli-Kakheti surrendered substantial control over foreign policy, while the implementation of Russia's defense obligations remained contingent on imperial priorities.

The withdrawal of Russian troops in 1787 and the failure to defend Kartli-Kakheti in 1795 demonstrated that the protectorate did not provide the security on which its legitimacy depended. At the same time, the restrictions imposed by the treaty reduced the kingdom's room for independent diplomacy. Russia's incorporation of Kartli-Kakheti in 1801 then overturned the promises to preserve its internal government and hereditary dynasty. The treaty should therefore be understood neither as an equal alliance nor as an act that immediately annexed Georgia. It was an unequal protectorate agreement that changed the regional balance of power, weakened the practical foundations of Kartli-Kakheti's sovereignty, and supplied Russia with a political framework for a deeper imperial presence in the South Caucasus.

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THE ISSUE OF PROTECTION, RESTORATION AND CONSERVATION OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF AZERBAIJANI MONUMENTS IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

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ABSTRACT

Historical monuments and other forms of material culture constitute important sources for the study of Azerbaijan's social, cultural, and architectural history. This article examines the development of the legal and institutional framework for monument protection in Azerbaijan, with particular attention to the transition from the Soviet administrative system to the policies adopted after independence. It analyzes the role of state programs, national legislation, and cooperation with UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICCROM, and other international organizations. The article also considers the effects of armed conflict and changes in territorial control on cultural heritage in and around Karabakh, as well as the inventory, conservation, and restoration measures undertaken after 2020. Rather than treating legislation and restoration projects as isolated measures, the study places them within a historical sequence and evaluates the relationship between institutional capacity, documentation, physical preservation, and post-conflict reconstruction. It concludes that effective heritage protection requires reliable inventories, transparent assessment, professional conservation standards, and sustained cooperation with relevant international institutions.

Keywords: Historical monuments, Cultural heritage, Restoration and conservation, Karabakh, Legal framework

1. INTRODUCTION

Historical monuments are primary sources for the study of political, social, religious, and cultural change. In Azerbaijan, archaeological sites, architectural monuments, and other examples of material culture document long-term settlement and the interaction of different communities and traditions in the South Caucasus. Their scholarly significance therefore extends beyond their symbolic value: their physical fabric, location, inscriptions, and successive alterations provide evidence that can be examined through historical, archaeological, and architectural methods.

The protection of this heritage has developed through several administrative stages. The late Soviet system relied on centrally approved monument lists and specialized state bodies. After Azerbaijan regained independence, the institutional structure was reorganized, new legislation was adopted, and cooperation with international heritage organizations expanded. Armed conflict and prolonged restrictions on access to a substantial number of sites created additional problems of documentation, maintenance, and damage assessment. Following the restoration of Azerbaijani control over a number of territories in 2020, inventory and reconstruction became central components of state heritage policy.

This article traces that institutional evolution and examines the relationship between legislation, administrative capacity, international standards, and post-conflict restoration. The analysis also distinguishes between documented physical conditions, official assessments, and political interpretations. This distinction is necessary because cultural heritage in conflict settings can become part of competing historical narratives, while conservation requires verifiable evidence and consistent professional standards.

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2. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF MONUMENT PROTECTION

Azerbaijan's present system of monument protection retains elements of the Soviet administrative legacy. The lists of monuments placed under state protection were approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in 1968, 1981, and 1988. The last Soviet-era list was prepared on the basis of earlier lists that had equivalent legal status. After independence, buildings and structures directly associated with revolutionary and communist ideology, including monuments dedicated to political leaders, were removed from the register (Hacıyev, 2010, p. 14). This process illustrates how a change in political order affected not only heritage administration but also the criteria by which particular objects were recognized as historically significant.

Until 1992, the Department of Monument Protection under the Ministry of Culture was responsible for the preservation of historical and cultural monuments. In 1992, the State Committee for the Protection and Restoration of Historical and Cultural Monuments was established under the Cabinet of Ministers. It operated until 2000 and assumed responsibility for the protection and use of monuments throughout the republic. Contemporary assessments indicate that the transfer of authority was accompanied by institutional and professional difficulties that reduced administrative effectiveness. After the committee was abolished, its functions returned to the Ministry of Culture, where the General Department for the Protection, Restoration and Use of Historical and Cultural Monuments was established (Məmmədov, 2006, p. 77).

This sequence demonstrates that formal reorganization alone did not ensure continuity in preservation. The effectiveness of a heritage institution also depended on professional expertise, stable management, accurate documentation, and the allocation of responsibility among central and local authorities. The post-2000 return of relevant functions to the Ministry of Culture can therefore be understood as an attempt to restore institutional coordination after a period of administrative fragmentation.

The list approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on August 2, 2001 remained substantially dependent on Soviet-era documentation. As a result, inaccuracies concerning the identification, location, and classification of some monuments continued into the post-independence system. This dependence on inherited records explains why the preparation of a new inventory became a recurring policy objective. The number of registered historical and cultural monuments, reported as exceeding 6,300, further illustrates the scale of the administrative task (Kalankatuklu, 1993, p. 78).

The State Program for the Restoration and Protection of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments and the Improvement and Development of Historical and Cultural Reserves for 2014-2020, approved by presidential decree on December 27, 2013, represented an effort to address the limitations of the inherited system. It connected protection, restoration, conservation, research, and public presentation within a single policy framework. Its importance lies not only in the number of proposed activities but also in the recognition that legal status, documentation, physical preservation, and scholarly research are interdependent.

Article 2.1.1 of the State Program provided for the compilation and approval of a new list of immovable historical and cultural monuments under state protection. Article 2.1.3 called for the improvement of legal acts governing immovable monuments and historical and cultural reserves. These provisions addressed two linked problems: an incomplete or inaccurate register can weaken legal protection, while legal rules cannot be implemented effectively when the identity, boundaries, and physical condition of protected sites are uncertain.

Article 2.2.3 addressed the determination of monument boundaries and protection zones, passporting, mapping, and the creation of databases that meet contemporary requirements. These measures are essential to historical research because the scientific value of archaeological and architectural evidence depends substantially on its state of preservation and documentation. Once a monument or its context has been severely altered, the recovery of reliable information becomes more difficult.

Article 2.3.7 provided for the publication of books on immovable cultural heritage situated in territories that were then outside Azerbaijani control (Azərbaycan Respublikası, 2014). The implementation of this objective required an accurate inventory, a scientific information base, electronic maps, and publications in Azerbaijani and other languages. A related draft State Program for 2020-2030 was prepared by the Ministry of Culture together with the Public Union 'Organization for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan.' It proposed measures for protection under international law, damage assessment, research, and the prevention of destruction or appropriation (Mədəniyyət. 2022).

The domestic legal framework includes Article 77 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which defines the protection of historical and cultural monuments as a civic duty, as well as the laws 'On Culture' of February 6, 1998 and 'On the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments' of April 10, 1998. These provisions operate alongside international instruments, including the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 1992 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Azadinform.2021).

Monuments are classified as being of world, national, or local significance on the basis of the opinion of a designated scientific organization and a decision by the relevant executive authority. Construction, reinforcement, improvement, conservation, repair, restoration, reconstruction, and regeneration concerning state- or municipally owned monuments are financed through state and local budgets under the applicable administrative decision (e-qanun). The same framework assigns the relevant executive authority responsibility for compiling and approving classifications in accordance with international standards (Azərbaycan Respublikası.2014).

The legal framework distinguishes among conservation, restoration, reconstruction, and regeneration. Conservation is intended to stabilize existing material, including through protective layers, groundwater control, enclosure, and other measures that reduce environmental damage. Restoration seeks to preserve or recover historically substantiated features. Reconstruction requires particular caution because attempts to recreate an assumed original appearance on the basis of legends, drawings, or engravings may introduce elements that cannot be verified from the surviving fabric. Accordingly, authenticity and documentary evidence should guide intervention decisions.

Azerbaijan has sought to develop international cooperation in cultural heritage preservation by studying foreign experience and participating in the activities of UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICCROM, and other organizations. Azerbaijani specialists have attended international conferences and professional sessions, while selected examples of the country's heritage have been included in UNESCO frameworks (Mədəniyyət. 2022). Such cooperation supports professional exchange and international visibility, although inclusion in an international list does not replace the need for effective domestic monitoring, maintenance, and documentation.

Restoration and conservation have generally been financed from the state budget, local budgets, private contributions, and assistance from foreign or international organizations. The restoration of the small German church known as the Kirkha or Kappelhaus in Baku, financed by the German government, illustrates the role that bilateral cooperation can play. International participation may provide specialized expertise and resources, but sustainable preservation continues to depend on local institutional capacity and long-term maintenance after a project is completed.

April 18 is observed as the International Day for Monuments and Sites following the initiative associated with ICOMOS in 1982 and its approval by UNESCO in 1983. The day is intended to increase public awareness of the diversity and vulnerability of cultural heritage. In the Azerbaijani context, it has also provided a forum for discussing the condition of monuments affected by conflict and restricted access (Ombudsman, 2022).

3. CONFLICT, TERRITORIAL CHANGE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Karabakh conflict altered demographic patterns, administrative control, and access to cultural sites.

These changes affected the ability of Azerbaijani institutions and specialists to inspect, maintain, and document monuments over an extended period. A historically rigorous assessment of this heritage must therefore consider both direct physical damage and the institutional consequences of disrupted access. It must also distinguish evidence obtained through field inspection from statements made before access was restored.

The Azikh and Taglar caves are significant prehistoric sites in territories over which Azerbaijan re-established control following the 2020 war. Finds from these caves were displayed in the exhibition 'The First Inhabitants of Europe' at the Museum of Man in Paris in 1981. At a conference held on April 18, 2017, Ombudsman E. Suleymanova and V. Isayev stated that military use and other activity during the period of Armenian control had damaged the caves and other cultural sites; they also described measures pursued by Azerbaijani state institutions in response. These statements document official concerns, but comprehensive assessment requires field-based archaeological and conservation reports capable of identifying the type, date, and cause of each alteration.

Political commentary has also been used in debates over the history of the region. For example, Russian political scientist Modest Kolerov discussed the history of Yerevan and the Irevan Khanate in a 2016 interview (Hacıyev, 2010). Such commentary may illustrate contemporary political narratives, but it should not be treated as a substitute for archival sources, demographic records, archaeological evidence, or peer-reviewed historical research. Its inclusion is therefore relevant primarily to the study of memory politics and competing interpretations of the past.

Reports concerning monuments in territories formerly under Armenian control describe destruction, alteration, lack of maintenance, and the reuse of religious buildings. Because the causes and chronology of damage may differ from site to site, broad collective labels are analytically insufficient. A more precise approach is to classify documented cases according to intentional destruction, military use, neglect, environmental deterioration, unauthorized alteration, removal of inscriptions or decorative elements, and incompatible new construction. This classification makes it possible to compare evidence and to assess responsibility under applicable legal standards (Hacıyev, 2010, p. 55).

The reported condition of Islamic religious heritage is particularly serious. According to figures cited in the article, 63 of 67 officially operating Muslim mosques in Karabakh and seven surrounding districts were completely destroyed, while four were partially damaged and rendered unusable. The surviving structures included the Agdam Friday Mosque and the walls of the Ashaghi Govhar Agha, Yukhari Govhar Agha, and Saatli mosques in Shusha. Reports that some mosque buildings were used to keep animals have been presented as evidence of use inconsistent with their religious and cultural function (Mahmudov & Şükürov, 2005, p. 56). Independent documentation of individual sites, including dated photographs, architectural surveys, and material analysis, is necessary for a legally and historically robust assessment.

The dispute also includes allegations that monuments were altered or supplied with new decorative elements and masonry in ways that changed their historical attribution. Such claims should be evaluated through comparative photographs, conservation records, inscriptions, material analysis, and documentation of restoration interventions. The same evidentiary standard should apply to all monuments regardless of their religious or ethnic association. This approach reduces the influence of political rhetoric and places authenticity, provenance, and physical evidence at the center of the analysis.

The protection of cultural property during armed conflict is governed principally by the 1954 Hague Convention and its protocols. In 2012, Azerbaijan initiated discussion within the UNESCO Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict concerning the protection of cultural property in occupied territories (AzərTAc, 2022). The committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a document addressing the legal provisions applicable to occupied territories and mechanisms for their implementation. This process provided a framework through which states could raise documented concerns and seek international consideration.

The practical value of international mechanisms depends on access, reliable evidence, and the willingness of the relevant parties and institutions to conduct or facilitate assessment. Where international fact-finding missions are absent, later inventories may help establish physical condition but can face difficulties in determining when particular damage occurred. Claims for responsibility or compensation therefore require site-specific evidence, a defensible methodology for valuation, and a clear connection between the documented act and the applicable legal obligation.

The article identifies the 1954 Hague Convention, the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage as relevant instruments [medeniyyet.az]. These instruments establish important principles, but their application should be analyzed separately because they differ in subject matter, enforcement mechanisms, and the obligations they impose. A general reference to multiple conventions is not sufficient by itself to establish the legal characterization of a particular event.

4. INVENTORY AND POST-2020 RESTORATION

Following the 2020 change in territorial control, the Azerbaijani government began a preliminary inventory and monitoring process under Presidential Decree No. 1170 of October 29, 2020, “On the Organization of Temporary Special Management in the Liberated Territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.” Representatives of the Ministry of Culture monitored monuments and other cultural institutions to record their condition and establish measures for initial protection.

By the end of the reporting period cited in the article, 312 historical and cultural monuments had been monitored, and 106 additional objects of historical, architectural, or archaeological significance that were not included in the state register had been identified. Monitoring also recorded 571 cultural institutions: 286 libraries, 237 houses of culture and clubs, 19 museums, 24 children's music schools, one cinema, two theaters, and two galleries. Most were reported to be in a destroyed or severely damaged condition. The inventory was presented as a response to the absence of international fact-finding missions during the preceding period (Mahmudov & Şükürov, 2005, p. 45). The results were used to describe the condition in which the territories came under Azerbaijani administration.

Site-specific reports include the destruction of four nineteenth-century tombs in the Karagach cemetery, among them the tomb of Ugurlu Bey (Qarabağ Azərbaycanlı İcması, 2022). Such examples demonstrate why the inventory should record coordinates, legal status, architectural description, photographs, material condition, evidence of earlier interventions, and the degree of urgency. A standardized record enables later comparison and reduces the risk that reconstruction will proceed without sufficient documentation.

The State Program and post-2020 monitoring should be viewed as successive stages in the same policy process. The earlier program identified weaknesses in registers, protection zones, databases, and legal regulation; the later monitoring supplied new field data from territories that had previously been inaccessible to Azerbaijani institutions. The effectiveness of the restoration phase therefore depends on whether these new observations are integrated into a transparent and regularly updated national information system.

A round table held at the Heydar Aliyev Center on December 13, 2021 addressed the goals, challenges, methods, and prospects of cultural heritage restoration in the territories where Azerbaijani control had been restored. Presidential Assistant Anar Alakbarov described ongoing construction and restoration measures (Azərbaycan tarix yazır). Local specialists were joined by experts from Great Britain, Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia, Austria, Russia, Turkey, and other countries. The stated approach was to include monuments of different religious affiliations and to preserve their authentic appearance through international conservation methods.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation has participated in both restoration and the construction of new religious and cultural facilities. In August 2021, work was completed on the museum-mausoleum complex of Molla Panah Vagif in Shusha, following reconstruction that began in February. The bust of Molla Panah Vagif and the statue of composer Uzeyir Hajibeyli were also reinstalled. These projects reflect the use of heritage restoration as part of urban reconstruction and cultural policy. Their historical evaluation should consider not only completion dates and institutional sponsorship but also conservation methodology, documentation of original fabric, reversibility of intervention, and long-term management.

At the same round table, Manfred Wehdorn of the Austrian company Wehdorn Architekten characterized the work in Karabakh as part of the revival of the region. Francesco Giordano, chief architect of Simmetrico, stated that the proposed new Shusha mosque would refer to local building traditions through materials such as stone and wood. Architect Adalat Mammadov reported that the remains of the nineteenth-century Zangilan mosque had been conserved while a new mosque was being constructed nearby. This distinction between conserving a damaged historic structure and building a new religious facility is important: the two activities serve different purposes and should not be described as the same form of restoration.

Official discourse has also emphasized the protection of Christian monuments, including churches associated with Caucasian Albania, alongside the restoration of Muslim religious heritage (Mahmudov & Şükürov, 2005, p. 42). From a conservation perspective, the appropriate standard is equal protection based on historical evidence, legal status, authenticity, and condition rather than the present religious affiliation of a monument.

A briefing held at the National Art Museum on November 6, 2021 discussed the condition and attribution of cultural heritage in the affected territories. Deputy Head of the State Service for the Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage Azad Jafarli referred to allegations concerning the Gazanchilar church and to Soviet-era documentation, including a passport issued in 1987. He also stated that the church had undergone several interventions after the occupation of Shusha. These competing claims should be evaluated through the original monument passport, archival plans, photographic comparison, inscriptions, and a technical examination of construction phases. Politically charged characterizations do not contribute to historical analysis; identifying the evidence for each interpretation does.

5. CONCLUSION

The historical development of monument protection in Azerbaijan reveals three related transitions. First, the administrative system moved from Soviet registers and centralized management to a national legislative framework after independence. Second, the focus of policy expanded from legal designation toward digital documentation, protection zones, conservation, public presentation, and international cooperation. Third, the restoration of territorial control in 2020 transformed a long-standing problem of inaccessible heritage into an immediate program of inventory, stabilization, and reconstruction.

These transitions also reveal persistent limitations. Inherited registers contained inaccuracies; institutional reorganization sometimes weakened professional continuity; and the absence of access or international monitoring complicated the verification and dating of damage. Post-conflict reconstruction creates an additional risk: rapid rebuilding may conflict with the slow, evidence-based procedures required for conservation. Effective policy must therefore distinguish emergency stabilization, conservation of surviving fabric, restoration based on reliable documentation, and new construction inspired by historical forms.

The geopolitical and demographic history of the South Caucasus has made cultural monuments central to competing claims of identity and territorial belonging. This context explains the intensity of public language surrounding them, but it also makes neutral terminology especially important. Terms that assign collective guilt or characterize entire peoples do not identify actors, dates, evidence, or legal responsibility. Scholarly analysis should instead specify the institution or armed formation concerned, the documented action, the affected site, the source of the evidence, and the relevant legal rule.

The role of UNESCO, ICOMOS, and related bodies should likewise be assessed critically. International recognition can promote heritage and facilitate expertise, but it does not automatically produce monitoring access, funding, enforcement, or maintenance. Domestic institutions remain responsible for accurate inventories, professional project supervision, public reporting, and the protection of monuments associated with all communities that have contributed to the region's history.

The protection of historical monuments in Azerbaijan has evolved from a Soviet-era system of registers and specialized departments into a broader framework based on national legislation, state programs, international cooperation, and post-conflict monitoring. The 2014-2020 State Program identified key structural needs, including updated inventories, protection zones, passporting, mapping, databases, legal improvement, and publication. The monitoring initiated after 2020 extended this process into territories that had long been inaccessible to Azerbaijani heritage institutions.

The available material indicates extensive damage to monuments and cultural institutions, but historically and legally persuasive conclusions require site-specific documentation and transparent methods. Neutral academic terminology does not minimize the seriousness of destruction; it makes claims more precise and testable. Future policy should therefore prioritize emergency stabilization, authentic conservation, comprehensive digital records, independent professional assessment where feasible, and equal protection for monuments of different religious and cultural traditions. International cooperation can support these objectives, but sustainable results depend on institutional continuity, scholarly scrutiny, and long-term maintenance.

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ARMENIAN MIGRATION TO THE SOUTH CAUCASUS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT

The Russo-Qajar and Russo-Ottoman wars of the early nineteenth century profoundly changed the political and administrative configuration of the South Caucasus. The territories north of the Araz River came under Russian control, while those to the south remained under Qajar rule. After incorporating the northern Azerbaijani khanates, the Russian Empire abolished the khanate system and established administrative structures reflecting its political and strategic priorities. The resettlement of Armenians in the South Caucasus was a multi-stage historical process that predated the nineteenth century. According to the interpretation presented in the relevant literature, an important stage occurred in 1441, when the Armenian Gregorian patriarchal seat was transferred to Echmiadzin, then within the Garagoyunlu state. Large-scale Armenian migration to the South Caucasus intensified after the Russo-Qajar War of 1826-1828 and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828-1829. Later Russo-Ottoman conflicts and political upheavals in the Ottoman Empire generated further waves. This article examines the political mechanisms, demographic consequences, and imperial considerations associated with these migrations, particularly in Northern Azerbaijan. It interprets migration as a process linked to Russian imperial policy, military expansion, settlement incentives, and the reorganization of newly incorporated territories.

Keywords: Armenians, South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Russian Empire, Qajars

1. HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF ARMENIAN RESETTLEMENT

Following Russian expansion into the South Caucasus in the first half of the nineteenth century, population settlement acquired strategic importance. The authorities viewed the demographic composition of newly incorporated territories as a factor in consolidating imperial rule. Within this policy, the settlement of Christian populations, including Armenians, became increasingly significant.

Russian statesmen had considered resettling Eastern Christians in the Caucasus even before the complete conquest of Northern Azerbaijan. Christian settlement was therefore not merely a consequence of the treaties of 1828 and 1829; it formed part of an earlier imperial approach to the region. One early initiative came from General P. D. Sisianov, commander-in-chief of the Caucasus. In October 1803, he referred to Armenian support for “the rapid and successful establishment of Russian rule in these lands” (Əmrahov, 2022, p. 34). Sisianov also encouraged Armenian Bishop John to facilitate the movement of Armenians from Iravan to Russian-controlled territories.

The Russian government also appealed to other Eastern Christian communities. In 1804, Sisianov invited 16,000 Armenians from the Qajar state to Northern Azerbaijan. This interest reflected Russia's geopolitical rivalry with the Qajar and Ottoman states. Armenians lived in both empires, knew local political and economic conditions, and were regarded by Russian officials as a potentially important Christian constituency in newly incorporated territories.

Demographic settlement and imperial consolidation were therefore closely connected. In addition to military and administrative control, Russian authorities pursued policies that could alter the social composition of strategically important areas. Under Alexander I and Nicholas I, Armenian migration from the Ottoman and Qajar states became increasingly linked to Russia's broader regional objectives.

This gradual process was evident before the major migrations of the late 1820s. After Alexander I

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ascended the throne in 1801, Armenians requested permission to settle near Derbent. The emperor approved the request by decree on December 21, 1802 (Məmmədli, 2008, p. 12).

The demographic situation in the Azerbaijani khanates before the large-scale migrations of the late 1820s is important for assessing the subsequent changes. Russian authorities paid particular attention to Karabakh, which had both strategic and economic importance. Citing the Acts of the Caucasian Archaeological Commission, Kh. D. Khalilov reports that approximately 10,000 families lived in Karabakh in 1805. By 1808, warfare and displacement had reduced this number to 7,474 (Əliyev, 2019, p. 12).

In 1810, approximately 12,000 families lived in the Karabakh Khanate, including 2,500 Christian families. Muslims therefore constituted more than 79% of the families and Christians approximately 21% (Шопен, 1852, p. 23). The 1823 tax register of Karabakh, compiled by Russian officials Yermolov and Mogilevsky, recorded 20,095 families: 15,729 Azerbaijani and 4,366 Armenian. Azerbaijanis constituted more than 78% of the population, while Armenian families accounted for approximately 22% (Шахмурадов, 2015, p. 45).

Nakhchivan and Iravan had comparable demographic complexity. According to the Armenian author V. Parsamyan, the Iravan Khanate had 169,155 inhabitants before Russian annexation: 84,089 Muslims (49.7%), 57,305 Armenians (33.8%), 26,911 Kurds (16%), and 850 members of other groups (0.5%) (Вердиева & Гусейнзаде, 2003, p. 12). These statistics provide a demographic baseline for assessing the effects of imperial-sponsored resettlement on an ethnically and religiously diverse population.

Following the Russo-Qajar War of 1826–1828 and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828–1829, the proportion of Armenians in parts of the South Caucasus increased as a result of migration encouraged and organized by the Russian authorities. Plans for Armenian resettlement were discussed during the Russo-Qajar War. S. N. Glinka notes that the Russian officer Bulaksky knew of Nicholas I's intentions regarding the future status of the territories north of the Araz River (Вердиева & Гусейнзаде, 2003, p. 23).

Count Paskevich also involved Colonel Lazarev, a Russian officer of Armenian origin, in contacts with Armenian communities. This involvement shows that the Russian administration considered these relations relevant to consolidating imperial authority in newly conquered territories. During the Russo-Qajar War, Armenian families were relocated to Karabakh and settled in villages including Maraghaly, Janyatagh, Yukhari Chayli, and Ashagi Chayli (Qasımlı, 2014, p. 45).

The Treaty of Turkmenchay provided the legal basis for a major phase of population movement. Article XV allowed officials and residents of Qajar territories to move with their families to Russian-controlled regions within a specified period. Migrants could take or sell movable property without customs duties and had five years to dispose of real estate.

Colonel Lazarev was entrusted with organizing the resettlement. Russian writer and diplomat A. S. Griboyedov criticized aspects of Lazarev's activities and noted the involvement of Argutinsky, Gamazov, and other officers (Əmrahov, 2023, p. 10). Not all Armenians in South Azerbaijan wished to move to Russian-controlled territories. The Russian government therefore offered economic incentives, including opportunities to trade, acquire land, and receive temporary exemptions from taxes and zemstvo dues. These material incentives supplemented the treaty provisions and made settlement in Russian-controlled territories more attractive. They could also weaken a rival state's economic resources while strengthening newly incorporated territories.

After the Treaty of Turkmenchay was signed, Russian troops withdrew from Tabriz on March 9, 1828. Armenians from settlements near Turkmenchay subsequently moved toward Karabakh. S. N. Glinka recorded that some migrants carried weapons because of concerns about possible attacks during the journey. The migration thus occurred in a militarized post-war environment involving armed groups, Russian forces, and imperial officers.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC CONSEQUENCES IN NAKHCHIVAN, IRAVAN, AND KARABAKH

In 1827-1828, Azerbaijanis comprised 4,170 of approximately 4,600 families in the Nakhchivan Khanate, or about 90%. After 1,400 Azerbaijani families left, the number recorded in 1832 fell to 2,791, approximately 60% of the population (Əmrahov, 2022, p. 122). In 1829, Nakhchivan city had 3,641 Azerbaijani and 1,829 Armenian inhabitants (Шопен, 1852, p. 33). The same records listed 5,553 Azerbaijanis and 7,974 Armenians in Nakhchivan district; 3,224 Azerbaijanis and 179 Armenians in Ordubad city; 3,985 Azerbaijanis and 3,550 Armenians in Ordubad district; and 4,960 Azerbaijanis and 3,508 Armenians in Daralayaz district. In 1828, the Armenian Province, formed from the former Iravan and Nakhchivan khanates, contained 1,111 settlements. Sixty-two villages were recorded as Armenian-populated, while 359 Muslim villages had experienced substantial population loss (Süleymanov, 2008, p. 23).

The demographic balance continued to change. According to the cited calculations, the proportion of Azerbaijani Turks in the Armenian Province declined from 73.8% in 1828 to 46.2% in 1834-1835 (Вердиева & Гусейнзаде, 2003, p. 56). Administrative calculations for 1832 recorded 32,400 Azerbaijanis and 17,400 Armenians in Karabakh Province (Вердиева & Гусейнзаде, 2003, p. 99). Together, these figures indicate substantial post-war demographic change associated with warfare, displacement, state-sponsored migration, and Russian administrative reorganization.

According to data cited by X. D. Khalilov and S. P. Zelinsky, 8,249 Armenian families were resettled in Iravan, Karabakh, and Shamakhi under the conditions created by the Treaty of Turkmenchay (Шахмурадов, 2015, p. 34). S. N. Glinka states that more than 5,000 families moved from the Urmia and Salmas khanates alone to territories north of the Araz River. Although the initial plan focused on Nakhchivan and Iravan, food shortages led authorities to direct some families toward Karabakh. The cited figures indicate that approximately 40,000 Armenians moved from the Qajar state. Further migration from the Ottoman Empire followed the Treaty of Edirne (Шопен, 1852, p. 112).

N. I. Shavrov states that more than 40,000 Qajar Armenians and 84,600 Ottoman Armenians were resettled in the South Caucasus between 1828 and 1830. They settled on state-owned lands in the Yelizavetpol, Iravan, and Tiflis governorates, as well as in Borchaly, Akhaltsikhe, and Akhalkalaki (Süleymanov, 2008, p. 66). Approximately 200,000 dessiatines of state land were reportedly allocated, and additional land was purchased from Muslim landowners. Shavrov argued that official statistics omitted some settlers and that the actual number was considerably higher (Əliyev, 2019, p. 3). Resettlement therefore extended across several strategically important areas and involved the allocation of land and other state resources.

3. RESETTLEMENT FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE WIDER SOUTH CAUCASUS

Armenians were settled not only in Northern Azerbaijan but also in territories corresponding to present-day Georgia. The Russian government settled groups arriving from the Ottoman Empire in Akhalkalaki and other districts. According to the cited data, Count Paskevich relocated approximately 30,000 Armenians from the Ottoman Empire to Samtskhe-Javakheti, Erusheti, and Palakatsio in 1828, significantly changing the demographic composition of these territories (Шахмурадов, 2015, p. 45).

On December 3, 1829, a special committee established by Paskevich under Zavilevsky planned the movement of families from Kars, Erzurum, and Bayazet to Russian-administered territories. Further Armenian families were subsequently resettled from Erzurum, Ardahan, Kars, and Bayazet (Süleymanov, 2008, p. 23). These developments show that Armenian resettlement formed part of a broader South Caucasian imperial policy rather than a process confined to Northern Azerbaijan.

Russia's victories in the Russo-Qajar (1826-1828) and Russo-Ottoman (1828-1829) wars created favorable conditions for large-scale Armenian migration. During negotiations with the Qajar state, Nicholas I instructed I. F. Paskevich to combine diplomacy with military pressure until Russia secured strategically important positions, including Iravan and territories beyond the Araz River (Əmrahov, 2022, p. 122).

The Treaty of Turkmenchay, signed on February 10, 1828, formalized the new political order and made the Araz River a major boundary between Russian-controlled territories and the Qajar state. It strengthened Russian authority in the South Caucasus and established legal conditions favorable to population movement.

Article XV was particularly important because it allowed inhabitants of the relevant Qajar territories to move with their families to Russian-controlled regions within a specified period. A. S. Griboyedov participated in drafting the treaty provisions (Əliyev, 2019, p. 45). The Qajar government agreed not to obstruct migration. It allowed one year for relocation and the duty-free disposal of movable property, and five years for the sale of real estate. Russian officials considered this provision important; one described the resettlement of Armenians from the Qajar state as a significant consequence of the war (Məmmədli, 2008, p. 31).

Documents indicate that Colonel Kh. E. Lazarev and other Russian officers were directly involved in the practical organization of migration. Their responsibilities included providing migrants with food and other necessities during the journey and assisting them after arrival. The scale of migration created logistical difficulties. When more than 5,000 Armenian families approached the Araz River, Russian authorities reported insufficient food supplies in the future Iravan Province. Some poorer families were therefore directed toward Karabakh. Lazarev informed Paskevich that more than 1,000 families from near Maragha and Tabriz had left their homes and that Christians from Urmia, Salmas, and Khoy were preparing to migrate. He proposed sending some of the poorest families to Karabakh, where they could receive food until the next harvest (Əmrahov, 2023, p. 12).

Migration also involved severe hardship. In early 1828, 750 Armenian and Greek families from the Qajar state were settled near Barda. According to the cited account, poor-quality food caused disease, and 1,012 Armenian migrants from Maragha died within three months (Əliyev, 2019, p. 23). Thus, food shortages, disease, administrative difficulties, and limited local capacity complicated the implementation of the imperial resettlement policy.

In 1828-1829, 6,946 families, or approximately 35,560 migrants, were recorded as arriving in Northern Azerbaijan from the Qajar state. Of these, 2,558 families settled in urban and rural areas of Nakhchivan Province (Шопен, 1852, p. 112). Approximately 3,000 families, or 15,000 people, settled in Karabakh Province, while 1,458 Armenian families settled in Iravan Province.

Russian authorities provided settlers with protection during travel, land, financial assistance, trading rights, and temporary exemptions from taxes and zemstvo dues. Lazarev emphasized the availability of agricultural land and state support in Iravan, Nakhchivan, and Karabakh (Шопен, 1852, p. 33). Russian policy therefore actively facilitated permanent settlement through legal, economic, and administrative measures.

Many Armenians who migrated from the Qajar state had lived in South Azerbaijani regions such as Salmas, Urmia, Khoy, Maragha, and Tabriz. Many subsequently settled in the former Nakhchivan, Karabakh, and Iravan khanates. Russian authorities sought to increase the Christian population in strategically important areas. N. N. Shavrov also noted that the Armenian population of the Yelizavetpol and Iravan governorates had previously been comparatively limited (Qasımlı, 2014, p. 150).

Russian resettlement policy consolidated imperial authority, increased the Christian population in selected districts, and linked settler communities to the administrative system. Armenian migrants, in turn, received land, economic privileges, tax exemptions, and new settlement opportunities.

Migration resulted from war, imperial expansion, diplomatic agreements, economic incentives, security concerns, and migrants' choices. Because it occurred in inhabited territories, it also produced long-term demographic, political, and social consequences.

4. CONCLUSION

Armenian migration to the nineteenth-century South Caucasus was a complex, multi-stage process shaped by the region's geopolitical transformation. Although Armenian communities existed in parts of the region before the nineteenth century, migration expanded substantially after Russian expansion and the wars of 1826-1828 and 1828-1829.

The resettlements of the late 1820s were not solely spontaneous population movements. Russian military and administrative involvement, the Treaty of Turkmenchay, land allocation, tax exemptions, financial assistance, and the organized distribution of migrants demonstrate the imperial state's active role. Statistics from Karabakh, Nakhchivan, and Iravan show that migration altered territories with established Muslim, Armenian, and other populations. Its significance therefore lies in the interaction of migration with warfare, displacement, imperial administration, land distribution, and regional political reorganization. The policy was regional in scope and affected present-day Georgia and other parts of the South Caucasus. Armenian migration formed part of a broader strategy for governing territories acquired from the Qajar and Ottoman states. Food shortages, disease, and administrative problems nevertheless complicated its implementation.

Nineteenth-century Armenian migration should therefore be examined at the intersection of demographic history and Russian imperial policy. Military conquest created the political conditions, treaties provided the legal framework, and administrative and economic incentives facilitated settlement. The resulting demographic changes influenced the region's subsequent social and political development. The demographic changes were thus products of interconnected military, political, administrative, and socioeconomic processes. A comparative study of imperial archives, population registers, and contemporary accounts could clarify their scale, geographical distribution, and long-term consequences.

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