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Note from the Editor in Chief

We are pleased to invite all scholars to publish their research papers on History and fields, related to History, written impartially and analyzing the historical past without political bias.

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

Our purpose is to provide a forum for scientific research without political overtones.

Kind regards,

Professor Huseyn Baghirov

Founder of the Western Caspian University

THE ARAB POLITICS OF IRAQ DURING THE BAATH PARTY RULE: BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Abstract: The paper analyzes one of the priority aspects of Iraq's foreign policy during the reign of the Ba'ath Party (1968-2003), relations with Arab countries. This policy was elevated to the rank of the most important state strategy and was given a special role in the scale of foreign policy priorities. It was allocated to an exceptional part of state politics, called "Arab politics", "*al-siyasa al-arabiyya*".

The research examines the basic ideological and theoretical principles of Ba'athism, which formed the basis of "Arab politics" and on the basis of which the ruling Baath of Iraq built its relations with Arab countries. In this vein, it considers the fundamental principle of Ba'athism, the idea of "Arab unity", which constituted the first element of the party's slogan "Unity, freedom, socialism" and within the framework of which, at certain stages, Ba'ath sought to closely interact with Arab countries. Analyzing official documents, the author concludes that on the issue of Arab unity, Iraq could only unite with those countries that had political systems identical to it. Based on this logic, it becomes clear that among the Arab countries with which Iraq shared common ideological and political principles, Syria, as well as one of the centers of Arab nationalism, Egypt could be natural partners of Iraq within the framework of integration processes in the Arab world. In addition, these countries were among the countries that Iraq considered as opposing Israel and with which it primarily sought to establish close cooperation, including in the military sphere, to resolve the Palestinian problem. It was noted, however, that the radicalism of official Baghdad on this issue not only placed Iraq in isolation in the Arab world, but also sometimes created obstacles to inter-Arab integration and cooperation. Often in his policies there was a deep gap between the declared principles and their practical implementation.

Within the framework of "Arab politics", the article examines in detail Iraqi-Syrian and Iraqi-Egyptian bilateral relations throughout the entire period of the Baath Party's rule in Iraq, revealing their most characteristic features and peculiarities.

Keywords: *Iraq, Ba'ath Party, Arab politics, Syria, Egypt, bilateral relations, Arab unity*

INTRODUCTION

The 35-year rule of the Arab Socialist Resurrection Party or Baath Party in Iraq (1968-2023) was a concentrated expression of important processes in all spheres of socio-political and economic life of Iraqi society; it also contained most of the contradictions that determined the uneven, sometimes zigzag development of the country. The defining trend in the socio-political development of Iraq during the reign of the Baath Party was

its gradual transformation into the leading force of society through the creation and development of a centralized system of ideological, political and administrative control, a system of one-party dictatorship. This process was accompanied by increased “Baathization” of the Iraqi political system, the main essence of which was the transformation of Iraqi Baathism into a national ideology. One of the inspirers and initiators of this course was Saddam Hussein, under whose direct leadership a one-party system of governing society was formed for the first time in the history of Iraq. Having concentrated absolute power in the country in his hands, S. Hussein gradually transformed it into the personal dictatorship of the “chief leader”.

These trends were most clearly manifested in the foreign policy activities of the Baath Party, the main goal of which was to create a solid base for transforming Iraq into the leader of the Arab world and the “center of power” in the Middle East, based on the ideological and theoretical platform of Baathism, one of the varieties of Arab nationalism.

This research makes an attempt, within the framework of Baath foreign policy, to consider the main directions of the so-called “Arab policy” of Iraq during the entire period of the rule of this party using the example of relations with Syria and Egypt, to identify their most characteristic features and characteristics.

“Arab policy” as a strategic direction of Iraqi foreign policy

From the very first days of establishing its power in Iraq in July 1968, the Baath Party declared that it intended to make fundamental changes in the country's foreign policy and formulate new approaches to solving international, regional and inter-Arab problems. In a statement by the Iraqi government on July 18, 1968, the need to provide conditions for the victory of the “Arab liberation struggle” and, in particular, the liberation of Palestine, was declared as a priority foreign policy goal. The statement indicated that “the revolution (Baath - author) will establish its relations with other states depending on their position in relation to the interests of the Arab nation and, above all, to the Palestinian problem” [Al-Bayan rakam vahida (1970): 3].

Let us note that the priority goals and objectives of Iraq's foreign policy became the subject of special discussion at the VII regional congress of the Ba'ath (November 1968). The congress obliged the party leadership to “work towards improving relations with Arab countries”, strengthening the “unity of Arab states”, pursue an active regional policy, expand ties with the USSR and other socialist countries and differentiate political relations with developed Western countries according to the degree of their “friendliness” and “hostility to the Arab nation” [The Political Statement of the 7th Regional Conference (1969): 10]. The congress also directed the ruling party to focus on solving regional problems, primarily the Palestinian problem.

In Iraq's foreign policy, one of the leading directions was its relations with Arab countries, which were allocated to an independent area of policy called “al-siyasa al-arabiyya”, “Arab politics”. In all official documents, decisions of the congresses of the ruling Baath, statements of the highest body of state power, the Council of the Revolutionary Command and Government, speeches of party and government officials, relations with Arab countries were considered as a priority task facing Iraq and stemming from the Baathist ideology and strategy developed by regional and pan-Arab congresses.

The starting point of Iraq's "Arab policy" was the principle of the country's ethnic, linguistic, historical, cultural and psychological affiliation with the Arab world. This provision was recorded in the provisional constitutions of Iraq (1968 and 1970), where it was noted that: "Iraq is an integral part of a single Arab homeland, and the Iraqi people are part of a single Arab nation" [Vizarat as-sakafa va-l-ilan. Ad-dustur al-muvaqqat (1969): 36].

Initially, the main components of the "Arab policy" of Iraq were of a general nature and boiled down to the implementation of the unity of the Arab countries; the liberation of all occupied Arab territories, primarily Palestine; supporting liberation movements in Arab countries. At that time, Iraq advocated strengthening ties primarily between "Arab progressive and revolutionary forces," and considered itself "a reliable base for their activities" [Masir at-Thawra (1969): 48]. The same position was confirmed at the Tenth Pan-Arab Congress of the Baath Party (March 1970), the Report of which spoke of the need to "transform the territory of Iraq into a refuge for revolutionary Arab forces and put the country's potential at the service of a pan-Arab strategy" [Arab Ba'th Socialist Party. The Political Manifesto (1970): 14]. As we see, from the very beginning of its activities, Baath outlined its claims to a leading role and leadership in the Arab world; it was the party, in the opinion of its leaders, "that was called upon to coordinate and direct the actions of individual Arab revolutionary groups" [Masir at-Thawra (1969): 49].

As the regional situation changed and new challenges emerged, the content of Iraq's "Arab policy" underwent a certain evolution and was enriched with specific goals and objectives. Accordingly, these goals and objectives found their detailed expression in theoretical documents - the "Charter of National Action" of Iraq (November 1971) [The National Action Charter (1973): 9], decisions of the VIII Regional Congress of the Baath Party (January 1974) [The Political Report adapted from the 8th Regional Congress (1970): 132].

This particularly concerned one of the fundamental principles of the Ba'ath, which formed the basis of the party's slogan "Unity, freedom, socialism", the idea of "Arab unity". Even in the first party program adopted in 1947, its most important goal was proclaimed "the unification on a nationalist basis of all Arab countries into a single state organism." The common language, territory, culture and "sacred mission of the Arabs" were named as objective prerequisites for its implementation [Nidal al-ba'th fi sabil al-vahda va-l-huriyya va-l-ishtirakiyya (1970): 27]. The important place given by Ba'athist ideologists in their theoretical principles to the problem of Arab unity was not accidental, given the exceptional popularity of the idea of unification in Arab countries. Unity was considered the main slogan and the highest demand of all political forces in the Arab world, elevated to the rank of state policy. However, the Ba'ath leaders invariably emphasized that only they were "the only consistent exponents of the idea of Arab unity" [ibidem: 31], claiming the role of leaders of the united Arab state, which was planned to be created under the auspices of this party and relying on its slogans. In the triad, "unity, freedom, socialism", the order of words is not accidental, as it may seem at first glance: since the Baath set national goals, concentrated in the concept of "unity", as the basis of its domestic and foreign policy, then only through achieving "unity" "a path to "freedom" was possible, under which it was possible to build "socialism" in society. The difference between the Baathist concept of "Arab unity" and others, according to Baathist theorists, was due to the fact that it brought this problem out of "the captivity of general ideas and

vague phrases, gave it flesh and blood, opened up the path of implementation for it, connecting it with the common struggle Arab peoples for liberation" [Farah (1973): 56]. The party leaders considered the implementation of Arab unity to be one of the effective forms of the Arab struggle for national independence.

One of the important documents that confirmed Iraq's desire to implement the principle of Arab unity was the country's Interim Constitution (October 1968), which proclaimed the main goal of the "sovereign people's democratic republic (Iraq)" to be the creation of a unified Arab state on the principles of socialism, based on the fact that "the Iraqi people are part of the Arab nation" [Vizarat as-sakafa va-l-ilan (1969): 10]. The desire to implement the principle of Arab unity was confirmed by the Iraqi leadership in the Charter of National Action (November 1971) and the decisions of the VII (November 1968) and VIII (January 1974) regional congresses of the ruling Baath. An analysis of these official government and party documents allows us to assert that Iraq's position on the issue of Arab unity followed logically from the impossibility of agreeing to state unification with countries that had opposing political systems. If we exclude from this list, in Baathist terminology, "Arab feudal-bourgeois regimes," then the circle of countries with which Iraq, in principle, could lay the foundations of a united Arab state, narrows significantly. He considered Egypt and Syria as Iraq's main allies. However, at that time, the country's leadership was not ready for political unification with these states, in return for which they proposed strengthening ties between them and intensifying their struggle against "international and regional reaction." Although the reasons for refusing immediate unification with Egypt and Syria were not given, nevertheless, the unsuccessful experience of the first unification project of the Arab countries, the creation of the United Arab Republic within Egypt and Syria (1958-1961) and the Federation of Arab Republics (1958, 1972- 1977), Ba'athist leaders began to exercise caution in their previously radical calls for Arab unity. A certain role here was played by a critical understanding of unsuccessful lessons, "experiments of past associations," which was confirmed in the documents of the IX, X and XI pan-Arab (national) party congresses and the decisions of some regional congresses of the Iraqi Baath. An analysis of these documents confirms the course towards a more balanced and pragmatic approach to the idea of Arab unity, which was expressed in "the need to work towards the political, economic and military unity of the Arab homeland" [Arab Ba'th Socialist Party. The Political Manifesto (1970): 21].

After carefully studying the mistakes and miscalculations of "previous experiences and experiments," the pan-Arab and regional Baath leadership concluded that it was advisable, in "the given historical conditions, to create the necessary atmosphere conducive to the implementation of unity" [ibidem: 15]. At one time, the founder and ideologist of the Ba'ath M. Aflyak noted: "Reality differs from theoretically compiled projects. Our goal is to make the best possible use of any situation" [Aflaq (1947): 63]. Despite the obvious failures in the practical implementation of unification projects, "the Baath continued to consider its concept of Arab unity as a flexible, not frozen form," therefore, "the correct use of objective and subjective factors associated with changing historical conditions" could make adjustments to the forms, terms, necessary for its implementation [ibidem: 65].

Another reason that determined the cautious approach of Iraqi leaders to the issue of state unification with Arab countries was related to their position on the Arab-Israeli

conflict, which fundamentally rejected all political means as a means of solving the problem. Iraq's position was quite clearly stated by President A.H. al-Bakr (1968-1979), stating that “with regard to the unification formulas proposed by some Arab countries, it must be taken into account that any unity serves the interests of Arab confrontation with the enemy, the complete liberation of Arab territories” [Al-Bakr (1977): 96]. The National Action Charter also confirmed the official point of view of the Iraqi leadership, which considered the unification of Arab countries on a different basis - “a fiction that creates a basis not for the implementation of Arab unity, but only for the implementation of various reactionary plans” [The National Action Charter (1973): 9]. It is absolutely clear that with this approach to the problem, Iraqi leaders could not agree to state unification with countries whose positions were officially regarded as “capitulatory”.

At the VIII regional congress of the Baath (1974), a final decision was made on practical methods and ways to unite the Arabs into a single state, the main provisions of which were as follows: firstly, the Baath proceeded from the real fact of the existence of independent Arab states and that the split of the “Arab nation is of a political, economic and psychological nature.” In this regard, a situation arose in which it was necessary to act within the existing state borders, but at the same time try to promote the integration of the Arab world. Secondly, based on the presence of the mentioned factors, the ruling party congress indicated a path that could lead to the creation of a unified Arab state. Its essence was to establish political control first in one country, and then in other countries - until the principle of Arab unity was realized and a single Arab state was created [The Political Report adapted by the 8th Regional Congress (1974): 177]. It was assumed that this process would be led by the Baath Party, whose ideological principles and organizational forms would form the core of the future united Arab state and which would play a leading role in this unification. “The development of the regional state will be put at the service of building a national state, through the organizational and ideological unity of the Baath Party and on the basis of its political program” [ibidem: 177], noted at the congress. At the same time, in determining future tasks, the congress encountered certain difficulties not only of a terminological nature, but also related to the need to revise some of the ideological and theoretical principles of the political platform of Baathism itself. The question of unifying the “Arab fatherland” could not but lead to a lack of clear differentiation, and sometimes even a contradiction between programs - minimum and maximum, a confusion of the strategic line of a foreign policy nature with the party’s tactics in the field of internal political development. This contradiction was not difficult to notice in the Political Report to the Congress, which, while defining the building of socialism among the main tasks of the party as “a necessary condition for achieving freedom, the unity of the Arab nation and its modern rise,” at the same time asserted that “only in a single Arab state is it possible building an Arab socialist system” [ibidem: 85].

It should be noted that the socio-political development of Arab countries after they achieved political independence and global challenges made significant adjustments to the ideological platform of Baathism, and the content of its main ideological doctrines, including the idea of Arab unity, underwent changes. During this period, the prevailing tendency within the Arab world was not towards unity, but towards deepening division, which was confirmed by the history of the Baath itself, which had been in a state of ideological and organizational split since the mid-60s [Baghirova (2023): 1879]. Later, in

one of his interviews, the leader of the Iraqi Baathists, Saddam Hussein (1979-2003), described the changes that had occurred in the position of the ruling party on the issue of Arab unity: "Twenty years ago, we thought that unity could be achieved through constitutional, political and policy measures. And now we see that unity or approximation to it cannot be achieved only by political and constitutional acts. And we began to look for opportunities to act towards unity in other areas as well" [Hussein (1981): 82].

In addition to attempts to implement the idea of "Arab unity" for the ruling Baath, one of the important areas of its activity was focusing on solving the Palestinian problem. Although Iraq did not border Israel and belonged to those Arab countries that conventionally constituted the "second line" of the Arab-Israeli confrontation, nevertheless, the existence of the unresolved Palestinian problem, which negatively affected the general political situation in the region, could not be ignored. However, unlike the "front-line" Arab countries, Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, Baghdad had a certain freedom of action and much more room for maneuver in implementing its "Arab policy" and making practical decisions. In addition, in the system of political priorities in Iraq, the factor of Palestinian refugees did not occupy a priority place. The insignificant presence of Palestinians in Iraq and the strict regulation of their activities by the authorities made it possible not to fear the destabilizing influence of this factor on the internal political situation. Party congresses oriented the leadership of the ruling Ba'ath to conduct energetic work in "the direction of solving the problems of the Arab nation" [The Political Statement of the 7th Regional Conference (1969): 43] Thus, in the final document of the 7th regional party congress (November 1968) there was a "special" approach of the Iraqi Baathists to solving the Palestinian problem was defined, which rejected all political methods of settlement as "capitulatory" and "treasonous". The only way to solve this problem was recognized as a war with the "Zionist entity" (Israel - author) and the "imperialist states" that supported it until the "enemies of the Arab nation" were completely defeated [ibidem: 18]. The use of the oil factor was proposed as a "political weapon". In general, the radical and uncompromising policy on the Arab-Israeli settlement proclaimed and pursued by official Baghdad should have created the image of the only until the end consistent promoter of the "goals of the Arab nation for the liberation of Palestine" [Muhammad (1980): 88].

Along with declarative statements, Baghdad in practice sought to normalize its relations with Arab countries that were directly opposed to Israel, to achieve unification of efforts and coordination of their actions. At the end of 1968, he put forward the idea of creating a unified military command with the participation of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq. At the same time, the Iraqi leadership proceeded from the fact that "Israeli aggression is directed not only against any specific Arab country, but against the entire Arab world" and stated that "Palestine, Syria, Jordan and we constitute a single Arab people, the Iraqi army is an army the entire Arab people, and if any country is attacked, we will consider it as an aggression against the entire Arab people" [The Political Analysis of Present Arab Condition (1975): 31].

Based on its position on the impossibility of resolving the Palestinian problem by peaceful means, Iraq sharply criticized King Hussein's plan put forward in the spring of 1969, which provided for an end to the state of war, recognition of Israel's borders, its right to existence, security and peace, and a guarantee of free navigation in international waters of the countries of the region, with the simultaneous Israeli withdrawal to the line

on June 4, 1967. On April 22, 1969, Baghdad radio broadcast the text of a statement by the regional leadership of the ruling Baath, which stated that it considered these proposals as “a prelude to the expected measures aimed at imposing Arab peoples of someone else's will.” It emphasized that the Baath rejects all peaceful means of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and believes that such solutions are based on “capitulation, which suppresses the Arab will to resist” [Al-mutamar as-suhufi (1969): 21].

However, by the beginning of the 80s, under the influence of a number of international and regional factors, as well as a more pragmatic approach to the problems of the Arab world, Iraq's position on the Palestinian settlement had undergone a certain transformation. Iraqi leaders recognized the possibility of a comprehensive settlement of the conflict through peaceful means. They confirmed the “fundamental fidelity” of their position, “rejection of defeatist decisions in any form, condemnation of the Arab regimes responsible for the defeat...”, but were forced to admit that “a very large distance separated in reality these slogans, programs from their practical needs.” According to them, the party's “own capacity to play a leading, decisive role ... to put these slogans and programs into practice” was insufficient due to its “limited position in the Arab world” [The Political Analysis of Present Arab Condition (1975): 131]. Drawing conclusions from “mistakes in the implementation of its national tasks in relation to the Palestinian problem,” the party leadership was able to generally soberly assess its own failures in this matter as “the natural result of a complex of mistakes and misconceptions.” It was also forced to admit, “the Baath became involved in national activities on the problems of Palestine in a form that significantly exceeded its subjective capabilities at that stage” [Ibidem: 139].

One cannot but agree with this generally correct and critical assessment of the Ba'ath activities on this issue, since even a superficial analysis of its policy in this direction revealed an inflexible, rather monotonous and straightforward, and most importantly, a position far from reality that could not satisfy Iraq's ambitions and ensure him the status of a state - the leader of the Arab world and the entire Middle East.

Based on the analysis of the theoretical principles of Baathism, which form the basis of the “Arab policy,” its practical implementation will be examined using the example of Iraq's bilateral relations with the leading Arab countries, Syria and Egypt.

Iraqi-Syrian Relations Within the Framework of the “Arab Policy”

It should be noted that in the overall system of Arab relations in Iraq, relations with Syria were the most difficult area. Their main feature can be characterized as permanent tension and conflict, with some periods of normalization.

Even with a superficial analysis of the reasons that gave rise to the Iraqi-Syrian contradictions, one can quite easily discover many common interests and points of contact both in bilateral relations and on the fundamental problems of the Arab world and the entire region. A factor capable of bringing two neighboring states closer could be their party and ideological identity. But it is precisely the disagreements in this area were the root cause of tension between the two countries, according to a number of researchers of the modern history of Iraq and Syria [Akhundova, Baghirova (2000): 122; Kienle (1990): 192]. A split in the pan-Arab leadership in February 1966, when its founder and leader Michel Aflaq was removed from leadership as a result of an internal party struggle, and power passed into the hands of representatives of the pro-Syrian wing of the

Baath, led to the refusal of the Iraqi regional branch of the party to implement the decisions of the new pan-Arab leadership, as “ illegal, anti-national and divisive.” The position of the Iraqi Baath was recorded in the Political Report of the Eighth Regional Party Congress, which stated: “From this period, the party in Syria was led by forces armed with false ideological, organizational and political principles, trying to separate the Iraqi Baath, which had a new, more progressive ideological, political and organizational platform, from the Syrian” [The Political Report adapted by the 8th Regional Congress (1974): 25].

The transfer to Baghdad of the headquarters of the old pan-Arab leadership, headed by the founder of the party and its General Secretary M. Aflyak, gave additional advantages to the Iraqi Baathists in their struggle with the Syrian Baath for leadership at the party-ideological level [Baram (1986): 128]. In fact, from that time on, two independent parties acted in the political arena with their own pan-Arab and regional leadership, new program guidelines and goals, strategy and tactics. Ideological rivalry and the struggle for influence, refracted through a complex system of international, regional and national-state interests, have become a factor of instability and tension in bilateral relations for many years. Over time, the party-ideological confrontation began to be burdened with the political ambitions and mistrust at the personal level. The struggle for leadership in the Arab world objectively turned these countries into irreconcilable rivals, which, against the background of complex regional problems in general, did not meet either their interests or the interests of the Arab world as a whole.

Another negative aspect of Iraqi-Syrian relations, according to a number of researchers, was the unequal approach to ways and methods of solving regional problems, primarily the Palestinian problem [Muftiler (1996): 123]. Iraqi leaders considered their position on certain problems of the Arab world to be the only correct one and criticized those states whose positions and principles did not coincide with their approaches, and the struggle was carried out in the most uncompromising way. At times it happened that because of its extreme radicalism and unwillingness to make reasonable compromises, Iraq found itself isolated in the Arab world. However, in fairness, it is important to note that at critical moments for the Arab world, Iraq and Syria, despite the tensions, provided assistance to each other, and criticism and harsh attacks gave way to cooperation and mutual assistance. This political line was dictated not only by Arab solidarity, but by the fact that, due to personal interests and ambitions, they could not ignore the implementation of the fundamental ideological and political principles and program goals of the party.

It is also noteworthy that in the initial period of its rule, the Baath attached great importance to the normalization of relations with those Arab countries that directly opposed Israel, and the mandatory participation of the Iraqi army in the war for the “liberation of Palestine.” It was these considerations that prompted the Iraqi leaders to put forward at the end of 1968 the idea of creating a unified military command from the front-line Arab states, such as Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq. Since Egypt refused to participate in this project, a joint “Eastern Command” was created in March 1969, consisting of Syria, Jordan and Iraq. Based on the agreement reached, up to 20 thousand Iraqi military personnel were stationed on the territory of Syria and Jordan, and their annual maintenance in the amount of 60 million dinars was fully assumed by the Iraqi side [Al-Saka (1980): 66]. However, as a result of contradictions, cooperation within the

Eastern Command soon fell apart, and Iraqi troops were withdrawn from the eastern front.

Syria also bore some responsibility for the collapse of this military alliance. Hafez Assad, who came to power as a result of the so-called Corrective Movement in November 1970, advocated the need to revise a number of principles of the country's foreign policy. The main goal was to achieve a speedy and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For this purpose, it was planned to establish close contacts not only with the so-called progressive and patriotic Arab regimes, but also with all Arab countries, regardless of the nature of their socio-political system. Syria sought to distance itself from Iraq's radical course in the Middle East settlement and began to strengthen the military-political alliance with Egypt within the framework of the Federation of Arab Republics (FAR), which, according to the famous researcher N. Gulliam, made it possible to characterize this period as a "pro-Egyptian stage" [Gulliam (1999): 120].

Although in the package of political reforms announced in early March 1971, H. Assad pointed out the need to establish closer cooperation with Iraq in various fields, in practice this period was characterized by a further cooling of bilateral relations. Taking into account Iraq's strained relations with Egypt and Jordan, it becomes clear that at this stage its attempts to establish close contacts and military cooperation with the front-line Arab states not only failed, but it found itself in virtual isolation in the Arab world. This situation could not satisfy the Iraqi leaders, so on March 20, 1972, President A.H. al-Bakr approached Syria and Egypt with a proposal to establish unity between these countries [Al-mutamar as-suhufi (1972): 19]. To specify the details and mechanism for its implementation, Iraq sent a special delegation to Damascus headed by the Deputy Chairman of the RRC, Saddam Hussein. However, during the negotiations it became clear that the unity project proposed by Iraq was fundamentally different from the Syrian plan to unite the Arab countries into a federation. The Syrian side invited Iraq to join the FAR, subject to agreement with all its principles, which actually meant accepting the leadership of Syria [Akhundova, Baghirova (2000): 192]. In response, Iraq stated that it was not seeking full state unification or joining the FAR; its plans included unifying the military efforts of the front-line Arab states. The failure of the Iraqi-Syrian negotiations at this stage was largely due to the intense rivalry for leadership in the Arab world, which, after the death of the pan-Arab leader, Egyptian President G.A. Nasser, in 1970, became open.

However, in addition to political rivalry between the two countries, there were other problems that negatively affected the nature of their relationship. Among them we can highlight the oil problem and the issue of distribution of water resources of the river. The Euphrates, which became chronic and repeatedly led to crises between them. When in June 1972 Baghdad began to nationalize the property of the Iraq Petroleum Company, the issue of transporting Iraqi oil became an issue. At that time, the only communication that ensured its delivery to foreign markets was the Kirkuk-Baniyas oil pipeline with access to the Mediterranean Sea through Syria. Initially, H. Assad declared full moral and political support for this strategic step by Baghdad and, as a sign of solidarity, announced the nationalization of the company's property on its territory. However, Syria soon notified the Iraqi side of a revision of payments, tariffs, customs duties and fees for the transportation of its oil [Eppel (1996): 211]. It became clear that by exerting economic pressure on Baghdad, it was seeking to obtain certain political concessions. Negotiations

between them on this issue were unsuccessful, and in January 1973, the Syrian parliament adopted a bill to double the tariffs for transporting Iraqi oil through its territory [ibidem: 218]. To block its negative consequences, a special commission was created, which was supposed to resolve the issue of building an alternative oil pipeline as soon as possible. To this end, in January 1973, the Iraqi Minister of Energy visited Ankara, where he discussed the issue of transporting oil through Turkey to the Mediterranean Sea, and in May a protocol was signed on the construction of an oil pipeline along the Kirkuk-Yumurtalyk route, which opened in January 1977. At the same time, the issue of building a strategic oil pipeline that connected the southern Iraqi fields with the Gulf was resolved. Thus, the construction of two new oil pipelines contributed to a significant weakening of the dependence of Iraqi oil exports on Syrian political decisions. Since April 1976, Iraq suspended the transportation of its oil to the port of Baniyas, after which Syria closed its common border and froze trade and economic ties.

As for the issue of using the water resources of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which pass through the territory of three Middle Eastern states, Turkey, Syria and Iraq, it arose since 1920 and was associated with many reasons, such as the state of the water level in the river, its quantity, spring floods, drought and etc. To avoid friction between them, firm quotas were established according to which the water resources of the Tigris and Euphrates were distributed [Orhan (2000): 192]. Since the beginning of the 1970s, in connection with the construction of the Keban hydraulic structure in Turkey and the Euphrates Dam in Syria, the distribution of water within the framework of previous quotas has undergone some changes. In the spring of 1975, the Iraqi side accused Syria of deliberately reducing water flow, as well as of excessive use. In response, Iraq's water supply was cut off without prior notice, causing the Habbaniyya Reservoir to fail to fill, causing severe damage to agriculture, and leaving some 3.5 million farmers in the Euphrates Basin in dire straits [Shen (2001): 91]. Syria explained the decrease in water flow by the fact that Turkey did not fulfill its quota obligations, as a result of which it was not possible to fill the Euphrates reservoir to the required level. In July 1975, mutual accusations and threats led to a severance of diplomatic relations. However, in October 1975, the parties managed to overcome their differences by reaching an agreement on a new division of the waters of the Euphrates and the establishment of annual quotas for each country [Orhan (2000): 193].

By 1977, Iraqi-Syrian interstate relations were at their lowest point in decades. The inability of the two leading Arab states to unite their efforts to solve the fundamental problems of the region, to rise above their own ambitions, and to sacrifice personal likes and dislikes in the name of Arab unity and solidarity contributed to the deepening of negative trends in the region. However, the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty became an incentive for their rapprochement and consolidation of the Arab world in new conditions, and the political discredit of Egypt and its isolation in the region opened up opportunities for these countries to implement their ambitious plans.

Therefore, the Iraqi leadership turned to the heads of Syria, Algeria, Libya, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) and the PLO Executive Committee with a proposal to create Arab Struggle Front to counter the political course of Anwar Sadat. It also declared its readiness to resolve all issues in dispute with Syria within the framework of a bilateral meeting in Baghdad at the end of 1977 [Al-mutamar as-suhufi (1977): 19]. However, this initiative did not find support among the leaders of

these countries, since there was already an official agreement to hold the next Arab Summit in Algeria in February 1978 to develop a plan of joint action and apply political and economic sanctions against the Camp David participants and those who supported it states Iraq boycotted the Algiers Summit and also refused to participate in the meeting of the leaders of Syria, Algeria, Libya, PDRY and PLO, convened on the initiative of Hamid Assad. Official Baghdad perceived the creation of the Front of Fortitude and Resistance as a result of it as an attempt by Syria to “throw a shadow on Iraqi political initiatives and push them away from the leading role in Middle Eastern affairs” [Hussein (1981): 56]. But soon sober calculation and pragmatism, and most importantly, fears of being isolated in the Arab world prompted Iraqi leaders to come up with a proposal to convene the next Arab Summit in Baghdad and create a special fund to finance the fight against Israel [Al-Yasri (2010): 86]. At the same time, to normalize relations with Syria, negotiations were held in Baghdad at the end of September 1978, which ended with the signing of a Charter of Joint Action to create a political body to regulate and coordinate military-political, economic and other relations between the two countries. During the negotiations, an agreement was reached on the unification of Iraq and Syria into a single state, and in June 1979 the parties signed the Political Declaration on Unification [Akhundova, Baghirova (2000): 77].

However, the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement was short-lived: the internal party struggle for power that escalated in Iraq in the late 1970s had a negative impact on the state of bilateral relations, and the issue of party-state unification was removed from the agenda. After S. Hussein’s group came to power and executed the so-called “conspirators,” whom the new authorities exposed as “agents of the Syrian regime who sought to place their henchmen in the most important state-party posts” [Hussein (1981): 191], confrontation between the two countries took on an open character. The breakdown of their relationship had extremely important consequences for the evolution of Iraq's "Arab politics", when the futility of attempts to lead the "struggle for the liberation of Palestine" led to its alienation from the countries considered by Baghdad as rivals for leadership in the Arab world.

During the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq's relations with Syria can be described as hostile. Syria was one of the few Arab countries to openly support Iran during the war. The reason for this was not only the long-term conflict between the two “centers of Baathism”, their rivalry for leadership in the Arab world, but also “Shiite sympathies” in Syrian politics (H. Assad and most members of the party-state elite belonged to the Alawite sect of Shiism). All this, of course, could not but lead to serious negative consequences for bilateral relations, the “war of words” between them ended with the fact that on April 8, 1982, the Syrian government announced the closure of the border with Iraq, and on April 10, the suspension of gas transportation through the pipeline Kirkuk-Baniyas, and on April 18, diplomatic relations were interrupted [Ari (2006): 197].

The serious international crisis that erupted as a result of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi troops in early August 1990 could not but affect the interests of Arab countries. Syria demonstrated the most consistent position against Iraqi aggression. It joined the multinational coalition, sending a 17,000-strong military contingent to the Gulf zone [Ahmedov (2009): 38]. Syria also adhered to a hard line when adopting anti-Iraqi resolutions both at the pan-Arab level and within the UN, which contributed to the political isolation of Iraq in the region and in the international arena.

The change in Damascus's foreign policy guidelines during the period under study occurred under the influence of a new balance of power at the global level, when the exploitation of the bipolar confrontation lost its effectiveness and narrowed the scope for maneuver. The Syrian leadership sought to extract the maximum political and economic dividends from the new course, which would allow them to count on leading positions in the post-crisis regional balance of power. The change in his political priorities was significantly influenced by the country's numerous internal and economic problems, which were aggravated by large external debt (the amount of debt of the former USSR alone was estimated at 16-17 billion dollars, of which 11 billion dollars accounted for military supplies) [Isayev (2001): 78]. The country's leadership, having realistically assessed internal resources, proclaimed a course towards a "multi-structured economy," which included attracting large foreign and national investments into the economy, creating free economic zones, etc. Economic reform projects in Syria, due to a lack of its own resources, required significant investment from outside, including from the oil-producing monarchies of the Gulf. For military assistance during the Kuwait crisis alone, Syria received up to \$2 billion from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in the form of "financial compensation" [Eppel (1996): 211]. The level of relations with Iraq played a special role in shaping the Syrian position in the Kuwait crisis. The excessive strengthening of the Iraqi military machine has changed the regional balance of power in favor of Baghdad, so it was vital for Syria to curb it by any means necessary.

The defeat of the Iraqi army by the forces of the multinational coalition during Operation Desert Storm (1991) and international sanctions led to a significant weakening of Iraq's economic and military potential, and the regime found itself in virtual isolation. The country's regional status has undergone significant deformation, which has led, in turn, to Baghdad's forced adjustment of its foreign policy in general and relations with individual states in the region in particular. Although over time he managed, although not fully, to restore his political and economic ties, the pre-war status in one of the regional "centers of power" was lost. It was during this period that the previous rhetoric of the Iraqi authorities, far from reality, was replaced by a new foreign policy course, which stemmed from a more objective assessment of the country's regional situation.

In the post-crisis period in the system of "Arab" relations in Iraq, the Syrian direction continued to remain one of the most complex and contradictory. Military defeat and international sanctions, which led to the weakening of Iraq's economic and military potential, tipped the balance of power in bilateral relations in favor of Syria for the first time in many years. Despite the fact that preserving the weakened state of Iraq was in its interests, the regional situation dictated the need to preserve its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Therefore, plans to dismember or federalize Iraq were decisively rejected by Damascus [Orhan (2000): 192].

At the turn of 1996-1997, the process of gradual normalization of Iraqi-Syrian bilateral relations began. The conclusion of the Turkish-Israeli military alliance in 1996, economic difficulties in both countries and other factors made their rapprochement urgent at this stage. Iraqi media, most of which were under the control of Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, began publishing articles about the need to intensify bilateral relations, which could benefit not only these countries themselves, but also the entire Arab world [Al-Yasri (2010): 126]. At the beginning of 1997, a joint trade committee was established, whose activities gave impetus to the establishment of economic ties.

Delegations at various levels began to practice regular meetings to discuss a wide range of issues of mutual interest. In June 1997, a significant event occurred - the common border, closed for 17 years, was opened. In August 1997, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Economy, as well as a large group of Syrian businessmen, visited Baghdad, during which agreements were signed on the opening of shopping centers, several contracts for the supply of essential goods from Syria in exchange for the export of Iraqi oil for a total of 13 million dollars [Ahmedov (2009): 36].

During this period, one of the important areas of bilateral cooperation was the oil sector, in particular the resumption of work on the Kirkuk-Baniyas oil pipeline, which was closed back in 1982. Negotiations on this issue at the expert level began in 1997, and on July 12, 1998, at a meeting of the oil ministers of the two countries, A.M. Rashid and M.M. Jemal, contracts were signed for the renewal of the old line, as well as the construction of a new one oil pipeline and oil refinery in Baniyas [Ahmedov, Kulaqina (2006): 135]. In August 1997, during the 44th international fair in Damascus, the Iraqi delegation led by Minister of Trade M.M. Saleh signed several agreements in the economic sphere.

An indicator of the parties' interest in deepening cooperation was the visit to Damascus in December 1997 of Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister T. Aziz and his negotiations with Syrian leaders. In the same month, on behalf of Hamid Assad, Syrian Foreign Minister F. al-Sharaa, during a meeting with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, for the first time voiced the idea of the need to speed up the process of "returning Iraq to the Arab ranks" [Ari (2006): 301]. The words of the Syrian minister were treated with "understanding" in Riyadh, especially since political processes in the region and in the international arena were leading Arab leaders to understand that Iraq's participation as a full member of the Arab community in these processes meets their strategic interests.

Iraqi-Syrian bilateral relations received a new impetus after the rise to power of Assad's son, Bashar, who maintained personal contacts with the younger generation of the Iraqi ruling elite. In 2000, an Iraqi advocacy section was opened in Damascus, and in May 2001, a similar Syrian advocacy section was opened in Baghdad. In November 2000, a decision was made to open the Kirkuk-Baniyas oil pipeline, which was of great importance for the troubled Syrian economy. Syria bought Iraqi oil at a price of 10-15 dollars a barrel, which was significantly lower than world prices, then refined it, and sold refined products along with its oil at current OPEC prices. Iraq also did not remain a loser: it received about \$2 million a day from oil supplies [Iraq exports oil to Syria (200): 11]. For him, the political benefit of oil cooperation lay in the fact that, in a broad sense, the development of economic ties had a beneficial effect on the general political climate between the two countries and that the sanctions regime was gradually weakened. In January 2001, Syrian Prime Minister M. Miro and Iraqi Vice President T.Y. Ramadan signed an agreement on customs tariffs, which provided for the gradual reduction and removal of most trade restrictions, and an agreement on a joint free trade zone. For Damascus, the development of trade relations with Iraq served to develop a number of sectors of the national economy; pending the lifting of sanctions, it was important to establish itself in the Iraqi market, which had great potential.

Nonetheless official Baghdad has repeatedly stated that, along with the development of economic ties, it also expects the restoration of diplomatic relations in full. However, Syria gave preference to the development of economic cooperation, since close political

contacts with Iraq could lead to regional and international isolation of the country. Syria did not want to jeopardize political and economic ties with the Gulf monarchies, primarily with Saudi Arabia, for the sake of an unpredictable alliance with Saddam Hussein. It was in this spirit that the first official visit Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Mustafa Miro to Iraq took place in the summer of 2001. The result of negotiations with the Iraqi leadership was the full restoration of the activities of the joint commission on economic cooperation, as well as the signing of a package of agreements in the sphere of economics, transport, trade, etc. Syria was the first Arab country with which Iraq entered into a free trade agreement. An important outcome of the joint commission was the signing in August 2002 of an agreement to create an investment holding company to implement four infrastructure projects in Iraq. In addition, since 1997, Syria has actively participated in the UN Oil for Food program [Ibidem: 10].

Relations with Egypt as one of the directions of Iraq's Arab policy

Analyzing in general terms the state of Iraqi-Egyptian bilateral relations in the first decade of Baath rule, it can be stated that they were uneven in nature with elements of rapprochement and cooperation to tension in certain periods.

To implement one of the priority goals of the Arab policy of establishing close ties with Arab countries that directly opposed Israel, Iraq placed special hopes on cooperation with Egypt and considered it as a potential ally in the region. Therefore, Iraqi President A.H. al-Bakr issued a statement declaring the government's intention to “develop and strengthen cooperation with Egypt in various fields” [Al-mutamar as-suhufi (1968): 31]. As for Egypt, the Ba'athists' rise to power was greeted coolly in Cairo. President G.A. Nasser was distrustful of their practical activities. He perfectly remembered the events of the recent past, when the popular slogans and verbal radicalism of the Iraqi Baathists turned out to be nothing more than an attempt to manipulate national ideas in the name of achieving their narrow party interests. [Seymour (1963): 402]. However, Nasser, being a pragmatic leader, could not ignore the extremely difficult situation that had developed in the Arab world after the defeat in the 1967 war. At this turning point in history, pan-Arab interests required coordination of the efforts of all Arab countries without exception, their unity and cooperation in various fields. Therefore, when Baghdad at the end of 1968 put forward the idea of creating a unified military command with the participation of the front-line Arab states and Iraq, it advised Syrian President N. al-Atasi and King Hussein of Jordan to accept their proposal, although he himself refrained from participating in this military alliance [Al-radd al-Misri (1970): 80]. But Iraq's military cooperation within the framework of the “Eastern Command” did not last long, after Egypt and Jordan agreed to a temporary ceasefire and accepted the “Rogers Plan” for a political settlement of the conflict, the Iraqi leadership began publicly criticizing their position. At the same time, Baghdad was in no hurry to withdraw its military contingents from the Eastern Front, intending to demonstrate to the nationalist population inside the country and “anywhere in the Arab world” its commitment to Arab unity and solidarity. The radical position of the Iraqi leaders on this issue was supposed to create for them the image of the only and completely consistent exponents of “the goals of the Arab nation aimed at the liberation of Palestine” [The Political Analysis of Present Arab Condition (1975): 43]. After the adoption by Egypt and Jordan in June 1970 of the American “Rogers Plan” for

a political settlement of the conflict based on UN Security Council Resolution No 242, Iraq's relations with these countries deteriorated sharply. Tensions reached a particularly high level between Iraq and Egypt, the war of words between them drew even high-ranking government officials, including presidents, into its orbit [Khadduri (1978): 181]. In August 1970, G.A. Nasser addressed a special message to Iraqi President A.H. al-Bakr, where he outlined his country's position, simultaneously accusing Iraq of passivity on the eastern front, which "is carried out only by slogans, without providing military assistance to the pan-Arab cause" [Haula risala ar-raisa (1970): 183]. However, the escalation of tension between them did not lead to a severance of diplomatic relations.

Although the policy of A. Sadat, who came to power in September 1970, for a partial and phased settlement of the Middle East conflict, caused sharp condemnation of Iraq, nevertheless, they did not greatly affect bilateral relations. Both sides were interested in maintaining them at the same level; Egypt due to the condemnation of A. Sadat's political course by the majority of Arab countries [Chechen, A. (2000): 194], Iraq due to its virtual isolation in the region. It is no coincidence that during the visits of the Egyptian Minister of Industry I.S. Muhammadein in August 1974 and Presidential Advisor A. Marwan in September of the same year to Baghdad, agreements on economic cooperation and the creation of mixed commissions in the oil and metallurgical industries were signed. The parties also agreed that Iraq would invest up to \$1 billion in the Egyptian economy to implement joint projects, and would also recruit and employ an agreed number of skilled workers and specialists in various fields from Egypt and provide them with the same rights as local workers. [Al-Yasri (2010): 16]

It should be emphasized that, while cooperating with Egypt in various fields, Iraq did not intend to deviate from its principles in solving the Palestinian problem. It is no coincidence that after A. Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 and the signing of the Camp David Agreement, the main direction of Iraq's regional policy was to counter this process, isolate Egypt and provide large financial assistance to radical forces opposing Israel - Syria and the PLO. In December 1977, Iraq broke off diplomatic relations with Egypt [Shmelyova (2003): 59]. He took an active part in the preparation and convening of a meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs, economics and finance of Arab countries in Baghdad, at which it was decided to impose political and economic sanctions against Egypt. The discredit of Egypt as the traditional leader of the Arab world after Camp David and its political isolation in the region created favorable prospects for the Baathist regime to turn Iraq into a new "center of power" in the Middle East. Official Baghdad firmly adhered to the political and economic sanctions imposed against Egypt and continued to pursue a policy of keeping it on the periphery of the Arab world.

During the Iran-Iraq War, Egypt was among those Arab countries that sided with Iraq. In conditions when Syria took a pro-Iranian position, Baghdad needed an alternative and equivalent ally in the region. According to the Iraqi leadership, only Egypt could play this role, so the process of normalizing bilateral relations was initiated. During the war, Iraq also had to solve the problem of military supplies, and therefore establishing cooperation with Egypt in the military sphere became an urgent necessity. Given Egypt's interest in expanding the Arab market for its military industry, Iraq's proposal to resume military supplies was received positively. During the first four years of the war, Iraq purchased weapons, military equipment, equipment and spare parts from Egypt worth more than \$1 billion [ibidem: 59]. In addition to military assistance, more than 15 thousand volunteers

and advisers from this country participated in the Iraqi army at the front, and up to 1.5 million Egyptians living in Iraq worked at its military and civilian facilities.

In response, in 1982, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein called on Arab countries to return Egypt to the Arab family. The 9th regional congress of the Baath Party (June 1982) noted that with the coming to power of President Hosni Mubarak, the situation in Egypt began to change for the better, and put forward the slogan “Isolation is not of Egypt, but of the Camp David Course” [The Political Report of the 9 -th Congress (1982): 43]. Saddam Hussein said that “Arab solidarity will never be complete without Egypt. He is too important for us not to let him into the Arab camp. Besides, Mubarak is not Sadat. He is a worthy person and his contribution to the pan-Arab cause is much more significant than other Arabs who constantly talk about Arabism” [Hussein (1997): 53]. Egypt also attached great importance to improving ties with Iraq, as it hoped with its help to normalize its relations with other Arab countries, and then gradually regain lost positions in the Arab world. Like S. Hussein, H. Mubarak was concerned about Ayatollah Khomeini’s policy of “exporting the Islamic revolution,” under the influence of which various extremist Islamic groups in the country became significantly more active.

Despite clear signs of improvement in bilateral relations, before 1983, political, trade and economic ties between them had not yet reached the expected level. In January 1983, in Paris, after a long break, the first meeting took place between the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Egypt B.B. Ghali and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq T. Aziz, during which issues of cooperation in various fields were discussed. In August of the same year, the parties agreed to regulate the economic and financial aspects of bilateral relations, including the transfer of funds, clearing operations, the establishment of bank representative offices, etc. [Mamadzadeh (2004): 305]. In response to Egyptian assistance, Iraq actively promoted Egypt's return to the Arab ranks and the restoration of its membership in the Arab League and other regional organizations. Although diplomatic relations between the two countries had not yet been restored, in 1985, H. Mubarak paid an official visit to Baghdad. Iraqi-Egyptian diplomatic relations were fully restored on November 13, 1987 [Yurchenko (2003): 208]. The Iraqi-Egyptian rapprochement reached its apogee after the war, when in February 1989 they united in the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC).

It should be noted that during the Kuwait crisis, Egypt’s position took into account a number of internal and external factors. Numerous problems (balance of payments deficit, 50 billion foreign debt, etc.), aggravated by the weak economic structure of the country, have become a collapse since the late 80s. The growing confrontation between the authorities and radical Islamist groups, on the one hand, and a wide spectrum of secular opposition with the authorities, on the other, which ended in a boycott of the 1989 parliamentary elections, had an extremely negative impact on the internal political situation in the country. Against this background, the Egyptian leadership saw a way out of this situation in intensifying its foreign policy. The desire of President H. Mubarak to revive the role and significance of Egypt as the traditional leader of the Arab world, undermined by the Camp David process and the subsequent isolation of the country, by the end of the 80s - early 90s. began to take on distinct and far from hopeless outlines. Egypt's increased activity during the Kuwait crisis was accompanied, as expected, by a strengthening of its position in the Arab world [Bilan (2010): 37]. It was in Cairo, on the initiative of Hosni Mubarak, that an emergency Summit of Arab leaders was convened, in

which the Egyptian delegation was active in making decisions condemning Iraqi aggression; he was also the initiator and participant of numerous bilateral meetings and negotiations with many leaders of the Arab world. Even full cooperation with Iraq within the framework of the NAC did not prevent Egypt from openly condemning the aggression against Kuwait and breaking off diplomatic relations with it. Egypt's position was expressed as follows: "We do not object to the transformation of Iraq into a strong state, but we cannot agree for it to become stronger through aggression against our Arab brothers" [Yurchenko (2003): 189]. Egypt sent a 30,000-strong military contingent to Saudi Arabia, which participated in the liberation of Kuwait as part of a multinational coalition. Despite the significant financial losses from the Gulf War, it brought significant political and economic dividends to Egypt. Firstly, it was decided to return the Arab League headquarters to Cairo from October 1, 1990, which stemmed from recognition of its contribution to the pan-Arab cause under extreme conditions. Secondly, Egypt's participation in the anti-Iraq coalition did not go unnoticed by the United States, which announced the write-off of its debt in the amount of \$7.1 billion. Thirdly, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait undertook to pay most of Egypt's losses [Baghirova (2003): 446].

The "peace dividends" received annually from the United States in the amount of \$2.1 billion and "material assistance" from the Gulf monarchies imposed certain obligations on Egypt. It is no coincidence that President Hosni Mubarak responded weakly to Baghdad's repeated calls to restore diplomatic relations and trade and economic ties between the two countries, which, in principle, met the interests of Egypt. The Egyptian leader did not want to risk the country's position; he invariably called on Iraq to strictly implement all UN Security Council resolutions, and considered this a necessary condition for the speedy lifting of international sanctions. At the same time, Egypt resolutely opposed the use of force against Iraq in situations of its confrontation with the UN Special Commission.

In general, until the mid-1990s, relations between the two countries were practically frozen. Egypt began to show diplomatic activity on the Iraqi problem in 1996–1997, when it became a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. At the same time, the first contacts between the two countries in the trade and economic sphere began in November 1997, for the first time after the Gulf War, the Egyptian delegation took part in the International Baghdad Fair, and already in 1998 the number of Egyptian firms and companies at the fair reached 60 [Mamadzadeh (2004): 309].

Since the end of the 20th century, against the backdrop of changes in the positions of a number of leading states regarding Iraq, Egypt's policy began to trace a line aimed at normalizing bilateral ties in various fields. At the same time, the Egyptian authorities stated that the resumption of full cooperation would be possible only after the lifting of international sanctions. Since 2000, Egypt has been involved in a campaign to abolish them, both through official government policy and through numerous non-governmental organizations. In November 2000, a significant event occurred, as diplomatic relations, interrupted in 1991, were restored. In January 2001, a representative Iraqi delegation led by Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan visited Cairo and held numerous meetings with the Egyptian leadership. As a result of the visit, a free trade agreement was signed, which came into force in the summer of 2001. According to Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Ebeid, the signing of this agreement was the first step towards the creation of the Arab Common Market, which provided for ensuring freedom of movement and transit of

human resources and capital, goods, labor hiring and property acquisition. For Iraq, it symbolized a breakthrough from the international blockade towards the resumption of active cooperation with the countries of the region.

In continuation of the development of trade and economic relations between the two countries, in February 2001, an Egyptian delegation led by Minister of Foreign Trade Youssef B. Ghali visited Baghdad. During the visit, agreements were signed in the field of railway, sea and air transport, and negotiations continued to accelerate the process of creating the Arab Common Market [Shmelyova (2003): 59]. In April 2001, an Egyptian trade fair was held in Baghdad, in which over 180 companies took part. In the summer of 2001, a quadripartite agreement (Egypt-Iraq-Syria-Libya) on the creation of a free trade zone was signed in the Iraqi capital. Thus, Iraq became one of the key links in the future inter-Arab integration union. Despite the sanctions, at the end of 2002, Egypt occupied second place after Russia in trade with Iraq within the framework of the UN Oil for Food program, displacing France and a number of other countries in the list, and also became one of its main trading partners in the Arab world, exporting goods worth \$2.8 billion annually [Rozov (2004): 163].

Thus, Egypt became the first Arab country that, by the beginning of the 21st century, actually broke through the regional blockade of Iraq and brought ties with it to the level of close partnership. Helping Baghdad restore its international image and establish economic ties, official Cairo proceeded from the fact that the isolation of such a potentially strong regional player as Iraq did not contribute to the unification plans of the Arabs, especially when the system of inter-Arab relations was experiencing one of the deepest crises in its history [Skibinskaya (2004): 110].

Although the Egyptian authorities did not hide their generally negative attitude towards the regime of Saddam Hussein, Iraq, with its high economic potential, continued to be viewed as an important participant in the integration processes in the Arab world.

CONCLUSION

An important component of Iraq's foreign policy were relations with Arab countries, which were considered as a special area of its international relations. A characteristic feature of inter-Arab political relations was the constant confrontation between centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. Among the factors that contributed to maintaining their mutual attraction are the similarity of problems associated with the need to gain economic independence, strengthen national sovereignty and resolve the Middle East problem. The growth of socio-political differentiation of Arab countries, the struggle for leadership in the Arab world, the clash of ideologies, and the intervention of extra-regional forces had a destabilizing effect on inter-Arab relations. Although the main principles of the Arab policy of Iraq were based on a serious ideological and theoretical basis, they were often declarative in nature, and a gap arose between the put forward slogans, the theoretical formulation of issues and their practical implementation. Since Iraq has clearly outlined its claims to a leading role and leadership in the Arab world, this course has repeatedly led to a clash of its interests and goals with the interests of other Arab countries, not only within the framework of bilateral relations, but also on the fundamental problems of the Arab world, and in each specific case contradictions and rivalry between them, the struggle for influence, refracted through a complex system of

international, regional and national interests, took on various forms and configurations. At the same time, excessive radicalism has repeatedly led Iraq to isolation in the Arab world.

Iraq's relations with the leading Arab states fully reflected the symbiosis of centrifugal and centripetal trends in the Arab world. On the one hand, the similarities and common characteristics of the problems faced by almost all Arab countries, the presence of a number of unresolved problems, made them potential allies. On the other hand, competition for influence and leadership in the region, differences in socio-economic and political orientations, ideological confrontation, as well as contradictions of a subjective nature created serious obstacles to their integration and cooperation, both on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

The priority goal in the field of Arab policy of the ruling Baath was the course of transforming Iraq into the leading state of the Arab world and the “center of power” in the Middle East by strengthening its ideological and political influence in the region. It was in this context that it was necessary to consider the chronic confrontation at the interstate level with a number of countries in the region, which in one form or another prevented him from implementing his ambitious plans, as well as between the Iraqi and Syrian branches of Baathism for ideological influence.

However, the Iraqi crisis, which worsened at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, reached its peak of tension by 2003. In March 2003, a multinational coalition carried out the military operation “Iraqi Freedom”, as a result of which the Baath Party regime in Iraq fell. A painful process of transformation of Iraqi society began, which took place in the context of global and regional challenges, competing aspirations of various political forces in the country to ensure their influence through participation in power structures. Iraq's relations with Arab countries also underwent fundamental changes during this period; they began to be built on a new basis, taking into account the changed status of the country.

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TREATISES BY SEYYID YAHYA BAKUVI IN THE HISTORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KHALVATIYA SUFI ORDER**Irada Vezirova**

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Abstract. Islam, although it is the youngest religion among monotheistic religions, as is known, the text of its holy book, the Quran, is replete with allegories and metaphors. Reading the Quran and knowing some surahs by heart was the duty of every Muslim in the Middle Ages. In this regard, there is a need for a living teacher and mentor. The need for spiritual leadership prepared fertile ground for the emergence of Sufi tariqah orders. In the 14th century, Omar Sirajaddin al-Khalwati, using the method of seclusion (in Arabic, “halwat”), laid the foundation of the Khalwati order. However, the tariqa received its true development under Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi. Thanks to the religious and philosophical treatises he wrote, this order went beyond the borders of Azerbaijan and expanded its sphere of influence in the Crimea, Dagestan, the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, India, and Africa.

The only copy of Sufi treatises by Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi called “Resayel” in Azerbaijan is kept at the Institute of Manuscripts of Azerbaijan Republic. Written in 1672, this handwritten monument contains the religious and philosophical lyrical heritage of the great sheikh and the works of other authors.

Keywords: *Sufi orders, Khalvatiya, Seyyid Yahya Bakuvi, Manuscript Collections, Philosophical Treatises, Spiritual Mentor, Modern Khanakas (Tekkes)*

Introduction: Islam and the Emergence of Sufi Orders

All religions of the world should be considered as equivalent paths to the comprehension of “truth” [Литман, Рыбаков (1983): 217]. Islam arose as a local religious and political movement that grew out of the centuries-old history of the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, it was a response to the spiritual needs of the entire Middle East during the period of the collapse of the ancient worldview and the formation of medieval society [Пиотровский (1991):5]. As is known, the text of the Holy Quran is replete with complex phrases, allegories and metaphors. Due to the flowery nature of the Arabic language, understanding some surahs and verses created certain difficulties. At the same time, the Quran contained so much pessimism and fear of Allah’s judgment, so many reminders of the vanity of life, that individual ascetics (wearing a specific dress made of wool, “suf” in Arabic), and then entire monasteries soon appeared in Islam [Белявский (1913)): 42]. There are several assumptions among researchers about the time of the appearance of the first Sufi orders. Some of them believe that the first Sufi communities began to appear among Muslims during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Sufi communities began to emerge that received permission to exist from

Muhammad himself. For example, a community founded in 622 A.D. (37 AH) by Uwais Karani, a native of Karai in Yemen [Позднев (1886): 45]. As is known, Uwais Karani did not have the chance to personally meet the Prophet, but there was a certain mystical connection between them; subsequently, such a spiritual connection in Sufism began to be called by his name “uweisi,” that is, when there is no direct personal mentoring directly, but only a mystical spiritual connection exists.

It should be noted that Uweis Karani in the last years of his life spread Islam on the territory of Azerbaijan, after his death his body was interred in the Zardab region and the place known as “Uweis Baba” is still the most revered place of pilgrimage for local residents (local pronunciation “Veisyal Baba”). There is a belief that the Prophet bequeathed Omar and Imam Ali to convey his *khirka* to Uwais Qarani with a request that he pray for his entire ummah, that is, for all his people, for all Muslims [Şeyx Fəridəddin Əttar (2011): 86]. This *khirka* was kept for centuries by him descendants living in Turkey and was subsequently given to the Ottoman Sultan Osman II in 1618. Years later, Sultan Abdul Mejid built a mosque called “Hirka-i Sharif” in Fatih in Istanbul to store this *khirka*. This *khirka* is still kept in this mosque and is put on public display every year during the month of Ramadan. [Veysəl Qarani, yaxud...].

As we see, the history of the *tariqats'* emergence in the Islamic world goes back to the birth of Islam, but they began to form into a worldview system only in the 12th century. The main reason for the emergence of Sufi orders was the social needs that had matured by this time. Since the existing Islamic legal orders also could not sufficiently meet the needs of various social strata, at first there was a division into *madhhabs*. After some time, the foundation was ripe for the emergence of *tariqats*. These difficult times of internal political discord and crusades led to a general socio-economic decline among the population. Against this background, the desire for devoted service to Allah and spiritual values simultaneously intensified; in a word, a desire for moral purity appeared, since it was believed that it was precisely the departure from the spiritual foundations of religion that led to fermentation in the minds of Muslim peoples. Along with the spiritual mentoring of Sufi sheikhs, during this period, the belief spread among people that Sufis, due to their closeness to Allah, have the ability to work miracles and prevent disasters, in connection with this, the influence of Sufis on the minds and hearts of people increased significantly. With the development of the mentoring system, *Qibla* turns into a *murshid*, who was the gateway to God [Тримингэм (2002): 248].

We must not forget the fact that in the pre-Islamic period the environs of Mecca and Medina were inhabited by *hanifs* (supporters of monotheism), leading a pious lifestyle and ascetics engaged in spiritual practices, who later transferred their teachings to the soil of Islam. Since ascetic deeds and exercises, causing a weakening of personal consciousness and an ecstatic state of bliss, seem to smooth out in the eyes of the ascetic the difference between him and the objective world, asceticism has always led to mysticism and in its further development to pantheism [Белявский (1913): 42].

The Method of Solitude As the Basis of the Khalwatiya Tariqa

The path of voluntary solitude as a type of spiritual practice was used by ascetics long before the advent of Islam, but at the end of the 14th century this method of improving one's *nafs* (ego) served as the basis for the emergence of the Khalwatiya Sufi order. The

appearance of this tariqa is associated with the name of Omar Khalwati as a person who placed the ascetic lifestyle and the practice of solitude at the basis of self-improvement of the Soul. This is how a mystical school arose, focusing primarily on individual asceticism and solitude. In the form of an already established system, it spread first in Shirvan and among the Tukmen Karakoyunlu in Azerbaijan, penetrating many Sufi communities in Anatolia and further into Syria, Egypt, Hijaz and Yemen following the victorious Ottoman troops [Тримингэм (2002:103)].

Regarding the history of khalwati as a spiritual method, it is believed that the event that laid the foundation for this practice is a case in the life of the Prophet in the cave of Hira, preceding Muhammad's receipt of Divine prophecy. It should be noted that in the practice of asceticism and solitude in Islamic mysticism there is more spirituality than just physical solitude.

The Role of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi in the Development of the Principles of the Khalwatiya Order

In the Middle Ages, due to religious requirements, reading the Quran and literacy among the Muslim population was widespread. According to Belyaevsky, every village had a school, madrasah [Беляевский (1912): 67]. The author further claims that in these madrasahs, along with extensive theological knowledge, mathematics, economics, logic, philosophy and some other subjects are taught, and each school has a library and a mosque. It was in this cultural environment that Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi was born. The city of Shemakha was also located at the intersection of the Silk Road, which also influenced the well-being of the local population.

We do not have exact information about the date of birth of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, but according to rough estimates, Pir-i Sani (Second Pir) of the Khalwatiya order was born at the end of the 14th century into a noble and pious family. His father Bahaaddin Shirvani was “naib-ul-ashraf” at the court of the Shirvanshahs, that is, he was in charge of the affairs of the office confirming the belonging of a particular family, to the Prophet's family. A chance meeting of the young Seyyid Yahya with representatives of the spiritual elite of the city of Shamakhi served as the reason for his entry into the spiritual path. The founder of Azerbaijani historiography Abbasquli Aga Bakikhanov in his work “Gulistan-i Iram” gives the following information about the great Sheikh Khalwatiya: “Seyyid Yahya Bakuvi in the 8th century AH was the main spiritual teacher of this region. His name is known in many mysterious sciences. The cell where he prayed, the school and the grave located at the mosque are named after him, they exist to this day” [Бакиханов (1991): 201].

Further, A.A. Bakikhanov covers in more detail the life and work of Yusif Muskuri, one of the prominent followers of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, and provides information about his work “Bayan-al-Asrar”, consisting of 24 chapters. Historical sources indicate that the reason for the departure of the young but spiritually mature Seyyid Yahya from his hometown of Shemakha was a disagreement between the murid followers after the death of the head of the Khalwatiya order, Sheikh Sadraddin Hiyavi in 1420. Most of the murids accepted the older Pirzadeh as the new head of the tariqa, and the young Seyyid Yahya accepted the invitation of the ruler of the Shirvanshahs-Khalilullah and, with 902 followers, left his hometown and headed to Baku.

It should be noted that the residents of Baku were Sunni Muslims of the Shafii school. However, from the end of the 13th and 14th centuries Shiism began to spread here. This is evidenced by the mosque and mausoleum over the tomb of the Shiite saint Hakima (Ukeima) Khanum, built at the end of the 13th century in Bibi-Heybat, as well as 15th-century inscriptions with the name Ali on the Divankhana and the tomb of the Shirvanshah Palace. There is reason to assume that the representative of the Shirvanshah-Derbendi dynasty, Khalilullah I, was inclined towards Shiism.

As for Sheikh Yusif, mentioned by A.A. Bakikhanov, it is known that he was sent to the northern direction of Azerbaijan, to Quba and until the end of his days he spread the light of the ideas of his sheikh, Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, among the local population.

As hagiographic sources confirm, the Khalwatiya order was widespread, the number of murids of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi reached 19 thousand, and the number of caliphs, that is, followers who reached the level of sheikh and received permission to mentor murids, was about 360 [Hulvi (1993): 345].

The Khalwatiya was a popular order due to the cult of a strong sheikh. It was famous for its rigor in training dervishes and at the same time encouraging their individual abilities, which caused the emergence of more and more new branches [Тримингэм (2002): 102].

Most researchers consider Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi to be the main spiritual leader of this order and note the great merit of Piri-Sani (Second Pir) of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi due to the fact that it was he who systematized the basic principles of the order [Bannerth (1964):10]. One of the famous German orientalist-Turkologists, who devoted several works to representatives of the Khalwati tariqa, also claims that Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi should be considered the true founder of this Sufi order [Kissling, (1994):32]

It is known that the *murshidi-kamil* (mentor who reached the highest level of perfection) of the Khalwatiya order Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi led adepts on the Path of spiritual purification, which is called seiru-suluk, for 40 years. At the same time, by sending his khalifa (followers who received permission to mentor) to different cities, he managed to spread the ideas of this Sufi order in Anatolia, and from there to Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Crimea, Dagestan, Africa, etc. etc. Hagiographic sources indicate that, at the invitation of the Crimean Khan, the youngest son of Seyyid Yahya-Nasrullah went to Crimea to spread knowledge about the Khalwatiya order. Information about the followers of Pir Nasrullah was traced in Crimea until the 17th century [Rihtim (2005): 64]. A Turkish researcher, confirming these data, provides information that the third son of the sheikh, Nasrullah, was invited to Crimea. The Crimean Khan provided Nasrullah with a specially built khanaqah, where he held the post of sheikh for many years. He also served as “naib-ul-ashraf” in the office of the ruler of the Crimean Khanate. Thanks to Sheikh Nasrullah, the religious and philosophical views and practices of the Khalwatiya order spread to Crimea and the surrounding regions. The family of Sheikh Nasrullah continued in Crimea until the 17th century [Serin, (1984): 176].

In the final part of the treatise “Magamat”, Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, with the following beit, explained in the best possible way the mission of the prophets and the

purpose of the enlightened evliya on Earth (the literal translation of this word is “friends of God”). We can safely say that he himself was one of these evliyas:

که بنمایند ره با سوی وحدت

ز وحدت آمده او با سوی کثرت

[B-6960, (1672): 40].

[zohur-e anbiya-vo-ovliyayi pak barayi marifat avarad bar xak
ze vahdat amade u ba su-yi kasrat ke benamayand rah basu-yi vahdat]
“God sent prophets and pure saints to this Earth for enlightenment.
They came from unity to multitude to show people the way to Unity.”

Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, by virtue of his belonging to the Seyyids, that is, to the family of the Prophet Muhammad through the line of Imam Muse-yi Kazim, and by virtue of his mission to introduce people to the Divine Light through moral purification, is rightfully considered one of the great medieval evliyas. The most common ways to achieve a mystical connection with God were khalwat, a long practice of meditation in solitude and self-blissful listening, a kind of collective meditation, a cult performed using musical means [Иноземцев (1989): 308]. In a short time, Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi was able to spread the religious and philosophical ideas of the Khalwatiya order and show his followers the Path of self-improvement leading to the Divine Light. It is not surprising that in a short time the Order of Halwatiya was able to find a response in the hearts of thousands of people representing the widest circles of society, from ordinary artisans to representatives of the ruling elite.

“This growth in numbers and spread of the Khalwatiya order was not limited to the geography of Anatolia, these ideas continued to cover vast territories, including the Balkans, North African countries and even Yemen and India. However, the fact that the founders of the order were Turks by origin contributed to its further spread, especially in the regions inhabited by the Turks” [Tasavvuf İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi, yıl: 6 (2005), sayı: 15]. The Khalwatiya sheikhs were especially strict towards neophytes. The first page of the collection “Resayel” describes the ceremony of joining the order, which is called “talkin”. After finishing the prayers, the sheikh took the newcomer by the hand and quietly said in his ear “la ilaha illa-l-lah” (“There is no deity but God”), the neophyte repeated this 101, 151 or 301 times. day. The above-mentioned article states that one of the most important features of the Khalwatiya order is its division into subsidiary branches, and notes that for this reason it is called a “Tariqah incubator” or “Tariqah factory”. [Aşkar (1999): 535]. It should be noted that this expression was first used by the Turkish researcher Mustafa Ashkar in his study on the Khalvatiya order. And all the authors whose subject of study is Khalvatiya note that in its ranks one can see people of any class. Since the Khalvatiya is an order that includes people from all walks of life, it has influenced government officials, scientists, soldiers, merchants and many other sectors of society [Alptekin (2021), 119]. Tracing the expansion of territories covered by the philosophical ideas of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, we can state that this influence gradually increased. “Even if we take into account the ruling circles, there is almost no sultan in the 16th century who did not have some connection with Khalvatiyya.” The divine poetic gift of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi inspired a whole galaxy of poets, whose names are inscribed in golden letters in the history of Azerbaijani and Turkish literature: Dede Omar Rovshani, Ibrahim Gulshani, Askari, Mahmud Khudai and others.

This wave continues to this day; one of the brightest representatives is Muzaffar Ozak, who signs his inspired poems with the pseudonym Muhibbi. We can safely say that the literary and philosophical creativity of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi played a positive role in the spread of humanism and stability in society, instilling devotion to the Divine Truth and pure thoughts in the hearts of people.

There is no doubt that the work of this great personality drew inspiration from the Holy Quran and Divine Love, his lines are imbued with the philosophy of Sufism, and the roots of his lyrics must be sought in classical oriental literature, in the motifs of Shams Tabrizi, Jaladdin Rumi, Mansur Hallaj and Imadaddin Nasimi.

Collection of the Institute for Manuscripts of Azerbaijan Republic

The funds of the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhammad Fizuli of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences contain more than 40 thousand priceless materials, including ancient manuscripts, early printed books, farmans (royal decrees) and personal archives of scientists and artists of Azerbaijan. The thematic range of ancient manuscripts is very diverse: these are historical works and philosophical treatises, poetic works and prose, translations of Greek thinkers and works of Muslim mathematicians, geographers, physicians, philologists, lexicographers, etc. In the Institute's repositories, a special place is occupied by works on Sufi literature or, as some European and Western researchers call it, Muslim mysticism [Кныш (2004)]. Until recently, the theme of Divine love, which is the main motive of Sufi philosophy, for a number of reasons, undeservedly remained unattended by scientists, which led to a huge layer of examples of creativity of Sufi poets falling out of the field of view of researchers.

Religious and Philosophical Treatises of the Great Sheikh

The greatest merit of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi can be considered the presentation of the philosophical foundations of the Khalwati order in his treatises. It should be noted that a distinctive feature of the Khalwatiya was the encouragement of the murids for both secular and spiritual knowledge. Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi himself was a highly educated person, therefore he attached great importance to science and the education of his murids. It is no coincidence that one of the treatises he wrote is called "Dar Beyan-e Elm," that is, "Explanation of Science." In this treatise, entitled "The Second Instruction," Murshid-i-Kamil notes that "Science is life-giving water, my brother. If you learn this, you will save yourself from the hardships of life. Sage, do not create a barrier for yourself out of ignorance" (عِلْمُ رسال B-6960 (1672):96a).

Sheikh al-shuyukh Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi attached great importance to science and considered it necessary for the sheikh to be a scientist [Shafa-ul-asrar, (2010): 155, 229]. This idea is based on three basic concepts found in science itself. Science consists of three letters: ein - the highest degree, lam - divine grace, mim - all-powerful (possessing everything). The eternal attribute of God is knowledge. True science directs a person to the Truth and protects him from deviations on the path of truth [Геюшов (2001): 70-71].

Perhaps it was precisely the attitude towards science that was the basis for the fact that on the occasion of the 550th anniversary of the Bakuvi's death, 2013 was declared by

UNESCO as the year of Seyyid Yahya Bakuvi. As part of the anniversary year, a number of events and international symposiums were held both in Azerbaijan and Turkey. As many researchers note, with new fundamental doctrines he ensured the formation and further development of the Khalwatiya doctrine as an independent tariqah [Кочарли (2008): 389].

Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi gained great fame from his collection of morning prayers called “Vird-i Sattar,” written in Arabic. This collection can also be found under the heading “Ovrad-i Yahya”, “Vird-i Yahya” or “Vird-i Khalvatiya”, which was very popular.

On the title page of the Baku manuscript, the copyist indicated in red ink the names of the works of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi collected in this collection: “Risale-yi keshf-ul-gulub” (“Treatise on the revelation of hearts”), “Risale-yi ma la Buddha batini” (“Treatise on the rules of ablution”, in Turkish manuscripts this treatise is entitled “Asrar-al-wudu”, “Adab-ul wudu was-salat”, “Asrar-al-wudu-was-salat”), “Risale-yi tafsir ve tawil “Ihdina-sirat-al-mustagim” (“Treatise on the explanation of verse 5 of Surah “Fatihah”), “Risale-yi menazil-ul-ashigin” (“Treatise on the steps-station of those who are in search of Divine love”), “Magamat” (“On the levels on the Path of Truth”), “Risale-yi asrar-al-gulub” (“Treatise on the secrets of the soul”), “Risale-yi atvar al-gulub” (“Treatise on the states of the soul”), “Risale-yi keshf-e asrar” (“Treatise on mysterious revelations”), “Risale dar beyan-e elm” (“Treatise on the explanation of science”), “Risale-yi sharkh-i samaniyat-i esma” ("Treatise on the explanation of the 7 Beautiful Names of God").

Unfortunately, all the rich lyrical heritage of the great sheikh has not reached us; there is an assumption that he was the author of an anthology of poetic works, that is, “Divan”. In addition to the treatises indicated on the title page, the compiler included in the collection 18 ghazals and 2 rubaiyat, written by Sheikh Khalwatiya, who, with the grace characteristic of oriental poetry, glorifies Divine love and calls the reader to a mystical journey on the path of improving one’s own ego.

Manuscript "Resayel" in the Collection of the Institute of Manuscripts in Azerbaijan Republic

Medieval book production was a sort of home-made compilation of handwritten books. Each mosque, Sufi monastery and madrasah had a special staff of specialists in the preparation of paper and ink, leather stamping, bookbinders, calligraphers and scribes. The tradition of medieval book culture in Azerbaijan has always attracted the attention of researchers. A handwritten book created in Arabic script not only served as a means of transmitting various knowledge; it was a kind of art that amazed the mind and imagination of the reader. Therefore, in the creation of a handwritten book, a special role belonged to calligraphers-scribes, who were respectfully called katibs, nassahs, khattats [Халидов (1985): 132].

In the rich collection of ancient handwritten monuments and early printed books of the Institute of Manuscripts named after Fuzuli of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, among the rare elegance of medieval manuscripts, an outwardly inconspicuous manuscript is kept. The author of this handwritten monument is indicated as “Seyyid Yahya bin Bahaadin Badkuhi”. Nisba Seyyid Yahya is indicated in most

European and Turkish sources as Shirvani, in some local sources one can find the spelling “Bakuvi” or “Shirvani”. The *nisba* “Badkuhi” in the name of Seyyid Yahya is found for the first time; it is known that in the Middle Ages the city of Baku was also called “Badikuba”, hence this *nisba* came from.

In the table of contents of the Baku list, the copyist indicated the names of 10 treatises included in this handwritten monument, however, in addition to these works, the collection also includes the lyrical works of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, signed with the pseudonym “Seyyid”. The Baku list “Resayel” is compiled on the principle of a collection, that is, the manuscript also includes treatises of sheikhs and other Sufi orders. For a long time, researchers believed that these treatises of other sheikhs ended up in the manuscript due to the mistake of the bookbinder, who accidentally added them to this manuscript while stitching the binding. It should be noted that the order of the last pages in the manuscript was violated [Алескерова (2015): 254]. It can be assumed that the violation of the sequence of pages occurred during the restoration of the manuscript monument. The only copy of the works of the great sheikh of the Khalwatiya order came into the collection of the Institute of Manuscripts in the 1980s and, due to its paleographic condition, was immediately sent to the department of “Hygiene and Restoration”, where the manuscript was subject to disinfection. The missing cover was also restored. A prominent researcher of Sufi texts, N. Mammadli, also notes that the khatima (ending) was written not at the end of the book, but in the middle of the collection, as a result of incorrect gluing of the book’s pages during “restoration” work [Məmmədli (2016): 181]. Upon careful study of those works, we for the first time established that these works are also of Sufi content, and their authors are representatives of the Naqshbandi and Nematullahi orders. We believe that the Resayel manuscript was originally intended as a collection, which indicates a tolerant attitude towards all tariqats in the Khalwati tradition. After the correspondence of the treatises and lyrical poems of the great sheikh, there is a note in the margins with the following content: “The owner, that is, the compiler is Sheikh-ul-arefin billah Seyyid Yahya bin Seyyid Bahaaddin. May God be pleased with them” [کتاب رسا B-6960,(1672):105-b]. This entry gives reason to assume that the only copy of the works of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi in Azerbaijan was copied from the autograph and compiled in this format at the request of the customer. Most likely, the scribe copied this entry in the margins as it was. There is reason to believe that this collection was prepared for the library of the Khalwati khanaka.

A characteristic feature of the Resayel manuscript is that this monument was copied by several Khattats, scribes. Besides the treatises of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi, the collection includes several works that researchers have long considered anonymous.

The result of our research was that we were able to attribute these works, that is, we identified the names and authors of the works included in the collection. For example, on pages 106-111 the text of a Sufi treatise entitled “Risale-yi maash-al-salekin hazrat-e imam” is rewritten. Having turned to world catalogues, we were able to establish that the author of this work is the founder of the Nimatullahi Order, Seyyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh. This work describes in detail the concepts of “halal” and “haram”, that is, about permitted and unlawful ways of earning money. The inclusion of this treatise in the collection indicates their belonging to the Khalwatian tradition. Next, the treatise of the founder of the Naqshbandiya order, Bahaaddin Muhammad bin Mahmud Naqshband Bukhari [کتاب رسا B-6960, (1672): 111] is rewritten. This treatise pays special attention to

such mystical techniques as “contemplation and introspection”, “journey to the Motherland” (meaning the path that the soul takes during the period of its evolution), “solitude in the crowd”, i.e. “halwat-dar-anjoman.” It should be noted that the Khalwatiya and Naqshbandiya orders go back to the teachings of Suhreverdi, which was also reflected in the spiritual practices used.

The next new work begins with the words “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful,” but the title of the work is not indicated. This work is replete with historical data on the origins of religions and their chronology, here special attention is paid to the Islamic religion, many statements are given by such classics of Sufi literature as Gijduvani, Abdul-Qadir Geylani, Faridaddin Attar, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Hafezi al-Bukhari, who is better known like Muhammad Parsa, as well as other authors [B-6960,(1672):114].

The presence of these works in the collection testifies to the wide education of the great sheikh and the presence of a rich library of Sufi literature. We consider it important to note that in the Khalwatiyya order, great importance was attached to science, and the murids’ interest in education was encouraged.

When directly studying the collection, we also came to the conclusion that over time, some part of the text was either damaged due to improper storage, or lost, because in 2-3 places the copyist's handwriting changes, but the custodes and pagination show that the sequence of the text is not interrupted. This is confirmed by the fact that the closest attention was paid to the library at the disposal of the monastery, and over time the text of the works was restored by another copyist. Upon careful study of the manuscript, it was possible to establish that editorial and restoration work was carried out on the text of the manuscript of the Baku list “Resayel”. Thus, on some pages of the collection, a piece of paper was glued to the lower right corner of the sheet and the lost part of the text was restored [B-6960, (1672): 112-b; 164b]. Damage to the edges of the page occurs because it is at this area of the sheet that the reader turns the page; over time, the paper loses moisture and becomes brittle.

The glosses in the margins of the manuscript, attributed by the hand of the copyist and explaining the text, deserve special attention; prayers from the Quran are given. Thus, on page 121a, the first sura of the Quran “Fatiha” is rewritten in beautiful nastaliq with vowels. Of interest is the comment left in the margins with the following content: “The soul of the Quran is Surah Yasin, the core of this surah is Salamun Gawlan min Rabbi Rahim - “Peace be upon you, a word from the Merciful Lord” [B-6960, (1672): 138].

Also of interest is a note in the margin with the following content: “I ask everyone who reads this book to pray for me, because I am a sinful slave.” Let us be clear that this traditional formulation is often found in the margins of Medieval manuscripts, which indicates the modest nature of the authors and copyists of that time.

From page 151, the 10th and 11th verses of Surah at-Talaq (“...and on that day they will have neither strength nor help...”) are rewritten in red ink and a short interpretation of these verses is given in Arabic. Further on the same page, the work “Min kitab nasim-ul-rabi” (The Book of the Spring Breeze) is rewritten, which, as we were able to establish, is a translation of the work of al-Zamakhshari (1075-1143) “Rabi-ul-abrar” (“Spring of the Saints”).

I would like to especially touch on the paper on which the text of the Baku Resayel List was copied. For a long time it was believed that it was copied on plain paper. As we indicated above, the sequence of some leaves of the collection was disrupted. For the purpose of restoring the manuscript, we transferred this handwritten monument to the “Department of Hygiene and Restoration of Manuscripts.” When the spine of the binding was opened, and it became possible to examine the paper through a special apparatus, we were faced with a pleasant discovery, for the first time, we discovered watermarks on polished paper; there were about 70 such filigrees. An interesting fact is that there were no such watermarks in any one of the filigree catalogs. It should be noted that the study of filigree is of interest to historians from the point of view of determining the ways in which European paper and trade routes entered the country.

Khalwatiya After Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi and to the Present Day

As mentioned above, the Order of Khalwatiya had about 40 independent subsidiary branches, and name of new branch started with the name of its founder, following necessarily with the word “Khalwatiya”.

Regarding the division into various madhhabs and movements in Islamic history, there are different views and opinions based on hadiths, they confirm that many sects actually arose within the Islamic Ummah. This division continues today and is expected to continue in the future. Because Islam is a religion that provides freedom of thought. In conditions of such freedom, the emergence of differences in moral and political beliefs is a natural process [Islam Mezhebleri Tarihi (2014): 73].

All new branches treated the personality and spiritual heritage of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi with great respect. For example, for each murid it was considered a daily duty to read during the morning prayer “Vird-i Sattar”, a collection of prayers and invocations to the Almighty, compiled by the great sheikh at the request of the followers of the order. Currently, there is information about the functioning of tekke, that is, Sufi abodes of various branches of this tariqa in the territory of many countries. This topic, of course, requires special research; we can only state the existence of only a few of them. In Istanbul there is a tekke of followers of Shabaniye-Khalwati, whose founder was Shabani-Veli (d.1569), an Ottoman Sufi saint from Kastamonu and founder of the Shabani branch of the Khalwati order. He studied with Hayreddin Tokadi of Bolu and was his murid [Shaban Veli].

One of the influential dergakhs in the Middle Ages was a branch formed by Ibrahim Gulshani, who was a pupil of Dede Omar Rovshani, one of the first caliphs of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi. He moved from Tabriz to Cairo due to persecution for his political beliefs. In Cairo, he was warmly received by the ruling circles and all conditions were created for him to spread the Khalwati teachings. Ibrahim Gulshani is one of the talented poets who follow the poetic school of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi. Information about the activities of representatives of this branch can be traced to the present day. Researchers of the cult-ritual practice of Sufi brotherhoods in Egypt in the 19th and early 20th centuries argue that magical and astrological activities were one of the essential areas of activity of Sufi brotherhoods, for example, khalwati [Кириллина С.А. (1989): 87].

Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Abu Abdullah Badraddin (1689-1768), an active follower of the Khalwatiya sect, a Shafi'i school lawyer and Gnostic scholar, was appointed head of one of the most prestigious positions in Cairo. Al-Azhar University, 1758 - [Hāshiyat al-Hifnī 'alá al-Yāsamīniyah]. There is no doubt that this man is one of the companions of Ibrahim Gulshani, the caliph of Dede Omar Rovshani, who is considered the owner of the dargah in Cairo.

One of the major branches of the Khalwatiya order was the Jalwatiyya direction. There are several points of view about their interpenetration. The names of various persons are given who are considered to be the first founder of the Jalwati order. One of the followers of the Khalwati order, Ismail Hakki Bursali, who describes various traditions, gives a poetic interpretation of this issue: Jalwati was a newly risen month in the time of Ibrahim Zahid Gilani (d. 700/1300), a crescent in the time of Uftade Baba (d. 988/1580) and became the full moon during the time of Hudayya (d. 1038/1628) [Mehmet Unal, (2014):46].

The Jalwati Order was founded by Aziz Mahmud Khudayi and began to develop rapidly within a very short time. In particular, in the 18th century, this tariqa was very widespread in Istanbul, Bursa, Balikesir, Edirne and the Balkans. As a result of this dissemination, his authority increased significantly. In the 18th century, poets belonging to this tariqa appeared, and the bulk of their works were of Sufi content. Currently, their poetic works are published in print, studied by researchers and introduced into scientific circulation [Mehmet Unal, (2014): 46].

It should be noted that within the Jalwatiya order, daughter branches were also formed, here are the names of some of them: a) Hakkiyya, b) Salamiyya, c) Fanaiyya, d) Hashimiyya.

In America, the Khalwati-Jerrahi branch has been functioning for many years, which, after the death of its founder Muzaffar Ozak, is headed by Robert Frager (born 1940). Robert Frager received his PhD in social psychology from Harvard University. In addition to teaching at such a famous university as Harvard, he worked as an assistant to the world famous psychologist Erik Erikson. He was the founder and first president of the first Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in America. He is the author of multi-volume books, textbooks and numerous articles. He teaches the master's course in Islamic Wisdom at the Holmes Institute's Graduate School of Consciousness Studies. Robert Frager has been trained in martial arts for over 50 years, and has been practicing Aikido since 1964. He trained personally with the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, while living in Tokyo, Japan in the mid-sixties, and currently holds the rank of 7th Dan. Gaku Homma. [Robert Frager]. Dr. Frager is also a Sufi teacher or sheikh in the Khalwati-Jerrahi Order, in which he was initiated by Muzaffer Ozak. He currently leads the Dergah in Redwood City, California, as Sheikh Raghıp al-Jerrahi.

There is information that there are also followers of the Khalwatiya order in Israel. In the homeland of the great sheikh, there are also several branches of Khalwatiya, united by the ideas of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi. They can often be found in the mausoleum of the great sheikh in Icheri-Shekher in Baku, as well as in Shamakhi in the town of Avakhyl, where, according to legend, there is a centuries-old tree in the hollow of which the founder of the order, Omar Khalwati, retired.

CONCLUSION

In the philosophical aspect, the undeniable merit of Seyyid Yahya Shirvani-Bakuvi is the presentation in his treatises of the principles of the moral purification of the Soul (seir-u-suluk) on the path of knowledge of the divine truth.

Regarding the manuscript, it should be noted that when writing the Resayel, the scribes used the following styles of handwriting: Nastaliq, Shikeste and Tahriri. The handwritten monument “Resayel” describes in poetic form the mystical stations (menazel) on the Path to the Almighty, expounds the secrets (asrar) of self-knowledge, explains the revelations received from above (mukashfat), reveals the secrets of performing ablution and indicates the hidden meaning of performing namaz.

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THE RUSSIAN-SAFAVID RELATIONS AND RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY IN 1715-1735

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Abstract: The issue of *studying the history of diplomatic* missions, consulates and embassies is particularly important for the study of international relations in the 18th century. In the absence at that time of a tradition of permanent diplomatic embassies in the Safavid empire, the exchange of missions and the establishment of consulates, together with and diplomatic correspondence were the main forms of establishing and maintaining intergovernmental contacts. This article describes the Russian diplomatic missions attempts' to ratify the Treaty of St Petersburg in 1723, during a turbulent period for the Safavid dynasty offers a significant perspective on the region's history.

The paper relies on official and semi-official historiography, contemporary mainly Russian accounts, and archival dates, as well some secondary sources.

Keywords: *Nadir shah, Russi-Iran relations, Councils, Diplomatic Missions, Residents, Embassy*

INTRODUCTION: Collapse of the Safavid Empire and Russian Expansion

In the early 1720s, the Safavid Empire faced a profound crisis that ultimately culminated in its collapse. The series of uprisings that erupted across the country played a pivotal role in this downfall. The weakened Safavid monarchy's absolute inability to effectively respond to external threats led to the Shah's court capitulating to Afghan forces led by Mir Mahmud. As a consequence, in October 1722, Shah Sultan Hussein (reign: 1694-1722) was compelled to relinquish power to the Afghans. [Avery (1993):15] The seven years of Afghan rule marked a period of turmoil characterized by violence, plunder, the razing of towns, and widespread devastation across many regions of the country. Shah Hussein's son, Tahmasp, fled Isfahan accompanied by eight hundred Qajars in June 1722. In the same year, he proclaimed himself Shah Tahmasp II (reign: 1722-1732). [Krusinski (1840): 113] However, the new Shah found himself lacking both funds and military support. With the advance of the Afghan army, he had to flee from Qazvin to Tabriz, then to Ardabil and finally to Mazandaran. Over the following seven years, the Safavids managed to maintain partial control only over the northern regions of the country.*

The demise of the Safavid Empire was not an unforeseen event for the primary stakeholders, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, as they were well-prepared for its collapse. As early as 1715, Peter I dispatched an embassy to Isfahan, led by Volynsky A.P., which

* Only 14 years after the Afghan invasion, the Safavid dynasty completely leaves the political scene.

remained in the Safavid state from 1716 to 1718 for reconnaissance purposes. Officially, Volynsky's mandate encompassed negotiating a trade agreement with the Safavid government and establishing Russian consulates and vice-consulates in the region's major trading hubs. Moreover, A. Volynsky was assigned the responsibilities of both gathering intelligence and establishing essential contacts at the Safavid court. According to Peter's directives, it was imperative to acquire information regarding the presence of the Shah's military and commercial ships, with a specific focus on Gilan and other coastal provinces. [Bushev (1978): 24] On July 30, 1717, a trade treaty known as the "assecuracion" (reassurance) was signed between Volynsky and the chief minister of the Shah, Etimad-al-Dawla* Fatali Khan. [Aliev (1979): 46–58] The treaty facilitated the establishment of Russian consulates in Isfahan, Shirvan, and Gilan. Upon his return to Russia, Volynsky's detailed report on the deteriorating conditions within the Safavid state provided Peter with substantial political insights, leading him to conclude that the Safavid regime was on an inevitable path towards collapse. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, Volynsky advised the Russian emperor to strategically occupy a segment of Safavid territory with a limited military presence until another power assumed control. [Lockhart (1958): 107]

After the conclusion of peace with Sweden in August 1721, Peter I took advantage of circumstances that were highly favorable for the Russians: the murders and robberies of Russian merchants during the unrest in Shirvan and Shamakhi, and most importantly, the appeal to the Ottoman Sultan by the leaders of the uprising, Hajji Dawud and Surkhay Khan of Qazikumukh, requesting military assistance to secure the territories they had seized, as well as recognition of these territories as subjects of the Ottoman Empire. [Lytsov, (1951): 178-187]

Seeking a deeper understanding of the regional dynamics between 1716 and 1720, expeditions were dispatched ostensibly to explore trade routes to both the western and eastern seaboard. Notably, Bekovich-Cherkassky led one such expedition from 1714 to 1715, followed by A. Kozhin and V. Urusov in 1718, and K. Verden and F. Soymonov from 1719 to 1720.† Resulting from these expeditions, a detailed map of the entire Caspian Sea region was created. It is noteworthy that Russian explorers did not revisit the Caspian region until 1726, with another expedition led by F. Soymonov. [Soymonov (1763)] In pursuit of his objectives, Peter the Great undertook rigorous preparations for the Caspian expedition, conducting detailed analyses of its economic, political, diplomatic, military, regional, and international dimensions. Additionally, ideological groundwork was laid for the Eastern campaign, with Peter I entrusting Prince Kantemir‡, renowned for his expertise in Eastern affairs, with the management of the campaign office. Kantemir's mastery of Oriental languages enabled him to play a prominent role in this campaign. He created an Arabic typeface, set up a special printing press and printed in Azeri-Turkic, Turkish and Persian the Manifesto of Peter the Great to the Peoples of

* E'temad-al-Dawla (arab. "Confidant of the State"), an important title given to people in the administration favored by the court. Under the Safavids it was a title of the prime minister, and under the Qajars it was the highest administrative (divani) title.

† For more details, see [Shteinberg (1949)]; Gadzhiev (1979)]

‡ In the Caspian campaign, Admiral General F.M. Apraksin commanded the army, while the head of the Privy Chancellery, P.A. Tolstoy, and Prince D.K. Kantemir managed civil affairs. The three formed His Majesty's Council.

the Safavid State, which he had written and translated on 15 July 1722. [Aliyev (1963): 9]* The manifesto declared that Russian troops were arriving to support Shah Hussein against the "rebels" who had risen up, not only challenging their ruler with arms but also harming Russian merchants and trade. On June 24, Peter dispatched a lieutenant to the Shamkhal, Adil Girey[†], with the manifesto, directing him to provide copies to the Shamkhal and distribute others to Derbend, Shamakhi, and Baku. [Golikov (1838):154-155; Hanway (1762):187] As a result, in October-December 1722, Russia captured Derbent (by laying the fortress of St. Cross in coastal Dagestan at the confluence of Agrakhani and Sulak) and Rasht (Gilan). Baku was captured by Russian troops only in 1723.[‡] [Gozalova (2010): 50-51] The Caspian campaign (1722-1723) resulted in a portion of the Caspian Sea falling under Russian control. Additionally, the southeastern Caucasus, which encompassed most of the province of Azerbaijan, and western Iran came under Ottoman rule from 1723 to 1726.

Simultaneously with military actions, Peter I sought to utilize diplomacy to persuade the Safavids to acknowledge Russia's claim over the captured Caspian provinces. At the commencement of the campaign on June 22, 1722, the Russian consul at the Safavid court, S. Avramov, was assigned the mission of persuading the Shah to forge an alliance with Russia. Avramov's objective was to assure the Shah that the presence of Russian troops in Shamakhi was not aimed at waging war against Safavids but rather at quelling the rebels who had endangered Russian interests. Specifically, he referred to the incidents of robbery and murder involving Russian merchants in Shamakhi in 1721. Russia emphasized that it could not permit the Caspian provinces to fall under Ottoman rule, stating, "we cannot allow the Turks to be here". [Golikov (1838): 141-143]

Therefore, on September 23, 1723, a treaty was finalized in St. Petersburg with the Safavid ambassador Ismail Bey[§], who lacked the authority to enter into such an agreement. The treaty pledged Russia's enduring friendship and support to the Safavid state against the rebels. In exchange, the Shah committed to permanently cede to Russia the cities of Derbent and Baku, along with all their associated territories, as well as the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Astrabad. Additionally, the treaty further specified

* At least 1,000 copies of the Manifesto were printed in Turkish, and the total circulation of the Manifesto in Eastern languages likely reached around 5,000 copies. [Gusteryn (2008): 64-65]

[†] Adil-Gerey II - Kumyk shamkhal of Tarki, who ruled from 1719 to 1726.

[‡] Immediately after the capture of Baku by Russian troops under the command of General Matyushkin on July 26, 1723, Turkish forces, advancing from Kars and Diyarbakir, easily took Tiflis and moved towards Ganja, Irevan, and Nakhchivan.

[§] It is important to note that during the siege of Isfahan by the Afghans, Shah Sultan Hussein dispatched Ismail Bey to St. Petersburg to negotiate a pact with the Russian government for military assistance to the Safavids. However, following the fall of Isfahan to the Afghans and Tahmasp II's ascension to the throne, Ismail Bey, who had not yet departed Iran, acknowledged Tahmasp II's authority as the new Shah. [Kurukin (2023): 87-96] However, following the fall of Isfahan to the Afghans and Tahmasp II's ascension to the throne, Ismail Bey, who had not yet departed Iran, acknowledged Tahmasp II's authority as the new Shah. Subsequently, Tahmasp II received alarming news that Russian troops had already arrived and seized Rasht. Disturbed by this development, the Shah dispatched a messenger to summon Ismail Bey back. However, upon the messenger's arrival in Rasht, Colonel Shipov falsely claimed that the ship transporting Ismail Bey had departed for Russia and denied access to him. Unaware of the deception, Ismail Bey boarded one of the Russian ships and departed. [Yuzefovich (1869): 186-187] It's crucial to underscore that this treaty was never ratified by Shah Tahmasp. For additional details about the ambassador's reception, see Bergholz (1860):135-139.

that the Shah would receive Russian troops for domestic peacekeeping. [Lockhart (1938):11] These provinces were the richest and most significant provinces of the Safavid state. [Markham (1874):293] However, Tahmasp II vehemently opposed the ratification of this agreement, deeming it legally invalid. Ismail Bey was subsequently branded a traitor and did not dare to return. He remained in Russia until the end of his life. [Aliyev (1975): 64] Of course, the consent of the Safavids was necessary for the Russian government to legitimize its efforts to seize Safavid territories amidst the effective collapse of this state. In that case, unlike the Turks, the Russian troops would formally have legitimate grounds for carrying out their expansionist plans.

The news of the treaty between Russia and the Safavids heightened the Ottoman government's activity. The Ottoman court became aware of this treaty through a Venetian newspaper published in Italy, which included a translation of the treaty sourced from St. Petersburg newspapers. Additionally, the Turks received a copy of the treaty directly from Peter Neplyuev, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul. The treaty's dissemination in Europe contributed to a surge in hostility towards Russia. [Lockhart (1958):228-300] In response to the Russian-Safavid treaty, the Ottoman government declared all Safavid territories as its own. Orders were issued to the troops stationed on the frontiers to prepare for war. [Markova (1966): 30]

By the beginning of 1724, the positions of Russia and the Ottoman Empire in the region were clearly delineated, essentially through occupation, marking the division of Safavid lands. After extensive negotiations, on June 24, 1724, in Istanbul, a treaty was signed between the Russian and Ottoman Empires mediated by the French ambassador de Bonac, clarifying the possessions of these states in the Caucasus. The Treaty of Istanbul in 1724 regarding the division of Safavid territories between Russia and the Ottoman Empire recognized the Caspian provinces as belonging to Russia, described as "voluntarily" ceded by the Shah. As compensation, the Ottoman Empire established control over Kartli, Kakheti, Ganja, Yerevan, Karabakh, Tabriz, and Qazvin. Regarding Shirvan, situated between Russian and Turkish dominions, it was decided to consider it under the Sultan's protectorate, without the right to station troops there. [Markova (1966): 30-31] The Treaty of Istanbul marked a military-diplomatic victory for Russia. Through skillful maneuvers, Russia was able, firstly, to temporarily secure its presence in Eastern Azerbaijan and Gilan, enabling it to become a significant military-political player in the Middle East. Secondly, due to this intricate strategy, Russia temporarily entered into a situational alliance with the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the Ottomans recognized Russian interests in the Caucasus-Caspian region, as well as territorial acquisitions in Safavid territories, thereby agreeing to the absence of any access to the Caspian Sea. However, Shah Tahmasp refused to acknowledge the Treaty of Istanbul of 1724.

The assumption that the weakened Safavid state would easily succumb to external pressure proved to be gravely mistaken. Furthermore, neither the Russian treaty with the Safavid state in 1723 nor the Russian treaty with the Ottoman Empire in 1724 were acknowledged by Shah Tahmasb II. Additionally, the local populations of the conquered territories resisted submission. The severe repercussions of the Afghan, Ottoman, and Russian occupations laid the groundwork for a liberation movement against the invaders. This movement was led by the capable commander Nadir of the Turkic Afshar tribes, who adopted the title *Tahmasb-qoli Khan* (servant of Tahmasb), to demonstrate his loyalty to Shah Tahmasp.

Meshchersky's Mission

The first Russian consulates in the Safavid empire (in Isfahan and Shamakhi) appeared after the signing of the treaty in 1720.* In December 1720, Semen Avramov [Turilova (1996):106] was appointed consul in Isfahan and Captain Alexey Baskakov in Shamakhi. Officially, they were to seek 'every assistance' from the local rulers for Russian merchants to buy and export raw silk to Astrakhan without hindrance. Unofficially, they were to gather military and political intelligence. [Kurukin (2010): 42]

It should be noted that throughout the 18th century Russian diplomats did not have a permanent residence in the Safavid state, they were located in Rasht (Gilan), Ganja and other cities. Permanent representation appeared only after 1723. [Turilova (1996):105] After signing the treaty of 1723, Russia decided to send its official diplomatic representative to the Safavid state for permanent stay. [Memorandum (1841):303] By decree of 18 September 1723, Prince B.V. Meshchersky, a non-commissioned lieutenant of the Preobrazhensky Regiment, and Semyon Avramov, a secretary, were appointed Russian resident. In April 1724 the ambassadorial mission entered the Safavid domains. Due to unrest in the country, the ambassadors were attacked several times on the road from Rasht to Ardabil, but the ambassadorial guards managed to disperse the attackers each time. Tahmasp II settled for some time in Qazvin, where Semyon Avramov found him. Avramov reported that he was received by Shah Tahmasp and handed him a proposal for an alliance with the Russian Empire. [Kurukin (2010): 82] Shah Tahmasp received Meshchersky graciously and was presented with a gift from Peter the Great (a golden water pipe). However, the Shah categorically refused to ratify the treaty, stating that Ismail bey had no authority to conclude the treaty, which placed the Caspian provinces of the Safavid state under Russian jurisdiction, and that he had only been sent to confirm friendly relations.

At the end of May 1724 Meshchersky and Avramov, having achieved nothing, set off on their return journey. Another attempt to ratify the treaty was made in November 1725 by S. Avramov on instructions from St. Petersburg, who was again instructed to go to Shah Tahmasp II to ratify the treaty. [Ulyanickiy (1899): 221] In case of refusal, the Shah was to be reminded that Russia might think: "If Shah Tahmasp would not agree, we are ready to agree on another candidate and we will act, for which all the proper preparations are being made". The consul stayed at the Shah's residence from May 1726 to January 1729.

Attempts to ratify the treaty by Dolgorukov and the Georgian king Vakhtang

The more successful was the advance of Ottoman troops in the region, the more actively Russia sought to achieve a formal agreement with Shah Tahmasp and ratification of the treaty of 1723, and for this purpose already in 1726 together with the new commander V.V. Dolgorukov came to Gilan to persuade Shah Tahmasp and the former king of Kartli Vakhtang VI together with Georgian prince Amilahor arrived in Gilan to convince Shah Tahmasp. [Kurukin (2010): 305,308] However, Tahmasp II reiterated his stance, deeming

* For the full text of this treaty, see: Bushev (1978): 274–277.

the provisions of the St. Petersburg Treaty unacceptable, and consequently declined to ratify it.

As a result of Nadir's successful liberation mission, the position of the Afghan Ashraf was considerably weakened. It can be said that since 1727 negotiations on behalf of Shah Tahmasp II with Russia were conducted personally by Tahmasb-qoli Khan. Valuable gifts were sent Russian court for Shah Tahmasp II's cronies and military commanders. [Nikonov (2008): 147] From 1728 Russian diplomats began to work on establishing friendly relations with the camp of Shah Tahmasp II and his commander-in-chief Tahmasb-qoli Khan.

Once more, diplomatic envoys were dispatched, and in one of the messages conveyed by the Safavid Shah Tahmasp through the ambassador Mohammed Nesir, it was explained that the Shah was displeased with the Russian court for consenting to the partition of Safavid state with the Turks. He pointed out that "Azerbaijan and Georgia were currently under Turkish occupation. Shah Tahmasp, having achieved numerous victories against the rebels, expressed his desire for friendship and alliance with Russia". [Bronevskii]

At the end of 1729, *Tahmasb-qoli* Khan expelled the Afghans and restored Safavid power in Isfahan in the person of Shah Tahmasp II. The following year he succeeded in recapturing all of western Iran and most of Azerbaijan, including (in August 1730) Ardabil, which had been taken by the Ottomans. [Tapper (1997): 103] With the revival and strengthening of the Safavid state, it naturally sought to regain all its former possessions. As soon as he entered Isfahan, Nadir (*Tahmasb-qoli* Khan) demanded from the Ottoman and Russian empires the return of all the lands that had formerly belonged to the Safavids.

Levashev's Diplomatic Activity

Lieutenant-General Levashov was sent to Gilan in April 1723 to "take" the Safavid lands "ceded" to Russia by the 1723 Treaty of St Petersburg. On 16 September Peter the Great appointed him 'chief administrator of all the conquered provinces'. [Turilova (1996):106] Seeking to gain a foothold in the region, Russia decided to negotiate not only with Tahmasb but also with Ashraf* to accept the terms of the treaties of St Petersburg (1723) and Istanbul (1724). Russian diplomats were simultaneously in negotiations with two groups - the Afghans (Ashraf Khan) and the Safavids (Shah Tahmasb II). As a result of negotiations with Ashraf, Lieutenant-General Levashov signed a treaty at Rasht (Yartsa) in February 1729 [Bronevskii], returning to the Afghans Astrabad and Mazandaran, which were still unoccupied by Russian troops.†

In August 1730, the Russian Empress Anna Ioannovna appointed Levashov Ansheff General and Commander-in-Chief of the newly conquered lands. [Inventory of Imperial Decrees (1875):229] Two years later (1732), she first replaced him with Lieutenant-General P. Lefort, and then appointed Prince Louis Gruno of Hesse-Homburg, Major of the Guards and Lieutenant-General, in his place; but she soon recalled him as well and

* Ashraf Khan the Afghan chief who ruled as Shah over part of Iran from 1725 to 1729.

† Full text of the treaty concluded between the Russian government and Ashraf, see: Yuzefovich (1869): 189.

reappointed Levashov (decree of 27 July 1733). [SIRIO (1898): 347–348, 369] He held this post until the end of the Russian presence in the South Caucasus in 1735. [Kurukin (2010): 218] Vasily Yakovlevich Levashov was again promoted to the rank of General-Ansheff and 'Chief Commander' of the Lower Corps. However, P.P. Shafirov was assigned to him as Second Minister Plenipotentiary.

General V.Y. Levashov, who became the commander of Russian troops in the newly conquered Caspian provinces and actually the Russian viceroy in the region, organised a whole intelligence network. "Spies are sent from us everywhere without fail", Levashov reported to Empress Anna Ioannovna in September 1731. The names of these 'spies' are recorded in the administration's income and expenditure books for 1729-1731 in the 'Baku Commander' collection of the Archives. From 1726 these local 'spies' were regularly sent to Rasht, Ardabil, Tabriz, Qazvin, Isfahan, Hamadan, Mashhad and other cities, returning two or three weeks later with the information and rumours they had gathered." [Kurukin (2010): 243]

The year 1730 passed in fruitless negotiations with the Ehtima Devlet Mirza Rehim, who had arrived in Rasht. The Safavids demanded the return of the provinces, and negotiations with the Shah's representative were again unsuccessful. To establish contact with a new political force in the person of the influential Tahmasb-qoli Khan, Lieutenant-Colonel Ivan Yurlov and the unflappable Semyon Avramov were sent to the Shah's court in Qazvin. [Armiano-russkie otnosheniia (1978):17-19] They carried a letter on behalf of Levashov to his new "most honourable friend", informing him of the death of Peter II and the accession of Anna Ioannovna to the throne. [Kurukin (2010): 323] Yurlov and Avramov returned to Rasht without a reply, but an envoy from Tahmasb-qoli Khan, Mirza Muhammed Ali, arrived after them. At Levashov's reception, the ambassador again demanded the return of the Caspian lands on behalf of the Shah, to which the general replied that the provinces would not be returned by Russia, and to the threats of war he reminded that Russia could come to an agreement with the Turks. The commander went on to say that such important problems are not solved by ultimatums, but by negotiations between authorised persons. The two sides agreed to continue negotiating. [Kurukin (2010): 324]

With the accession of Anna Ioannovna to the throne of Russia (1730-1740), an increase in diplomatic activity between the two countries is observed: embassy exchanges and negotiations were conducted both with Shah Tahmasp and with Tahmasb-qoli Khan separately. In early 1730, the Shah's ambassador Mirza Ibrahim arrived in Moscow with proposals: if Russia helps to clear the territory of Iran from the Turkish occupants, the Shah will cede to it both the areas already occupied by Russian troops and those promised under the treaty concluded in 1723 with Peter the Great. Otherwise, all conquered territories were to be returned to the Safavid state. [Kurukin (2010): 325] On his part, in 1730, Tahmasb-qoli Khan, to maintain diplomatic relations, personally dispatched a congratulatory letter on the occasion of the coronation of the new empress. [Astrabadi (2016):118-119] Amidst significant shifts in the international landscape, including the looming threat of war over the Polish throne and the escalating tensions in the Caucasus, the Russian government made a strategic decision to withdraw its troops from the Caspian regions. This move aimed to transform the Safavid state from a potential adversary into a valuable ally. As reported by the British resident in St Petersburg, C. Rondeau, the intention of the Russian court was to return all appropriated

territories to Safavids as soon as possible, without compromising the dignity of Russia. Empress Anna Ioannovna convened two "secret councils" in May and August 1730, during which it was decided to return the seized lands to the rightful claimant, Tahmasp II, the representative of the Safavid dynasty, acknowledging him as the legitimate authority over these territories. [SIRIO (1894): 401] In October 1730, Empress Anna Ioannovna, concerned about the significant casualties due to fever and plague among Russian troops stationed in Gilan, dispatched a letter to Tahmasp outlining the conditions under which Russia would return the province. Vice Chancellor Osterman emphasized that Russia's primary objective, both for its own interests and for negotiations with the Turks, was to employ all means necessary to persuade the Shah to accept the treaty already concluded with the Turks. [Osterman (1726).] In June 1731, when the return of Gerat to the Safavids became apparent, the Empress, with the announcement of the conditions for the liberation of Gilan, dispatched Shafirov, who had been instructed not to allow the Turks to outpace Russia in concluding peace with the Safavid state.

At the same time, in April 1731, Baron Shafirov arrived belatedly in Rasht, sent to conclude a bilateral agreement. He brought the Shah "sables and other soft furs" for the sum of 1600 rubles, and "especially for the expenses of soft furs" (for gifts to close dignitaries) for the sum of 3,000 rubles. Birds of prey were a special item among the goods sent: gyrfalcons, falcons, balabans, hawks. [Никонов (2008):145] Even Mirza Ibrahim, who came to Rasht, at first said that he had only been instructed to accept provinces from the Russians without any agreement, but then he agreed to negotiations. [Kurukin (2010): 329] They were successful: according to the project presented by the Russians, the Empire ceded Gilan and Astara 'along the Kur River' to the Shah for the sake of 'eternal neighbourly friendship' and promised to hand over the remaining territories when the western lands of the Safavid state were liberated from the Turks, and the Russian representatives also hoped for some monetary compensation for the ceded lands. Mirza Ibrahim went to the Shah with the Russian project; negotiations continued in Tabriz, where Captain Kutuzov was sent with gifts for the Shah - birds of prey (hawks, gyrfalcons and falcons); however, he never reached the Shah in August 1731 - he was forced to turn back from Ardabil. [Kurukin (2010): 330-331] Tahmasp's Turkish campaign* caused a complete halt to the negotiations, and the Treaty of Rasht signed in January 1732. According to that treaty, Russia committed to returning all seized territories within five months, except for those situated north of the Kura River. These lands were to be retained until the expulsion of the Turks from West Azerbaijan, Georgia, and other Safavid provinces under their control. Additionally, the treaty granted Russian merchants in the Safavid state and Safavid merchants in Russia the freedom to trade. Furthermore, both states were obligated to appoint diplomatic representatives to each other's courts, formalizing diplomatic relations. [Lockhart (1938): 58]

On September 7, 1732, a long-anticipated event occurred: Nadir deposed Shah Tahmasp II and placed the young son of the latter, Shah Abbas III, on the throne, declaring himself as regent, or *naib as-saltaneh*. This effectively ended the dual rule in

* The 1731-1732 military campaign, held by Tahmasb II, aimed to launch an offensive into the Ottoman-held Caucasus. However, it ended in a catastrophic defeat, resulting in the loss of all the territorial gains made by Tahmasb-qoli Khan during the previous year.

the country. Henceforth, Nadir became the absolute ruler, and it was he with whom external actors would have to deal in the future. In 1733, to announce the proclamation of Shah Abbas III and to continue diplomatic relations with Russia, Nadir sent an embassy to St Petersburg led by Ahmad Khan with a large present consisting in pearls, precious stones 3-4 lions, 2 tigers, 4-5 monkeys and others. [Floor, W. (2009):25] Due to the delay of his ambassador in the capital, Nadir, now acting as regent, personally sent a letter to the Russian Empress, requesting the release of his ambassador and expressing his hope that the goals of the mission would soon be achieved. [Astrabadi (2016):59-61]

During this period, Nadir engaged in negotiations with Russian ambassadors, conveying his discontent with the Russian government's reluctance to relinquish control over all Caspian territories, with particular emphasis on Baku and Derbent. In October 1734, Nadir besieged Ganja [Cook (1770): 465], where there was a large Turkish garrison under the command of Haji Ali Pasha who strongly defended the fortress. Amidst the siege, Nadir made an appeal to the Russian ambassador, who was in attendance, urging for the return of the Caspian territories of Baku and Derbent. Faced with the looming specter of conflict over the Polish throne and the escalating tensions in the Caucasus, the Russian government opted to withdraw its troops from the Caspian regions. This strategic move aimed to transform the Safavid state from a potential adversary into a valuable ally. To finalize the treaty, an embassy headed by Prince S.D. Golitsyn, accompanied by a retinue including Nadir's ambassador Ahmad Khan, was urgently dispatched to Isfahan.

The negotiations concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Ganja on March 10, 1735. According to the treaty, Russia agreed to evacuate Baku within a week and Derbent within two months from the date of signing. In exchange, the Shah pledged eternal allegiance to Russia and undertook not to transfer Baku and Derbent to any other power, particularly Ottomans. Furthermore, the Sulak River was designated as the border between Russia and the Safavid states. Both parties also agreed to notify each other before engaging in peace negotiations with Ottomans. [Lockhart (1938): 86] Even though Russia had relinquished the last of Peter's conquests in this area, it remained steadfast in adhering to the fundamental principle of its Eastern policy, which aimed to thwart the expansion of Ottomans in the region. [Sykes (1921): 96] Consequently, the transfer of lands to the Shah raised fewer concerns. Therefore, English diplomats conveyed in their message: "...Her Majesty, would never consent, cost what it will, that the Turks should settle on the Caspian Sea." [SIRIO (1891): 410]

At the same time, as Nadir's siege of Ganja continued, it became evident that the prolonged capture of Ganja was not in line with the interests of both Russia and the Safavids. Recognizing this, the empress decided to provide assistance to Nadir. As a result, Levashov dispatched an officer-engineer and four artillerymen disguised in local attire, along with several significant artillery pieces, to the Shah's encampment. [Lockhart (1938): 85] According to Cook, Golitsyn, the Russian ambassador to the Safavid state, sent a letter to Nadir, indicating that everything was prepared and inviting him to proceed. Nadir responded that he could not do so immediately but encouraged them to commence whenever they were ready, pledging to join them once they had achieved some progress. "Though Kouli-khan was glad that the bastion was destroyed, yet he was very sorry that he had not seen the operation". [Cook (1770): 465-466] Nadir, appointed Hassan Ali Khan the *ma'ayyer-bashi* new ambassador to Russia. [Floor, W. (2009):55]

Thereby, in 1735, the last remnants of Russian presence vanished from the Safavid state, enabling the Nadir to reclaim the liberated territories without obstruction. This event marked the beginning of a new phase in relations with Russia, which lasted until the end of Nadir's life and throughout the Afsharid period. On the surface, it may have appeared that friendly relations were established between the two states. However, a closer examination reveals a different reality. In essence, these relations were a covert, veiled conflict between Russia and the Safavid state. Russian policy in the region was inherently dualistic. On one hand, Russia opposed its primary adversary, the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the growing military power of Nadir concerned Russia, which hoped to eventually return to the South Caucasus. Consequently, Russia sought to counter Nadir's consolidation by all means short of open confrontation, as Nadir had by then restored the historical borders of the Safavid state.

CONCLUSION

The Petersburg Treaty of 1723, aimed at securing Russia's strategic interests in the Caspian region, faced significant challenges on the path to ratification. Shah Tahmasp II's reluctance to acknowledge the treaty's validity posed a formidable obstacle, prompting Russian diplomats to embark on a series of missions to secure his approval. From Meshchersky's diplomatic overtures to Levashov's strategic maneuvering, each envoy navigated the complex web of Safavid politics with skill and determination. Despite facing resistance from Tahmasp II and competing interests from the Ottoman Empire, Russian diplomats remained steadfast in their pursuit of ratification.

The diplomatic landscape was further complicated by the rise of Nadir-qoli Afshar, who emerged as a central figure in Safavid politics. Nadir's ascendancy to power in 1729 and his subsequent overthrow of the Safavid dynasty reshaped the region's geopolitical dynamics, challenging both Russian and Ottoman ambitions.

Through the treaties of Rasht (1732) and Ganja (1735), Russia ceded Peter the Great's conquests to the Shah. In return, Nadir promised to ally with Russia and avoid peace talks with the Ottoman Empire without Russian consent. Russia's motives were twofold: it lacked control over Peter's acquisitions in the South Caucasus, and tensions with the Ottoman Empire were rising, with the Crimean Khan raiding Russian borders in 1735. Nadir's victories over the Ottomans liberated the South Caucasus, forcing the Ottomans to confront multiple adversaries, including the Safavids, Russia, and Austria.

Russia aimed to delay its conflict with Turkey (1736-1739) by keeping the Safavid-Ottoman war active, but this strategy ultimately failed, leading to a break between the Ottomans and Russia. Russia needed an alliance with the Safavids for future actions against the Ottomans, starting with returning the Caspian provinces to the Safavid state.

Despite Russia's efforts, Nadir independently negotiated peace with the Ottomans after the Russo-Ottoman War began. In 1736, he restored the Safavid state's borders and declared himself Shah at the Kurultai in Mugan, overthrowing the Safavid dynasty.

Russian all diplomatic missions after Peter I's Caspian campaign (1722-1723) and the Treaty of St. Petersburg (1723) show that these diplomatic initiatives took place against the backdrop of broader geopolitical dynamics, including the Safavid-Ottoman rivalry and Russia's expanding influence in the Caucasus and Caspian regions. The

interactions between these powers shaped the course of diplomatic negotiations and influenced the outcome of regional conflicts and alliances.

Despite Russia's efforts to secure Safavid recognition of its territorial gains, the situation remained fluid and subject to change. Safavid-Ottoman relations, Safavid internal politics, and the shifting balance of power in the region all played a role in shaping the trajectory of diplomatic interactions between Russia and the Safavid state.

In conclusion, Russia's diplomatic efforts following the Treaty of St. Petersburg and Istanbul reflected its ambitions in the Caucasus and Caspian regions and its desire to establish itself as a major player in the geopolitics of the early modern era. While these efforts were not always successful, they nonetheless contributed to shaping the regional balance of power and laid the groundwork for future diplomatic initiatives and engagements.

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**KHAZAR-BYZANTINE-SLAV COALITION AGAINST ABBASID CALIPHATE
AND THE CAUCASUS IN THE 850s****Leri Tavadze***

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Abstract: The rebellion of 852 in Armīniya (Abbasid province in the Caucasus) resulted in the assassination of the governor of the Abbasid Caliphate. Caliph al-Mutawwakil (r. 847-861) dispatched a punitive expedition with intention of conquering and subduing the areas that were out of Abbasid control.

Bughā al-Kabir was appointed in command of the Abbasid army and was sent to the Caucasus in the same year. Bughā's Caucasian military campaign was of large scale, arguably the largest Caucasian military expedition organized by the Caliphate in the 9th century.

The Abbasid army attacked, imprisoned, and killed the population of Armīniya involved in the assassination of the Abbasid governor; Muslim usurpers who were unwilling to yield the orders of the Caliphate got punished; the governor of Tbilisi Ishāq b. Ismā'īl was captured and beheaded while his residence and the center of Muslim position in Kartli, Tbilisi, was submitted. A large number of Christian Armenian and Arranian (Albanian) rulers were imprisoned.

The Georgian rulers, who ruled the northern outskirts of the Caliphate, were divided. They mostly opposed the Abbasids, while some of them supported the Caliph. The 853-854 campaigns were successful for Bughā and his Georgian allies, but other Georgian rulers asked for support from the Byzantines and the Khazars. According to al-Ya'qūbī (the 9th c.), the Caucasian rulers who had escaped captivity called for the help of Khazars, Byzantines, and Slavs in the fight against the Abbasids. They received a positive response. A large force under Khazar leadership was sent against the Caliphate while the Byzantines launched an attack on the Eastern Mediterranean domains of the Caliphate.

In 855, in the course of Khazar-Byzantine-Slav involvement in the Caucasian affairs, the Abbasids adopted a defensive stance. Derbent was successfully protected. The Khazars and their allies were unable to penetrate in the direction of Arran. In the direction of Kartli, the Khazars were more successful, probably with the support of local rulers.

Keywords: *Abbasids, Armīniya, Arran, Byzantium, Caucasus, Georgia, Khazars, Slavs*

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INTRODUCTION

The ninth-century reality in the Caucasus was characterized by the rise and decline of Abbasid hegemony in the region. The great powers influenced political condition of the Caucasus. The primary adversaries of the Abbasids were the Byzantines and the Khazars. The first testimony of the Slavic involvement in Caucasian affairs dates from this period. The middle of the 9th century saw emergence of numerous local states in the Caucasus. All these political entities played a serious role in reshaping the Caucasian political map. The interactions of these entities provide a dynamic picture of alliances, conflicts, diplomacy, negotiations, wars, and border changes, all of which make the political history of the 9th century Caucasus so interesting.

The middle of the 9th century is notable due to the intense military intervention of the Abbasid Caliphate in the Caucasus. The internal conflicts and political intrigues weakened the power of the Caliph in the peripheries of the Abbasid Empire. In the 850s, particularly in 852-855, the Caliphate made a significant effort to subdue the local Christian or Muslim population of the Caucasus. Khazar-Byzantine-Slav involvement in the Caucasian conflict was a single phase of the war that took place in the region.

The 852-855 War in the Caucasus, more commonly known as Bughā al-Kabir's military expedition, has been extensively studied by historians. However, the involvement of the Khazars, Byzantines and Slavs in these events has received less attention. An overview of the historiography of the 850s conflict is a valuable starting point before examining the details of the war and diplomacy.

Medieval Armenian authors provide various accounts of Bughā al-Kabir's military activities in the Caucasus region; however, the accounts of two historians are of greater interest. Tovma Artsruni (The 9th-10th cc.) wrote "History of the House of Artsruni" and describes the political history of Vaspurakan, along with a description of the domains held by the dynasty. His account is particularly valuable about Bughā al-Kabir's campaign, although he does not mention the involvement of the Khazar-Byzantine-Slavs coalition in the conflict [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 175-255]. John Catholicos of Armenia (r. 897-923), also known as Yovhannes Draxanakerc'i, wrote "History of Armenia" [Yovhannes Draxanakerc'i (1987): 118-125]. His narrative is primarily concerned with the Armenian and Arranian resistance against the Caliphate, with less attention being paid to other aspects of the Caucasian resistance. Step'anos Tarōnec'i provides further insight into the suppression of Armenian princes by the Abbasids [Step'anos Tarōnec'i (2017): 174-177], while Vardan's "History" is the compilation of former authors [Thomson (1989): 183-184].

Movses Kaghankatvatsi (or Movses Dasxurançi) is the 10th century author of "History of Aghuans". He wrote on Bughā's incursion in Armenia, Arran, and Georgia in the 850s [Movsēs Dasxurançi (1961): 218-219]. Arab authors provide insight into the materials preserved in the archives of the Caliphate. Those authors were: al-Balādhurī (the 9th c.), al-Ya'qūbī (the 9th c.), and al-Ṭabarī (839-923) [al-Balādhuri (1916): 331-332; al-Ṭabarī (1989): 111-116, 121-124]. The Campaign of Bughā is narrated by all of them, but only al-Ya'qūbī mentions the Khazar-Byzantine-Slav alliance against the Abbasids [al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1266-1267; Шагинян (2018): 362-363]. The compilation of above-mentioned Oriental authors was presented by other Muslim historians, e.g. Ibn al-Athīr [Ибн ал-Асир (1940): 68-69].

The Georgian authors also provide considerable and informative insight. Mat'iane Kartlisa ("A History of Kartli". Also known as Royal Georgian Annals) was written in the 11th century and it was based on documents kept in the chancellery of the Georgian Kingdom. Similarly, as al-Ya'qūbī, it also describes Bughā al-Kabir's campaign and subsequent events [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142-143]. Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian was written soon after these events and concentrates attention on the Caliphate's campaign and the passion of Kostanti the Georgian, a native of Kakheti Korepiskopate [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 164-172; Javakhishvili (1977): 86-90; Abashidze & Rapp (2004): 137-173]. Michael Modrekili composed a work of hymnography, entitled "Hymns". It describes the passion of Kostanti the Georgian based on aforementioned hagiographic work [Michael Modrekili (1978): 324-326]. Michael Modrekili's work was composed in the second half of the 10th century, but the particular hymn could have been written before. A contemporary Georgian inscription from the Ateni Sioni Church (the end of August, 853) sheds some light on Bughā's incursion in Georgia [КСК III (1989): 131-132].

The study of the Caliphate's Caucasian policy is extensive in scholarly literature. Proficient authors have written about Abbasid policy in the Caucasus. These researchers are not only Orientalists; rather many are involved in Caucasian or Khazar studies, hence their primary research areas are countries of the Caucasus or Khazar Khaganate. Mkrtsich Ghazarian, Panteleymon Žuze, Aram Ter-Ghewondyan, Arsen Shahinyan and Allison Vacca are among those, who studied the Abbasid policy and administration in the Caucasus [Ghazarian (1903): 43, 51-54; Жузе (1937): 166-214]; Sikharulidze (1976): 139-143; Ter-Ghewondyan (1976): 41-44; Тер-Гевондян (1977): 138-148; Silagadze (1991): 146-153; Шагинян (2011): 299-313; Japaridze (2014): 11-43; Vacca (2017): 66-112; Vacca (2020): 229-253]. The military career of Bughā al-Kabir in the context of the Arab-Byzantine conflicts is studied by Konstantinos Takirtakoglou [Takirtakoglou (2018): 83-120].

Some other authors use to write from different perspectives rather than keeping their minds on Abbasid policy and Arabic sources. In this case, a more local, Caucasian approach is employed. Ivane Javakhishvili was one of the first to employ Ateni Sioni fresco inscription and narrative sources for the study of the 850s [Javakhishvili (1965): 97-100; КСК III (1989): 131-132], Mariam Lordkipanidze researched the history of Tbilisi Emirate [Lordkipanidze (1951): 185-201], Ziya Buniadov explored the issue regarding the history of Azerbaijan [Буниатов (1965). 190-194]. Elene Tsagareishvili studied the same period largely based on Armenian sources [Tsagareishvili (1968): 105-114], Jaba Samushia analysed Bughā's military campaign against Tbilisi with an emphasis on topographic research of the city, largely based on al-Ṭabarī [Samushia (2003): 365-384] and Farida Mamedova was interested to study the same topic in connection with a history of Caucasian Albania [Мамедова Ф. (2005): 391-395].

Douglas Morton Dunlop, Anatoly Novoseltsev, and Tatiana Kalinina wrote more on Khazar involvement in the events of the 850s based on al-Ya'qūbī and other primary sources [Dunlop (1967): 193-194; Новосельцев (1990): 192; Калинина (2015): 172]. The latter author extensively researched the relations between the Khazars and Slavs, based on various Arabic and Persian sources [Калинина (2015): 166-176]. Alexander Abdaladze's approach towards the issue was to view the entire process as the mutual struggle of the Albanians, Armenians, and Georgians for independence against the

Abbasids [Abdaladze (1988): 50-51, 56-59]. The Abbasid war in the Caucasus from Kakhetian perspective were examined by Tengiz Papuashvili [Papuashvili (1982): 179-186] and Hamlet Mkrtumian. The latter author pays special attention to Armenian-Kakhetian relations as well [Мкртумян (1983): 78-85]. My latest research is also devoted to the History of Kakheti Korepiskopate, with a particular focus on the Abbasid policy towards the Caucasus and its impact on Georgia [Tavadze (2022): 173-182].

Abbasid Policy towards Caucasian States

The Caucasus in the 9th century was a profoundly disintegrated region. The northern part of the region was Khazar Qaghanate's territory or sphere of influence, the southern part was claimed by the Abbasid Caliphate, and the western part of the Caucasus Byzantine Emperors insisted on themselves. Despite such a division among the three great powers that operated in the Caucasus and claimed most of the region, the genuine political condition was much different. The Caucasus was also divided among petty states and they mostly depended on the great powers. Minor political entities were much more insignificant than the above-mentioned world power, particularly in terms of their political or socioeconomic condition. However, these local Caucasian states exerted considerable political influence in the South Caucasus.

The political reality of the 9th century South Caucasus was unique compared to previous centuries. Prior to this period, local Southern Caucasian states were few. Three of them had dominated local Transcaucasian policy. Armenia, Arran, and Kartli were large territorial states in the Caucasus. These three political subjects played a key role in the region, either defending their interests or competing with neighboring superpowers. However, by the 9th century, all three major local political entities were largely fragmented. In the 9th century all those countries were divided and governmental centers, such as Dvin, Barda, and Tbilisi, were occupied by the Caliphal forces. Furthermore, the Abbasid administration that operated in the South Caucasus brought with them numerous Arab, Persian, and Transoxanian tribes, resulting in a significant loss of land for the locals to the newcomers. The Caucasian map was gradually transformed. Despite two hundred years of Muslim expansion, the natives retained much of their possessions and formed new competing political entities that challenged the Abbasid authority in the region.

Georgia is located in the northwestern part of the South Caucasus. It was unified in the mid-8th century, but the Abbasid incursion led to its collapse into much reduced states. The principal Georgian state was the Kartvelian Kingdom ruled by the Bagrationi Dynasty. The Bagrationi emerged as a new dynasty and claimed the legacy of Kartli Kingdom otherwise known as the Kartvelian Kingdom. The Bagrationi Dynasty possessions were divided among three brothers by the mid-9th century: Adarnase, a senior brother, possessed Klarjeti as his central domain; Bagrat I Kouropalates, a middle brother, controlled Tao as his main domain and was proclaimed a king; Guaram Mampali, a junior brother – controlled Samtskhe and Artani. They established collegial rule over the Kartvelian Kingdom and Bagrat acted as a *de jure* ruler [Lordkipanidze (1963); Javakhishvili (1965); Muskhelishvili (1980); Abdaladze (1988); Tavadze 2020].

Kakheti Korepiskopate was one more pretender for the legacy of Kartli Kingdom. Kakhetian rulers controlled the eastern portion of the former united Kartli Kingdom. In the mid-9th century they controlled several provinces including Zena Sopeli (the Upper

Land), Kakheti, Kukheti, Gardabani, and Tsanareti together with the entire Mtiuleti. Local elites recognized the ruler with the titles of Korepiskopos and King. Samuel Korespiskopos from the Donauri Dynasty served as a Korepiskopos and, most probably, was called a King simultaneously [Papuashvili (1982); Мкртумян Г. Г. (1983); Tavadze (2022)].

The Abkhazian Kingdom was a western Georgian political entity established at the end of the 8th century by the Abkhazian dynasty from Abasgia (Abkhazia). King Leo II successfully unified Abkhazia and Egrisi and subsequently established an independent kingdom. He dismissed the Byzantine political authority and embraced a Georgian political system. His sons continue their father's policy. Demetre II, a second son of Leo, ruled in the 850s. The policy of the Abkhazian kings was to maintain the integrity of the western Georgian possessions and to expand in the direction of Zena Sopeli, which was commonly called "Kartli" [Lordkipanidze (1963); Javakhishvili (1965); Muskhelishvili (1980)].

Armenia in the mid-9th century was politically fragmented and the most vulnerable area for the Abbasid expansion. The Bagratuni Dynasty possessed a central authority in Armenia. Abul Abbas Smbat VIII Bagratuni was at the top of hierarchy, while his son, Ashot, served as nominal *Ishkhan Ishkhanats* of Armenia. Despite the formal unity of Armenia, the country was divided among confronting *Ishkhans* and they competed with each other for land and power. The most influential among Armenian *Ishkhans* were Artsruni family of Vaspurakan; *Ishkhans* of Taron were Ashot and David, sons of Bagrat II Bagratuni a previous ruler of Armenia; Philip was *Ishkhan* of Syunik; Vasak Ishkhanik was *Ishkhan* of Vayots Dzor; Mamikonians and other influential families continued to hold formidable power in Armenia [Тер-Гевондян (1977); Abdaladze (1988); Шагинян (2011)].

Arran was similarly divided in the same century. The Aranshahik Dynasty possessed the Shaki region, Hereti, and also territories on the right bank of the Kura River. The head of the house was Sahl, son of Sumbat, and his son, Muawiyah-Ioannes. The latter held the office of Chief of *Baṭrīqs* in Armīniya. Next to the Aranshahik Dynasty, the territories on the right bank of Kura River were controlled by relatives of the old Mihranid Dynasty. Esayi Apumusē (Abū Mūsā ʿĪsā b. Yūsuf), a Prince of Baylakan was one of them. He held territories in Uti and surrounding areas. Nerseh Ktritch was a prince of Gardman and controlled the northern outskirts on the right bank of the Kura River, which at this time was considered to be a land of Arran [Буниятов (1965); Abdaladze (1988); Мамедова (2005); Шагинян (2011)]. However, large estates of Arran, Armenia, and Georgia were under newly migrated Muslims from different Arab or Iranian provinces. All these estates were under the control of Arab administration [Жузе (1937); Тер-Гевондян (1976); Тер-Гевондян (1977); Шагинян (2011); Васса (2017a)].

The Abbasids established an administration from the very beginning of their rule when they conquered the Caucasus. The entire Caucasian domains were united in a single province, called Armīniya. The governor (*Wālī*) served as a chief executive officer in this province. The province was formed based on the Armenian lands, the first territory the Arabs managed to conquer in the Caucasus. The capital of Armenia Dvin (Dabil) was established as the administrative center of Armīniya. Subsequently, the administrative center was relocated to the capital of Arran – Barda (Partaw). Caliphs organized four

minor provinces within Armīniya, thereby expanding Arab administration and military governance in the Caucasus. The principal policy of the Caliphate was to expand administration, control trade routes, convert locals to Islam, collect taxes, acquire of lands for the relocated Arab or non-Arab loyal people, and prevent the influence of the Byzantines and the Khazars [Тер-Гевондян (1977); Шагинян (2011); Tavadze (2020): 191-198; Vacca (2020): 229-234].

The Abbasids invested significant amount of resources into maintaining their authority over Armīniya. The province included the entire South Caucasus. At least the Caliph considered it as a part of his northernmost province. Thus, it was essential to maintain control of the South Caucasus to some degree. Nevertheless, numerous challenges emerged in controlling the Caucasus. The political challenges of the ninth century could be understood in the context of the realities of the eighth century. In this context, the Caliphate faced the following difficulties in its efforts to exercise effective control in the Caucasus:

1) The geographic location of the South Caucasian states particularly affected Abbasid domination. The mountainous area was impregnable for the effective control;

2) The lack of permanent military presence was a significant challenge. It was partially solved in the 9th century, but Muslims continued to rely on military forces stationed in the most important cities of the Caucasus. These forces were rarely deployed in rural areas;

3) The lack of large military campaigns, especially summer operations that were extensively held in the 8th century;

4) Religious confrontation between the Muslims and the Christians that deprived the Abbasids of a solid base of support among the locals;

5) Domestic unrests among Muslim factions, especially the issue of *al-mutaghlibs*. They were the rulers who had usurped local power without Caliphal approval;

6) Frequent dismissal of governors of Armīniya that helped to create a favorable environment for internal conflict [Tavadze (2020): 197-223].

The latter was subject to some degree of regulation in the mid-9th century, with the establishment of a limit of two or three clans permitted to hold the office of governor in Armīniya. The last was the House of al-Marwazi. They established strict control over the Armenian part of the province and arrested Bagrat II Bagratuni *Ishkhan Ishkhanats* of Armenia in 851 for the crimes that he had committed against Muslims [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 175-185; Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i (1987): 118]. Humiliation due to Bagrat's arrest and the severe fiscal and disciplinary policy provoked the rebellion in the Abbasid Armīniya.

Revolt in Armīniya and Abbasid Punitive Expedition

On February, 852 the local population killed the governor of the Abbasid Armīniya [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 185-188; Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i (1987): 119; al-Ṭabarī (1989): 114; Шагинян (2011): 299-302]. As a result of a mutiny in Taron, Yusuf ibn Abu Saiyd Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Marwazi was assassinated. Caliph al-Mutawwakil and his administration in Samarra decided that it was important to send a punitive expedition to the province. The Abbasids had various goals to achieve, some of which are clear from the primary sources. Their intentions were to punish all those nobles involved

in the murder of Yusuf al-Marwazi, suppress the upraise, submit *al-mutaghalibs* of Armīniya, and bring the Christian rulers of Caucasus, who were considered the subjects of the Abbasid Armīniya, under control [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 190-193]. Hence, the main goal was to conquer and subdue the areas that were beyond the control of the Abbasids Caliphate or due to the loose authority of Muslim governors posed a threat to the Caliphate's authority.

Abū Mūsā Bughā al-Kabir was appointed in command of the Abbasid army and was sent to Caucasus in the spring of 852 [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 193; Yovhannes Drasxanakerte'i (1987): 119; al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1266; Шагинян (2011): 302-303; Vacca (2017): 66-67]. Bughā was of Turkic origin, Khazar by birth, one of the most influential Turkic *ghulāms* serving under Caliphs in Samarra. This is a primary reason he was called Bughā the Turk in Georgian accounts [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142]. Bughā's Caucasian military campaign was of considerable scale. Georgian and Armenian sources provide accounts about the number of Bughā's army. According to the Georgian source, he had 120, 000 soldiers [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143], while based on the Armenian source, the Abbasids had 200, 000 [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 247]. These figures are exaggerated, but they show how large this military campaign was for the local Caucasian population. The sheer number of the troops and the scale of the campaign were cause of considerable concern for the locals, and it seemed to be the largest Caucasian military expedition organized by the Caliphate in the 9th century.

The Army of Caliphate invaded Armīniya. The initial targets were the assassins of Governor Yusuf and Muslim defectors. Many provinces were raided and pillaged in the vicinity of Lake Van. Taron, Vaspurakan, Mokk, Rshtunik, Apahunik, and other provinces inflicted heavy destruction. The 852 campaign was a significant and successful military operation. Bughā managed to capture Mūsā ibn Zurāra, a relative of Bagrat II Bagratuni of Armenia, along with his family and clan members [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 114-115]. Upon his arrival in Taron, Bughā captured the sons of Bagrat II Bagratuni, Ashot and David, and together with their kinsmen sent all of them to the Caliph [Yovhannes Drasxanakerte'i (1987): 119]. The Abbasid army defeated and confined Ashot Artsruni *Ishkhan* of Vaspurakan, his son Gregory, Vahan Artsruni and his son, Gagik, Mushegh, brother of Vahan and Princess Hranush and Apusahak Vahevuni, who was put to death under the order of Caliph [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 194-205]. Subsequently, Bughā chased the brother of *Ishkhan* Ashot, Gurgen Arthruni and lured him into his camp for the false promise, arrested and sent him to the Caliph just like others from Vaspurakan. As the military campaign was completed successfully by the end of the year, Bughā encamped for his winter quarters in the city of Dvin (Dabil) [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 205]. According to al-Ṭabarī, during this campaign, his soldiers killed 30, 000 people and enslaved many [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 115-116].

Bughā the Turk's subsequent strategy was to subdue *al-mutaghalib* governor of Tbilisi Ishāq b. Ismā'īl al-Shuayb, who ruled in Kartli without the authorization of the Royal Court. However, *emir* of Tbilisi Ishāq b. Ismā'īl was not alone. He had many allies in the Caucasus. His wife was a daughter of the King of Sarir [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 123], while Kakhétian Korepiskopos, Abkhazian King and Prince Guarām Mampali were his allies against the Abbasids [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142-3]. This alliance that was forged against the Caliphate involved primarily some Georgian rulers. The core reason for supporting *Emir* of Tbilisi should be the attempt of Georgian rulers to avoid the

Caliphal burden. Ishāq b. Ismā'īl required no tribute from the Georgian rulers, hence he was a suitable sovereign of Muslim possessions in Kartli. A marriage with the daughter of the King of Sarir helped Ishāq to establish good relations and alliances with North Caucasian leaders.

Tbilisi, a center of Muslim positions in Georgia, was a subsequent target. Bughā intended to subjugate Tbilisi and entire Georgia accordingly. In the summer of 853 his army, greater than it was during his first-year campaign, advanced towards of Tbilisi. When spring currents allowed him to pass over the Kura River around July, the Abbasid army crossed the river and surrounded the city. The Abbasids had allies among the locals of the Caucasus.

Smbat VIII Bagratuni *Ishkhan* and *Sparapet* of Armenia and his army were in the ranks of Bughā the Turk. The Abbasids were supported by Bagrat I Kouropalates, king of the Kartvelian Kingdom. They both had their own interests and supported the Caliphate in this military campaign. Smbat VIII Bagratuni was anxious about the heavy military presence of the Abbasids and sought to maintain his authority [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 204-205], while King Bagrat I Kouropalates had his ambitions to overtake Kartli (modern Shida Kartli region) and was on the bad terms with the rulers of Tbilisi Emirate, Kakheti, and Abkhazian Kingdom. Kartli was ruled by the representatives of Kakheti Korepiskopate [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 165-167; Abashidze & Rapp (2004): 148, 150, 152], which was against the interests of Kartvelian king Bagrat. The latter intended to reclaim control of a region that had been bestowed upon him during the previous governors of Abbasid Armīniya [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142]. Such division pulled some strings for Bughā the Turk. The South Caucasian rulers from Arran had a neutral position seemingly. They were not actively involved in this campaign and the available primary sources do not allow us to be more comprehensive.

On August 5, 853 Bughā forced *Emir* of Tbilisi to surrender. He seized the city, burned it, killed and enslaved many people, and beheaded Ishāq b. Ismā'īl as measure of punishment for disobedience [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 237-239; al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1266-1267; al-Ṭabarī (1989): 122-123; al-Balādhuri (1916): 332; Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142; Javakhishvili (1965): 97-99; KCK III (1989): 131-132]. Hence, as a result of Tbilisi military campaign *al-mutaghlib* governor, Ishāq b. Ismā'īl al-Shuayb, was captured and beheaded, while his residence and the center of Muslim position in Georgia, Tbilisi, was submitted; Ishāq's wife, a daughter of King of as-Sarir, was forced to become Bughā's consort, but, later, he sent her to al-Mutawwakil [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 239]. Bughā intended to stabilize the relationship between the Caliphate and the local Caucasian rulers. King of as-Sarir was a ruler of the Avar Kingdom (Khundzakh) in Dagestan. Bughā was enthusiastic to establish friendly relations with the Caucasian rulers in terms of tributary dependence. Keeping the ties with those states, even with the help of the forced marriage, should have been the way to induce small Caucasian realms into an alliance with the Caliphate. The dissatisfaction with a second marriage that the Saririan Princess loudly expressed was caused by the lower social status of Bughā al-Kabir, a Turkic slave of his former masters. Another reason for this displeasure was a punishment of her husband despite her appeal for clemency that Bughā vigorously ignored [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 239].

Tbilisi's takeover was the beginning of the restoration process of the Abbasid domination in Georgia. As the Tbilisi Emirate was under firm control Bughā proceeded

with his military expedition by invading Kartli (present-day Shida Kartli region), a central part of Georgia. Bughā sent his troops under the command of Zīrak al-Turkī. Most of Kartli was captured without strong resistance. According to the contemporary inscription in Ateni Sioni fresco painting, Kakhay and his son Tarkhuj were seized on Saturday, August 26, 853 by Zīrak [Javakhishvili (1965): 98-99; KCK III (1989): 131-132]. Kostanti-Kakhay was a prominent Georgian noble from Kakheti Korepiskopate. His life and passion are narrated by the contemporary author in a hagiographic work [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 164-172]. According to his biographer, Kostanti-Kakhay was a Kakhetian noble who lived in Zena Sopeli (i.e. Katli), a wealthy and very influential person all over Georgia. The same author calls him a leader (*cinamz̄guari*) and noble (*carčinebuli*) of the entire country of Georgia (*govelsa kueqanasa kartlisasa*, in this case refers to Georgia. It is not used to refer to a separate Georgian political entity, but rather to describe a commonwealth, which includes all countries with a predominantly Georgian population) [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 165, 167]. A leader or *cinamz̄guari* as the author refers to Kostanti-Kakhay indicates his political position. However, the term *carčinebuli* shows his social status. Kostanti was indeed a political leader established in Kartli as a representative of Kakheti Korepiskopate. A Muslim scholar al-Ṭabarī confirms it by calling him *Ṣāhib as-Ṣanāriyyah* [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 128; Japaridze (2012): 86], which means “ruler of Tsanars”.

The occupation of Kartli was a cause of serious concern for the Kakheti Korespiskopate and neighboring powers. Abkhazian king Demetre II responded with his military intervention in Kartli affairs. Abkhazians operated on the western edge of Kartli while Kakhetians were on the eastern outskirts of the same region. Bughā did not allow enemies to unite their forces and sent Zīrak al-Turkī and Bagrat I Kouropalates to halt the Abkhazian advance in the direction of the central road. The central road was located along the Kura River. Bagrat advanced from the south and Zīrak from the east passing through the Kura River. Bagrat and Zīrak presumably met each other near the banks of Kura and moved on the way to the Abkhazian encampment towards the northwest of Kartli. The Abkhazian king had no choice; he would either take a fight or flee the battlefield. Abkhazians went into the battle. It was the only chance to continue further and merge forces with Kakhetians, Tsanars and Mountaineers of Kartli. The decisive battle took place in Kuertskhobi. The Abkhazians were defeated, expelled, and forced to withdraw in the direction of Dvaleti to the North [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143; Tsagareishvili (1968): 110-112].

As a result of this victory, Bagrat went to take positions in Kartli as this region was conferred to him by former governor of Caliph. Zīrak al-Turkī safeguarding the central road along the Kura River went back en route to Tbilisi. Near the vicinity of Mtskheta, before researching the main headquarters of the Abbasid army, Zīrak al-Turkī was ambushed by the troops of Samuel Korespiskopos. Jvariskhevi battle took place after summer, most probably in September, and turned out to be a turning point in the Abbasid struggle for the domination of Georgia. The Army of Korepiskopos of Kakheti inflicted heavy damage on Zīrak al-Turkī's detachments. Zīrak was forced to withdraw and retreated to Tbilisi [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143; Tavadze (2022): 175]. Korepiskopos Samuel appeared to be the major threat to the Abbasids.

Samuel's household domains were in Gardabani. He was a member of the Gardabanian noble house. But alongside with Gardabani, Samuel controlled Kakheti, Kukheti, Tsanareti (as-*Ṣanāriyyah*), Mtiuleti and, briefly, Kartli – all roughly connotes eastern Georgia. Based on primary sources, we can assume that Koreposkopoi of Kakheti never considered themselves merely as rulers of Gardabani, Kakheti or Tsanareti alone. Instead they affiliated themselves as rulers of Entire Kartli, hence claimed the legacy of Kings of Kartli [Tavadze (2022): 44-71].

In the Autumn of 853, Bughā prepared for his second offensive against Korepiskopate. The chief aim of the Abbasid commander was to seize Aragvi Valley and Dariali Fortress. According to al-Ya'qūbī, those who escaped from Bughā al-Kabir's menace wrote to Byzantines, Khazars, and Slavs requesting military assistance against the Abbasids [al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1267]. This account of al-Ya'qūbī is understood to be an appeal of as-*Ṣanāriyyah* for assistance [Новосельцев (1990): 192; Калинина (2015): 172; Vacca (2017): 86]. Based on al-Ya'qūbī testimony, help was sought after the 853 military campaign by those who had escaped punishment and captivity, but not only by as-*Ṣanāriyyah*. Despite these facts, presumably, the first appeal for help, as it was assumed in historiography, took place in 853. It was in the best interests of Kakhetians and Khazars to protect the road leading through Dariali on the way to Ossetia and Khazaria. The Abkhazian king, who controlled Dvaleti road, an alternative path that leads to the North Caucasus, was also interested in the involvement of Byzantines, Khazars, and Slavs on their side in this ongoing conflict. It is unclear whether Kakhetians and Abkhazians sent the emissaries or not in Khazaria. Regardless, they received no help in 853. Furthermore, Bughā advanced in Mtiuleti and encamped in Tchartali, midway from Tbilisi to Dariali Fortress. He demanded the surrender from the people of Mtiuleti. The region was the mountainous part of Korepiskopate. It was divided into small administrative units called *ḥevi*, and the northernmost entity was Tsanareti, better known as the land of as-*Ṣanāriyyah* in Arabic sources (Mostly this term is used to designate Korepiskopate). Aragvi Valley and Dariali Fortress were essential as their control could tear apart Korepiskopate and allow the Abbasids to control the important strategic road leading to the North Caucasus.

The leaders of Mtiuleti decided to open negotiations and agreed to subdue. The agreement allowed the Abbasids to establish suzerainty, use roads, and control Dariali Fortress. Bughā demanded and received three hundred hostages from the local clans [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. We do not know for sure whether it was a tactical move to hold the advance of the Abbasid army, or did Mtiuleti population decide it was better not to fight against numerous foes? It should have been decision of local clans; Samuel Korepiskopos, as a member of the Gardabani enclave, kept fighting against the Abbasids. The Gardabanian nobility, who were in possession of the rich winter pastures of Kukheti and Gardabani, were aware that in case of the Abbasid domination in the region they would lose their winter pastures, which, constituted a source of power in Korepiskopate. The Tsanars and the entire Mtiuleti were economically dependent on the winter pastures of Gardabani and Kukheti, the land that was controlled by the Gardabanian elite. Consequently, Samuel and his Gardabanian aristocracy were interested in the continuation of hostilities.

The success of the northern Georgian population was beneficial for pro-Byzantine Prince Guaram Mampali, enabling him to continue resistance against the Abbasids.

Smbat VIII Bagratuni, seeing the devastation of his homeland, was also interested in the continuation of conflicts between Korepiskopate and Caliphate. Therefore, the instigation of Guaram and Abul Abbas Smbat played an important role in the failure of negotiations between Muslims and Mountaineers [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143].

We can assume that in addition to the support from Guaram and Smbat, the Georgian Mountaineers awaited the onset of the snowfall, which frequently occurs in October and persists for more than half a year. This strategic delay allowed the Georgians to gain significant advantage. The inhabitants of Mtiuleti abandoned their hostages and prepared for war. Samuel Korespiskopos and Tsanars were against to surrender the Dariali Fortress. Bughā intended to invade Ossetia, which was impossible task without taking control over the Gates of Alan, i.e. Dariali. The Abbasid army moved further into Tskhavati and encamped there [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. The Army of Bughā the Turk was as close to Dariali as it even been, with troops almost completely crossing the Aragvi Valley and prepared to move into the Tergi Valley. Dariali was situated upstream of the Tergi Valley. It was the last stronghold of Korepiskopate situated in the north.

Dariali was an important feature in disagreement, in case of the Abbasid takeover of this fortress Tsanars would have been left without their primary source of income and strategic advantage. The situation in Tskhavati became highly tense. The mistreatment and humiliation of the Abbasid messengers provoked Bughā to order his troops to launch an offensive. According to Thomas Artsruni, the Tsanars defeated the invading army nineteen or more occasions over nine days [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 241]. The damage inflicted on the army of Bughā the Turk in the Tskhavati battle was heavy, many soldiers lost lives in combat, and many horses fell victim to freezing weather as snowfall took place during the encounter. Weather conditions, loss of provision, and heavy damage that his army inflicted forced Bughā to abandon this military campaign in the same month. In November, as it was habitual, he went to pass a winter. Bughā spent his winter in Barda, the capital of the Abbasid Armīniya [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 242; Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143].

Bughā's defeat against Korespiskopate constituted a significant blow to the Abbasid governor's prestige in the Caucasus. It seems probable that the Caliph ordered the execution of Kostanti-Kakhay in public on November 10, 853 [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 170; Abashidze & Rapp (2004): 158; al-Ṭabarī (1989): 128] in order to exact vengeance on his defeated soldiers. The harsh measures were necessary for maintaining authority and prestige among the Caucasian subjects. Some Caucasian rulers showed no signs of obedience. There was distrust and disgust of Caliphal rule in the region.

The triumphs of Korepiskopate in several engagements demonstrated the weakness of the Abbasid army. Near the end of this year, Bughā summoned Esayi Apumusē, who refused to obey fearing the consequences of his arrival in the Abbasid camp. Esayi Apumusē was a Prince of Arran who ruled over the southwestern territory of this country. Esayi Apumusē and his kinsmen were seriously encouraged to take action against the Abbasid army since the latter was defeated by Tsanars [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 241-242; Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i (1987): 123]. All these resulted in war between Caliphal forces and Arranians. The Abbasid war against Esayi Apumusē continued for around a year, from November of 853 till the second half of the following year. Thomas Artsruni assumes that within this period twenty-eight battles took place and Abbasid forces were

defeated in many actions and encounters [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 242-248]. Finally, conflicting parties started a negotiation. Esayi Apumusē was granted a pardon in the form of a letter sealed with the royal signature of the Caliph. Therefore, he went to the Abbasid camp and from there he was sent to the Caliph as a prisoner. According to the Georgian Royal Annals, Bughā the Turk captured the son of the priest, which indicates the surrender of Esayi Apumusē, who is referred to as the son of a priest in other primary sources as well. Only after the aforementioned events the Abbasids invaded Gardabani. [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143; Thomas Artsruni (1985): 247]. Mat'iane Kartlisa's "Gardabani" is Korepiskopate. In fact, it was Bughā's the second-year incursion in Kakheti Korepiskopate.

First Actions for the Organization of Coalition Against the Abbasids

Korepiskopete, which connotes Gardabani in the Royal Georgian Annals, resisted the Abbasid invasion for more than a year. Samuel Korepiskopos and his nobles were in close communication with the Byzantine Emperors. The regent Empress Theodora (r. 842-856) and Emperor Michael III (r. 842-867) received information about the passion of Kostanti-Kakhay shortly after his martyrdom. The Byzantine rulers sent an inspiring royal epistle encouraging all Georgians to take action against infidels in the fight for the protection of the Christian faith [Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian (1963): 170-172; Вачнадзе Н., Куция К. (1998): 154-158].

The letter of the Byzantine Emperors is preserved in "Martyrdom of Kostanti the Georgian" and it has a form of eulogy for Kostanti the Martyr. The letter mentions Kostanti only once by name and praises his courage against invisible enemies. The rest of the letter is encouragement, devotion, and a call to fight against infidels. The letter calls upon all the Georgians within the Byzantine sphere of influence to take action, draw a sword, and never allow infidels to dwell among the land of believers of Christ. The Emperors promise a reward for this endeavor on their and God's behalf. Although the royal epistle, as preserved in hagiographic work, does not contain preamble and postscript it employs a form of common propaganda to prompt Christian leaders into action in the defense of the faith of Christ. In this case the Emperors are portrayed as defenders, leaders, and patrons of a remote Christian nation, the nation that fights and shreds the blood for the right cause. The similar letters should have been sent to every Christian Caucasian state the Byzantines believed to be on their side in the war against the Caliphate. The message was sent to Kakhetians, kinsmen of Kostanti, obviously pointing to negotiations between the Byzantine Empire and Kakheti Korepiskopate. The Kakhetians sought help which the Byzantines accepted, but exact terms are unknown.

The war in southeastern Anatolia and the Egyptian expeditions of the Byzantine army under Theodora and Michael III took place in these years [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 120, 124-129; al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1264; Theophanis Continuati (2015): 236-239; Treadgold (1997): 449]. They demonstrate the devotion of the Roman nation to fight against the Abbasids, against a common enemy of Byzantines and Caucasians. If the Georgians were defending the northern borders of Christianity, the Eastern Romans were expanding to the southern frontier. The alliance between the Byzantines and the Georgians that would involve Khazars and Slavs was a dangerous liaison for the Caliphate. Therefore, Bughā's mission was not to allow the Khazars to pass through Dariali. It was possible only through the subjugation of Korepiskopate.

Bughā the Turk after he besieged and then captured Esayi Apumusē organized a large military expedition against Korespiskopate. Hence, in the summer of 854 they invaded Korepiskopate. The summer was the only season when the conquest of Dariali and Ossetia was possible without much damage, the intention Bughā had from the very beginning of his Georgian military campaign. The country was razed to the ground [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. The former governor and ruler of al-Bāb Muḥammad ibn Khālīd ibn Yazīd ibn Mazyad al-Shaybānī also participated in this warfare [Minorsky (1958): 25]. It was around this period when Bughā attacked the House of Sewordi in the province of Sewordik. Solomon Sewordi was captured and executed by the order of Bughā. His passion is described by Thomas Artsruni together with a martyrdom of Kostanti-Kakhay, [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 251-252], but Kostanti-Kakhay was martyred separately in the city of Samarra by the order of Caliph al-Mutawwakil.

The ruler of the House of Sewordi was Stephanos Kon, who was captured in a village named Tus and later sent to Samarra [Yovhannes Draxanakertc'i (1987): 123; Step'anos Tarōnec'i (2017): 175]. This land was probably the southeastern edge of Gardabani, hence the campaign started with the devastation of Sewordik and continued with desolation of the lands of Gardabani, Kukheti, Kakheti, and Mtiuleti, which were on the way to Dariali. As the season was wisely chosen the Abbasids reached the Aragvi valley, seized the Daliali Fortress, entered Ossetia, and brought over 100 families from the North Caucasus [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143].

Bughā was particularly interested in the realization of the Ossetian Campaign. Ossetia was a passage towards Khazaria, a place of origin of the Abbasid commander. Taking into consideration the fact that Khazaria was his ancestral homeland, Bughā was interested in the establishment of Abbasid control on the land of Khazars. His original intention was to open the path en route to Khazaria. The maximum that Bughā and his associates had in mind was the conquest of Khazaria. Münejjim-bashī in his "History of Sharvān and al-Bāb" reports that Bughā fought against Alans and Khazars and imposed *jizya* on those people [Minorsky (1958): 25]. No other narrative sources mention the imposition of pull-tax revealed by Münejjim-bashī. According to "Mat'iane Kartlisa", Bughā managed to relocate one hundred households of Ossetians and three hundred households of Khazars. The latter were brought over as a result of a military campaign from Derbent, while the Ossetians were invaded and forcefully migrated passing through Dariali [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143].

The primary sources indicate that in the summer of 854 a military operation was organized in two directions. The first army, under the direct control of Bughā, entered Ossetia (Münejjim-bashī refers to this region as "Alān") from Dariali Fortress. The second army under the command of Muḥammad b. Khālīd b. Yazīd b. Mazyad al-Shaybānī invaded the northwestern Caspian positions of Khazaria from Derbent [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143; Minorsky (1958): 25]. Both of these operations were effective, but the expedition in Khazaria was more successful as evidenced by the number of households that were forcefully relocated from there and settled in Shamkir. The Ossetians were settled in Dmanisi. Hence, the *jizya* was imposed on those migrants who had resettled in the cities of Armīniya. A small number of resettled people in the South Caucasian domains of the Caliphate and Bughā's intention to invade Ossetia once again next summer [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143] demonstrate a lack of satisfaction he had for his 854 North Caucasian campaign. This would explain the silence of the Arabic

sources, which do not report much on the actions that took place during this military operation. The gains were insignificant and repulsed soon after.

Bughā and his army had returned in Tbilisi already by the beginning of Autumn. Esayi Apumusē had already arrived in Bughā's camp in the autumn of 854. He was treated well in the military headquarters of the Abbasids. The relatively successful military campaign in the North Caucasus and the fair treatment of Esayi Apumusē convinced many Armenian and Arranian leaders to be present in Bughā's camp. According to Thomas Artsruni, Bughā treacherously ordered the arrest of Armenian and Arranian princes and their family members and sent them to Samarra [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 254].

The Abbasid commander spent the last winter of the Caucasian military operation in Barda [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 255]. It was his second winter in the capital of the Caliphal province of Armīniya. In the course of his 854 military campaign, Bughā accomplished much success. He broke the resistance of Arranian princes, defeated and seized key fortresses of Korepiskopate, and brought much of the Armenian and the Arranian rulers into custody. All these achievements were overshadowed by the imminent threat coming from the Byzantine-Khazar-Slav coalition.

Byzantine-Khazar-Slav Coalition Against the Abbasids in 855 and Aftermath

Primary sources indicate that by 855 numerous Christian Armenian and Arranian rulers were captured. Tovma Artsruni, John Catholicos (Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi), Step'anos Tarōnec'i (Asoghik), Vardan Areveltsi and al-Ṭabarī provide a long list of sovereigns taken as hostages as a result of Bughā's expedition. The list of those who were taken as hostages is as follows: *Sparapet* of Armenia Abū al-'Abās Wāthī Smbat VIII Bagratuni, Gregory lord of Mamikoniani House, Sahl son of Sumbat ruler of Shaki, Mu'awiyāh son of Sahl who was chief of Christian *Baṭrīqs* of Armīniya, Atrnerseh Great Prince of Arran son of Salh, Esayi Apumusē Prince of Baylakan and Arran together with his father and son, Gregory lord of Syunik, Vasak *Ishkhan* of Vayots-Dzor, Philip *Ishkhan* of Syunik, Nerseh *Ishkhan* of Gardman and Ktrič *Ishkhan* of Gardman mentioned by others author, but not by Thomas, could be the same Nerseh, Stephanos Kon *Ishkhan* of Sewordik, Atrnerseh Prince of Khachen, and many nobles from Vaspurakan including members of the ruling Artsruni Dynasty [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 254-255; Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i (1987): 123-124; Step'anos Tarōnec'i (2017): 174-177; Thomson (1989): 183-184; Movsēs Dasxurançi (1961): 218-219, 226; al-Ṭabarī (1989): 124; Шагинян (2011): 308-309]. Some of those nobles were sent to Samarra prior to the 854 military campaign, but majority of them were either captured or deceived as a result of the last military operation preceding and occurring during the last winter that Bughā spent in Barda.

According to al-Ya'qūbī, only those who managed to escape from the wrath of the Caliphate sought assistance from the rulers of Byzantines, Khazars, and Slavs [al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1267]. The author does not specify the names of those who requested support from foreign powers. Most Armenian and Arranian Princes should be excluded from the list, as they did not escape penance. Certainly, these were a group of Princes who, judging from the Caliphate's perspective, violated *amān* and acted against peace and order. It is well documented that Korepiskopate had communication concerning mutual military cooperation with the rulers of the Byzantine Empire already from 853. The same

realm required assistance from the Khazars in the summer of 854. Therefore, Samuel Korespiskopos of Kakheti was among those who looked for help from the rulers of Byzantium, Khazaria, and, probably, Slavs as well. The Slavs (*Ṣaqāliba*) had contact with the Caucasus primarily through Dariali Pass, thus Kakhetian-Slavic relations were realistic. It is noteworthy to mention that a large number of Slavs were forcibly relocated from Khazaria to Kakheti a century before by Umayyads. However, the majority of them left Georgia with the assistance of the local population [Tavadze (2020): 116-118]. It is reasonable to assume that some of those Slavs remained and at least some contact was preserved between the Slavs and the people of Kakheti. Slavic ruler (*Ṣāhib*) was Prince of the eastern Slavic tribe [Бейлис В. М. (1986): 142; Калинина Т.М. (2015): 172]. Consequently, it can be assumed that, the Kakhetian leaders had close relations with Byzantines, Khazars and, Slavs altogether. Samuel's involvement in arranging and encouraging this coalition is therefore convincing. In order to gain further insight into the matter, it is necessary to ascertain who wrote to the rulers of the Byzantines, the Khazars, and the Slavs for the fulfillment of this coalition. Two more sovereigns who actively fought against the Caliphate and escaped the Abbasid confinement were: 1) Demetre II, King of Abkhazia; 2) Guaram Mampali, Prince of the Kartvelian Kingdom.

Demetre II was the principal ally and supporter of Korepiskopate in the fight against the Abbasid Caliphate. His brother Theodosi II (r. 798-825), who is erroneously referred by the author of "Mat'iane Kartlisa" as Abkhazian ruler confronting Bughā the Turk [Tsagareishvili E. (1968): 110-112], was shrewd supporter of Ashot I Kouropalates, father of Prince Guaram, in the fight against Korepiskopate [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142]. However, the times have changed. The Abkhazian King and House of Guaram subsequently provided support to the Kakhetians in their conflict with the Caliphate. "History of Sharvān and al-Bāb" relates about the Abkhazian and the Kartvelian military collaboration. According to Mūnejjim-bashī, Bughā fought many battles against Georgians (Kartvelian Kingdom) and Abkhazians (Abkhazian Kingdom), and was victorious, with numerous killed, and taking a lot of captives and treasure [Minorsky (1958): 25].

These battles took place after Bughā spent his winter in Dvin, which spanned the period from spring 853 to summer 854. This was prior to his engagement with the Alans and the Khazars. The battle of Kuertskhobi between the Abkhazians and the Abbasids took place in August (or September at the latest) of 853. During the same year, Prince Guaram encouraged Mountaineers of eastern Georgia to fight against the Abbasid army. All these events, as attested in the Georgian Royal Annals, confirm the account of "History of Sharvān and al-Bāb" about the collaboration of Abkhazians and Kartvelians against the Caliphate. The Abkhazians were led by Demetre II and the Kartvelians by anti-Abbasid Kartvelian, Guaram Mampali. Both rulers supported Korepiskopate in the war against the Abbasids, which was mainly caused by the danger of the Caliphate's expansion towards southern and western parts of Georgia. Mūnejjim-bashī or his source, do not mention as-Ṣanāriyyah as the principal enemy of the Abbasids during Bughā's campaign. The author avoids mentioning the failure of the Caliphate in the fight against as-Ṣanāriyyah. The intention is to show the successful suppression of rebellion by Bughā al-Kabir and Muḥammad ibn Khālīd al-Shaybānī.

Prince Guaram Mampali's anti-Abbasid and pro-Byzantine policy is well illustrated in "Mat'iane Kartlisa". The Royal Georgian Annal indicates that Guaram frequently

fought with the Saracens (Abbasids). On occasions Guaram was victorious, while on other occasions, the Saracens emerged successful. However, upon achieving the major triumph against the Muslims, Guaram proceeded to send prisoners of war in Byzantium [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. This kind of attitude displays Guaram's alliance with the Byzantines and the cooperation that he had with them. For example, the Abkhazians were more closely connected with Khazars. The Abkhazian Kingdom was established by Leo II, father of Demetre II, with help of the Qaghan of Khazars [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 142], hence the Khazarian Qaghanate and the Abkhazian Kingdom were in alliance for more than half century. The alliance of the Georgian Bagrationi Dynasty and the Byzantines, as well as Abkhazian-Khazar cooperation, indicates possible active participation of Guaram and Demetre in the organization of the Byzantine-Khazar-Slav coalition against the Abbasids.

Bughā negotiations with the Khazars, recorded in "Mat'iane Kartlisa", confirm that the Abbasid commander actively sought to prevent the formation of such an alliance. These negotiations took place after his North Caucasian military campaign [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. Bughā was worried by the rumors of a large alliance that had been projected to include Byzantines, Khazars, Slavs, Abkhazians, Kakhetians, and Kartvelians. As it was customary for the Abbasid commander, he informed the Caliph about it. Al-Ya'qūbī records that Bughā sent a special letter and informed al-Mutawakkil about the dangers of the coalition [al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1267]. Volf Beylis proposes that Bughā was asking for help from the Caliph [Бейлис (1986): 141], which suggests his intentions to increase the number of Caliphal forces under his disposal. Another intention was to undertake one more expedition in Ossetia, probably targeting the land of Khazars from the central parts of the North Caucasus. All these are the proposed intentions of Bughā al-Kabir.

However, what is the evidence for the realization of the Byzantine-Khazar-Slav coalition?

Unfortunately, the sources are very scant on this issue [Бейлис (1986): 141; Новосельцев (1990): 192; Калинина (2015): 172]. Douglas Morton Dunlop thinks that there was no intervention from the Byzantine-Khazar-Slav coalition [Dunlop (1967): 194]. Anatoly Novoseltsev notes that the account of al-Ya'qūbī is not confirmed by other evidence, but employs "History of Sharvān and al-Bāb" by Mūnejjim-bashī about these events [Новосельцев (1990): 192]. The chronicle preserved in the work of Mūnejjim-bashī provides clear evidence of Muḥammad ibn Khālid's defensive war against infidels bordering Derbent and its fortifications [Minorsky (1958): 25]. Those infidel neighbors were certainly Khazars and their allies. There is indirect evidence in the Georgian Royal Annals that the Khazars were involved in the Ossetian affairs. Bughā's intention to wage another campaign in Ossetia could be explained only by the threat that was coming from there. Moreover, based on contemporary author Catholicos Yovhannes (John) Drasxanakertc'i, during the reigns of Armenian kings Ashot I and Smbat I the Dariali Fortress was considered part of Tsanaria, which was conquered by Armenians in summer 893 [Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i (1987): 128-129, 139; Tavadze (2022): 222-224]. There is no indication that Dariali was liberated by Tsanars or anyone else following Bughā's Caucasian campaign. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Fortress was recovered while Bughā was in the Caucasus. Furthermore, Gardabani, which was the southernmost province of Korepiskopate, remained outside the Abbasid control in the 860s, with

Muslims attempting to subdue it with short-term success [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143; Tavadze (2022): 193-199].

Political reality excludes any possibility that Bughā maintained domination over Gardabani or, more generally, the entire Korepiskopate after his departure. Everything that Bughā achieved in Korepiskopate during the 854 military campaign was vanished in the following year, shortly after he departed from the Caucasus. It is likely that Korepiskopate achieved these successes with the assistance of the Khazars. The latter reestablished their control in Ossetia. The Khazar-Caucasian alliance was less successful on the Derbent frontline. Muḥammad ibn Khālid's successful defensive stance and the protection of the Bāb al-abwāb region played an important role in his subsequent appointment as governor of Armīniya [Minorsky (1958): 25; al-Ya'qūbī (2018): 1267; Tavadze (2022): 179-181].

The removal of Bughā in 855, following his recall from his three-year military campaign in Caucasus, prompts a number of questions. What were the circumstances that led to his recall in Samarra? A number of potential explanations can be put forth. According to the Georgian Royal Annals, Bughā the Turk was advised to leave by the Caliph after al-Mutawwakil learned that Bughā was negotiating with his Khazarian kinsmen [Mat'iane Kartlisa (2014): 143]. In the course of these negotiations, Bughā had several objectives: firstly, to avoid the Khazar-led coalition in the Caucasus; secondly, to supply information concerning the political atmosphere in the court of Khazar Qaghan; and thirdly, to encourage the settlement of more Khazar families in the Caucasus. The author of the Georgian Royal Annals emphasises the importance of ethnic solidarity, a sentiment that was met with suspicion by al-Mutawwakil. The Georgian author attributes Bughā's dismissal to his pro-Khazar sentiments. Bughā achieved less in Ossetia carrying with only one hundred families, whereas Muḥammad ibn Khālid was far more successful taking three times more households from Khazar lands. Furthermore, there were a lot of complaints about Bughā regarding his brutal actions. These complaints were passed by Armenian and Arranian nobles, also from Princess of Sarir, widow of Ishāq ibn Ismā'īl [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 216-217, 239, 248, 273-274]. It is notable that there were others even among the Muslims who denounced Bughā with the Caliph. Many followers of Islam were mistreated (e.g. Mūsā ibn Zurārah and his family) by the commander of the Abbasid army. These circumstances played a role in the recall of Bughā from the Caucasus to Samarra.

Bughā desperately needed the public demonstration of his victories, hence bringing the Caucasian rulers was probably the biggest display of Caliphal power in the 9th century. He boasted a lot about the marvelous deeds that he had accomplished. Bughā secured his position at the royal court of Caliph, the Turkic guard favored him. His achievement gained him respect [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 273-274]. It is noteworthy to mention that Bughā was dismissed from his position of Armīnian governorship only after he arrived in Samarra. Hence, he was first recalled and then he was dismissed from the office. However, the fact that Bughā's dismissal was not caused due to his failures is evidenced by the circumstances of the next governor's appointment in AH 242 (14/05/856-3/05/857), which was agreed with Bughā according to "History of Sharvān and al-Bāb" [Minorsky (1958): 25]. Muḥammad ibn Khālid was first recalled to Samarra, probably during winter 855-856 and then he was appointed as governor of Armīniya. This appointment was partly the result of Bughā's recommendation and for his military

success in the Caucasian campaign, especially for the defense of Derbent and its defensive walls. It was his second appointment in this position. The first appointment proved unsuccessful, resulting in his dismissal after a brief tenure [Minorsky (1958): 24; Tavadze (2022): 171-173]. However, his second appointment was more successful and lasted longer. His second service as a governor of Arab Caucasia is shortly described in “History of Sharvān and al-Bāb” and “History” by al-Ya’qūbī.

Muḥammad ibn Khālid was appointed in HA 242 (14/05/856-03/05/857). The primary source does not specify a month [Minorsky (1958): 25], but based on the practice, as a rule, new governors were appointed in spring or summer. In this instance, Muḥammad ibn Khālid was restored to his former position in around May or June of 856 due to exertions by Bughā al-Kabir. This was the favorable period for the launch of a military campaign. Chronicle specifies the regions that he received: Azerbaijan (Pers. *Ādurbādagān*), Armīniya, and Arran [Minorsky (1958): 25]. These are in fact two major provinces (Azerbaijan and Armīniya), which sometimes had a single governor. Muḥammad ibn Khālid was accompanied by new military units during his arrival. It was customary practice in the Abbasid-controlled Caucasus, each governor used to bring fresh forces into the region. However, Muḥammad had a different mission rather than Bughā. According to al-Ya’qūbī, when Muḥammad ibn Khālid arrived in his assigned province – Armīniya – the troublemakers stopped their actions and the new governor renewed their *amān* [al-Ya’qūbī (2018): 1267]. The end of the conflict was a result of *amān* or guarantees of safe-conduct that was given by Muḥammad ibn Khālid to troublemakers. The latter were as-Ṣanāriyyah and their counterparts, as described by al-Ya’qūbī. The most probably, as-Ṣanāriyyah, i.e. Korepiskopate, agreed on Muḥammad’s proposed *amān* and they ceased the conflict [al-Ya’qūbī (2018): 1267]. The guarantees of safe-conduct extended on Armenian and Arranian rulers as well.

The peaceful resolution of the conflict was not the result of Muḥammad ibn Khālid’s policy, but rather the consequence of an agreement between the Abbasids and the Byzantines. The Byzantine Empress Theodora sent her emissaries and started negotiation for peace and prisoner exchange. According to al-Ya’qūbī, Empress Theodora sent small gifts in the process of diplomatic exchange, while Caliph al-Muttawakil was more generous and sent back a lot more presents [al-Ya’qūbī (2018): 1268]. The Arab historian underlines that the Abbasid ruler was more wealthy while the Byzantine Empress was more interested in peace talks and prisoner exchange. The negotiations for peace and the exchange of prisoners commenced on November 19, 855 [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 138-139; al-Ya’qūbī (2018): 1268]. The negotiations lasted for several months and the prisoner exchange between the representatives of Empress Theodora and Caliph al-Mutawwakil took place the following year. In February and March of 856 both parties reached an agreement, and the exchange of prisoners took place [al-Ṭabarī (1989): 138-140; al-Ya’qūbī (2018): 1268]. It served as a short-term culmination of the conflict between the Byzantines and the Abbasids.

The Byzantines, during the reign of Theodora, engaged in a significant conflict with the Caliphate, particularly in 853-854, when they conducted raids along the Egyptian coastline and later on the Abbasid emirate of Tarsus [Treadgold (1997): 449-450]. During the same period, the Byzantines and their allies were fighting against the Abbasids and their associates in Western Armīniya [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 258-259], at the northern borders of Byzantium and the Caliphate. Consequently, the Byzantines had been engaged

in the conflict against the Abbasids since the Georgians petitioned the Imperial Court of Constantinople for assistance. The sea raids on Egypt were not a direct response from Byzantine leaders to assist the Caucasians. Nevertheless, the Georgian appeal undoubtedly played a positive role in reinforcing the anti-Abbasid policy in Constantinople. The Byzantines' involvement in the anti-Abbasid coalition was not limited to the Caucasian frontline. They largely operated primarily outside the Caucasus, with the Eastern Mediterranean region being the main target. In the Caucasus, they dispatched a limited number of forces. Nevertheless, primary sources indicate the Byzantines' participation in anti-Abbasid actions. Finally, they agreed with the Caliphate and allowed captives to return home. The same policy was employed by Muḥammad ibn Khālid during his second appointment. Consequently, his decisions should have been approved at the Royal Court in Samarra.

The negotiations between the Khazars and the Caliphate commenced prior to the Byzantine-Abbasid peace talks. Bughā was already in communication with the Khazars following his military campaign of 854. Unfortunately, the available evidence concerning the Abbasid-Khazar diplomatic exchange is limited. Bugha initiated this negotiation during his final year in the Caucasus. However, the process was interrupted upon his recall to Samarra. Bugha left Ibrahim as his deputy until new governor, Muḥammad ibn Khālid, arrived in the Caucasus next year [Thomas Artsruni (1985): 255; Шагинян А. (2011): 309-310; Tavadze (2022): 179-181]. We know little about Ibrahim's policy prior the new governor was appointed. However, it should be deduced that he abandoned Bugha's plans concerning Ossetia and the migration of Khazars. Therefore, no farther Abbasid military campaigns were held in Ossetia and Khazaria. The rule of Ibrahim was short and weak, as he *de facto* held office for only a few months despite being Bughā al-Kabir's first choice. The new governor, Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Shaybānī delivered *amān* to all troublemakers in the Caucasus, according to al-Yakubi. Hence, the Khazars are also included in this accord. The Abbasids relinquished lands beyond al-Bab to Khazars and they withdrew from Korepiskopate including Gardabani, the southernmost province under Samuel's control. Consequently, these measures reestablished peace and order in the Caucasus at least for some period of time.

Muhammad's rule was rather peaceful. He established the city of Ganja and was preoccupied with building activities. Later, at the end of the 850s, after his retirement, he received Ganja as a domain and paid substantial sum of money for it [Minorsky (1958): 25-26]. Ganja was more like a reward for his accomplishment in the reestablishment of peace and order in the Caucasus.

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of primary sources leads to the conclusion that the anti-Abbasid coalition was organized by the Khazar Qaghanate with the assistance of the Slavs against the Caliphate. The Byzantines were active in the eastern Mediterranean region and the western Caucasus. In response to concerns about Bughā's close ties with the Khazars, the Caliph ordered the withdrawal of Bughā al-Kabir from the Caucasus in 855. Bughā was of Khazar origin and his resettlement of the Khazars and the Ossetians from the North Caucasus in the cities of Dmanisi and Khunani, as well as the close relationship that he kept with the Khazars, were sufficient motives for al-Mutawwakil to recall him back to

Samarra. There were some other reasons as well, moreover Bughā's military operations were not always successful.

In 855, during Khazar-Byzantine-Slav involvement in the Caucasian affairs, the Abbasids adopted a defensive stance. Derbend was successfully protected, preventing the Khazars and their allies from penetrating southwards in the direction of Arran. In the Georgian frontline, the Khazars, probably with the support of the locals, were more successful and recaptured Dariali Fortress from the Abbasids, expelling the Caliphal forces from Ossetia and surrounding North Caucasian areas. It seems probable that the Christian *Baṭrīqs* seeking assistance from the coalition mentioned by al-Ya'qūbī were Samuel Korespiskopos of Kakheti, Demetre King of Abkhazia, and Prince Guarām Mampali. The surviving family members of the Arranian and the Armenian rulers could be considered, as they were suppressed during Bughā's expedition in the Caucasus. The Khazar-Byzantine-Slav coalition was short-lived, coming to an end soon after the Khazars had achieved their primary objectives and consolidated their dominions in the North Caucasus.

The new governor of Caliphal Armīniya Muḥammad ibn Khālīd al-Shaybānī concluded the peace with the survived Caucasian rulers and granted them *amān*, which guaranteed their amnesty, safe-conduct, and protection at least for some period of time.

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DOMINION OF KHWARAZMSHAH JALAL AL-DIN AND THE MONGOL RULE IN AZERBAIJAN

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Abstract: The period, spanning between 1220 and 1250s in the South Caucasus, as well as in Azerbaijan, is marked by significant events, such as the Mongol campaigns and Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din's short rule in the region. The both Khwarazmshahs and Mongols established their rule here, having some similarities and differences of the governance. The Persian historical literature, as well as other textual sources contain various information concerning the period. The presented paper is devoted to investigating the mentioned issue, based on these sources. The study aims to examine the features of the Mongols and the Khwarazmshahs governing, and their consequences in the region.

Azerbaijan became the target of Jalal al-Din's campaign, after the fall Khwarazmshahs due to the Mongol conquest Jalal al-Din conquered cities such as Maragha, Tabriz, Ganja and compelled the Shirvanshahs to vassalage. As a consequence of the second campaign of the Mongol general Chormagan, Jalal al-Din withdrew from Azerbaijan, bringing the entire South Caucasus under the Mongol control.

These historical events were scrutinized through a comparative analysis and interpretation of other textual sources and scholarly works. Examining these issues through contemporary sources enables the clarification and objective analysis of political events, as well as economic and social conditions in the South Caucasus during that era.

Keywords: *Mongols, Khwarazmshahs, Jalal al-Din, South Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Noyons, Tamma, Tammachin*

INTRODUCTION

When examining the historical sources and historiography works of numerous Asian and European countries of the 13th century, we come across records concerning the expansive military ventures of the Mongol Empire under the leadership of Genghis Khan and his successors. These records describe both the long-term and short-term outcomes of these campaigns for the conquered regions. The Caucasus region, including Azerbaijan, occupies a special place in the historical sources on the Mongol campaigns. The incursion

of Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din into Azerbaijan and his short reign in this region from 1225 to 1231 are also among the events that have left mark in the historical records during the era of the Mongol conquests.

During the short historical period, between the fall of the Atabegs of Azerbaijan and establishment of the Hulaguid dynastic rule in the region, the two administrative systems, the rule of Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din and the Great Mongol Empire, replaced each other. The purpose of this research is to make a comparison between these two administrative systems.

The scholarly contributions of individuals such as A. Alizadeh, V. Piriyeu, and Z. Buniyatov hold an important place in Azerbaijani historiography on the Mongol invasions and Jalal al-Din's rule in Azerbaijan. Moreover, scholars like D. Morgan, T. Allsen, P. Jackson, and T. May have contributed to the study of Mongol period. They analyzed the Mongol campaigns and the effects of conflicts between the Mongols and Khwarazmshahs on various regions. While many scholars have scrutinized this period, this research offers a distinctive perspective. In this paper, a comprehensive analysis of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din's rule and the Mongol authority in Azerbaijan is undertaken through mainly the Persian historical literature, focusing on the biases approaches, and interpretations. Also, the governance, established as a result of the Mongol and the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din's conquests in Azerbaijan, is examined through a comparative analysis of the other sources such as Arabic, Georgian, and Armenian, from the period. This study implements historical criticism, comparison, and the textual analysis method to gain deeper understanding of the political landscape of the period. Moreover, the scrutiny of these historical events, based on the textual sources of the period, shows that there were different approaches to the campaigns of the Mongols and the Khwarazmshahs by the authors of the time. These different approaches lead to distinct descriptions in the sources and contribute to a detailed examination of them.

The theoretical framework for research on the history of administrative governance should draw upon different theoretical perspectives to understand the development and evolution of administrative systems and practices over time. This paper considers the issue from the theories of historical institutionalism and comparative governance.

The historical institutionalism perspective emphasizes the importance of historical context in shaping administrative governance. It looks at how past events, decisions, and structures have influenced the development of administrative systems, and how these legacies continue to shape governance practices today. It underlines a historical context for political events as a direct consequence. By enriching the understanding of the historical moment, it offers more accurate explanations for the specific political events [Porta & Keating (2008): 127-128]. And the comparative governance theory considers variations in administrative governance structures and practices across different countries and regions. It seeks to identify common trends and patterns, as well as differences and unique features, in the evolution of administrative systems over time. By analyzing the governance in different levels, it emphasizes how administration is conducted and aspects of governing rather than only expressing demands and desires [Peters & Pierre (2016): 84-118].

Azerbaijan on the eve of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din's conquest

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Azerbaijan was not governed by the central administration. States of the Atabegs and Shirvanshahs, the Aghsunurids dynasty, and the melikdom of Ahar were in power here [Piriyev (2003): 111]. Moreover, the state of the Atabegs experienced a decline at that time. In 1210-1211, Georgian troops under the leadership of Mkhargrdzeli raided Azerbaijan, the territories of the state of the Atabegs. They could get a large amount of booty from the cities like Nakhchivan, Tabriz, Ardabil, and others [Bünyadov (2007): 92-93; Kartlis Tskhovreba (2014): 260-261].

In the next decade of the thirteenth century, between 1220 and 1222, some cities of Azerbaijan experienced the Mongol marches and were captured and destroyed. The Mongol troops led by the commander Jebe and Subutai entered Nishapur on May 1220 [Juvaini (1997): 145], then directed to Azerbaijan. After looting the cities, such as Ardabil, Maragha, Beylagan, and Shamakhi, the Mongols moved toward Derbend. They could pass through the Derbend Gates with trickery, killing one of the envoys of the Shirvansahs and forcing others to guide them to leave Derbend [Rashiduddin (1998): 259-260]. So, the Mongols left Azerbaijan by leaving a trail of destruction behind them.

Different facts were presented in the textual sources of the period on the cities of Tabriz and Ganja during the first Mongol marches. Despite Juvayni noting that Tabriz was devastated and the population was slaughtered like the other cities [Juvaini (1997): 148], Ibn al-Athir emphasized that the city was spared destruction several times by paying tribute to the Mongols [Ibn al-ʿAsir (1959): 165, 167, 169-170]. Similarly, Rashid al-Din Hamadani mentioned that they left Tabriz after gaining tribute from the city and did not cause devastation there [Rashiduddin (1998): 259]. Although Rashid al-Din noted that Ganja was plundered by the Mongols [Rashiduddin (1998): 259], Ibn al-Athir emphasized that the city was well-defended and the Mongols left here after receiving tribute [Ibn al-Athir (1959): 171]. However, Juvayni did not provide any facts on Ganja. Taking into account that Ibn al-Athir was the author who gave the most detailed information about the events of that period and was an eye-witness of the time, the facts he provided can be considered more reliable data.

It should be noted that, at the beginning of the Mongol campaigns, some northwestern territories of Azerbaijan were conquered by the Georgian troops. Also, when the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din marched to Azerbaijan and Georgia in 1225, towns such as Sheki and Kabala were still under the rule of the Georgians [Latifova E. (2023): 220].

When the Mongol troops under Jebe and Subutai left Azerbaijan by passing through the Derbend Gates, they confronted the Kipchaks in Deshti-i Kipchak (the Plain of Kipchak). Following their defeat, some Kipchak tribes migrated to Azerbaijan and settled in Ganja. However, in a short time, their relations with the governor of Ganja, Kuskhara, were deteriorated. Although Kuskhara welcomed and let the Kipchaks settle in the town, their raids on Georgians dissatisfied him. Shortly after, Kipchaks clashed with the local people. When they moved to Shirvan, they were defeated and expelled by the Muslims, Lezgins, Georgians, and other groups of people [Əliyeva L. (2015): 169-171].

In 1222, when the Kipchaks were driven out, the Georgians marched and devastated Beylagan, which the Mongols had captured and pillaged before [Bünyadov (2007): 104]. Then, in 1225, the Georgian troops again raided Ganja and other territories which were under the rule of the Atabegs and the Shirvanshahs. However, they were beaten by the son of Shirvanshah and then by the locals [Ibn al-ʿAsir (1959): 181, 184-186].

It became clear that the social and political conditions in the region were very miserable and complicated on the eve of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din's march. During that period, Azerbaijan was ruled by different dynasties, such as the Shirvanshahs and Atabegs, who suffered from a decline in power. In the first decades of the thirteenth century, the cities, destroyed and marauded, hence the Georgian and Mongol campaigns, were not in a condition to resist future attacks. It expedited and fostered the conquest of the Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din in 1225.

Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din Manguberdi's rule in Azerbaijan

According to Aladdin Ata Malik Juvayni, the court historian of the Ilkhanate state, and Shihabeddin Muhammad al-Nasawi, the secretary of Sultan Jalal al-Din Manguberdi, Sultan Muhammad had been vanquished in combat by the Mongols and had taken refuge on the island of Abasgun in the Caspian Sea. However, Jalal al-Din Manguberdi, the son of Khwarazmshah Muhammad, opposed his father's decision and desired to continue the battle against the Mongols [Juvaini (1997): 396-397; Nasawi (2021): 74]. His courageous struggle against the Mongols impressed Genghis Khan himself and according to Fazlullah Rashid al-Din's work "Jami' al-tawarikh", he attempted to build amicable ties with Jalal al-Din rather than engage in combat. Genghis Khan's plan was never executed [Rashiduddin (1998): 236].

Jalal al-Din, pursued by the Mongols, proceeded first to Mangishlag and soon he fled the city because of companions, who supported his brother's ascent, and were planning an assassination attempt. He eventually moved to Qazvin [Juvaini (1997): 405]. When he learned that his brother Qiyasaddin was in Rey, he sent his soldiers in Mongol dress against and defeated him. He then summoned his brother and made amends with him. Following this, he moved to Baghdad and subsequently to Arran and Azerbaijan [Juvaini (1997): 424].

Although Ata Malik Juvayni described Jalal al-Din's march to the Tabriz region immediately after his arrival in Azerbaijan, several authors of the time mentioned that he first went to Maragha. Nasawi noted in his work "Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah biography" that the people of Maragha sought refuge from the oppression of officials and Georgians by approaching Jalal al-Din when he approached Azerbaijan. Therefore, Jalal al-Din went to Maragha first before proceeding to Tabriz [Nesevi (2021): 111]. Ibn al-Athir, another author of this period, mentioned that Jalal al-Din approached the area of Maragha for the first time and that he even carried out reconstruction works in Maragha [Ibn al-ʿAsir (1959): 186]. Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah arrived in Maragha first and completed reconstruction work here, according to the textual sources of the time such as Nasawi and Ibn al-Athir.

While in Maragha, Jalal al-Din sent letters to his western and southern neighbors made an effort to establish relations with them. However, the Georgians rejected this proposal [Buniyatov (2015): 133-134; Latifova S. (2024): 283-284]. By that time, Jalal al-Din found out that his uncle Igan Taisi and brother Qiyaseddin had arrived in Hamedan two days earlier and had marched through the city. With almost fifty thousand warriors, Igan Taisi had pillaged several regions of Azerbaijan before relocating to Hamadan. Jalal al-Din rushed to Hamedan and surrounded his brother and uncle. Jalal al-Din reconciled with his brother and restored their relations. He subsequently returned to

Maragha before relocating to Tabriz. In contrast to Juvayni, according to Ibn al-Athir's piece, the Georgians attempted to ally with Atabeg Uzbek while the Sultan was in Maragha, Jalal al-Din marched towards Tabriz to thwart their alliance [Ibn al-Ṭsir (1959): 186]. Although Juvayni assesses Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah's march to Tabriz as a policy of aggression [Juvaini (1997): 424], Nasawi writes that he was invited by the Tabriz dwellers to protect them from Atabeg Uzbek's yoke [Nesevi (2021): 111]. Atabeg Uzbek fled Tabriz and left Malika, the daughter of Togrul II, the last Iraqi Seljuk ruler, alone because he lacked the courage to oppose the Sultan throughout his march [Juvaini (1997): 424]. The Sultan reached Tabriz and besieged the city, the soldiers of Atabeg engaged in combat with him there. Since Malika believed that Jalal al-Din could not be defeated, she dispatched an emissary to inform him that they would no longer be fighting, that their relationship with Atabeg Uzbek was upside down and that she could wed him in Nakhchivan because she had a fatwa from the imams in Damascus and Baghdad. Two days later, Malika summoned the city's elders and emirs and informed them that the city was under siege by a great ruler, and that if the city did not yield, he would inflict the same disaster on Tabriz that Khwarazmshah Muhammad had wreaked in Samarkand. So, they decided to surrender the city, and dispatched a deputation to Jalal al-Din, they granted him entry into the city on condition that he would not touch Atabeg Uzbek's harem [Juvaini (1997): 424-425]. According to Nasawi, a writer of that period, the accuracy of this information is confirmed. And Jalal al-Din comes into the city after that [Nesevi (2021): 112]. Ibn al-Athir reported that upon his arrival in Tabriz, Jalal al-Din informed the emir, governor and all the chiefs of the city that his warriors purchasing food and providing to all of their requirements. This demand was accepted by the governors of city and Jalal al-Din's forces began to purchase and selling the food and other goods they desired. However, these soldiers also took the goods of community, and paid the price they wanted. Tabriz people complained about the situation, so, Jalal al-Din sent a governor to preside over the city, and demanded the execution of the soldiers who oppressed the people. Although the governor first formed stability in the city, eventually, the population complained about him because of his heavy obligations. Jalal al-Din ordered the governor to seek money in taxes and duties from residents as possible. Jalal al-Din gives the order that Tabriz residents will not be prevented from approaching him if they decide to do so. As a result, the troops do not obstruct anyone, and the villagers come forward to congratulate Jalal al-Din. The Sultan assigned one of his commanders the authority over the city after he has been there for a few days [Ibn al-Ṭsir (1959): 187-188].

On the eve of the capture of Tabriz by Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din, the Georgians wanted to occupy Tabriz, turn mosques into churches, lead the people astray, invade Baghdad and replace the Caliph with the Catholicos [Juvaini (1997): 426].

After receiving this news, the Sultan marched against the Georgians, defeated them and returned to Tabriz. From there he moved to the city of Khoy and from there to Nakhchivan and married Meleka. According to the writings of Juvayni, Atabeg Uzbek was in the fortress of Alinca at this time. When he learned that Jalal al-Din and Malika were getting married, he fell ill and died [Juvaini (1997): 426]. Nasawi similarly described the death of Atabeg Uzbek [Nesevi (2021): 117]. In his work "Rawzat as-safa", Muhammad ibn Khvandshah ibn Mahmud Mirkhvand recounts the events in this manner, stating that Atabeg Uzbek passed away from grief as a result of Jalal al-Din and Malika's

marriage [Ravzatu's-Safa (2022): 198]. Minorsky referenced Nasawi when he indicated that following Uzbek's death, a man by the name of Nusrat was granted control over the cities of Ahar, Sarab, and Waravi. He further stated that Jalal al-Din promised these regions to him since Atabeg Uzbek's time because of his service and respect [Minorsky (1951): 868]. Juvayni remarked on these occurrences before reporting that the Sultan marched against the Georgians from Nakhchivan [Juvayni (1997): 426]. Following pushing to Dvin and Amoberdi, the Khwarazmshahs set up camp in Ghazni [Kartlis Tskhovreba (2014): 330]. According to D.T. Timokhin, confrontation in this battle defined the future directions of the Khwarazmian army. If Jalal al-Din's ambitions until this confrontation were primarily to conquer the Atabeg state's territory, his following objectives were to take control of Azerbaijan, the whole South Caucasus region, and even Khalifa An-Nasir's territories [Тимохин (2017): 930].

Ziya Bunyadov describes a sequence of events with reference to Nasawi [Buniyatov (2015): 136-137; Nasawi (2021): 111]. In contrast to Juvayni, Nasawi explains Jalal al-Din's return to Tabriz and its reasons in detail. Nasawi's writings indicate that Jalal al-Din returned back to Tiflis following Nakhchivan. A letter from Sharafulmulk arrived from Tabriz while the Sultan was at Tiflis. The letter stated that Shamsuddin Tughrai and Nizamuddin are preparing to revolt against him in Tabriz. Upon learning of this, Jalal al-Din returned to Tabriz again, he punished Tughrai and sent him to Maragha. Though he had intended to kill him there, he was unable to do so, so Tughrai escaped for Baghdad before embarking on a pilgrimage [Nesevi (2021): 115]. In this declaration, he affirms his innocence and his allegiance to the sultan. Upon learning of this, Jalal al-Din dispatched Tughrai to Tabriz once more and his general Orkhan to Ganja. Districts of Beylagan, Barda, Shamkir, Siz, and Ganja also surrender [Nesevi (2021): 116-117]. After conquering Tiflis, the Sultan moved to Akhlat and Kirman before returning to Tiflis. Sharafulmulk also went to Ganja for the winter when Jalal al-Din left his harem and moved to Akhlat. Taking advantage of Jalal al-Din's absence, the Georgians attacked Tiflis again. Jalal al-Din went to Tiflis again to punish the Georgians, and from there he returned to Azerbaijan [Nesevi (2021): 114-125].

Kirakos Gandzaketsi, in contrast to other writers of the era, noted that Jalal al-Din's campaign had more dire repercussions for Georgians, forcing them to convert to a new faith while they were in Georgia and if they did not change their religion were sentenced to death. Kirakos Gandzaketsi notes that during Jalal al-Din's march against the Georgians, the Khwarazm soldiers were more brutal, mistreated women, destroyed all the churches and removed the signs of the cross [Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1986): 66]. Unlike the Mongols, Jalal al-Din demanded the Georgians to convert their religions. Furthermore, Ibn al-Athir states that during Jalal al-Din's reign in Akhlat, the Oghuz dynasty of Turks took control of Asna and Urmiya in Azerbaijan. They then extracted tribute from these cities, shut off their merchants, and pillaged them. Jalal al-Din was urged to return from Akhlat as quickly as possible in letters sent by the townspeople and Malika Khatun, the daughter of Sultan Toghrul. Considering this news and the difficulties in the siege of Akhlat, Jalal al-Din left Akhlat [Ibn al-ʿAsir (1959): 189]. While he was in Akhlat, Sharafulmulk sent him series of letters from Ganja, in which he mentioned about his doubt about Georgian march to Tiflis. When Jalal al-Din marched to Tiflis, defeated Yiva Turks, and delivered their goods to Mughan, Sharafulmulk captured the cities of Beylagan and Ardabil, constructed a wall around these two cities to create conditions for

the population to enter and seek safety inside. Indeed, these cities began to flourish [Nesevi (2021): 127].

When Jalal al-Din was in Ganja, he invited Atabeg Uzbek's deaf and dumb son Khamush Bey to his presence. Khamush gave gifts to him, and Jalal al-Din took him to his side, however, according to Nasawi's account, Khamush later fled and died among the Ismailis [Nesevi (2021): 128-129]. In his work, Ibn al-Athir notes that Jalal al-Din's entry was a retribution for the Ismailis' actions in Muslim lands [İbnü'l Esir (1989): 432]. Upon Jalal al-Din's marched to India [Nesevi (2021): 118-129]. By that time the Ismailis complained about the lawyers of Orkhan, one of his emirs, near Ganja. When Jalal al-Din came to Ganja, five Ismailis killed Orkhan. They then threatened Sharafulmulk. This infuriated Jalal al-Din, who commanded that these 5 Ismailis be set on fire. After that, Sharafulmulk left Azerbaijan and went to Iraq [Nesevi (2021): 130-131].

While Jalal al-Din arrived at the Hamadan border on his route to Iraq, according to Nasawi's report, he was informed that Atabeg officials such as Nasreddin Akkas, Seyduddin Beklek es-Sedidi agreed with other tribal judges and was getting ready for a riot, so they formed an army near Tabriz and started preparations to restore the Atabeg state. Jalal al-Din sent Sharafulmulk to Azerbaijan to fight against them, consequently, he defeated them in Tabriz [Nesevi (2021): 146], and restored his power in Azerbaijan and Arran. Sharafulmulk dispatched officers to collect taxes in Beylagan while he was in Mughan, but Siraj, an official of the Khwarazm, insisted on demanding more duties and taxes. Sharafulmulk attacked Beylagan, distributed the locals' cattle to the soldiers, and left the city, heading for Mughan, even though the residents of Beylagan had promised him they would pay the tax themselves. The taxes of all provinces were gathered here, and Sharafulmulk reminded the Shirvanshah to pay his taxes. The Shirvanshah didn't respond him, Sharafulmulk became irritated and dispatched troops to Shirvan. Nevertheless, the Shirvanshah had left his residence, so those ventured back empty-handed [Nesevi (2021): 154]. Nasawi's confirmed that a fight occurred between Sharafulmulk and Salaheddin Ayyubi's Akhlat representative, Hajip Ali, while Sharafulmulk was in Arran. Hajib Ali moved to Khoy, Nakhchivan, and Marand in order of precedence, at last he was vanquished and Sharafulmulk's authority was regained in Tabriz and later in Arran [Nesevi (2021): 153-160].

Ibn al-Athir described the conflict between Hajib Ali and Sharafulmulk in a similar manner [İbnü'l Esir (1989): 450]. Jalal al-Din entered into an alliance with the Kipchaks here and crossed over to Mughan to capture Derbend. By that time, Derbend was ruled by Atabeg named Asad, and Jalal al-Din first imprisoned him. While the soldiers looted the city of Derbend, Asad escaped from prison and restore its previous condition in the city [Nesevi (2021): 167-168]. In contrast to Juvayni, Nasawi also discussed the relationships between the Shirvanshahs and Jalal al-Din. As per the accounts in Nasawi's works, upon Jalal al-Din's initial arrival in Arran, the Shirvanshah dispatched a message to Fariburz, requested to pay the tax that had been given to Malikshah. As a result of negotiations, Fariburz was able to reduce the annual tax amount. When Jalal al-Din marched on the Shirvanshahs for the second time, Sharafulmulk offered Jalal al-Din to capture the state the territory of the Shirvanshahs, but Jalal al-Din allowed Fariburz to leave by giving gifts and taxes [Nesevi (2021): 169]. Following next march and victory over Georgians, Jalal al-Din went to Akhlat in Anatolia before traveling back to Azerbaijan, where he

learned the Mongols had arrived and relocated to Isfahan, Raya, and Nishapur [Juvaini (1997): 437].

Furthermore, while Jalal al-Din set out for Isfahan and Georgia, the sultans of Rum and Syria regions, Georgian, Alan, Sarir, Lagz, Kipchak, Abkhazia and many other regions, who were afraid of Jalal al-Din's revenge, united against him, and Jalal al-Din fought against them. He first gained the support of the Kipchaks and defeated the Georgians once more [Juvaini (1997): 440]. Following these events, while Jalal al-Din relocated Akhlat, he faced resist, but quickly overcame this opposition and took control of the city. Following the conquest of Georgia, Jalal al-Din received gifts from the governors of Syria and Anatolia, indicating their recognition of his power and their refusal to stand in his way. When Jalal al-Din proceeded to Harput from Akhlat via Malazgird, the Erzurum ruler approached Jalal al-Din and reported that the Maliks of Syria and Halep had banded together and was preparing an attack on the sultan during the siege of Akhlat. When Jalal al-Din reached Mush, he surrounded the army that was going to help Syria and killed every one of them. Although they faced the Sultan of Anatolia, because Jalal al-Din's army was disintegrated, Jalal al-Din was forced to go to Akhlat and from there to Khoy.

By that time, Jalal al-Din received the news that Chormaqan had crossed the Oxus River, that is why, he appointed vizier Sharafeddin Yulduzcu to defend the Gilan castle and then moved to Tabriz. He dispatched envoys to the sultans of Syria and Anatolia, and informed the Mongols had crossed the Amu Darya River, that they were unable to defeat the greater Tatar force, that he acted as “Wall of Alexander” separating them from the Mongols, and they should resist against them [Juvaini (1997): 452]. Jalal al-Din, who heard that the Mongols were going to Sarab, left for Miskin, only stayed there for a single day before moving on to Mughan and the Kaban mountains (nowadays Kalan), so when the Mongols arrived in Mughan, they started chasing Jalal al-Din, because they could not find him here.

Jalal al-Din resided in Urmiya and Ushnu in 1230 years, he heard Vizier Sharaf-Malik Yulduzcu, whom he had left there to protect the Gilan fortress, touched his harem and treasure. He summoned him to his presence and imprisoned him [Juvaini (1997): 454].

Nasawi reported that the people of Ganja slaughtered every Khwarazmian in the city during Jalal al-Din's stay, upsetting the peace and sparking a rebellion led by a man by the name of Bandar. At first, Jalal al-Din sent a message to them and tried to make them dependent again, but the people of Ganja did not agree, so Jalal al-Din marched on the people of Ganja and suppressed the rebellion. However, according to a letter he got, he proceeded to Diyarbakir and discovered that the Mongols were on their way [Nesevi (2021): 230; Latifova S. (2024): 286-287]. Instead of chasing Jalal al-Din, the Mongol army planned to set traps in the places where he would pass. While Jalal al-Din was in Diyarbakir, he sent Buku Khan to Azerbaijan to get information about the Mongols invasion. Buku Khan told Jalal al-Din that the Mongols had not visited here without providing further details. Jalal al-Din was merely having pleasure after hearing this news. Jalal al-Din's soldiers approached Taymas, nevertheless, Jalal al-Din and all of his troops were inebriated, so they were incapable to stop the Mongols, and Jalal al-Din withdrew with a small force [Juvaini (1997): 455-456].

Juvayni pointed that there are multiple narratives of Jalal al-Din's demise such as Jalal al-Din's assassination. According to the narratives Jalal al-Din was assassinated by a Kurd group and had his clothes stolen while attempting to spend the night in Diyarbakir after he left the Mongols. Upon arriving in the city, Jalal al-Din's relatives realized that the clothes belonged to him, buried him in a tomb, and they murdered the men who killed Jalal al-Din [Juvaini (1997): 459]. According to another narrative, Jalal al-Din had his clothes worn by one of his relatives, and he himself walked around wearing Sufi clothes, and finally died [Juvaini (1997): 459]. When discussing Jalal al-Din's demise, Nasawi noted that Kurds killed him; subsequently, he was discovered and interred [Nesevi (2021): 237]. In "Rawzat as-safa", Muhammad ibn Khvandshah ibn Mahmud Mirkhvand mentioned the works of Ibn al-Athir and Nasawi regarding Jalal al-Din's demise and provided additional narratives of Jalal al-Din's demise [Ravzatu's-Safa (2022): 221]. Jalal al-Din's death created conditions for Mongols to settle in the territory of Azerbaijan, and Mongols entered Azerbaijan under the leadership of Chormaqan.

In conclusion, the struggle that started between the Khwarazmshahs and the Mongols affected the states located in the neighborhood of these states, including some other areas located far away from them. David Morgan, referring to a number of textual sources, noted that during this struggle only 1,600,000 people were killed in Herat (in some sources it is even more, 2,400,000) and 1,747,000 people were killed in Nishapur [D. Morgan (2007): 65]. When we investigate the sources, we observe that Juvayni's description of Jalal al-Din's campaign is generally more condensed, with some episodes omitted. In fact, Juvayni's position in the Mongol court or his life following these campaigns may have had an impact on his refusal to address some issues. Juvayni, in spite of his position, did not describe an adverse portrait of Jalal al-Din's rule in Azerbaijan; in fact, he depicted Jalal al-Din as one of the Mongols' greatest enemies, mentioned the improvements he made to the country's territory, and gave some justice to his policy in the cities that resisted him.

In the sources listed above, only Ibn al-Athir assesses Jalal al-Din as an administrative failure, it is possible because of his position. [İbnü'l Esir (1989): 458]. If we take into account Nasawi was one of the closest people of Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din, it is understandable from which side he views and interprets his position and events. However, in reality, Jalal al-Din Manguberdi's some activities in Azerbaijan were not as terrible as it was described in Soviet historiography because of the information provided by his Juvayni, even although Jalal al-Din was an enemy of the Mongols, he did not note harshly about him, and the fact that he appreciated his work to some extent. Although Jalal al-Din's march to the South Caucasus, including Azerbaijan, was described negatively in a number of historiographical works, it can be concluded from the sources of the time that Jalal al-Din Manguberdi played significant role in defending the Muslims in Azerbaijan from the Georgians, as well as in restoring the cities that were destroyed during the Mongol campaigns. In textual sources such as Georgian sources, and Juvayni and Nasawi, it was clearly that Jalal al-Din was supported in Azerbaijan, and he even came to Maragha and Tabriz at the request of the population. Relationships between Jalal al-Din and the Eldiguzids and Shirvanshahs who rule Azerbaijan also demonstrate that Jalal al-Din's marches were not an invasion but rather an attempt to flee the Mongols. Taking all of this into account, Jalal al-Din's march to Azerbaijan requires to be revised and evaluated according to the historical sources.

The governing system, established by Jalal al-Din in the region, based on the preservation of local administrative bodies, and limited superiority of his appointees, in the case of Azerbaijan his vizier Sharafalmulk. During whole period of his rule, Jalal al-Din attempted to expand his invasions, gaining more territories under his control and did not aim to intensify his administration in the newly invaded territories. Thus, during his occupations, his officials and governors were assigned to administrative policy, it caused displeasure of population in this territory, and prevented to establish strong administration in Azerbaijan.

Formation of the Mongol Authority in Azerbaijan

The presence of Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din Manguberdi, who was actively conducting campaigns in the Caucasus and subjugated the region, incited unrest within the Mongol Empire. Moreover, rebellions and strikes were ongoing in Azerbaijan along with Khorasan, Iraq, and other areas. According to Juvayni, the Mongol Khan, Ögedei appointed Chormaqan to conquer the Fourth Clime with a military force of thirty thousand in 1230 [Juvaini (1997): 190, 482]. The Fourth Clime was the area between Tibet and the Mediterranean Sea, including the Caucasus region.

It should be noted that the Persian historical sources and other chronicles of the Muslim authors do not contain data on the second march of the Mongols and the invasion of the region. Although the invasion of Maragha and Tabriz was described by the Arab author Ibn al-Athir [Ibn al-Ṭsir (1959): 204, 207, 211-212], the mentioned sources did not provide data on the subsequent course of the invasion. We can find the description of the subjugation of Tabriz, Ardabil, Mughan, Ganja, Shamkir, Barda, Kabala, Shirvan, and Derbend by the Mongols in Christian sources of the period, Kartlis Tskhovreba and the work of Kirakos Gandzakets'i [Kartlis Tskhovreba (2014): 329-330; Kirakos Gandzakets'i (1986): 69, 71; Karim K. (2024): 83-84].

The Mongol army that entered Azerbaijan in 1231 under the command of Chormaqan Noyon, conquered the whole region and also subjugated Armenians and Georgians in 1239. Following this invasion, Transcaucasia was incorporated into the administrative control of the Mongol Empire. The Mongol noyons were appointed as viceroys by the Mongol Khan and oversaw the administration of the region [Ализаде А. (2012): 116-118; Piriyeu (2003): 121-123].

Juvayni's "Tarikh-i Jahangusha" and Rashid al-Din's "Jami' al-tawarikh" contain noteworthy details about the Mongol viceroys and their activities in Azerbaijan during the post-occupation period of the region. While Juvayni and Rashid al-Din did not specifically address Chormaqan's invasion of Transcaucasia and Azerbaijan, it is clear from their notes about subsequent events that Chormaqan subjugated this region to the Mongol Empire, and subsequently, the entire region was governed by Mongol noyons.

When the Mongols conquered a region, the Mongol Khans made decrees on the administrative structures and appointed their commanders or functionaries as *daruyachin* and *tammachin* in certain regions [Hope, M. (2024)]. One of those commanders was Chormaqan, who was tasked with conquering a vast region, including Azerbaijan [Cleaves (1982): 214-215]. Rashid al-Din emphasized that Ögedei Khan appointed Chormaqan as a commander of four *tuman* of a *tamma* troops and sent them to the areas where Jebe and Subutai had marched before [Rashiduddin (1998): 41]. Also, D.

Ostrowski referring to the “Secret History of the Mongols”, mentioned that when the Mongols captured northern Persia, Ögedei Khan ordered Chormaqan to reside as *tamma* in that region. He explained the term *tamma* as garrison involved in military campaigns, and conquest of the different districts then resided in those regions [Ostrowski (1998): 263-264]. Although Ostrowski distinguished the terms *tammachin* and *baskak*, he also emphasized that when the Mongols adopted Turkic, the Mongol word was replaced with the Turkic one *baskak* for the individuals who were military governors of the regions [Ostrowski (1998): 277].

While Rashid al-Din referred to Chormaqan as *tamma*'s commander, Juvayni did not use that term. He mentioned Mengu Bolad and Buqa as *baskaks* in Azerbaijan appointed by Chormaqan and Arghun Aqa [Juvaini (1997): 508, 511]. Juvayni provided significant data on the deeds of the Mongol appointees in Azerbaijan.

The Mongols firstly appointed Jin Temür, then Nosal as *baskak* to the territory of Khorasan and Mazandaran. In 1236 Körgüz was named Baskak of the same territories. When he settled affairs in Khorasan and Mazandaran, “Ögedei Khan gave him the control of the territories in the west of the Oxus (Amu Darya) river, conquered by Chormaqan, with *yarlighs* and *paizas*” [Juvaini (1997): 492-493, 499]. Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq were also included to these territories. Vyacheslav Gulevych examined these terms in the case of Kievan Rus to clarify the level of its dependence on the Mongol Empire [Gulevych (2023): 63]. In other words, these attributes were an indicator of state administration.

Juvayni and Rashid al-Din provided the explanation for Körgüz's policy towards Azerbaijan. They described that later, Körgüz sent his son to Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq. They took control of the provinces by fighting against the emirs of Chormaqan in these regions. They introduced a new method of taxation. Before now, emirs in the cities and noyons in the provinces used to send a portion of their taxes to the Diwan and keep the rest for themselves [Juvaini (1997): 501]. Rashid al-Din also mentioned the arrival of the son of Körgüz into Persia, Arran, and Azerbaijan and described these events in the same way as Juvayni [Rashiduddin (1998): 334].

In 1243, Töregene Khatun, the regent of the Mongol Empire, appointed Arghun Aqa of the Oirat tribe to control the lands ruled by Körgüz. Subsequently, Arghun, who had taken part in the coronations of Güyük Khan in 1246 and Möngke Khan in 1251, regained control over the regions that included Azerbaijan, Shirvan, Iran, and Iraq.

P. Jackson clarified that the Mongol administration system had been developed in two directions during the reign of Ögedei Khan. The new financial system for three administration structures in Central Asia, Iran, and China was implemented to perform the functions of the *tamma*. Arghun Aqa, who had gained control of a vast territory, oversaw the financial system and administration of Iran. The second development was the establishment of the *yam* centers, which served as a communication system within the empire [Jackson P. (2024): 67]. However, it was only implemented in Azerbaijan in the late thirteenth century during the reign of Ghazan Khan [Piriyevev (2003): 203].

Compared to Rashid al-Din and other authors, Juvayni, who lived at the same time as Arghun Aqa and accompanied him on several occasions, introduced a more detailed account of his policy in Azerbaijan, specifically in Tabriz.

Describing the events that happened in Tabriz during Arghun's time, Juvayni writes that Arghun left Khorasan for Azerbaijan and followed the way to Tabriz. After the arbitrary administrations of Chormaqan, Baiju, and other commanders disrupted the

situation in the region, he came here and put them back in order. He protected the people's possessions and punished those who oppressed them. However, despite Arghun's objection, Sharafeddin, who had arrived in Tabriz from Batu's palace, started imposing extra taxes. After Arghun left, he appointed my father Sahib Divan as his deputy in the regions of Rum, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, appointed Buqa a *baskak* here [Juvaini (1997): 507–508]. It shows that Juvayni strongly criticized the arbitrary behavior of the Mongol emirs and noyons, even as he positively commented on Arghun's activities. Emir Sharafeddin was one of those emirs who arrived in Tabriz from Batu's palace, levied an extra personal tax on the population, grabbed their property, and then collected a large amount of illegal taxes from many cities in 1245. He died before Arghun Aqa arrived in this region. Arghun Aqa abolished all unlawful taxes and freed all prisoners he had imprisoned [Juvaini (1997): 540-541, 544].

Juvayni also emphasized the census of Arghun Aqa in Azerbaijan. Juvayni stressed that he dispatched officials to different regions to count the population, divide them up into groups of tens and thousands, and define the *kupchur*. Arghun himself came to Georgia, Arran, and Azerbaijan through Derbend. Then, he headed for Iraq after completing the census and determining the *kupchur* there [Juvaini (1997): 521]. These events occurred in the period between Möngke Khan's appointment of Arghun to those regions in 1251 and Hulagu Khan's campaign in 1256.

Juvayni describes Arghun's activities, focusing on his visits to Tabriz and the work he accomplished there. When Töregene Khatun appointed Arghun to rule over these areas, he arrived in Tabriz shortly after Khorasan. He even received ambassadors from the Sultan of Rum and the Ayyubid rulers of Aleppo and Damascus in this city [The Cambridge History of Iran (1968): 338]. It indicates that Tabriz had a particular significance for the Mongols as a center. The importance of Tabriz city again became evident during the Ilkhanid period as a capital of the state.

It is worth mentioning that, like Tabriz in the south, the Mughan Plateau in the north served as a center for the Mongol administration in the South Caucasus, Anatolia, and western Iran. The Mughan Plateau, where the winter was mild and there were natural pastures, was ideal for the nomadic Mongols due to its geographical location [Nasirov N. (2021): 82-83].

When Möngke Khan commanded Hulagu Khan to launch his campaign in 1253, Arghun Aqa heard of Hulagu's arrival and welcomed him. Juvayni also stated in 1256 how he began to serve under Hulagu Khan, saying that "Emir Arghun sent his sons, Emir Ahmad and Kerei Malik, as well as the present writer, to Hulagu's service. Hulagu entrusted them control over the affairs of the Mazandaran, Khorasan, and Iraqi areas" [Juvaini (1997): 521-522]. When Hulagu Khan founded the state of the Ilkhanate in 1258, Azerbaijan was subjugated to the fifth Mongol ulus. Arghun Aqa, who earned Hulagu's confidence, continued his activities in these areas until he died in 1275.

T. May asserted that even though Arghun Aqa had been an appointee of the Mongol Khans, he could keep and strengthen his position in the governance of the whole region, Khorasan and Azerbaijan, with his proficiency and capability [May T. (2018): 127].

As Juvayni was an eyewitness of some events, his records served as a valuable source for that period. However, it's important to note that his father's position in government and his relationship with Arghun also influenced Juvayni's work. Juvayni's father, Baha ad-Din Muhammad Juvayni, was a prominent figure in the Mongol government. During

the reign of Jin Temür and other governors, he was appointed to the post of *Sahib-i Diwan*, who was in charge of financial affairs and was approved by the Mongol Khan [Ализаде А. (2012): 119]. Furthermore, as mentioned above, Arghun Aqa appointed him deputy over an extended region. Juvayni praised Arghun's policy, distinguished him from other Mongol emirs for his taxation policy, and introduced him as a fair governor.

Despite all of this, the source analysis leads one to the conclusion that even though the Mongol central authority controlled a large number of territories, including Azerbaijan, the population suffered from the tax policies of the Mongol noyons, and there were gaps in administration of the region under the Mongol rule.

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the administrative structures of the Mongols and Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din Manguberdi through the textual sources of the period enables us to conclude that, unlike the Mongols, Khwarazmshah Jalal al-Din could not accomplish to simultaneously govern the newly conquered territories and expand his borders. He strove to seize control of the entire Transcaucasia by repeatedly waging campaigns in Azerbaijan and Georgia. However, he did not pay enough attention to strengthening the administrative structure in Azerbaijan. His disregard for governance and the activity of his appointees led to insurrections in the region. However, the Mongol Empire had adequate military power and human resources to complete the conquest of the whole region and further extend the campaigns. The noyons and tammachins, appointed by the Mongol Khan, executed the governance of the Caucasian region, including Azerbaijan. Even though the Mongol administration was more powerful and deep-seated in comparison with Jalal al-Din's rule, people continued to endure the arbitrariness of the Mongol functionaries and their taxation system. Both administration systems were characterized by autocracy and military rule in the region.

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**POST-SOVIET ASIAN POLICY:
RUSSIAN DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY IN CHINA AND INDIA (1991–1999)**

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Abstract: This article is an attempt to revisit the Asian policy of the Russian Federation in the Post-Cold War era. More specifically, the aim of this article is to determine the origins of Moscow's current strategic alliances with China and India in a historical trajectory from 1991 to 1999. To this end, the article focused on Russian diplomatic activities, state visits, cooperation strategies and signed agreements within this timeframe. Then, in the context of these diplomatic efforts, the article discussed how the priorities of each government could affect these initiatives with a focus on their national concerns, geopolitical imperatives and global strategies. Following these discussions, the article concluded that a revival of global status was at the heart of Russia's Asian diplomacy. Moreover, it was concluded that while foreign relations with China and India had emerged from two different historical processes, the common interests and imperatives that were mutually perceived by these states were crucial in reaching strategic agreements and shaping post-Soviet alliances.

Keywords: *Soviet Union, Cold War, India, China, Russian foreign policy, post-Cold War era*

INTRODUCTION

Russia's relations with Asian countries have demonstrated stable development over the years. In this regard, the purpose of the current research is to revisit the Asian policy of the Russian Federation in the Post-Cold War era to find the origins of current strategic alliances between Russia, China and India. The significance of this research lies in the growing importance of Asia as an economic and military sphere of influence where Russia, China and India seek to shape and promote a multipolar system despite their differences. On the other hand, a review of recent diplomatic activities suggests that the so-called "pivot to Asia" has also become a spearhead of Kremlin's reinvigorated Eurasian policy [Lukin (2016); Mankoff (2015)]. In the following discussions, this article argues that the depth of current relations is due to the generally stable and forward-looking initiatives that Russia pursued under Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999) to form a coherent Asian policy.

Historically, the collapse of the Soviet Union unleashed a myriad of mixed assessments and sentiments across the world, especially among the Western political thinkers who speculated about the fate of former USSR territories and its spheres of influence. In this environment, however, Russian foreign policy underwent a transformation. In Eurasia, the roots of alliances were slowly forming, the fruits of which were to be seen in the first quarter of the 21st century. In this sense, the early post-Soviet environment played a significant role in directing Russian regional policies. In terms of priorities, Moscow's relations with Asian partners seem to have been initially overshadowed by the so-called Atlanticist approach

advocated by the elites in Russian foreign ministry [Tsygankov (2012); Tsygankov (2016)]. In the framework of rapprochement with the West, the Atlanticists emphasized economic relations with liberal democracies on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Their goal was to facilitate the transition from the Soviet command economy to a liberal market economy following Western models and advice. In fact, Boris Yeltsin, the first democratically elected president of the Russian Federation, endorsed such a policy in his 1991 inauguration speech by asserting that “we are turning to the world community with pure intentions in order to win new friends but not enemies, and to establish honest and civilized relations with other states” [Inaugural Speech by Boris Yeltsin (1991)]. However, Yeltsin’s turn to the West was evident even before his presidency. During a press conference on September 7, 1991, he had stated that Russia is “a country in a transitional period, which wants to proceed along a civilized path, the path along which France, Britain, the United States, Japan, Germany, Spain and other countries have been and still are proceeding” [Breslauer (2002): 144].

Therefore, what is loosely regarded as Atlanticism in the analysis of Russian foreign policy was the ruling ideology in the early nineties [Ambrosio (2005)]. Nevertheless, as will be discussed later, this approach gave way to a more nationalistic and assertive foreign policy towards the end of the century. During this period, Russia’s domestic transformation was coupled with challenges including the 1993 constitutional crisis and the First Chechen War (1994–1996), which provoked the criticisms of Western governments regarding the management of these crises. On the other hand, the serious conflict of interests with the West over the enlargement of NATO, the Yugoslav Wars (1991–2001) and military escalations in the Middle East prompted Russia to devise an independent policy and reaffirm its influence globally where it was possible.

In what follows, this article will revisit some of these epoch-making diplomatic activities focusing on two important Asian countries, namely China and India. As will be discussed later, this aspect of Russian foreign policy underpinned a steady development that continues to affect strategic alliances in Asia and beyond.

Russia and China: Foundations of a strategic partnership

There is a consensus among the observers of international relations that the relationship between Beijing and Kremlin progresses within the framework of a strategic partnership. The fall of the Soviet Union in late 1991 created new possibilities or, as some scholars have debated, “an axis of convenience” in Sino-Russian relations that were hardly conceivable before [Bobo (2009)]. Previously, the relations between the two sides were not warm due to the so-called Sino-Soviet split which manifested doctrinal divergence and geopolitical tensions. In this particular case, the post-Cold War era seemingly removed some of these barriers even though the two sides needed to engage in a long-term process to properly address the remaining disputes. On the other hand, lessons to be learned from the disintegration of the Soviet Union had also affected the policies of the Chinese communist system and its internal mechanisms. For instance, Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party described it as a “cautionary tale” stating that an important cause of the disintegration showed that “the struggle in the field of ideology was extremely intense” which in his opinion led to “confused thinking” and “historical nihilism” [Tiffert (2019)]. But as stated previously, ideological and geopolitical differences, including border disputes between the two powers could no longer hamper the development of relations. Thanks to this

new paradigm, Boris Yeltsin visited China four times, three of which took place during his second presidential term in 1996, 1997 and 1999. This frequency itself may show the significance of relations in that timeframe. In what follows, two key aspects in the development of Russia-China relations will be briefly discussed. There is a general understanding in the literature that it was impossible for the two states to reach the current level of relations without properly addressing these aspects of bilateral interest. The aim of this discussion is to situate the strategic partnership in a historical trajectory that began in earnest in 1991.

1. The Sino-Soviet Summit of 1989: origins of defense diplomacy with China

With the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia-China cooperation grew significantly in military and technical areas to such a degree that China (along with India) soon became a major customer of Russian military equipment. However, the expansion of military cooperation evolved in a political context. More specifically, it resulted from new geopolitical and economic compulsions which the new Russian Federation felt immediately in the post-Cold War era. According to some scholars such as Vasily Mikheev, Russia could no longer hold the traditional view of China as a “potential enemy” and, instead, China was seen as “a great and prosperous neighbor” with whom Russia could establish long-term and mutually beneficial relations [Mikheev (1997): 166].

Historically, one should note that military ties were developed in the late 1980s. In this regard, one of the significant events in the contemporary history of China was the massive protests of 1989 in Tiananmen Square. The suppression of these protests by the Chinese government provoked a wave of international criticism and brought sanctions including an arms embargo against China. Partly due to these sanctions, China considered importing weapons from the Soviet Union and then its successor state. In 1990-1992, China ordered and received a considerable number of weapons and military equipment such as Mi-17 helicopters and a variety of Russian-made air-to-air missiles [Jyotsna (2000)]. Therefore, military cooperation set the stage for a strategic relationship which led to the meeting between the Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and his Chinese counterpart Chi Haotian in November 1993. The two sides solidified defense cooperation by signing a five-year defense agreement based on which they could increase number of military attachés who were stationed in Moscow and Beijing. Following this historic agreement, the military relationship between the two countries deepened and was symbolically consummated in December 1996 by the sale of Sukhoi SU-27 fighter aircraft and other military technologies to China [Parrish (1996)]. This important deal had been signed during the Soviet period. However, China was only able to receive the aircraft after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As a result of this defense diplomacy, China became one of the major importers of advanced military equipment from Russia by the early 2000s [Brown (2023)]. Within that timeframe, Russia’s crisis-stricken economy needed further revenue streams and the development of defense cooperation could facilitate arms purchases from China.

One may also view this development from another perspective. Historically, it can be an example of how political instruments such as sanctions can influence strategic-military ties. In mid-May 1989, Mikhail Gorbachev traveled to Beijing to attend the Sino-Soviet Summit. It was the first official meeting between the leaders of the two countries since the 1950s. At this long-planned summit which was closely monitored by Western governments, the Soviet president met with important figures such as Den Xiaoping, Li Peng and Zhaho Ziang [Garver

(1989)]. In sum, the parties emphasized the development of friendly ties including party-to-party relations within limited means while emphasizing the independence of each state in foreign policy [Vamos (2010): 100]. However, this summit progressed under the influence of Tiananmen Square protests to such an extent that some of the pre-planned ceremonies had to be canceled and attempts were made to postpone the meetings [Liu et al. (2004)]. In retrospect, what was politically significant was perhaps Gorbachev's refusal to comment or interfere in the internal affairs of China, lest it could jeopardize his reception in Beijing and his ultimate aim which was the normalization of relations [DNSA Collection (1989)]. In this sense, Gorbachev's cautious approach in the presence of Chinese leaders set the cornerstone in the development of relations between the USSR successor state and China which, as this article argues, displays the roots of the current strategic partnership between these two military powers.

2. Border disputes: lessening geopolitical tensions

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and China heavily fortified and militarized the areas surrounding their borders with missile sites. These fortifications were coupled with the mobilization of civilian population from the border regions in anticipation of border skirmishes. With this background, the 1989 Summit also set the precedent for mutual talks about a major dispute between the Soviet Union and China which was the tension along the border. In this connection, the two sides agreed on a plan to reduce the number of troops stationed in critical regions [DNSA Collection (1989)]. It should be noted that Russia and China share a long border which measures roughly 2615.5 miles and was initially demarcated in 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. During the Soviet era, border tensions had become a point of friction even leading to military clashes in 1969 [Yang (2000)]. In 2001, however, they were able to circumvent this obstacle by signing the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation. The treaty that serves as an instrument for a range of strategic agreements emphasizes economic cooperation, military assistance and geopolitical alignments. At its core, however, it seeks to guarantee peaceful relations between China and Russia.

However, this strategic achievement was also a product of Russian diplomatic activities during the 1990s. The point of departure can be seen in Boris Yeltsin's first official visit to China on December 23, 1992, during which meetings were held with Zhiang Zemin, the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and Yang Shangkun, the president of the People's Republic of China. The settlement of border disputes was a major question in these talks even though it was posed within a collection of interests. Yeltsin who had arrived in Beijing with an entourage of 100 Russian officials was later quoted by Western media stating that Russia must "open a new era in relations between Russia and China" [Wudunn (1992)]. The Communist elites in China may have viewed the Russian president with mixed feelings of admiration and caution particularly in that he was partly responsible for overthrowing the Communist system in Russia. In fact, the context showed an ideological rift which could be problematic. In this respect, Gilbert Rozman indicates in his seminal analysis of Sino-Russian relations that the Chinese were at that time "desperately defending communism's so-called fundamental principles if not its historical contents" whereas "Russia was blaming communism for its troubles" [Rozman (1997): 396]. However, relations continued and the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin visited Beijing on May 29, 1994 which enabled the two sides to reach an agreement about the Sino-Russian border. Shortly after, on July 12

of the same year, the defense ministers of the two countries signed an important agreement to manage border security and avoid accidental clashes which could lead to border tensions. In a reciprocal fashion, the Chinese authorities pursued the same diplomatic efforts. In December 1996, Chinese Premier Li Peng visited Russia which contributed to the deepening of relations. The visit of this high-ranking Chinese official, who was known to the Western media due to his role in suppressing the Tiananmen Square protests, had a wide reflection in the American media. For instance, an article written by the New York Times in December 1996 concisely described the aims and achievements of Li's visit. In this way, the objective was to conclude the agreements that the Chinese and Russian officials had discussed seriously during Yeltsin's first visit. According to media outlets, reaching a formal border accord to reduce the number of troops along the Russo-Chinese border was still the first priority [Associated Press (1996)]. However, the talks also highlighted the agreements to boost bilateral trade, increase arms sales to Beijing, build a gas pipeline from Siberia to China and pursue ambitious energy projects such as the construction of a nuclear power plant in the Chinese province of Jiangsu which is still an important aspect of Russian-Chinese energy cooperation. Therefore, as reflected in the media, Li Peng's visit focused on four areas: geopolitics, defense-military cooperation, trade, and energy agreements. Arguably, strategic cooperation between the two sides has continued to evolve chiefly along these lines.

Accordingly, Russian diplomatic activities were crucial in removing an obstacle which hindered the development of relations with China. As stated previously, these meetings and agreements reflected the growing desire of the Russian Federation to balance the American hegemony and introduce multipolarity in international politics. As scholars have debated, this was also a desire shared by the Chinese [Turcsanyi (2023); Lampton (2024)]. With respect to what was discussed above, there is a tendency in the literature to classify the Russian-Chinese relations of the 1990s into three epochs ranging from "good neighborly and mutually beneficial" relationships established in December 1992, the so-called "constructive partnership" in September 1994 and the "strategic partnership" which was forged in April 1996 [Xia (2000)]. Altogether, the trajectory which has evolved through these epochs may explain the current state of affairs in Sino-Russian relations.

Russian approach to India: A special relationship

Presently, India is a fast growing economic power with considerable political strength in international equations. Here, the article argues that the depth of the current relationship between the Russian government and India should be traced to mutual diplomatic efforts in the 1990s.

In the terminology of International Relations, special relationship is a familiar term in Winston Churchill's famous 1947 speech that praised Anglo-American relations. Nevertheless, this term no longer fits the Atlanticist view and often highlights similar relations between other states. For example, China's relationship with Pakistan and even North Korea, which is a legacy of the Cold War years, is sometimes described using this term. On the other hand, Russia's relationship with Armenia and Serbia has been described similarly. On this basis, some have argued that the relationship between Russia and India can be a special relationship in every respect [Gvosdev (2013)].

Gorbachev's foreign policy set the cornerstone for Russian-Chinese relations in the late 1980s and, as this article has argued, Yeltsin's initiatives cemented them throughout the

1990s. However, compared to the ties with China, the relationship with India emerged from a different historical process. As some researchers have pointed out in different years, the Soviet Union and India enjoyed relations at a strategic level during the Cold War even though India tried to distance itself from the bipolar order of that era by promoting the so-called Non-Alignment Movement [Ahmar (1989); Donaldson (1972); Vojtech (2010)]. Historians usually trace the formal relationship between the two governments to April 1947, months before India's independence on August 15, 1947. Therefore, a great deal of research has been devoted to the depth of Soviet-Indian cooperation. In a nutshell, however, Joseph Stalin's statement in 1953 may clearly show the importance of these relations. Addressing the Indian officials, Stalin had asserted that "we" the Soviets would not consider India as an enemy and "this will continue to be our policy and you can count on our help" [Addy (2018): 245]. Arguably, this vision of Stalin holds the essence of the relationship between the two states that continued during the Cold War and even after the demise of the Soviet system. Therefore, one may assume that maintaining or perhaps developing relations with India was a less problematic task for the USSR successor state. Nonetheless, the historical records may show uneven patterns.

As with the Sino-Soviet settlement, relations with India were also predicated on Gorbachev's new foreign policy. In particular, his first state visit to a Third World country in late 1986 was reserved for India. Indeed, both governments anticipated such an undertaking to boost relations. Earlier, in May 1985, Rajiv Gandhi, the new Prime Minister of India, had traveled to Moscow on his first state visit. In this connection, the Indian scholar Rejaul Karim Laskar has concluded in his review of Gandhi's diplomacy that both leaders had a corresponding and even similar outlook on world affairs [Laskar (2014)]. Historically, the Indian foreign policy of this period should be viewed in a larger horizon not least because India's relations with China and the United States were also improving. Therefore, in this sense, maintaining or improving relations with India was not an easy task for the new Russian Federation in the post-Cold War environment.

In an effort to restore Russian global role, Yeltsin visited New Delhi in January 1993. In this case, Russia had encountered yet another constraint which arose from the political atmosphere in India and could overshadow efforts to develop strategic relations with the country. As mentioned earlier, Yeltsin's government and his foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev initially attempted to pander to the West and especially the United States early in the 1990s. The relationship with Washington was of such importance that Yeltsin and Kozyrev were repeatedly criticized on the homefront for neglecting the interests of Russia against the demands of the American government. Additionally, one should note that India (along with North Korea, Pakistan and perhaps Israel) joined the ranks of states with nuclear weapons in the post-Soviet environment. Naturally, this process could present diplomatic constraints for the Russian Federation in that the Bill Clinton administration had imposed sanctions on India for its nuclear ambitions and ballistic missile program. In that framework, military cooperation or the supply of sensitive technologies to India could trigger Washington's punitive actions. Nevertheless, as the records show, the Russian government was determined to deepen relations with India and supply advanced rocket engines which were to be used in India's controversial space program. To reflect this determination, news outlets such as the Washington Post highlighted Yeltsin's outspoken criticism of the United States regarding the sale of technology to India and considered it a sign of Moscow's decision to adopt a more independent foreign policy. Therefore, in the context of relations with India, Yeltsin's words

were highlighted saying that “no other state can command such a great nation as Russia to terminate its obligations” [Hiatt (1993)]. Today, Russia is considered the largest exporter of arms to India and the two governments work closely in areas such as the space program. However, as discussed earlier, this cooperation depended at the time on the persistent diplomatic activities of the Russian government. Therefore, this context gave Yeltsin’s visit to India a special meaning which the media addressed with great fervor. For instance, in an article published in the New York Times, journalist Sanjoy Hazarika quoted Yeltsin’s remarks that “we do not plan to backtrack” and echoed his expectation that the US government would react to Kremlin’s decision with “common sense” and “sensitivity”. Earlier, Yeltsin had supported his government’s consensus “to move away from a pro-Western emphasis” which showed once again that his visit to India was part of Kremlin’s new “purposeful Eastern policy” [Hazarika (1993)]. In this way, the new relations with India were so important that Kremlin had decided to oppose the restrictive measures of the United States and some western governments which had emerged in the form of their Missile Control Regime. Therefore, in hindsight, Yeltsin’s visit was not only symbolic, but was a critical part of Russia’s new strategy to balance American hegemony. On another level, military cooperation is now a fully developed aspect of the special relationship between India and Russia. But one should note that India encountered disruptions in the supply of weapons after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In this respect, in an article distributed by the United Press International (UPI), journalist Brahma Chellaney reported on the “high-powered” delegation that accompanied Yeltsin during his visit. His key companions were Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Minister of Economy, S. Y. Glaziev and Defense Minister Pavel Grachev. According to the press, when Yeltsin was asked about his plans to supply arms to India, he stated that “the defense minister has come just for that purpose” [Chellaney (1993)] once again taking a position that compromised the American interests in that affair.

However Yeltsin’s visit to India was also crucial in another formative direction. As stated previously, due to economic pressure, the Russian Federation struggled to obtain financial resources during the 1990s. Paralleling the case of relations with China, the question of ‘resource’ was a major driver of Russian foreign policy towards India. In this case, India’s debt repayment, which had been caused by the country’s massive military purchases from the Soviet Union, was a matter of dispute between the two sides, not least because the value of the ruble had greatly decreased and trade with the Soviet Union had been conducted in rubles [Chellaney (1993)]. Therefore, Yeltsin’s visit and the ensuing diplomatic contacts can now be considered from two angles. First, one may consider the strategic imperatives within that historical timeframe. In one way, the efforts of the Russian government and Yeltsin’s visit were crucial at that time because of the need to replace the Indo-Soviet Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1972. This treaty had determined the relations between New Delhi and the Kremlin in a bipolar and ideological environment. Therefore, it was to be replaced with a more pragmatic agreement based on the imperatives of the post-Soviet environment. Simply put, the bilateral strategies of the two governments needed a reshuffle. Secondly, the Government of India was not only aware of this new situation but had also prepared itself to take proportionate steps.

In India, P. V. Narasimha Rao served as Prime Minister from 1991 to 1996. In terms of foreign policy, Rao proposed a new strategic perspective remembered today as the “Look East Policy”. As the name suggests, the policy emphasized the development of relations with ASEAN nations. Strategically, the aim of this policy (also known as Act East policy today)

was to develop multifaceted cooperation with Southeast Asian countries and find a way into China's traditional sphere of influence [Bajpae (2023); Thongkholal (2011)]. Like Russia, the Indian government had strategic ambitions based on the country's unique geographical location, its geopolitical imperatives and the new world order. In the final analysis, although both governments tried through diplomatic activities to maintain most of the agreements reached previously, the Indian government was required to give increasingly more prominence to regional agreements. This was due to the fact that India had lost the support of a major international ally after the demise of the Soviet Union.

In June 1994, Rao became the first high-ranking Indian official to visit Moscow in the post-Cold War era. Before the visit, the UPI summarized its general aims by quoting an Indian foreign ministry spokesperson. In this way, the prime minister's visit was expected to facilitate the areas of cooperation in supplying military spare parts, providing space technologies, economic initiatives and especially regional politics [United Press International (1994)]. In brief, the aim of this visit was to complete and elucidate the goals that the Russians had set earlier. Interestingly, as the Indian authorities were making preparations for Rao's visit to Moscow, Yuri F. Yarov, the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, was visiting India to address the remaining uncertainties in previous agreements. In this connection, Yarov claimed that discussions between the two governments were still evolving within a long-term perspective [United Press International (1994)]. From this point of view, it can be assumed that Moscow and New Delhi were determined to resolve their differences in order to cement strategic relations that would define the level of cooperation in the new century. In terms of scheduling, the records show that Rao visited Moscow shortly after visiting China and the United States in the same year. As indicated earlier, as far as India was concerned, the Americans and Chinese had emerged as serious competitors for Russia. This may also highlight the difficulty that the Yeltsin's government encountered in maintaining and strengthening relations with New Delhi.

This being said, the extensive diplomatic efforts of India and Russia were ultimately successful. In 1997, these efforts led to the conclusion of a ten-year agreement to enhance military and technical cooperation, which has made India a large market for the Russia military industries [Bedi (1998): 16]. Moreover, in October 2000, the Russian diplomatic activities led to the signing of the Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership that was perhaps the main achievement of this historical process.

CONCLUSION

Investigation of the stable development of Russian diplomatic relations with China and India in the post-Cold War era, we can assert that these relations became the foundation for current strategic relations with these countries and an important aspect of Moscow's global strategy. In this sense, Russia's Asian diplomacy shows the attempt to claim a global role by pivoting to Asia. With a review of diplomatic records such as state visits and bilateral agreements, it can be concluded that although the blossoming of these relations is a 21st century phenomenon, its roots were defined by the Russian government's Asian policy throughout the 1990s. As regards the relations with China, Russia's post-Cold War diplomatic activities aimed to move beyond the ideological differences arising from the Cold War era and overcome geopolitical obstacles such as border tensions in order to secure long-term economic and military cooperation. Regarding the question of India, Russian diplomatic

activities were based on maintaining and promoting the preexisting alliances and adopting an independent policy. In this sense, Kremlin's Eurasianist approach resembles the "Look East Policy" of the Indian government in the same historical timeframe. Based on the records that document these diplomatic activities, in both cases, Russia's independent foreign policy grew early in the post-Soviet environment and brought significant achievements by the end of the 1990s.

In conclusion, while the sum of relations with China and India had emerged from two different historical processes, the underlying similarities in Russian, Chinese and Indian global strategies were crucial in the realization of diplomatic achievements, mutual agreements and post-Soviet alliances. In other words, Russia's success in securing long-term strategic cooperation with these states was not only boosted by Kremlin's foreign policy initiatives, but also by the imperatives that were mutually perceived by these states. The significance of this comparative review therefore lies in the fact that it can situate the roots of current strategic alliances in a historical trajectory with antecedents that elucidate Russia's Asian policy. This policy is an important paradigm in the international politics of the 21st century and emphasizes the status of India and China as powerful and independent poles.

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