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RESEARCH AND COMMENTARY OF CAUCASIAN HISTORIANS ON THE KARABAKH CONFLICT

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Works of Azerbaijani Researchers and Their Commentary.

In the study of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, Mirza Bala Mammadzadeh's work *"The Armenians and Iran"*, published in Istanbul in 1927 [1. s. 280], remains relevant even today. Reading this work gives the impression that nearly a century has not passed since the events described.

Mammadzadeh, referring to the map of "Greater Armenia" published in 1919 by Armenian émigrés in America, notes that their absurd idea of a "Greater Armenia" was meant to encompass all territories in Turkey, Iran, and the Caucasus inhabited by Turks [1. s.30]. In the work *"The Republic of Azerbaijan: A Decade Equal to a Century (1991–2001)"* by Tahir Qafarov [2], special attention is given to the Karabakh War in the third chapter titled *"Obstacles to the Establishment of an Independent State"* [2, s. 86–137].

The author rightly emphasizes that the personnel and military equipment of Soviet army units stationed in Upper Karabakh provided substantial assistance to the Armenian armed groups [2. s.89]. The researcher notes that, with the support of the CIS military forces, Armenia and local Armenian bandit groups conducted large-scale military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh and seized several strategically advantageous positions. With Russia's close support, the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh was further reinforced, leading to the establishment of the puppet "Nagorno-Karabakh Republic" by early September 1991 [2, s. 88–89].

Works of Armenian Historians and Their Commentary. Armenian scholars such as Q.B. Abramyan, Q.A. Ionesiyan, Q. Kocharian, and S. Avakyan, focusing on the social construction of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast during the Soviet era, falsified its history to justify the "Greater Armenia" idea. However, some Armenian historians acknowledged facts. For instance, Bakhshi Ishkhanyan's *Peoples of the Caucasus* (1916) examined ethnic composition, population classification, and socio-economic analysis, recognizing Armenians' historical homeland as Asia Minor and describing Karabakh Armenians as Christian Albanians preserving their religion. In this work, the historian B. Ishkhanyan,

who studied the history of the peoples of the Caucasus, wrote that the true homeland of the Armenians lies in Asia Minor and that the Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh are, in fact, ancient Albanians who preserved the Christian faith. Ishkhanyan further noted that the rest of the population consisted of refugees from Iran and Turkey who turned Azerbaijani lands into a place of refuge to escape persecution and attacks [3, s. 44].

Indeed, research and contemporary sources confirm this. Except for a few episodic cases related to Armenians, evidence and documents show that their systematic migration to Northern Azerbaijan began only after the 1828 Treaty of Turkmenchay. This fact is also acknowledged by Armenian authors themselves, such as Parsamyan, Korkodyan, and Zori Balayan.

In his book *“The Hearth (Ocaq)”*, Zori Balayan himself admits it, writing: *“Yerevan is a city created before the eyes of one generation, its inhabitants being newcomers...”* [4, s.110]. He continues: *“I met with residents in seventy-five settlements. The exact founding date of most of these settlements is known — 1828.”* [4, s.119] and *“Almost all the people living in the region are from Kars and Van, Mush and Bitlis, and other provinces of Western Armenia.”* [4, s. 273].

Analysis of these works reveals a recurring narrative in which Armenians were portrayed as the ancient and indigenous population of Nagorno-Karabakh, supposedly entitled to join Armenia because of numerical majority and for their security. Armenian betrayal and hostility toward Azerbaijan were openly reflected in art and culture. For example, Gverk Emin’s 1978 film *Seven Songs About Armenia* (Mosfilm), S. Khanzadyan’s 1980s films jointly produced by Armenfilm and Mosfilm (*Star of Hope*), and L. Babajanyan’s *The Shore of Youth* (Lenfilm) all conveyed explicit anti-Azerbaijani messages. Similarly, Armenian sculptors, painters, and musicians depicted Armenians as oppressed and defenseless, reinforcing anti-Azerbaijani propaganda.

Historical Research on the Karabakh Problem Shows that the region’s ethnic and political situation, foreign interventions, and migration transfers were major sources of long-standing tension in Azerbaijani territories. Contemporary researchers propose political, economic, and regional cooperation solutions to resolve the conflict.

Modern Georgian Historians’ Approaches. Georgian researchers study Karabakh not only in the Azerbaijan-Armenia context but also within South Caucasus politics and geostrategy. For example, Emil Avdaliani, at Tbilisi State University, analyzes the 2020 Second Karabakh War from Georgia’s perspective in his article *Georgia and the Second Karabakh War*, showing how the war placed Georgia in a difficult geopolitical situation, affecting relations with neighbors and ethnic Azerbaijani and Armenian communities.

Ani Bukia, in her article “*Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict in the Context of South Caucasus Realpolitik*” [5, s.45], analyzes the conflict through the lens of South Caucasus realpolitik, demonstrating the influence of major powers such as the West and Russia. Giorgi Klimiashvili, in “*Political Roots and Ethnic-Political Dynamics of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*” [6, s. 52], explores the underlying political causes and ethnic dimensions, while Giorgi Koberidze, in “*The 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War: Regional Consequences for South Caucasus Geopolitics, Security, and Democracy*” [7, s.67], examines the geopolitical, military, and democratic implications of the 2020 war. Together, these scholars emphasize that the consequences of the conflict extend beyond Azerbaijani-Armenian relations, influencing Georgia’s national security and overall regional stability [7, s. 68].

Historical Foundations: The Karabakh region has been inhabited by the Azerbaijani people for centuries, and its historical and cultural heritage entirely belongs to the Azerbaijani nation. The creation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and the intervention of foreign powers laid the groundwork for future Armenian territorial claims.

Critical Analysis of the Conflict: Comparative study of events, analysis of both local and international authors, and the identification of distortions and one-sided presentations allow for an objective assessment of the conflict.

In conclusion, the article demonstrates that a historical and political analysis of the Karabakh conflict is possible only through a multifaceted and comparative approach. Integrating diverse perspectives and research is essential for an objective understanding of events. This approach is important both scientifically and practically.

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SPREAD OF ISLAM IN JAPAN

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In the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of transportation, political relations, and international trade also influenced religious relations and contributed to their development. On the eve of the twentieth century, although Christianity dominated in Europe and Islam in the Middle East, that is why when Japan was mentioned, the first things that came to mind were Shinto, which had existed there since ancient times, and Buddhism, which later entered Japan. In addition, there were also relatively few Christians compared to the population during the Meiji period.

Japan's acquaintance with Muslims has a history of approximately more than 150 years. During the 265 year Tokugawa period, when the country was ruled by the samurai, relations, trade, and travel with other countries were almost restricted, effectively closing the country's borders to the world. Due to its geographical position, this situation could be maintained for a long time. Although this ensured peace in the country during that period, it also significantly delayed its acquaintance with many countries, cultures, and peoples of the world. After the arrival in 1853 of American ships at the port of Yokohama, which demanded that the opening of the country to trade, Japan opened territory to the outside world in commercial, political, and cultural terms. It is believed that the first Muslims who came to Japan were also traders. Up to the present time,