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Birja Bayramova

Baku State University

PhD in History

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9427-6333>

birjabayramova@bsu.edu.az

The Treaty of Turkmanchay (1828) and Incorporation of Zangazur into the Russian Empire in Sources

Abstract

Little attention has been paid in Azerbaijani historiography to the distortion of geographical place names belonging to the territory of Azerbaijan in the texts of the Treaty of Turkmanchay. It is the moral responsibility of historical researchers not only to highlight this issue within our historiography, but also to spread it on an international scale. So it should not be forgotten that “geographical space creates a way of life. If an ethnic group is moved to another territory, it takes a certain time to adapt to natural processes”. However, the armenianization of Azerbaijani lands by armenians and the distortion of geographical names were an insidious political plan that they had prepared in advance. The Zangazur region was also a part of this policy. With the Turkmanchay Peace Treaty, the geographical points of Zangazur's territory were artificially divided between the two empires, the process of division into ethnic groups took place, Zangazur became part of Russia's plan to create a buffer zone between Armenia and Azerbaijan. With this, the policy of Armenization was openly declared.

Keywords: *Zangezur region, Turkmanchay Treaty, resettlement of population, armenian province, Caucasus, geographical location, demographic processes*

Bircə Bayramova

Bakı Dövlət Universiteti

tarix üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9427-6333>

birjabayramova@bsu.edu.az

Türkmənçay müqaviləsi (1828) və Zəngəzurun Rusiya İmperiyasının tərkibinə qatılması mənbələrdə

Xülasə

Türkmənçay müqaviləsinin mətnlərində Azərbaycan ərazisinə aid coğrafi yer adlarının təhrif edilməsinə Azərbaycan tarixşünaslığında az diqqət olunmuşdur. Bunu nəinki tarixşünaslığımızda ön sıralara çıxarmaq, hətta beynəlxalq miqyasda da yaymaq tarixçi tədqiqatçıların mənəvi borcudur. Çünki unudulmamalıdır ki, “coğrafi məkan həyat tərzini yaradır. Bir etnik qrup başqa əraziyə köçürülərsə, təbii proseslərə uyğunlaşması müəyyən zaman tələb edir”. Ancaq ermənilərin Azərbaycan topraqlarının erməniləşdirilməsi, coğrafi adların təhrif olunması onların öncədən hazırlamış olduqları məkrli siyasət planı idi. Zəngəzur bölgəsi də həmin siyasətin bir parçası idi. Türkmənçay sülh müqaviləsi ilə Zəngəzurun ərazisi coğrafi nöqtələri iki imperiya arasında süni parçalandı, etnik qruplarda bölünməsi prosesi baş verdi, Zəngəzur Rusiyanın Ermənistanla Azərbaycan arasında tampon zona yaratmaq planının bir hissəsinə çevrildi. Bununla erməniləşdirilmə siyasəti açıq elan edildi.

Açar sözlər: *Zəngəzur bölgəsi, Türkmənçay müqaviləsi, əhalinin köçürülməsi, erməni vilayəti, Qafqaz, coğrafi mövqe, demoqrafik proseslər*

Introduction

Throughout the centuries, we have witnessed the rapid changes in world politics. Azerbaijan has endured through many bloody pages to safeguard against the unforeseen challenges and upheavals of our country.

Currently, "our political strategy, based on real political conditions, examines the irregularities of socio-political development." (Piriyev, 2002, s. 3). It is responsibility of researchers to investigate the historical roots of our lost lands and uncover the truths to assist predict future developments. According to Suat İlhan, Azerbaijan is connected to the bipolar world, therefore Azerbaijan is a state that plays an important role in the development of the Caucasus (Piriyev, 2002, s. 173).

Research

The international situation that emerged in Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries had a great impact on Asia, especially the Caucasus region. The Russian Empire emerged victorious in the war against the Gajar state within the years 1803-1813. Therefore, with The Gulistan Peace Treaty, "Tsarism, which consolidated its influence in the region, enabled the relocation of Armenians to the South Caucasus" (Qasımlı, 2014, s. 13). Later, in 1826-1828, states used Armenians to achieve their tsarist goals. As Ali Asker noted, "In 1829, the viceroy of the Caucasus, Chopin, was instructed to prepare a plan of the newly occupied territory in the South Caucasus." (Askarov, 2023, s. 45). Researcher noted that Chopin comprehensively conducted the Iravan and Nakhchivan khanates, which were designated the "Armenian province" in 1829-1832. He reported in 1852 that 57,266 Armenians were resettled from the territories of Iran and Türkiye to Azerbaijan after the Turkmenchay and Edirne treaties. Of course, this could have had a negative impact on the demographic situation of the population in the following years (Askarov, 2023, s. 46).

İlgar Niftaliyev in his article titled "Azerbaijani-Armenian Relations in Soviet Armenian Historiography", writes that "Soviet Armenian historiography not only viewed Azerbaijani-Armenian relations through the prism of Russian-Turkish and Armenian-Turkish history, but also presented the history of the Nakhchivan, Zangazur, and Garabagh regions as Armenian histories" (Niftaliyev). The same historians, by presenting the conclusion of the Kurekchay Treaty on May 14, 1805 as a "way of salvation" and a "voluntary union," were concealing the true essence of Article XV of the Turkmenchay Peace Treaty. Fake Armenian historians such as S. Kharmandaryan, G. Galoyan, and M. Shaginyan emphasized the lands of Zangazur either as a "disputed territory" between Azerbaijan and Armenia, or directly as Armenian territory (Niftaliyev).

The main essence of Article XV of the "Turkmenchay" Treaty was that the resettled population, regardless of their identity or status, "shall not be subjected to harassment, persecution, or insults for their behavior or religious beliefs... Starting from this day, officials and residents are given one year to freely move from the Iranian province to Russia with their families, to transport and sell their movable property without any customs or taxes on their movable goods and property or belongings, without any hindrance from the government or local authorities" (Bayramzadeh, 2013, s. 4). What was actually entailed: was creating all kinds of conditions for Armenians, implementing the plan to Armenianize, and by extension Christianize the land of Azerbaijan.

Therefore, the misfortunes that have befallen Azerbaijan, the continuous aggressive policies of neighboring states, have always stemmed from the advantageous geopolitical location, and natural resources have been the subsequent part of the plans.

What happened in the end? The historical Azerbaijani land became the Armenian province (1828), the İrevan governorate (1849), the Ararat Republic (1918), and since 1991, the Armenian land. These treaties gradually Armenianized ancient lands like Zangezur, contrary to the will of the Azerbaijanis (Bayramzadə, 2013, s. 4). It should be noted that in Section III of the "General Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire", one of the documents refers to the İrevan and Nakhchivan khanates as the "Armenian province" (Shukurov, 2006, s. 61). Regarding the resettlement of Armenians under Article 15 of the treaty, Griboyedov noted that the treaty granted them full rights. (Shukurov, 2006, s.66). The newspaper "Severnaya pchela" («Северная пчела») wrote: "On this date, that is, on March 14, 1828, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the inhabitants of the capital were informed by cannon fire

from the Petropavlovsk Fortress about the conclusion of peace with Iran."... Griboyedov presented the Turkmenchay treatise to Nesselwrode on behalf of Paskevich afterward, they attended a reception for Nicholas I." (Shukurov, 2006, s. 60).

The delineation of borders through the Zangezur region in the Turkmenchay Treaty was addressed in Article V: "...Following the bed of the Aras river... It will stretch 21 Russian versts. Then the border goes through the Mughan plain to the Bulgarchaya, to the lands three trees, or 21 Russian versts, below the confluence of two small Adinabenzer and Sarigamish rivers; border... It continues to the confluence of the aforementioned small Adinabenzer and Sarigamyş rivers, then along the right bank of the East Adinabenzer river to its upper reaches, and from here it continues to the top of the Jikoir hill. ... The border runs from the peak of the Jikoir Height, along the mountains separating Talysh from the Arsh region, to the peak of Gamarkuhum.... Then the boundary line will extend from the peak of Gamarkuh along the mountain range separating Zuvand and Zuvand and Arsh districts to the borders of Velkich district, in accordance with the rules explained above regarding the flow of water.... Thus, the Zuvand region, except for the part located on the opposite side from the peak of the aforementioned mountain, is annexed to Russia. The boundary line between the two States shall continue, in accordance with the above-mentioned rules of water flow, from the borders of the Velkich district, along the summit of Klopota and the main range of mountains in the Velkich district, to the northern source of the Astara river, from there along the bed of that river to its place of discharge into the Caspian Sea, where the boundary line separating the Russian territories from Iran ends (Turkmanchay Treaty, 2018).

Referring to the above text, it can be said that the clause on the borders of the Turkmenchay Treaty shows manifestations of imperialist goals, geographical determinism, and ethnic-geographical fragmentation. Thus, although the peace agreement established on the borders was supposedly seen as an "agreement", it was more like a dictate of defeat than a real agreement. The Zangezur, Nakhchivan, and Karabakh regions were creating future hotbeds of conflict. When discussing about the Jikoir Heights and other geographical areas, one can observe the delineated of borders based on the main watershed principle. This was also a plan for that period, which would lead to the fragmentation of local communities and the division of the districts into separate empires. The vast majority of geographical areas such as Sarigamish, Jikoir, Zuvand, Gamarkuhum and others fell within the territory of Armenia. The Zangazur region was also divided as part of these borders. This region was associated with the Eastern Zangazur region.

Abbas Piriyevev notes in his work: "The territory is considered the place of the national spirit. If the place of the national spirit is not protected, the nation cannot be saved from disasters" (Piriyevev, 2002, p. 173).

Conclusion

The point is that when we look at it from an imperial perspective, we witness the military-strategic, geographical relevance of the territory being taken into account rather than its demographic and historical significance. As a result, the territory of Zangazur was artificially divided between two empires by geographical positions and points, ethnic groups were divided, and Zangazur became part of Russia's plan to create a buffer zone between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Thus, the policy of armenization was openly declared. Migration routes and pastures were blocked by the border, which led to the economic weakening of the region. The geographically based, historically and ethnically unfair agreement laid the groundwork for the destruction of the integrity of Zangazur.

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