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2021.02.002. ELENA DMITRIEVA. AZERBAIJAN-TURKEY RELATIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS // *Condensed abstract*.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, Turkey, foreign policy, Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, Russia, Armenia, South Caucasus, conflict settlement, military-political escalation, international recognition, geopolitical analysis.

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1. Yumatov Konstantin V., Sivina Kseniya N. Azerbaijan-Turkey Relations in the International South Caucasus Context (1992–2020)* // *"Vestnik Kemerovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta"*. 2020. Vol. 22. № 4 (84), P. 963–971.

2. Maslakova-Clauberg N.I., Sadykova E.L. Escalation of the Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh as a Geopolitical Challenge* // *Vestnik Instituta mirovyh tsivilizatsi*. 2020. Vol. 11, № 3 (28), P. 51–57.

The authors of the article, Yumatov K.V. and Sivina K.N. (1), analyze Azerbaijani-Turkish relations since the collapse of the USSR and investigate their impact on the geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus. The authors refer to the importance of studying this issue, since this is Turkey, relying on the ideology of "one people, two countries," did a lot, to help Azerbaijan overcome the political and economic crisis of the 1990s, lobbied for its interests in the international arena in organizations such as

* Translation of the title is presented in author's version.

the UN, NATO, OSCE, OIC, and under President R. Erdogan in 2020 allowed Azerbaijan to inflict a military defeat on Armenia and regain most territories captured by Armenians during the Karabakh war of the 1990s.

The collapse of the Soviet Union transformed the geopolitical situation in the Caucasus and in the Eurasian arena, new players appeared seeking to find their place in world politics. The authors note that when building foreign policy in the South Caucasus, Russia needs to take into account the established historical ties between the main actors of international relations in the region. The development of friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the post-Soviet era was predetermined by both geography and Turkic ethnic history. These two countries were united by the fact that for several years Azerbaijan had an open ethno-territorial conflict with Armenia for Nagorno-Karabakh, and Turkey, refusing to take historical blame for the 1915 Armenian Genocide, was objectively interested in proving the expansionist policy of Armenian nationalism and Azerbaijan's rightness. Therefore, interaction between the two states developed rapidly.

Azerbaijan and Turkey have an advantageous geoeconomic and geopolitical position. Through the territory of the South Caucasus, it is possible to create a direct trade and transport route between Central Asia and the Black Sea countries. Turkey unites the southeastern part of Europe with the Middle East. Azerbaijan has access to the Caspian Sea basin, which allows producing and delivering hydrocarbon crude to Turkey and then to Europe. Turkey, in turn, is becoming, due to this, a kind of energy "hub" that accumulates oil and gas flows of Russia, Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Thanks to the combination of these factors, Turkish-Azerbaijani relations become one of the key issues of geopolitics and the economy of Eurasia. Azerbaijan immediately took the place of Turkey's closest partner in the post-Soviet space. The Turkish Republic throughout the 1990s, to the best of its ability, contributed to attracting Azerbaijan to transatlantic, European and Asian political and economic

institutions. Ankara tried to pursue an active policy towards all post-Soviet countries. Pan-Turkist slogans were revealed in the country: "Turkic world from the Adriatic to China".

In 1992, a summit of Turkic-speaking peoples was assembled, at which Azerbaijan played a key role, supporting and promoting Turkey's initiatives in the post-Soviet space. But in time, it became clear that other Turkic states do not need an "elder" brother and are aimed at building their own foreign policy. These particular agreements will help Azerbaijan to consolidate in the international arena in the conditions of building independence during the war and economic crisis. Turkey also respected its interests. It became a mediator in international relations between Azerbaijan and the West, in particular in NATO structures and programs. The example of Azerbaijan was to convince the usefulness of cooperation with Turkey and other post-Soviet states. Thus, backing it, Turkey created a strong support in the Caucasus and extended its political influence to the vast territories of the former Soviet Union.

The policy of Ayaz Mutalibov in the presidency was ambiguous. On the one hand, he tried to strengthen the role of his state in the international arena, showing it as a strong player in the Caucasus. On the other hand, by 1992, he had lost all the levers of governing the country, was subjected to relentless criticism and sabotage both from the opposition and from his own security forces. Agreements with Turkey in the military sphere were not put into practice. After the defeats of the Azerbaijani army in Karabakh, A.N. Mutalibov was forced to resign, and in May to flee to Russia. With coming to power of the new leader of the Popular Front of Azerbaijan Abulfaz Elchibey, the foreign policy of Azerbaijan changed dramatically. Having come to power under the slogan "Turkism, Islamism, modernization," A. Elchibey declared himself as a pan-Turkist, a fan of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Mamed Emin Resulzade. He fostered his efforts to build special relations with Turkey, defined as a strategic partnership. Elchibey considered Iran and Russia

hostile neighbors for Azerbaijan. The created conditions had a favorable effect on relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey. In the shortest possible time, trade contacts were established on favorable terms and huge benefits were received for Turkish businessmen. Against the background of domestic political successes in Azerbaijan, the Turks tried to act as initiators of a peacekeeping initiative. With the advent of such an ally as Turkey, Azerbaijan began to feel more confident in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

In the euphoria of the opening opportunities in the South Caucasus in the elite of the Republic of Turkey under President Turgut Ozal, there began the discussion of possible participation in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Turkish statesmen viewed the Karabakh problem indeed as an internal problem affecting the interests of the Turkish people across the nation. The rebellion of troops led by Suret Guseynov and large-scale defeats in the Karabakh conflict led to the resignation of A. Elchibey in 1993. Heydar Aliyev came to power and served as president from 1993 to 2003. Heydar Aliyev the new president immediately defined the course of further development of the country as a “policy of balances”, the purpose of which was to mitigate conflict situations within the country and solve the consequences of the mistakes of previous presidents. As a result, long Karabakh armed conflict was frozen, but a mutually beneficial solution to this issue was not found and the events of September–November 2020 are a direct confirmation of this.

The authors note that under Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijani-Turkish relations did not always have a trouble-free character. H. Aliyev did not want to depend on one partner. This became obvious especially after the events of 1994 and the attempt to commit a coup d'état by R. Javadov. Turkey had been denied the priority status of intergovernmental relations. H. Aliyev's policy focused on diplomacy with Western powers, in particular the United States and the European Union (EU), without any intermediaries. At the same time, during the reign of Aliyev Sr.,

20 visits were made to Turkey, which shows a favorable attitude towards Turkey.

In 2003, Ilham Aliyev became the leader of Azerbaijan, as the heir and successor to the political course of Heydar Aliyev. During his reign, Azerbaijani-Turkish relations underwent serious strength testing. By this time, it seemed that in the process of resolving the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, a situation of "frozen instability" gradually developed as a form of stability that suits both participants and mediators. Turkey's policy of restoring bilateral relations with Armenia has intensified. But, as further developments showed, the contracting parties did not take into account the factor of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Azerbaijan's reaction to the Armenian-Turkish negotiations. Azerbaijan reacted ferociously to the restoration of relations between Yerevan and Ankara. The confirmation of it was an event that went down in history as the "history of flags," when, in response to Turkey's ban on allowing Azerbaijani fans to enter the arenas with national flags in 2009, the Azerbaijani authorities removed Turkish flags from the buildings of the Memorial to Turkish Soldiers, the Council for Religious Affairs, etc. Due to such actions, economic relations between the two countries suffered, because Azerbaijan was deprived of gas exports for two years. These events led to the search for new markets for Azerbaijani gas. Normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia bothered Azerbaijan. It began to be skeptical about its ally. But it should be noted that the restoration of Armenian-Turkish relations did not have positive results.

According to the authors, the attempt to normalize relations between Armenia and Turkey only deepened relations between Baku and Ankara. Azerbaijan's policy was based on the "tempo-battle" on the diplomatic front. Thus, at a meeting in Munich, Ilham Aliyev said that actions in Nagorno-Karabakh can be resumed if a solution is not found at this conference between Baku and Yerevan. Such a passage was used more than once by Azerbaijani leaders, but at the moment the result was much more

serious, since the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh was considered in the context of normalizing relations between Turkey and Armenia. It has become a tool for exerting pressure on Turkey. The Turkish authorities nevertheless tried to bypass Azerbaijan in 2009 at a meeting of Russian Prime Minister V.V. Putin, US President B. Obama and Turkish Prime Minister R. Erdogan. The Turkish party expressed the need to combine the Nagorno-Karabakh problem and normalize relations between Turkey and Armenia. But Azerbaijan's positions are very important for Turkey, and therefore there is no bilateral solution that would satisfy Azerbaijan.

In 2009–2020, the EU actively used the Eastern Partnership program to strengthen its influence in the South Caucasus. As a result, by 2020, Georgia and Armenia had concluded agreements with the EU, Armenia (an exceptional case for a member of the Eurasian Integration) – a framework agreement on partnership and cooperation with the EU. Azerbaijan and the EU did not find a common ground for concluding the treaty. Azerbaijan was finally convinced that the EU is not ready for real cooperation with a political regime that does not share its values. Moreover, when the Velvet revolution took place in Armenia, and the West actively supported Nikol Pashinyan and his associates, Ilham Aliyev perceived as a signal that changes should not be expected from the OSCE. On the other hand, N. Pashinyan's policy towards politicians during the reign of the "Karabakh clan" in Armenia created a certain tension between Moscow and Yerevan. At the same time, Turkey was being revitalized.

The Neo-Osmanist doctrine of R. Erdogan, which has been actively implemented in recent years, turned out to be very profitable for Baku. The Syrian Astana format was a deterrent for both Russia and Iran. Thus, Turkey could use its potential to help Azerbaijan. Moreover, the OSCE Minsk Group has long been criticized by the Azerbaijani side for inefficiency, and therefore alternative projects were considered.

At the present stage of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, after signing of the joint statement of the Presidents of the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Armenia, the following international situation developed: Russia joined the resolution of the conflict at a critical moment when Azerbaijani troops took Shusha, which actually meant a further military defeat of NKR and Armenia. According to the authors, the military helicopter of the Russian Federation shot down a day earlier by Azerbaijanis from Nakhichevan gave such an opportunity. As a result, Russian military peacekeepers became the main guarantors of peace in Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey stated that it didn't participate in the hostilities that began in September 2020, but only carried Azerbaijan along. But Azerbaijan's actions looked like a clearly planned military operation with real material and organizational support from Turkey. In October 2020, Turkey began military exercises near Ankara and announced that it was ready to provide its armed forces, but only at Azerbaijan's request.

In this conflict, Turkey pursued its own goals. Firstly, this is an opportunity to replace Russia as a partner of Azerbaijan, since Russia is a trading partner (military sphere) of both Azerbaijan and Armenia. Turkey was in this case in a very favorable position, because it supported the position of one party. Secondly, this ensures safety of the Baku-Ceyhan gas pipeline and the South Caucasus one from Azerbaijan to Turkey (since the gas pipeline runs along the border with Armenia). Thirdly, this is an opportunity for Turkey to spread the ideology of neo-Osmanism, which helps strengthen its position.

As for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the Armenian diaspora has weight both in the United States and in European countries, so Azerbaijan does not have to wait for any support. For the US administration, Karabakh is clearly in the background after Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, France represented by E. Macron criticized Turkey and Azerbaijan in connection with the escalation of the conflict, Iran as an external actor and the

only territory in contact with all three parties to the Karabakh conflict, tries not to interfere in these disputes, but the Azerbaijani population of Iran is a factor of tension between Tehran and Baku. Iran's policy is more in contact with Armenia than with Azerbaijan. The Chinese party, which worked extensively with Azerbaijan on the One Belt and One Road program, called on the parties to come to a peaceful solution to the conflict, since it is important for it that the region of the South Caucasus remains as calm as possible.

At the end, the authors come to the following conclusions: the development of the conflict in Karabakh forces Russia to be in constant tension, that limits its capabilities in other areas; military operations in the territory of the South Caucasus are beneficial for the West, since this region will later become an excellent base to contain Russia; Turkey managed to strengthen its position in the South Caucasus and throughout the post-Soviet space by helping Azerbaijan resolve the conflict in a beneficial direction. The events of 2020 showed that the OSCE Minsk Group was powerless to resolve the situation. In fact, the war was stopped at the expense of diplomatic instruments in the format 2 + 2 (Russia - Armenia, Azerbaijan - Turkey) with a clear advantage in favor of the Azerbaijani-Turkish union. Military and political support from Turkey became a decisive factor in Azerbaijan's victory in the 2020 Karabakh conflict, which will undoubtedly lead to a further rapprochement of the foreign policy of R. Erdogan and I. Aliyev.

The authors Maslakova-Clauberg N.I. and Sadykova E.L. in the article "Escalation of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh as a geopolitical challenge" (2) analyze in details the origins of the Karabakh conflict and show its role in the geopolitical situation developing around the region of the South Caucasus. Speaking about the story behind this conflict, the authors turn to the times of the collapse of the USSR, when the territory of the post-Soviet space became a field of geopolitical competition, on which conflict processes caused by external and internal factors remain

to date. Gorbachev's policy in the 1980s caused a general rising in national radical sentiments in the country, that entailed the so-called "parade of national sovereignty" as a result of the conflict between the union center and the republics. The reason for this was the proclamation of the supremacy of republican laws over the Union ones, which was regarded as a violation of Art. 74 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Thus, in the second half of the 1980s, the national movement of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh intensified and in 1988 an appeal was sent to the leadership of the USSR, the Azerbaijan SSR, the Armenian SSR, which asked the Regional Council of People's Deputies of the NKAR to consider the possibility of withdrawing the NKAR from the Azerbaijan SSR and joining the Armenian SSR. However, the CPSU Central Committee, like the leadership of the Azerbaijan SSR, took a negative attitude to this request. Then multiple armed clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis began. In September 1989, the Azerbaijan SSR and the Armenian SSR announced their sovereignty. The referendum on independence held in December 1991 in the self-proclaimed NKR was boycotted by local Azerbaijanis and could not receive international recognition. As a result, this inter-ethnic conflict went beyond the local problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and escalated into an open international confrontation between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Despite the international efforts undertaken since the beginning of the 1990s with the participation of the CIS, the UN, the OSCE and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, it was not possible to resolve the Karabakh conflict by political and diplomatic means.

The authors note that the multifaceted ethnopolitical Karabakh conflict has a historical, ethnosocial, ethno-religious, as well as geopolitical basis. Answering the question of why the Karabakh issue has become so acute today, the authors believe that first of all, this is due to the state in which the world has been since the beginning of the 21st century – the stage of "global confrontation" or "global break." The consequence of the USSR collapse was that the United States and the EU declared their

interests in the post-Soviet space and the Americans had a real opportunity to realize their main strategic goal - construction of a unipolar world. However, in a number of states in the world, their own national ideas began to appear on the basis of greatpowerness (Poland - on the revival of the "Great Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth," the Eastern European states began to define national-state ideas on the ground of affiliation with a common European historical community, denying in fact all historical ties with Russia). In this emerging trend of reviving historical national ideas, the countries of Asia and the Middle East are not retarded, which have begun to consider inter-ethnic conflicts as an opportunity to expand their zones of political influence and include them in the orbit of their strategic interests.

Thus, the "Karabakh conflict" turned from a regional conflict in the South Caucasus into a "geopolitical chess game" with several geopolitical players with their own strategic interest in it. In that way, one of the parties to the Karabakh conflict is Azerbaijan with the active support of Turkey as one of the major geopolitical players in the modern world. Turkey's participation on the side of Azerbaijan is formulated by the motto "Two States - One Nation," which emphasizes the historical community of the two peoples. Modern Turkey is engaged in the embodiment of its long-standing national idea - the revival of a strong Turkish state on the basis of neosmanism and neopantürkism and sees itself as the leader of the big "Turkic world." However, Turkey does not still have enough political and economic resources to implement such a project. Expanding Turkey's influence in the Greater Caucasus and Asia is seen as a priority.

However, two issues remain open in Azerbaijan-Turkey cooperation on Nagorno-Karabakh:

- How is the interaction of two directions of Islam - Sunnis and Shiites seen in the declared strategy of "two states - one nation"? Given that Turkey represents Sunni Islam and Azerbaijan represents Shiite Islam.

- What role is defined in this strategic partnership between Turkey and Azerbaijan - who will be the "elder" and "younger" brother? A lot will depend on the formation of this position.

The importance of the "Karabakh issue" in Turkey's foreign policy strategy is indicated by the following fact: declaring Armenia's unconditional liberation of the "occupied territory of Nagorno-Karabakh," Turkey is ready to go quite far in its relations with its recent partners and allies - the European Union and NATO, presenting itself as a separate player in the Caucasus and pursuing its own geopolitical line, without looking at the interests of the partners, as well as the need to coordinate further steps with them. As a result, there are opinions in the EU that Turkey should be expelled from NATO and it's necessary to reformat EU partnerships with it. However, Turkey today has quite strong leverage on the countries of the European Union, among which there is significant "diaspora Turkish potential" in Europe, as well as influence on "migration flows" in the EU. Such a political position of Turkey is based on the fact that it will not succeed in gaining membership in the EU, since negotiations between Brussels and Ankara on the country's accession to the European Union have achieved stalemate and this means that for Turkey only its own national interests become a priority and not "European solidarity". Moreover, NATO allies fear that Turkey is trying to drag the Alliance into a large-scale war that does not meet NATO's strategic goals. In turn, Turkish President Erdogan said that "NATO allies should express solidarity with Turkey."

The authors highlight the interesting fact that there are visible and invisible geopolitical players in the Karabakh conflict. Among invisible ones, Iran occupies an important position. In the past, Turkey and Iran were empires opposing to each other. Today, the two countries are Middle East neighbours seeking to assume the role of regional leaders. Turkey presents itself as the leader of the Sunni Islamic world, and Iran as the center of the Shia Islam. Relations between countries are based on competition and possible cooperation. It should also be taken into account

that there are 15–30 million Azerbaijanis (18–42% of the Iranian population) in Iran in the “Iranian Azerbaijan” region (West, East Azerbaijan and Ardebil provinces) who are mainly Shia Muslims. The other side of the “Karabakh conflict” is Armenia, which, despite its multifaceted foreign policy and tendency to Euro-Latin partnership, remains a member of the Eurasian Economic Union and the CSTO. In addition, the Russian military base Gyumri is located on the territory of Armenia. Russia is one of the main investors in the Armenian economy, the gas monopolist Gazprom Armenia is completely owned by the Russian Gazprom. Armenia looks forward to the assistance of Russia in this conflict, on the basis that for centuries it was Russia that carried out the historical mission as a guarantor of stability in the Caucasus. However, after the Velvet revolution in Armenia in 2018, the new leadership of the country, represented by Prime Minister N. Pashinyan, began to pursue a multi-vector pro-Western policy, as a result of which relations with Russia were exposed to adjustments. So, on July 16, 2020, the Armenian Parliament adopted the bill “On Audiovisual Media,” and the leading Russian channels fell under information clearance, which, according to the Armenian leadership, pose threat to the country’s national security.

In relations with the European Union, Armenia adheres to the line of European strategic partnership and even declared accession to the EU one of its long-term goals. As for the United States, there is a large Armenian diaspora in this country, which is one of the effective ethnic lobbies. The strategic importance of Armenia's cooperation with the United States is evidenced by the fact that Yerevan has the largest US embassy in the entire post-Soviet space.

Each of the above parties has its own geopolitical interests in the situation around Nagorno-Karabakh. For Russia, the question of a peaceful resolution of the conflict is of particular importance, since the conflict is actually developing at Russian borders. Russia cannot allow a “big war” in the South Caucasus. It is also necessary to highlight the problem of strengthening the

military-political influence of Turkey in the Greater Caucasus and Caspian regions. France and the United States, as NATO allies and partners, begin to realize that Turkey is playing its own game, thus violating the unity of the Alliance.

Summing up, the authors draw the following conclusion: only Russia can solve the aggravated "Karabakh issue." Precisely, Russia has interacted with the peoples of the Caucasus for many centuries, knowing well the mentality and value system of the Caucasian peoples. Its historical mission is always to prevent conflicts in the Caucasus and maintain the necessary geopolitical balance. However, it is hardly possible to count on its protection in the name of "friendship of peoples," and at the same time take up an anti-Russian position for the sake of "flirting" with the West. Russia today holds a rather pragmatic position, guided just by national interests and acts within the framework of the international law. Precisely, the course of this "international political chess game" on Nagorno-Karabakh will depend on Russia's position.

VALENTINA SCHENSNOVICH. IMPACT OF THE MASS MEDIA OF KAZAKHSTAN ON THE ETHNOPOLITICS OF THE REPUBLIC // *Analytical review was written specifically for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

Keywords: Mass media of Kazakhstan, "fourth power", instrument of power, ethnopoltics, regional identity, multi-ethnic societies, Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, Eurasia, integration, ethno-confessional harmony, Islam, Christianity, DUMK, ROC.

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