

Introduction

Azerbaijan, its impact on Europe's energy security and relations with Poland - yesterday and today is our next issue devoted to Azerbaijan. The reason for its publication was «The 5th International Conference Azerbaijan - Poland on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and Azerbaijan», organized on June 6, 2022 by the Center for Azerbaijani Studies of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of University of Warsaw; Faculty of History of University of Warsaw, Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of University of Warsaw and supported by: Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Warsaw and Institute of History of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. Our Editorial Office also cooperated in the organization of the Event.

Like the Conference, this issue is devoted to much broader issues than Polish-Azerbaijani relations. The diversity of authors representing the largest scientific centers in Poland and Azerbaijan, as well as various scientific disciplines, made it possible to examine the subject of Azerbaijan and its relationship with Poland from many perspectives. The most important are: historical, political science and cultural and social perspectives. The former is represented mainly by scientists from ANAS. Special thanks go to Professor Kerim Karamoglu Shukurov General Director of the Institute of History named after Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov of ANAS, the author of the first article. Also, scientists from other universities - the University of Warsaw, ADA University, Baku State University, Jagiellonian University and Maria Curie Skłodowska University made a significant contribution to the content of this issue of the journal, focusing mainly on research conducted mostly from the point of view of the other two scientific perspectives, listed higher.

The first part of this publication is devoted to Azerbaijan. The issue opens with an article that is the foundation of research on the country in question - it concerns the beginnings and

stages of development of Azerbaijani civilization and its essence. It is a natural beginning and the basis for further research presented in subsequent articles. The next author focuses on the analysis of the Azerbaijani language and culture, treating them as part of the heritage of the Turkic peoples. The next article deals with the multiculturalism of Azerbaijani society and the appropriate state policy in this regard, thanks to which the discussed element is an asset and not a problem for Azerbaijan. Energy resources are the key natural resource of the state in question, allowing for rapid economic development - this issue is explored by the next author, pointing to the role of the state in question in building Europe's energy security. The second part of this issue concerns various aspects of Azerbaijani-Polish relations. The first two articles of this fragment analyze mutual relations - from their beginnings, dating back to the Middle Ages, through the period of regaining independence by both states after the First World War, to modern times. The next author focuses on presenting the legal aspect of contemporary Azerbaijani-Polish relations, analyzing their legal basis in the years 1997-2022. Subsequent studies of Azerbaijani-Polish relations are made from the perspective of the activities of Poles in Azerbaijan, in particular at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and during the First Republic. The author of the next article focuses his research on the relations between the Safavid state and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the first half of the 17th century. The role of culture in international relations, also in the case of Azerbaijani-Polish relations in the 20th and 21st centuries, is analyzed in the next article. The next two authors deal with similar issues, but they study one of the elements of culture - literature, in terms of Azerbaijani motifs appearing in the works of Poles exiled to the Caucasus. The last article also concerns the role of literature in the relations between the two nations, but this time from the opposite perspective - the poetry of an Azerbaijani artist interested in Polish issues is analyzed.

Azerbaijan is a very important subject of international relations. It is the leader of the South Caucasus, a state with a rich and long history and tradition, and also with great development potential, which means that its international position will be increasingly stronger in the future. Poland, on the other hand, has played a very important role in Central and Eastern Europe for a long time and also has a strong development potential. For this reason, research on Azerbaijan and its relations with Poland is very important, especially since these relations have a long and fruitful tradition, and, taking into account the potential of both states, will also develop in the future. For this reason, the editors of the scientific journal «Eastern Europe Studies» hope that this issue, at least in part, will fulfill the previously indicated need for research on Azerbaijan and its relations with Poland.

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