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**AZERBAIJAN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 18th CENTURY IN THE OCCUPATION
POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE (BASED ON THE MATERIALS OF THE RUSSIAN
STATE MILITARY HISTORY ARCHIVE)****Rovshan Mammadli**

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Abstract: *The article is devoted to the preparations of the Russian Empire to implement an aggressive policy against Azerbaijan and to annex it in the middle of the 18th century. Starting from the beginning of the 18th century, Russia, having gained access to the seas and becoming an empire, began to expand at the expense of the territory of neighboring states. The Caucasus and Azerbaijan had an important place in these invasion plans of Russia. Russia, which could not annex Azerbaijan, tried to implement this plan step by step. Various means were used for this. Russia, which studied Azerbaijan by sending scientific, spy, trade and sometimes military expeditions, laid the groundwork and prepared for the future invasion. This policy of Russia against Azerbaijan during the studied period was studied on the basis of documents preserved in the funds of the Russian state military-historical archive. Documents of the military ministry of the Russian Empire are stored in the funds of the Russian state military-historical archive. Due to the interest of the Russians in Azerbaijan in the middle of the 18th century, documents reflecting all the details of this policy are preserved in the archives. In the archive, especially in the 52nd fund, called the Pyotomkin fund, there are many documents related to Russian-Azerbaijani relations. The documents include diplomatic correspondence, letters, reports, state documents, summaries, descriptions. The documents stored in the archive show that the Russian Empire made plans to invade Azerbaijan as early as the middle of the 18th century.*

Keywords: *archive, fund, expedition, report, empire, consul, diplomatic correspondence, agreement.*

Preamble

In the middle of the 18th century, feudal disorganization reigned in the territory of Azerbaijan. In June 1747, the founder of the Afshar empire, Nadir Shah, was assassinated. The sudden death of the shah and the lack of a strong successor led to the emergence of numerous contenders for power. The central government has completely collapsed. The countries that were subordinated to the Safavid and then to the Afshar state, including Azerbaijan, were divided into small states. Many small state institutions - 20 independent and semi-independent khanates were formed in the territory of Azerbaijan. Besides the khanates, 5 sultanates and 1 community were also created. [18, 4] From the time of their creation, there was a constant hostile relationship between the khanates. From the second half of the 18th to the end of the 18th century, these small state institutions were involved in internal wars and conflicts. All this paralyzes economic life inside the country and abroad left him defenseless in front of enemies.

In the middle of the 18th century, the Russian Empire, which began to hatch plans for invasion, again began to show interest in the South Caucasus and the Caspian coastal areas. Having returned the Caspian coastal regions occupied by Peter I during the reign of Nadir Shah to the Afshar state, Russia wanted to take Azerbaijan under its control along with the entire Caucasus. [12, 77] Russia had two purposes in this intention. The first is to provide trade with the interior regions of Iran and India through the Caspian regions and Azerbaijan, and the second is to obtain a raw

material base for its developing industry. However, Russia, whose interests collided with the Afshar state and now with the Ottoman Empire, could not intervene militarily in the region. That's why it tried to subdue the local judges and take the territory in parts.

There are a large number of written materials that reflect Russia's policy of aggression against the South Caucasus. Most of these materials are stored in the Russian archives, where the documents of the Russian Empire are preserved. In the middle of the 18th century, Russia's policy of aggression against Azerbaijan was more reflected in the documents in the funds of the Russian state military history archive [20, 638]. Documents of the Russian military ministry are preserved in the funds of this archive. During the mentioned period, Azerbaijan was not only dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but by the command and deputies of the Caucasian army line. Since viceroys had a military rank, their paperwork was included in the archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense. The materials of RSMHA are also rich with documents from the middle of the 18th century. These documents include diplomatic correspondence, requests, spy reports, trade agreements, complaints, government orders and imperial decrees [3, 7]. In particular, a lot of documents related to the topic are preserved in the "Potyomkin fund" No. 52 of the archive and in the former "Military-Scientific Archive" and the current fund No. 846 [21, 219]. From these documents, it is possible to obtain a lot of information about the historical processes and historical personalities of the period.

In the study of the period of the middle and second half of the 18th century of Azerbaijan, among the materials of the RSMHA, the documents of fund No. 846 have a serious historical weight. The collection of documents from the end of the 18th century - the first half of the 19th century kept in the fund No. 846 allows to follow all aspects of the Russian occupation policy. In particular, the scientific value of the collection "Materials on the history of the unification of Georgia with Russia" is worthless [7, 4]. This collection preserves many materials on the history of Azerbaijan from the mentioned period. These documents in the archive can be considered more reliable than narrative (descriptive) sources. So, some of them are official state documents. Official state documents include diplomatic correspondence, decrees, instructions and orders. Moreover, there are a large number of report documents in the archive, whose compilers were required to provide objective and complete information. In general, most of the military documents are rich in information that accurately expresses the essence of the events.

Russia's invasion plans against Azerbaijan

It is possible to trace the reactivation of the Russian Empire in the region from the 70s of the 18th century, from the documents in the RSMHA's funds. It is clear from the documents that the main goal of the empire, as at the beginning of the century, was to strengthen and occupy the Caspian coastal areas. Another goal of the Russians here was to ensure security from the direction of the South Caucasus during the war with the Ottoman Empire and not to be attacked from here. It is known from the documents of RSMHA that for this purpose, the Russian side was actively conducting espionage in the region. In particular, the empire's consuls in Tiflis, Anzali, Baku, Rasht and Salyan were also engaged in espionage. They constantly sent information to the capital Petersburg about the relations of local judges with the Ottoman state.

In the archive, in the letters sent by Burnashov, Consul of Russia in Tiflis, Sulyakov, Consul in Salyan, and Bogolyubov, Consul in Anzali, to the command of the Caucasus line of Russian troops, they provide information about the Ottoman palace of Khan Fatali Khan and ambassadors [9, 105]. It is known from the documents that on the basis of the letters of the Russian ambassadors, the Russian government was alarmed and at the height of the Russo-Ottoman war, sent part of the troops from Kazan and a number of other Volgaboy cities to the Kizilyar and Terek districts instead of to the frontline with the Ottoman Empire [1, 173].

The Russo-Ottoman war of 1768-1774, which left a significant mark on the future history of the South Caucasus, ended with the peace treaty of Little Gaynarc. Russia, which gained a great advantage due to the conditions of peace, increased its activity in the entire southern direction [9, 104]. In particular, Russia, which wants to include the eastern shores of the Black Sea and the South

Caucasus in its sphere of influence, intended to invade Azerbaijan as well. For this, the empire began to conduct an active policy in the region.

Russia always organized various expeditions to the region to carry out its active policy in the region. Also, its representatives in the region were busy collecting information. The RSMHA has a large number of documents that allow us to follow the activities of these expeditions and representatives. It should be noted that among them there were also emissaries who were selected for their active activities. One such person was Colonel Stepan Burnashov, the representative of Russia in Kartli-Kakheti in the 1770s. There are many documents prepared by Burnashov in the archives. A 23-page short book published in 1793 in Kursk by Stepan Burnashov, a colonel and scout of the tsarist army, is considered a source of significant historical importance. His work is called "Description of Azerbaijani provinces in Persia and their political situation". In the work, Burnashov provides general information about Azerbaijani khanates and important political forces. Burnashov writes that the land called Azerbaijan borders the Kartli-Kakheti kingdom from the north, the Caspian Sea and Gilan province from the east, and the Ottoman Empire from the west [19, 215]. S. Burnashov mentions the names of khanates in his description and gives brief information about them. He states that Karabakh (Shusha) khanate is stronger than other khanates. Most likely, it was after Burnashov's reports and information that the Russian government began to maintain close diplomatic relations with Guba Khan Fatali Khan and Karabakh Khan Ibrahimkhalil Khan. There are many documents showing this in the archives.

In order to prepare the ground for the invasion of the Caucasus and to get to know the region even better, the Russian government sent representatives here several times under the scientific expedition. In addition to scientific research, they were also engaged in espionage activities. Both expeditions led by Samuel Gottlieb Gmelin and Johann Anton Gildenstedt in 1768-1775 explored the region in detail, especially Azerbaijan. Gmelin led two expeditions to Azerbaijan and wrote in detail about his trip to Derbend, Guba, Baku, Shamakhi, Lankaran and Salyan. It includes city forts, roads, bridges, defenses, fortifications, local population, farm life, etc. collected a lot of information and published them in 4 volumes [10, 9; 12, 106].

It was after these expeditions that Russian official circles learned detailed information about Azerbaijan and Dagestan. They began to consider the possibility of future military and political intervention. Especially after Gmelin's reports, it became clear that the political and military power of the khans was not a serious obstacle for the Russian army. Gmelin's reports about Guba Khan Fatali Khan are preserved in fund 52 of the archive. Fatali Khan's correspondence with Russian official circles is also stored here. The document showing the reason for Russia's military intervention in Azerbaijan and Dagestan in 1774 was in this fund. Thus, immediately after the peace of Küçük Gaynarja, Russia, which moved in the Caucasus, was waiting for favorable conditions for military intervention. Such a condition was the appeal of Gubali Fatali Khan in 1774. In the summer of that year, Fatali Khan, who was defeated by his rivals, took refuge in Darband Castle. The siege of the city aggravated his situation [2, 324-325]. Khan, who had no choice but to turn to Russia for help, unknowingly laid the groundwork for a greater threat to enter the region.

Fatali Khan's appeal gave the government of Catherine II a reason for military intervention. Moreover, the Russian official circles had a hostile attitude towards Amir Hamza, the commander of Karagaitag, who fought against Fatali Khan. This is because during the second expedition, suspecting that Gmeli was a spy, Usmi imprisoned him, and the latter died there. On September 5, 1774, General De-Medem, the commander of the Caucasus line of the Russian troops, who received an order to attack Darban from Catherine II, took action in March 1775. He defeated the Usmis of Garagaitaq and entered Darban. Even after leaving Derbend, he kept a military unit of 500 people [2, 534].

Seeing Russia's military advantage, Fatali Shah decided to take advantage of it. In May 1775, he sent an ambassador to the palace of Catherine II and asked to accept the Guba Khanate under Russian protection. However, the Russian government did not accept this request [13, 129]. The main reason for this was that Russia wanted to annex the region, not as a protectorate. Moreover,

Russia knew Fatali Khan's attitude towards them. The Russian government realized that the Khan could use the Russian army to expand his territory. Russia did not want to get involved in the intermediate wars in the Caucasus. The government of Catherine II, who did not want to experience further tension with the Ottoman state, recalled the Russian troops held in Darbend.

Materials of the Potemkin Foundation

It is clear from the archive documents that for some time Russia took a break from military rhetoric in its policy towards Azerbaijan. Only in June 1781, the Russian government sent a squadron from Astrakhan to Astaraba under the command of Count Voynovich. The squadron consisted of three 20-gun frigates, one bomber, two deck boats. The main goal of the military campaign was to conquer a small area on the coast of the Astarabad Bay, near the city of Ashraf, and build a trading settlement. However, it is clear from the documents of the archive that the Russians actually intended to build a base for future invasions. The military personnel built a small fortification in the region. But until 1882, the squadron, which could not achieve serious success, returned. The squadron led by Voynovich anchored in Baku. However, he could not stay here for a long time [6, 46]. This step of Russia once again showed that along with the "Armenian issue" of Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin, the occupation of the Caspian regions and the project of creating a buffer state in the South Caucasus for Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich had an important place in Russia's foreign policy [11, 129].

In general, Russia's Azerbaijan policy for the mentioned period is largely connected with the name of Field Marshal Grigory Aleksandrovich Potemkin. It is for this reason that the 52nd fund, which is one of the largest funds of RSMHA, is also called the Pyotomkin fund. Potemkin's transformation into a decisive figure in the direction of Russia's South Caucasus took place after the invasion of Crimea in 1783. Thus, after the annexation of Crimea, Russia began to take measures to strengthen itself in the eastern part of the Black Sea. Ekaterina II entrusted Grigory Potemkin, who successfully completed the annexation of Crimea, with relations with the Khans of Azerbaijan, Eastern and Western Georgia. He, in turn, appointed his close relative and trusted assistant, Pavel Potyomkin, as the authorized representative for Caucasian affairs. On November 15, 1782, P. S. Potemkin arrived at his headquarters in Georgiyevsk, North Caucasus. G.A.Potyomkin instructed P.S.Potyomkin, first of all, to establish contact with Iraqis and Armenians. For this purpose, he wrote to her on April 17, 1783: "The tsar should strengthen relations with Irakli and overthrow Ibrahim Khan of Shusha, an independent Armenian province should be established in Karabakh under the protection of Russia" [11, 141].

Grigory Potemkin's order to his assistant became, in fact, the unofficial policy of Russian ruling circles. The Russians, who could not find serious bases in the region, began to establish relations with the Armenians. Russia, which actively used all means to invade Azerbaijan, hoped for the help of the local Christian population. Thus, from the beginning of the 1780s, the "Armenian issue" began to occupy an important place in Russia's policy towards Azerbaijan. Catherine II's government decided to use two influential Armenians, Ivan Lazarev and Ivan Argutinsky [11, 129]. On January 11, 1780, Alexander Suvorov was sent to Astrakhan by special order to prepare for the march to Azerbaijan. The Russian government decides to organize a march to the region by sea and land. Suvorov, who came to the embassy, begins active preparations here. In addition to the equipment of the army, reconnaissance work is also carried out in order to study the local conditions. Fund 52 of the archive preserves a large report sent by Suvorov to Pyotomkin [8, 36]. These documents contain information about Azerbaijan's local geography, nature, administration, economy, bridges, roads and fortresses.

Suvorov, who made decisions in Astrakhan, established close relations with Armenians. Among the archival documents are documents showing his correspondence with the patriarch of the Armenian Church, the Karabakh emirs. In almost all of these documents, Armenians invite Russia to the Caucasus. Alexander Suvorov's report to G.Pyotomkin is stored in the archive on sheets 5-6 of the list 1, 218 of the 52nd fund. In the report dated February 15, 1780, he states that two Armenian Maliks from Karabakh came to him in Astrakhan. Write that the Maliks were oppressed

by Shusha Khan Ibrahimkhalil Khan and asked for help. Also, in the appendix included in the document, according to the emirs, Iravan Khan attacked Etchmadzin, looted a monastery there, and executed six monks. [19]. Of course, Suvorov received all this information from local Armenian spies. Armenians, on the other hand, claimed to be innocent and oppressed by the local Muslim rulers for being Christians.

However, the military campaign led by Suvorov did not take place. Instead, there are several documents in the archive that show how Ibrahimkhalil Khan, who learned about the treachery of the Armenian princes, punished them.

Armenians did not complain about Ibrahimkhalil Khan alone. They also complained about Fatali Khan to the empress. The 6-page document kept in case number 1, 270 of the 52nd fund is of special interest. This document reflects the request of an Armenian merchant named Petros Ivanov to Catherine II. Ivanov recalled his services in providing food to the Russian army in the Caucasus. He says that he was oppressed and robbed by Fatali Khan. For this reason, he asks the empress for help. [14, 27-33] However, despite these letters of complaint, Russia, which has significantly activated its policy in the South Caucasus, first of all tried to establish friendly relations with local judges. For this reason, Russia promised to protect them from the threats that might come from the Ottomans and the south of Araz. Nevertheless, Azerbaijani khans did not trust Russia. The Kartli-Kakheti kingdom was the first to approach Russia in the South Caucasus. In 1783, the Treaty of Georgiyevsk was concluded between Kartli-Kakheti and Russia [15, 92]. The agreement consisted of thirteen articles [16, 22]. The clause on the acceptance of the tsar under Russian protection in the agreement was of interest. With this agreement, it can be said that Russia's open intervention in the South Caucasus began.

Russian interference in the internal affairs of the khanates

The Russian authorities tried to maintain friendly relations with the Guba Khanate, one of the main powers in the region. Especially, starting from the beginning of the 70s of the 18th century, the relations of the ruling circles of Russia with Fatali Khan became more intense. There are many documents in RSMHA that reflect the diplomatic correspondence between the Guba Khanate and the ruling circles of the Russian Empire, including Catherine II. Among these documents, Fatali Khan's letter to Catherine II of 1776 shows that he was loyal to the empress and asked the Russian ruler for help to fight against Karim Khan Zand, who was entrenched in the lands of the former Afshar empire. It is clear from the documents stored in the archives that during the mentioned period, Fatali Khan had a lot of correspondence with the Russian court as well as with Grigory Pytomkin. Among these correspondences is a letter written by Fatali Khan to the Russian government in 1784 on the eve of the march south from the Araz River. Fatali Khan started a campaign in the spring of 1784 and in May 1784 he captured Ardabil and then Meshki without a fight. The front parts of the army continued to move southward [13, 153].

His easy progress alarmed the Russian government. General Pavel Potemkin took action after receiving a directive from the government to prevent the continuation of the movement of Kuban troops to the south. On the instructions of Grigory Potemkin, it was decided to raise the neighboring feudal judges, and first of all, Karabakh Ibrahimkhalil Khan against Fatali Khan. On the instructions of Grigory Potemkin, it was decided to raise the neighboring feudal judges, and first of all, Karabakh Ibrahimkhalil Khan against Fatali Khan. G. Potemkin's orders related to this issue stated that if the governor of Guba does not listen to the word and continues his march, it is necessary to capture Darbend or direct other khans against Fatali Khan. Lieutenant General P. Potyomkin demanded Fatali Khan to release his troops, and Prince Potyomkin to think about the consequences of his actions. Due to these reasons, Fatali Khan had to withdraw from South Azerbaijan. [11, 152-153] Apparently, although Russia did not make an open military intervention in the region, it tried with all its might to keep the area under its sphere of influence. He did not want any judge to gain power in the lands of Azerbaijan. He tried to prevent any positive step that could continue in this direction by various means. Let's admit that Russia used the political weakness of the local judges to get its way.

It is clear from the archive documents that at the end of the 80s of the 18th century, Russia allocated a special place to Azerbaijan in the politics of the South Caucasus. Although the Empire established friendly relations with the local rulers, it still distrusted them. Because unlike the Georgian tsars, they were not eager to accept his patronage. The khans, wary of Russia, preferred the role of observers in the struggle of the great powers with each other. Russia, in turn, tried to keep them away from the alliance with the Ottomans, and pursued a policy of not allowing them to unite. During these years, there was an exchange of ambassadors between the Russian Empire and local khans. [5, 174-191] However, these diplomatic exchanges are more formal in nature and could not hide the mutual distrust of both sides.

The reluctance of the Ottoman state to come to terms with Russia's annexation of Crimea made a new war inevitable. The Russian government was seriously preparing for war. For this purpose, the government of Catherine II wanted to comprehensively insure itself. Also, seeing the main battlefield in the Black Sea and the Balkan Peninsula, Russia was not interested in opening an additional South Caucasus front in the war. Challenging military operations in the South Caucasus did not correspond to Russia's real capabilities at that time. The construction of the fleet had not yet been completed, there were no convenient transportation routes to the South Caucasus, food did not reach even the small units located in Georgia, and the state's financial capabilities were limited. The Russian government gathered military forces on its right wing and planned to use mainly political means (taking the Caucasian rulers under Russian protection) on the left wing. The empress gave extraordinary powers to Grigory Potemkin and instructed him to bring the rulers of the Caucasus under Russian protection [4, 362-375]. Acting in this direction, Potemkin allocated appropriate funds and even tried to reconcile the khans who were angry with each other.

The result

In the last decade of the 18th century, the Russian Empire had to change its occupation policy against Azerbaijan. Thus, Russia, which focused on the war with the Ottomans, thought that keeping military forces in Georgia would create additional problems for it, and withdrew its troops from Georgia. The departure of the Russian troops from the region meant that the threat to Azerbaijan, albeit temporarily, disappeared. It is also clear from the archive documents that this step of Russia somewhat encouraged the local khans. However, instead of appreciating this new situation, they became addicted to internal wars again.

Russia defeated the Ottoman state in the war of 1787-1791. The victory in the war led to the reactivation of Russia in the Caucasus [3, 69]. However, the new political conditions in the region at the beginning of the 18th century demanded a revision of this policy. Because, in the struggle for dominance in the South Caucasus, a stronger candidate - Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar - appeared. Agha Mohammad Khan, who defeated his main rival Lutfali Khan in 1793, had already brought almost all of Iran under his rule in the early 90s. Only the Tsar of Kartli-Kakheti and the khans of Northern Azerbaijan did not recognize his supreme authority. Agha Mohammad Khan also took into account the Russian factor before military intervention in the South Caucasus. RSMHA funds also have documents about this. In the reports sent by the Russian emissaries in the region, it was reflected that Qajar Khan was preparing to march to the South Caucasus, aiming to restore the borders of the former Afshar empire. It is also known from the documents that the Russian Empire preferred the traditional policy of rule by division, and considered the possibility of sharing the lands of Azerbaijan with the Gajar state.

The Russian Empire used various means to enter Azerbaijan. These were the struggle for the protection of trade interests, the security of the southern borders, and the rights and freedoms of the local Christian population. Among the archival materials, there are a large number of letters and wishes written by local Armenians to Russian official circles and Empress Catherine II [17, 41-43, 78]. The most interesting thing was the desire of the Armenians of Astrakhan, Rostov, Isfahan, Tiflis, along with the local Armenians, to free the Azerbaijani Armenians from the oppression of the Russian ruler. All these documents show that Azerbaijan occupies an important place in Russia's

policy of aggression. The materials of the archive are an invaluable source in the study of this period of Azerbaijan's history.

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AZƏRBAYCAN XVIII ƏSRİN ORTALARINDA RUSİYA İMPERİYASININ İŞĞAL SİYASƏTİNDƏ (RUSİYA DÖVLƏT HƏRBİ TARİX ARXİVİNİN MATERIALLARI ƏSASINDA)

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Xülasə: Məqalə XVIII əsrin ortalarında Rusiya imperiyasının Azərbaycanı qarşı işğalçılıq siyasəti həyata keçirməyə və onu ilhaq etməyə hazır işləri görməsinə həsr edilib. XVIII əsrin əvvəllərindən başlayaraq dənizlərə çıxış əldə edərək imperiyaya çevrilən Rusiya qonşu dövlətlərin ərazisi hesabına genişlənməyə başladı. Qafqaz və Azərbaycanda Rusiyanın bu işğalçılıq planlarında mühüm yer tuturdu. Azərbaycanı bir başa ilhaq edə bilməyən Rusiya, bu planını mərhələli şəkildə həyata keçirməyə çalışırdı. Bunun üçün müxtəlif vasitələrdən istifadə olunurdu. Elmi, casus, ticarət və bəzən hərbi ekspedisiyalar göndərməklə Azərbaycanı öyrənən Rusiya gələcək işğala zəmin və hazırlıq görürdü. Tədqiq edilən dövrdə Rusiyanın Azərbaycana qarşı yürütdüyü bu siyasət Rusiya dövlət hərbi-tarix arxivinin fondlarında qorunan sənədlər əsasında tədqiq edilib. Rusiya dövlət hərbi-tarix arxivinin fondlarında Rusiya imperiyasının hərbi nazirliyinin sənədləri saxlanılır. XVIII əsrin ortalarında rusların Azərbaycana göstərdikləri maraq ilə əlaqədar, arxivin fondlarında bu siyasətin bütün təfərrüatlarını əks etdirən sənədlər qorunur. Arxivdə xüsusilə Pyotomkin fondu adlanan 52-ci fondada Rusiya Azərbaycan münasibətlərinə aid xeyli sənədlər mövcuddur. Sənədlər arasına diplomatik yazışmalar, məktublar, raportlar, dövlət sənədləri, icmallar, təsvirlər daxildir. Arxivdə saxlanılan sənədlər Rusiya imperiyasının hələ XVIII ortalarında Azərbaycanı işğal etmək planlarını qurduğunu göstərir.

Açar sözlər: arxiv, fond, ekspedisiya, raport, imperiya, konsul, diplomatik yazışma, müqavilə

AZƏRBAYDЖАН В ОККУПАЦИОННОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ РОССИЙСКОЙ ИМПЕРИИ В СЕРЕДИНЕ XVIII ВЕКА (ПО МАТЕРИАЛАМ РОССИЙСКОГО ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО ВОЕННО-ИСТОРИЧЕСКОГО АРХИВА)

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Резюме: Статья посвящена подготовке Российской империи к осуществлению оккупационной политики против Азербайджана и его присоединению в середине XVIII века. Начиная с начала XVIII века Россия, получив выход к морям и став империей, стала расширяться за счет территории соседних государств. Кавказ и Азербайджан занимали важное место в этих завоевательных планах России. Россия, не сумевшая аннексировать Азербайджан, пыталась поэтапно реализовать этот план. Для этого использовались

различные средства. Россия, изучавшая Азербайджан, отправляя научные, разведывательные, торговые, а иногда и военные экспедиции, закладывала основу и готовилась к будущему вторжению. Эта политика России в отношении Азербайджана в изучаемый период изучалась на основе документов, сохранившихся в фондах Российского государственного военно-исторического архива. Документы военного министерства Российской империи хранятся в фондах Российского государственного военно-исторического архива. В середине XVIII века интерес русских к Азербайджану сохраняется в архивных документах, в которых отражены все подробности этой политики. В архиве, особенно в 52-м фонде, именуемом фондом Потемкина, хранится множество документов, касающихся российско-азербайджанских отношений. К документам относятся дипломатическая переписка, письма, отчеты, государственные документы, сводки, описания. Документы, хранящиеся в архиве, показывают, что Российская империя строила планы вторжения в Азербайджан еще в середине XVIII века.

Ключевые слова: архив, фонд, экспедиция, отчет, империя, консул, дипломатическая переписка, договор

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