

An Analysis of Iran-Armenia Relations Using Security Theories (Copenhagen School and Neoclassical Defensive Realism Theory)

Masume Zareei Hodk,

Postdoctorate Scholar, Department of Political Science, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Mohsen Khalili,

Professor, Department of Political Science, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

Abstract

Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, new states emerged in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Armenia and Azerbaijan are two countries resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union in the South Caucasus region and adjacent to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In one hand the constant tension in the relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia is due to Karabakh crisis, and on the other hand it is due to the union and collusion with Turkey, which has committed genocide during the First World War in the Ottoman era. Whereas, Iran despite its historical and ethnic ties with the Azerbaijanis of Azerbaijan, has chosen Armenia in line with its foreign policy and has established extensive ties in various dimensions between the two sides. The main question of the present study is that why Iran has chosen Armenia in its foreign policy despite Iran's proximity to Azerbaijan. The research hypothesis is that the convergence and common interests of Armenia and Iran as well as the common threat posed by Azerbaijan to both countries have deepened relations between the two countries. Theories of security studies (the Copenhagen school and theory of neoclassical realism) were used as the theoretical framework in the present study.

Key words: Copenhagen School-Relations-Iran-Armenia-Neoclassical

Introduction

The South Caucasus region, due to the intersection of energy transmission networks between the North and South and the historic Silk Road attracts the attention of global and regional players (European Union, Israel, Iran, and Turkey). On the other hand, it is located in the turmoil of the new big game between the two superpowers, namely, the United States, the hegemon and Russia, Eurasia, which has attracted more attention among the countries of the South Caucasus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Disputes and tensions between the two countries over Karabakh region

before their independence and after independence have led Armenia's foreign policy to approach Iran for multilateral economic, political, and cultural security. Azerbaijan, adjacent to Armenia and Iran, makes the triangle of Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Israel, which contradicts the foreign policy of the two countries, opposing to this strategic alliance between their rivals. However, in the 2020 war in Karabakh along the Aras River and on the border with Iran, although Armenia's defeat in the Karabakh war could help Turkey connect to Azerbaijan through a corridor rather than using Iranian route, and could jeopardize Iran's and Armenia's security, the Islamic Republic of Iran supported the sovereignty of Azerbaijan over the lost territories of the country and peace treaty between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which was signed at the initiative of Russia in November 2020 and liberated the southern regions of Karabakh along the Aras River on the border of Iran. However, the historical background of the Armenians to the genocide committed by the Turks in Turkey and Iranians' positive attitudes to the Armenians residing in Iran, as well as major challenges between Iran and Azerbaijan over various issues such as the legal regime of the Caspian Sea and convergence between Azerbaijan, Israel, and Turkey, common language and religion between Iran and Azerbaijan, there has been no convergence between Iran and Azerbaijan. Hence, Iran and Armenia developed their relations based on security theories (Copenhagen School, neoclassical realism).

1-Theoretical Background and Methods

Iran-Armenia relations can be better analyzed by using the theories of security studies (Copenhagen school and neoclassical realism). Since security is one of the most essential needs of human beings and is one of the important concepts of international relations, it has always been considered by the paradigms of international relations. In fact, these paradigms are produced as a result of historical developments during different periods of time (Vosoughi & Sheikhoon, 2012: p. 97). Metpositivism approach to identify categories such as security is different from the positivist one. Copenhagen school is one of the modern met-positivism approaches to security (Ozcan, 2000: p15). In the current study, the power structure is examined within a wide international system focusing on the state factor. State is one of the postmodern post-positivist ideas.

People like Barry Buzan, played an effective role in explicating modern positivism approaches to security. In this approach, security has a software structure and configuration rather than hardware nature. In this regard, Buzan states: (Mottaqi, 2007: 3-2). "With the expansion of communication, a new level of social expectations is created. Countries will try to ensure their security by balancing domestic and international expectations. In this way, power becomes relative in nature, just as security is relative in nature and function. Buzan arguments about new security indicators can be considered as a reflection of the new necessities of cooperation between countries. In this process,

security depends on a greater degree of cooperation. The more the level of identity cohesion and software correlations of countries increases, the more opportunity for cooperation increases”(Mottaghi, 2007: 3-2). The Copenhagen School deals with security not only in terms of military but also in other economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions. Buzan stressed that these dimensions cannot be dealt with separately and they ought to be examined in relation with each other (Aktas, 2011: p20). According to Waver, security is a conscious choice made by the state players and elites. For instance, Ole argues that social security plays an important role in analyzing security from Barzan's point of view. Waver considers social security as defending one's identity against other existing entities.

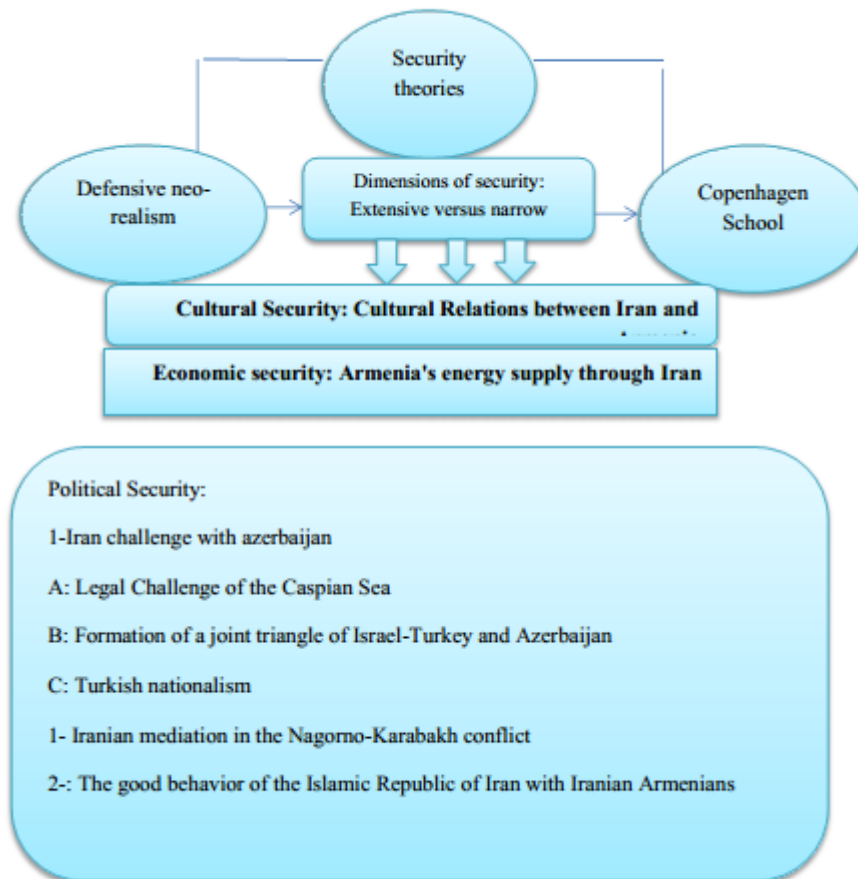
Societal security and political security are interlinked, but there is a distinction between them in that political security prioritizes institutional stability and the administrative integrity of states, whereas, societal security is the defense of an identity against a perceived threat. (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014:p195).

Another security theory is neoclassical realism. It was coined by Giddens Rose, who drew on realism ideas to explain foreign policy and relations between countries. To neoclassical realism, not only the structure of system is important, but also is the mental perceptions and internal structure of governments. Neoclassical realism is divided into aggressive and defensive category. Aggressive realists, such as Farid Zakaria and John Mearsheimer believe that in a state of anarchy, security is scarce and governments attempt to maximize their power by maximizing their relative advantages. From neoclassic's point of view, the power of state is more important than national power. Therefore, Farid Zakaria considers three elements as the reason for the governments' desire for power: the anarchic structure of the international system, the aggressive capabilities of governments, and lack of confidence in the intentions of an enemy (Ghavam, 2005: p. 112). The most important theorists of defensive realism are Snyder and Walt. Walt believes in the balance of threat rather than in the balance of power. From his viewpoint, the more aggressive a government is, the more likely, other governments will take action against it. To defensive realists' view, unlike the aggressive realism of anarchy, the lack of central authority is benign and secure, and governments will act aggressively only when they feel threatened. According to Taliya Forou, aggressive realism is based on 4 assumptions. 1- The problem of security 2- The delicate structure of power 3- The mental perceptions of national leaders 4- Domestic politics (Azarshab&Najmabadi, 2017: p. 130). The current research is explanatory in nature and explains the reasons of relation between Armani and Iran based on security theories. According to defensive theory, the countries facing a common threat incline to turn to deeper alliances or ties with each other. Hence, the

common threat posed by the Republic of Azerbaijan to the two countries in question has led to the establishment of extensive ties in various political, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions based on the Copenhagen School.

The figure below shows the close relationship between the two theories in security studies.

Figure 1-1: Security theories



2-Iran-Armenia Relations in Light of the Theory of Security Studies (Copenhagen School and Defensive Neo-Realism)

Iran and Armenia have tried to expand their relations in various political, economic and cultural dimensions, given the threats posed them by the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Islamic Republic of Iran has strengthened its ties with Armenia due to the security tensions caused by the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea region due to joint exercises (Azerbaijan-Turkey-Pakistan), and Armenia, which faces security threats from Azerbaijan, considers such a relegationasa balancing factor in the Caucasus region as well. According to the theory of neo-realism, the common threats of Azerbaijan to the two countries and the common triangle of Armeniacountry with (Turkey and

Israel) have deepened the relations between Iran and Armenia as well as have created a balance of power against Azerbaijan. Therefore, we examine the relations between Iran and Armenia.

2-1-Cultural Relations between Iran and Armenia

The Republic of Armenia is one of Iran's neighbors. Armenia, despite its small geographical border, has a very deep cultural and civilization background with Iran. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the spread of Persian language in Armenia is one of the main concerns of the Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran in Armenia. Yerevan's scientific and cultural institutions have also supported this cultural diplomacy including teaching Armenian language in Iranian universities, holding university seminars, cooperating in broadcasting, television, and translating and publishing scientific books.

2-2-Language and Literature

As Iranian and Armenian languages are both from Indo-European language family, many similarities can be found between them. A number of linguists, including Wendishman, Yaterman, Delacard, Freeridge, and Mueller, have considered Armenian to be an Avestan and Pahlavi branch of Iranian language. Only Hoyshman in his famous works, examined the pronunciation of similar words in Armenian and other Indo-European languages, and after matching Armenian synonyms, he argued that the Armenian language, contrary to other scholars' opinions, is not a branch of Iranian languages, "but rather both " languages are Indo-European languages that are closely related. The similarity of some of words in these two languages is quite obvious (Ghogscian 1376p.17.)

It goes without saying that in the process of evolution of Armenian language, Persian language and literature, has granted many words and expressions to Armenian language to enrich that language, which has been effective in flourishing of culture and enriching vocabulary (Nalbandian, 1375: p. 95). Cultural and historical commonalities between Iran and Armenia has caused Persian language and Iranian culture to have a special place in Armenia from the past as well as to be considered as the second language of Armenians; Armenians are very interested in learning it. Furthermore, the presence of Iranian Armenians in Armenia is one of the factors that intensify Armenians people's motivation to learn Persian language. A large number of Persian-speaking Armenians poets such as Chaos-e-Irvani, Chaos-e-Irvani, Fakhri-e-Irvani, Ghabel-e-Irvani, Qudsi Irvani, Nazem Irvani, are clear indications that prove Armenian people's interest in Persian language and literature. Given Armenia's neighborhood with Iran, Oriental Studies and Iranology courses in Armenian Universities contributed to booming Persian-Armenian Literary Works.

In the field of research on Persian language, it should be noted that a group of Armenian scholars translated valuable texts of Persian literature, such as Golestan and Bustan Saadi, the famous sweet-tongued poet, Khayyam's pleasant Rubaiyat and Ferdowsi's rich Shahnameh. Ferdowsi's

Shahnameh has had a great influence on Armenian poets and has been translated into Armenian many times by various translators. Hosop Mirzaian published Khayyam's quatrains in 1963. After Armenia's independence in 1991, Armenia's relations with Iran in the field of culture and translation expanded. Scientific centers such as the Armenian Academy of Sciences, Armenian State University, Yerevan State University, the Institute of Oriental Studies, Center of Iranian Studies in the Caucasus, Acharyan University, Lazarian University have involved in Iranology. After Islamic Revolution in 1978, 64 books have been translated, of which 14 books were translated from the Iranian Revolution to the independence of Armenia and 50 books after Armenia's independence until 2011, and in Armenia a total of 60 books have been translated, of which are three books before the independence of Armenia and 57 books after the independence. Statistics indicate that the number of translated books has been doubled (Gharibian et. al., 2012: p. 85).

2-3-The Common Myth of Anahita in Iran and Armenia

Anahita signifies unpolluted and clean. Anahita is a goddess similar to the Babylonian goddess and Artemis goddess of Greece. (Gholizadeh, 1392: pp. 93-92) Merry Buris believes that the beginning of the worship of Anahita in the era of Achaemenid Ardashir II is considered as a Persian innovation. In an inscription in Susa, Ardashir II states that the construction of his palace was thanks to Ahuramazda, Anaitis, and Mitra, and asked them to protect him against enemy. The Parthians following Achaemenids, worshiped Ormazd, Mehr, and Anahita as their main deities. Anahid was very popular during the Parthian period. Since the time of Ardashir II, Venus worshipping had become more important among the gods, and the god Nahid was also in the first place during the Parthian era. During the reign of Bahram II, the fifth emperor of Iran from Sassanid dynasty, there were two large fire temples in Istakhpars, namely the fire temple of Anahid Ardeshir and the fire temple of Anahita Banu, which was under the supervision of the great priest (Back, 1978: p411). Nahidism, which was growing during the reign of Ardeshir Hayamnshi, began in another region. The empire of Iran, including Armenia, worshiped a lady named Sanahita. With the growing influence of Iran in ancient Armenia, we are witnessing an increase in the status of this goddess. (Schoems Baghdarsian, 1932: p.79).

2-4-Cinema

Among cultural activities of Iran in the field of film is screening films in July 1937 in Armenia, in which one of the Iranian films was screened. As for cooperation in the field of cinema, in past years, Farabi Cinema Foundation of Iran and National Cinema of Armenian have signed treaty to facilitate producing joint film projects. In a meeting at the Culture Ministry to Armenia, held on September 1, 2019, the minister of culture of Armenia emphasized on the development of cultural

ties between Iran and Armenia. Amemorandum of agreement in the field of cinema was signed by the head of the Fedarabi Cinema Foundation of Iran and Shushanik Mizahkanian, the director of national cinema center of Armenia. This agreement involves cooperation in various cultural fields including Co-production of films, implementation of educational programs, assistance in the development of Armenian cinema and ideas, boosting interaction in running festivals.

3-Political Security

Principally, providing security policy is largely a government activity, and governments must determine their own policies. In fact, the notion of national security is developed in the context of government, and state is demarcated to the internal affairs of the government and the external issues of the international system. It is the government that should find solutions to compromise with these two systems (Amini2007). In order to achieve the political security that Iran and Armenia are pursuing based on defensive realism, we must first address the challenges that Iran and Azerbaijan face over the Caspian Sea legal regime and environmental issues, the formation of a joint Israeli-Turkish triangle, Azerbaijan and Turkish nationalism in the region.

3-1- Sea legal regime and environmental issues

So, today, the Caspian region plays an important role as well as an intersection of important transport communications. The advantageous geopolitical situation makes the region a zone of strategic interest for many countries (Akbulaev and Bayramli, 2020: p8). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and Iran, as legal successors to the 1921 and 1940 bilateral agreements, sought to maintain their position and relied on the principle of joint sovereignty, in which each country would have an equal share (Pritchins, 2018: p32). Meanwhile, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan sought the right to unilaterally develop energy resources in their respective coastal areas. Geopolitical changes in the Caspian region and the beginning of the activities of Western companies in the Caspian Sea faced a new plan: an attempt to divide the seabed, although for the first time Iran and Russia emphasized the joint exploitation of the resources of the Caspian Sea; But Iran claims that the 1921 and 1940 treaties between Soviet Union and Iran will remain in force until a new multilateral convention is reached (Zimnitskaya, 2011: p8). In the meantime, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan soon paved the way for other major players to reduce the influence of Iran and Russia in the region (Sanei, 2001: p681).

On July 6, 1998, Russia and Kazakhstan reached a separate agreement on the demarcation of their border line on the Caspian Sea bed. 6/1998(Agreement Between the Russian Federation And The

Republic of Kazakhstan, 7/6/1998). The agreement does not legally divide the Caspian Sea into two parts, but restricts the sea border to determine the rights of the parties to underground resources and their resources. This formula was later used to divide the northern part of the Caspian Sea between Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. Therefore, only Iran emphasized the preservation of the Caspian legal regime (Zhiltsov and etall, 2007: p27). On August 12, 2018, the Caspian Sea Summit on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea was held in Aktau, Kazakhstan. Which was closed with the aim of establishing a new legal regime between the Caspian littoral States? On one hand, there was the dispute between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, which wanted to use the oil and gas pipeline on the Caspian Sea, and on other hand, Iran and Russia, which were environmentally opposed to this pipeline (Janusz-Pawletta, 2015: 97-104). Article 14 of the Aktau Convention authorizes the laying of major oil and gas pipelines on the Caspian Sea floor, subject to the provisions of the Convention on the Caspian Sea Environmental Protection Framework and the Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment Protocol (Seyrafi: 2020,p121).

This pipeline will transport Turkmen gas to the Republic of Azerbaijan for delivering to European markets. The non-implementation of this plan is due to the opposition of Iran, especially Russia. The reasons for Iran and Russia to oppose the plan were that until a new legal regime is established, the implementation of such a plan depends on the agreement of the five littoral States. And another reason is that the environmental impact of such a pipeline will be for all the countries of the Caspian Basin. Of course, the more important reason is the economic and political interests that are endangered by Russia and Iran. Because the pipeline in question bypasses them as a transferring country and makes Turkmenistan a competitor (p171: Gurbanov, 2018). To the extent that Russia and Iran have stated that despite the environmental assessment protocol, they have the legal tools to implement this plan (Bayramov, 2019: pp. 16-16).

Considering that today the Caspian Sea is experiencing vital environmental degradation. Meanwhile, the newly independent countries, such as Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, have been the biggest sources of pollution in the Caspian Sea by developing their oil and gas industry and attract foreign investment. Between 1991 and 2015, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan accounted for the highest levels of pollution in the Caspian Sea through petroleum products and oil spills at Sea. Over the years, Azerbaijan has tried to act positively to protect the environment of the Caspian Sea against oil pollution by observing the laws. Assigning some concessions for exploration, identification and extraction in the Caspian Sea greatly increases the risks of ecosystem and marine environment disruption. The table below shows the production of oil by Azerbaijan and

Kazakhstan after the collapse of the former Soviet Union in the Caspian Sea. Due to this amount of production, it caused a lot of environmental pollution. And also shows the growth of production in this region (Kubicek, 2013: p172)

Table (3-1): Oil Production of Azerbaijan and kazakhstan

Oil production,thousands of barrel,dayCrude oil production:kt

	1992	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Azerbaijan	222	309	317	440	1,290	989	922	407	394	390	382	360	35	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	34643
Kazakhstan	529	718	804	1,293	2,400	1640	1,515	817	808	794	780	861	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90572

Sources: BP. BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2006; Penwell Publishing Company. Oil & Gas Journal. December 19, 2005; Energy Information Administration. Caspian Sea Region: Survey of Key Oil and Gas Statistics and Forecasts, July 2006; U.S. Geological Survey. "National Oil & Gas Assessment, at: <http://www.energy.cr.usgs.gov/oilgas/noga/2004update.htm>], viewed March 1, 2005

Source:Data from International Energy Statistics at <http://www.tinyurl.com/bfvq5j8>, accessed 21 January 2013.

Source:<https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics?country=AZERBAIJAN&fuel=Oil&indicator=OilProd>

3-2-The Union of Turkey-Azerbaijan-Israel

Following the fall of the Russian Empire, Azerbaijan declared independence and thus the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan came into being. Iran sought to recognize formally (the independence) of Azerbaijan; but the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan refused. Subsequently, in Karabakh crisis, Russia provided political, economic and military support to Armenia, enabling Armenia to occupy Karabakh, an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan. Iran, while providing support to Armenia, criticized Azerbaijan for its close ties with the United States and Israel (Brennan, 2012). Turkey and Israel have recognized formally Azerbaijan's independence

from the very beginning. In 1997, then-Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had a short stay in Baku. The two parties discussed Iranian threat as well as the intelligence cooperation of Azerbaijan and Israel. This meeting is considered by some experts as the starting point of unity between the two countries (Bourtman, 2006: p.48).

After Ilham Aliyev, was elected as the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in October 2009, Iran, as the greatest threat to Israel in the Middle East, sought to improve its ties with the intention of persuading Azar Bayjan to cut its relation with Israel. Several high-ranking Iranian military officers came to Baku, Azerbaijan, to obstruct security cooperation with Israel (Bolive, 2010). Another strategic factor was the successful experience of Turkey-Israel cooperation after a decade, which influenced Azerbaijan authorities to develop strategic ties with Israel. Despite the current problems in Turkish-Israeli relations, Ankara recognizes that its regional aspirations require proper relations with the Jewish state. Baku welcomes the security triangle and security cooperation between Turkey, Israel, and Azerbaijan. This model of cooperation regarding energy has been successful. Triple strategic cooperation can be an effective tool in strengthening and diplomatic support of the United States, as well as in balancing the Iran-Russia axis in Central Asia and the South Caucasus (Murinson, 2014:14). In early April 2012, Israeli Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman had an official visit to Baku. He met President Ilham Aliyev and discussed bilateral relations and those of Iran. According to Israeli analysts, "Lieberman's visit happened one month after an American publication Foreign Policy reported that Azerbaijan had given Israel access to its air bases, which was regarded as an important step in a possible attack on Iran." Both Azerbaijan and Israel have denied the allegations (Ismayilov, 2013: p.70).

Common concern about the Islamic Republic of Iran has been an important factor in the relations between Azerbaijan and Israel. Iran poses the most serious threat to Israel. As a result, Jerusalem has commenced on an active diplomatic strategy in areas surrounding Iran. "It is very important to form an alliance with moderate Sunni countries that fear the threat of Iran's nuclear program," said Major General Aharon Zawi Farkash, a former head of Israel's general directorate of military intelligence, at a conference in the Center for Iranian Studies at Tel Aviv University in May 2009). Furthermore, according to Israeli analyst Ozi Rabbi, "Israel must implement active diplomacy surrounding Iran" and "several alliances and coalitions must be formed to stand against Iran's aggression." Without a doubt, cooperation with Turkey is essential to Israel's foreign policy and its security. Despite cold ties between Israel and Ankara, Israel regards the Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance as an advantageous factor for deepening and improving security and defense cooperation with Azerbaijan. In this regard, Israel assumes that expanding political and defense cooperation with Azerbaijan could function as a favorable factor in boosting its relations with Turkey. Therefore,

Azerbaijan, given its strategic situation on the northern border of Iran, plays a special role in Israel's foreign policy program towards the Commonwealth of Independent States. In this respect, Israel has frequently reiterated that Jerusalem supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (Khalifa-zadeh, 2012: p75-77). Israel also trains Azerbaijani intelligence and security forces and provides security for the President of Azerbaijan during foreign visits. According to some sources, Israel also eavesdropped on electronic stations on Caspian border, which is not appealing to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region.

Following a visit of Israeli defense minister, Moshe Ya'alon to Azerbaijan in September 2011, Ha Ar Tes published several articles on arms, in which arms export from Israel Azerbaijan, (Lindenstrauss, 2015: p74) was one of dominant topics.

Israel surrounded by Muslim countries, seeks strategic cooperation with Azerbaijan. Due to events of Davoos and attack on Gazeh strip in September 2008 by Israel, Israel's relation with Turkey has diminished. That's why Azerbaijan is currently the only state in the Islamic world that can have strategic cooperation with Israel. The aim of Israel is to work with Non-Arab agents in the Arab Middle East to ensure energy security and confrontation with Iran. Azerbaijan tries to obtain the support of the Jewish lobby against the Armenians of Armenia (Rahimova, 2011).

3-3-Azerbaijan Nationalism

In 1992, after Abolzazl Elchi Beyg, the leader of the Khalgh Front of Azerbaijan, who believed in nationalist tendencies, was elected as a president, he took a pro-Western, pro-American position. He stressed that the new nation should be of Turkish nature. He intended to prevent the influence of Russia and Iran in the south Casusas region. (Afzali & Seidi 1394, p. 254). Ilchi Beyg having pro-Turkish tendencies spoke about North and South Azerbaijan alliance. By South Azerbaijan, it is meant all Azeri provinces of northwestern Iran, which according to some statistics, constitute 24% of the population of 70 million Iranians (Atai et al., 2012: p. 124); and at the same time, before the presidential election in Azerbaijan, he said that one day he would come to Iran if the flag of independent and unified Azerbaijan were raised in Tabriz (Mousavi, 2012: p. 23). In the republic of Azerbaijan, the Azeri Nationalism is the dominant discourse supported by the government and the majority of the nation. Such a discourse does not care about religion and Islam is taken as a part of Azari-Turkish- identity. Given its external effects, such an identity discourse affects partially political, social, cultural, ethic regions of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Falah, 1390).

The existence of the republic of Azerbaijan on both sides of the Arras River has become an incentive for Baku authorities to propose the idea of Great Azerbaijan in Azeri language. This idea was intended not only as an anti-Iranian tool, but also as a tool for identity formation and State-formation of Azerbaijan government. The Azeri state-men could not overlook the past for identity formation,

because documents such as the agreements of Golestan and Turkmenchay indicate that they belong to Iran. In this regard, the plan of United Azar by Aliyev's party in 2022 was published (Amira Ahmadian, 1931: pp. 000). Given kinship, religion, and cultural backgrounds of Azeri-speaking populations, such an idea has raised security concerns for Iran, and has been frequently condemned by Tehran (Chaboki, 1933: p. 91). Yet, Iran continues supporting the Shiites of Azerbaijan (Jacksdon, 0219). In 1339, in a formal speech, Ali Akbar Rafsanjani stressed on the threat of Azerbaijani nationalism as a potential threat similar to that of former Communist party. He strongly expressed that Iran does not allow any nationalist movements, even if they are of Islamic motive) (Erendor, 2019: p162). Concerns and fears over security are the key elements in Iran-Azerbaijan relations that have affected regional peace (Monique et.al. 2013: 35).

3-4-Iran's Mediation in Karabakh Crisis

The Karabakh crisis goes back to 1986, when 300,000 Azeris residing in Armenia were deported, and continued till 1988 with resumed attacks by Armenians, which led to the expulsion of Armenians from Baku and other Azerbaijani cities in 1990. (Skarov, 2020: p59). With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the independence of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Karabakh conflict became an international conflict. Meanwhile, Russia's active military support for Armenia played an important role in Armenia's military position against Azerbaijan. Following the crisis, the Security Council resolution in 1992 called for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijan (Kucera, 2019).

Mediation attempts by Iran, lasted from February 1330 to May 1330. As a neighbor to Azerbaijan and Armenia, Iran tried to bring the two countries to negotiation table for a solution. While negotiations were under way, Armenia occupied Shusha, the most important city populated with Azeris in Karabakh region. Shortly, due to increasing aggression by Armenia on Azerbaijan, Iran's mediation failed (Peuch, 2001). Other countries, France and the United States, having a large Armenian diaspora, could not influence resolving this conflict. The summit in Tehran, Iran, put forward that future talks on the Autonomy of Karabakh be continued; a position that was oriented to Armenia rather than Azerbaijan, which were identified in clause 14 in the end of negotiations. One of the most important clauses of the negotiations is as follows: The two sides agree that after the presidents of the the two countries signed the Tehran agreement; the agreement should be complied with. One clause was about the Autonomy of Karabakh; the president of Azerbaijan refrained from signing the statement, regarding it as Iran's support for Armenia. Consequently, the Tehran statement was not fruitful at all (Javadi Arjmand and Keiykhosro, 2012, p.22). Among mediators, the Minsk Group mediators (Russia, France, and the United States) were more successful in achieving agreement (Ellena, 2016). After unsuccessful attempts to mediate and the inability of resolutions

300, 379, 391 and 331, by the UN Security Council to change the situation, the fatigue of Azerbaijani military, poor economic status of Armenia, the occupation of all regions of Karabakh and most of the territory of Azerbaijan outside Karabakh region by Armenians, which covered about 02% of Azerbaijan's territory, created favorable conditions for mediation (Askerov, 2020).

An Inter-Parliamentary group of the CIS along with the Representative of Russia President traveled to Baku, Yerevan, Stepanakert in order to settle conflict over Karabakh. On May 7, 1931, as a result of negotiation with the parties to the conflict, a peace agreement was signed, which was known as Bishkek Protocol. According to Bishkek Protocol, mediated by Russia, the defense ministers of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Karabakh agreed to a permanent ceasefire on May 3 until a comprehensive agreement was reached; this agreement was breached by Armenia in 2020. As Karabakh conflict and its developments have led to instability and insecurity on the borders of Iran, the national security of Islamic Republic of Iran has been directly overshadowed. Because of the interference of other regional countries: Turkey, Russia, it might be possible that the scope of conflict would turn into an all-scale war. The Azeri claimed that Russia was providing Armenians with military assistance, on the other hand, Armenia believed that Turkey got military and financial equipment from Baku. Geographically speaking, neither Russia, nor Georgia or Turkey is adjacent to Karabakh; Iran is the only neighboring country to Karabakh that has been hit directly by a drone strike and rockets and has affected the security of the residents in the border villages of Khodasfarin and Aslandooz in the second conflict of Karabakh. Secondly, the flow of refugees to Iran needs to be addressed. For instance, after Armenians' invasion, some Azeris, like the people of Jalilabad, crossed the Arvand River and entered Iran. And the third issue to be addressed are the risk of transmission to neighboring countries, the interference of competitors, ethnic-religious polarization. From Baku's vantage point, such issues are prominent in the bilateral ties between the two countries.

They also claimed that Iran, like Turkey, should define its relations with Armenia based on Karabakh conflict and the complete evacuation of the lands occupied by Armenians. On the other hand, Azerbaijan was expanding its ties with Iran. In some cases, Azeris blamed their defeat in Karabakh conflict on the defeat of Iran to Armenia. (Vaezi, 1933: p. 31).

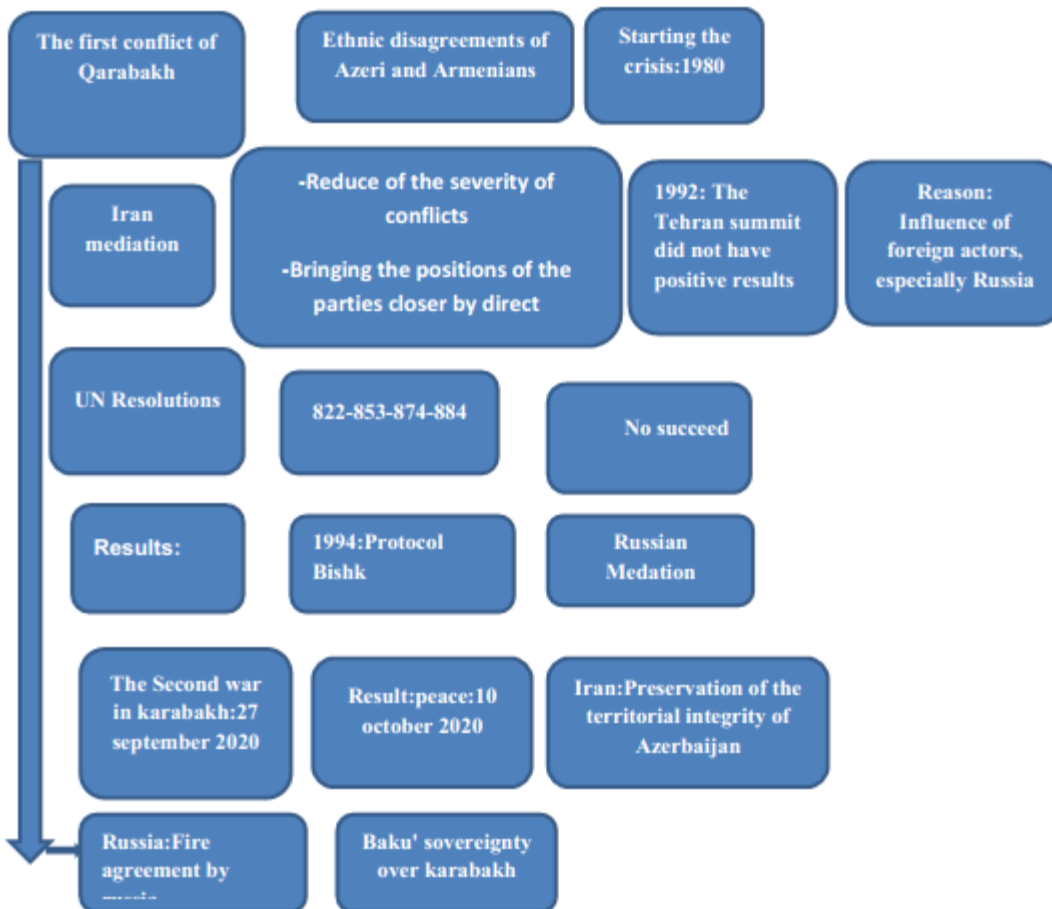
Azeris proclaim that Iran's claim to support Muslims and Shiites are nothing more than a claim and Iranian authorities with the help of the Armenians are seeking to impede Azeri people to gain power in Azerbaijan as well as to prevent the Azeri unity (Mohammadzadeh, 1932: p. 1).

Iran's ability to take the initiative in the matter of "Great Azerbaijan" was diminished due to following reasons: a. the continuation of Karabakh crisis was problematic for Iran's territorial integrity. b. Iran's neutrality to Armenians' aggression during civil war, while it was able to establish

unity and internal security in a short term (Afzali, Sidi Asl and Mahmoudi, 1939: p. 77). In recent Karabakh crisis, Iranian officials pronounced that the territorial integrity of the countries should be respected and war refugees should return to their homes.

In past years, Azerbaijanis were not able to reclaim their occupied territories due to many factors such as Russia's unwavering support for Armenia, however, this time it seemed that they relatively won the 2020 war, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran officially showed green light. Especially in a speech, the leader of Islamic Republic of Iran stated that: Karabakh belongs to Azerbaijan: all occupied lands should be evacuated and handed over to the Republic of Azerbaijan. (The second conflict of Karabakh; opportunities and analysis). Hence, studies indicate that in the second conflict, Iran displayed a good will and spared no pain to resolve Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Thus, the presence of Iran as a mediator in the talks of the parties to conflict contributed to a final solution of Karabakh conflict. It should not be overlooked that Iran is one of the most geographically vulnerable countries in the region of Caucasus.

Figure: Karabakh Crisis (3-4)



3-5-Armenian Diaspora in Iran

The mutual relations are partly due to a strong Armenian diasporasin Iran, which possesses the oldest Armenian community in the world. Armenian community is the largest Christian community in Iran; and unlike other minorities, the Armenian regime is not regardedas a problematic minority. Currently, the present-Armenia is the main home of Iranian Armenian. In recent centuries, Iranian Armenians have received the attention of Catholic and Protestant missionaries (Eivazi, 0211: p. 1). In the third century AD, Christianity gained a foothold in this country; and finally, in the early twentieth century, it became the fourth official religion in this land. The arrival of Armenians to Iran dates back to four centuries BC.when about three hundred thousand Armenians entered the areas of Khoy,Maku, Gharghe, Salmas.Then, they gradually, moved to the center of Azerbaijan, especially Tabriz, and settled there. In the fourth century AD, Sassanid Shapur II, forced a large number of Armenians to migrate to northernregions of Iran, however, due to Arab attack, they did not stay there for long. (Askari, 0211: p. 103). In 333 A.H, as a result of war between Shah Abbas I and Ottoman Sultan, Armenia and Karabakh came under the rule of the Ottomans (Hashemi ShokooH, 1931: p. 1). In 1219 A.H, with the resumption of warsbetween Iran and the Ottomans and the location of the old Julfa (Jogha) in the route of these military campaigns, due to Iranian's military inability to fight the Ottomans, Shah Abbas tactfully plannedto retreat along with Armenianscommunities toward Iran.Hence, he transferred different Armenian states to Iran.

Shah Abbas noticed that the Julfais are the same group that could implement his policies, in 1123ADa large number of Armenians from Old Julfa settled in Isfahan(Arakel of Tabriz, 2010: p39). Armenians thanks to the Safavid kings, their own efforts, and their trading and religion interactions with Europeans as well as thanks to the benefits from Safavid statesmen and theinfluential figures among themselves, composed the wealthiest minority among other minorities in Isfahan(Aghajari et al. 2019.p.5-10).

The golden days of Jolfa declined during the reign of Shah Sultan Hussein. Although a number of Armenians were Shah Sultan Hussein's servants, Armeniansunderwent great hardship like other Isfahani residents, when Mahmud Afghan attacked on Isfahan.Yet the third group composed Isfahan's residents.

In the same years, the Armenians living in Caucasus were forced to endure Ottoman troops in 1909,who encountered Ganjacommander's attack. After the fall of the Safavids and the reign of Nader Shah Afshar, Armenians did not enjoy the same condition;in one hand, once, they longed for Nader to live a long and happy life because of his taking care of the oppressed Armenian nation, which relates to ten years of his presence in the political arena of Iran,on the other hand, they were writing poems about his death(Akbar Jafari, 1388, p. 5-8).During the Qajar period, many

Armenians migrated to Bushehr to make the best use of the favorable and suitable working situation in this port. In the Qajar period, the Armenian population was greater. In this period, while preserving their customs, habits, and religious beliefs, interacting culturally with society and taking advantage of diverse ethnic and racial situations, Bushehr Armenians were able to work in the economic and cultural fields, and consequently, they left a significant impact on the cultural atmosphere of this city.

According to a report by Mr. Thompson, which has been reflected in the economic history of Iran, the number of Armenians living in Bushehr in 1039 A. H., is 14 families, in a total of 80 persons (Isavi, 1913: p. 91). Establishing friendly relations with the indigenous people of Bushehr and using religious tolerance dominant in ports of Iran, contributed to Armenians to take advantage of favorable opportunities for trade and commerce in this period,

In line with Bushehr's development, Armenians, by taking various positions such as the position of consul or political representative, represented a number of commercial companies and occupations (Alizadeh Moghadam and Hashemipour, 2018, p.65). Following the genocide of Armenians in 1915, many Armenians settled in northwestern Iran after fleeing and being deported from the Ottomans, which gave them legitimacy to become a representative in Iranian Parliament. Commerce is one of the most important activities of Armenians (Aghanian, 2007). The process of modernization during Pahlavi period offered a good opportunity for Armenians living in Iran to work in economics, art, industry, as well as to progress significantly in Iranian caviar industry. After 1979 revolution, there are two representatives in Islamic Consultative Assembly, one from Isfahan and one from Tehran (Javad Arjomand Vakikhosro Dolatyari, 2012: p. 200).

4-Security Theories and Economic Relations between Iran and Armenia

Economic relations between Iran and Armenia goes back to the establishment of the Development Commission in 1330 (Petros, 2003). In this respect, Iran-Armenia Trade Organization and Trade Council were established in order to boost more economic ties between the two countries. Armenia stressed transporting gas from Iran to Armenia whereby the territory of Armenia could be liberated from the siege of Turkey and Azerbaijan as well as Iran would undergo less suffer from Western's sanctions. However, the projects proposed by Iran included a high voltage pipeline, a petroleum pipeline, and a rail network, which could not compete with those of Azerbaijan. Yet, the two parties have taken positive steps to create a common economic zone (Logan, 2018). Economic relations between Iran and Armenia on energy equality, transportation, cooperation in the field of Agriculture machineries, as well as food industry indicate that the greatest investment in Armenia's economy belongs to Russia and Iran in the post-Soviet Union period (Country Reports 2001-On Economic Policy and Trade Practices, 1995).

Economic competition with Turkey as well as Iran's incapability to improve its relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan, which is one of the geopolitical players in the region, have contributed to the strengthening of Iran-Armenia economic relations. (Azimov, 2019:p97). These relations are in several sectors: including agricultural products, petroleum, gas, and electricity; and Iran is the main exporter of these products to Armenia. The following table indicates Armenia's imports from Iran until 2018, the amount of which shows a decrease or increase in various products in recent years. In 2020 Iran exports 6/93% (\$ 34 million) to Armenia. (Armenia imports 2020 by Country, 2020). In January 2020, the Chairman of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Herodek Yarijanian said that the preferential trade agreement between Iran would have a significant impact on his country's trade relations. According to him, trade volume between the two countries has dramatically increased, after signing this agreement in October 2013. Iran mainly imports red meat from Armenia, while Armenia imports Iran raw polymeric materials, machinery, industrial gases, manufactured products, leather and leather goods from Iran (Armenia's market a new opportunity for Iranian producers, 5 / January / 2021).

In 2020, Armenia decided to replace Turkish goods with Iranian ones in markets, which has offered a new opportunity for Iranian producers to have a strong presence in this market as well as to turn this temporary opportunity into a permanent trade tie between the two countries.

Chart (4-2): Iran's Exports to Armenia

	agriculture	Petroleum oil	Natural gas	Natural gas, liquefied	Petroleum coke(2713HS4)	Electrical energy(2716HS4)	Electrical energy(271600HS6)
1997	15.63%				100.00%	24.46%	
1998	8.45%	23.81%			100.00%		
1999	15.46%	9.42%			99.00%	96.73%	96.73%
2000	13.89%	9.49%			81.42%		99.16%
2001	12.42%	14.88%			91.19%	97.76%	97.76%
2002	10.98%	6.54%			17.88%	91.70%	91.70%
2003	9.23%	43.32%			21.41%	87.36%	87.36%
2004	7.47%	13.37%			82.40%	81.96%	81.96%
2005	7.00%	20.79%			99.67%	100.00%	100.00%
2006	5.37%	18.38%			89.61%	100.00%	100.00%

2007	4.13%	8.98%			73.13%	100.00%	100.00%
2008	4.26%	20.28%			82.75%	100.00%	100.00%
2009	3.464%	9.46%			87.49%	71.22%	71.22%
2010	4.01%	8.51%	24.46%		99.16%	100.00%	100.00%
2011	3.09%	7.42%	21.45%		99.64%	46.63%	46.63%
2012	2.89%	5.89%	26.27%		100.00%	46.09%	64.04%
2013	2.26%	3.20%	13.43%		99.98%	22.25%	23.25%
2014	2.10%	5.79%	98.26%		98.23%	16.42%	16.42%
2015	2.79%	24.98%	22.68%		83.53%	45.75%	45.75%
2016	1.57%	2.87%	14.31%	99.98%	96.07%	19.91%	19.91%
2017	2.14%		13.72%	100.00%	99.88%	16.42%	16.42%
2018	2.97%	2.68%	24.43%		99.36%	12.97%	12.97%

<https://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/explore?country=107&product>

Conclusion:

The independence of the Republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia as a result of collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the bipolar world period of the East-West Camp in the early 1990s, generated new geopolitical challenges and opportunities in South Caucasus. These two countries were historically part of Iran's heritage, from which they were split by the contracts imposed by the Russian Empire on Qajar government; after their formation, these two states engaged in territorial disputes, especially over Karabakh; in 1933, such disputes were called Karabakh crisis, which has affected both their bilateral ties and their orientation towards the countries of the region, especially with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At the same time, the tendency of the emerging Republic of Azerbaijan towards Turkey and the historical mentality of people of the Republic of Armenia towards the issue of the Armenian genocide by Ottoman Empire was a decisive factor in Yerevan's relations with Ankara. In addition, energy geopolitics and its role on the competition of the United States and Europe with Russia have an important impact on the regional players such as Iran and Turkey.

The approach of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia is of a priority approach. The priority approach to establishing, maintaining, and expanding relations between Tehran and Yerevan was adopted due to reasons such as disagreement between Tehran and Baku over exploitation of Caspian Sea resources, especially dispatching the West to the Republic of Azerbaijan for oil exploration and extraction in oil fields of the Caspian and some provocative actions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Azeri-speaking regions of Iran, from the very beginning developments in the

former Soviet Union. In one hand, due to the threats of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia needs Iran's support, on the other hand, it has taken advantage of disagreement between Tehran and Baku, which could be attributed to the security theories of Copenhagen School and defensive neoclassicists.

By the same token, following such theories, Baku is in favor of the above-mentioned approach; it seeks to establish a balanced relation with the Islamic Republic of Iran by recognizing Israel and cooperating with Tel Aviv in political, economic and cultural fields. Despite the fact that the majority of Azerbaijan people are Shiites, Iran has developed ties with Armenia in the political, economic and cultural fields. It can be generally concluded that the world of politics is a world of interests, and a utilitarian approach will be prioritized whenever a country's national interests call for it, not necessarily the considerations of ethnic, historical or religious commonalities..

Resources:

1. -Abilov, S. (2009). THE AZERBAIJAN-ISRAEL RELATIONS: A NONDIPLOMATIC, BUT STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP. *OrtaAsyaveKafkasyaArařtırmaları*, (08), 138-156.
2. -Aghajari, Hashem, Mazinani, Rezaei, Mehran, Shahidi, & Mohammad. (2019). The roots of politics and political issues in the Armenian social system of Iran (1390-906 AH / 1501-1725 AD). *Asian Culture and Art Studies*, 1 (1), 1-21.
3. -Aghanian, D. (2007), *the Armenian diaspora: cohesion and fracture*, university press of America polymouth.
4. -Afzali, SidiAsl, & Mahmoudi. (2014). Explaining the relations between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan with a constructivist approach. *Central Eurasian Studies*, 7 (2), 237-264.
5. -Armenia's market a new opportunity for Iranian producers (5/January/2021), available at: <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/456631/Armenia-s-market-a-new-opportunity-for-Iranian-producers>
6. -Arak'el of Tabriz (2010). *Book of History*, Translation by George A. Bournoutian, Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers.
7. -Askari, Seyed Ahmad, ZadQanari, Saeedeh, GhasemiArdehani, Ali. (2011). Redefining the dual identity of Iranian Armenians in the context of globalization: An Armenian study of the Vahidiyeh neighborhood of Tehran. *Cultural Research Society*, 1 (2), 123-157.

8. -Askerov, A. (2020). The NagornoKarabakh Conflict. *Post-Soviet Conflicts: The Thirty Years' Crisis*, 55.
9. -Atai, Farhad, Shekari, Hassan and Azizi, Hamid Reza (2012), "Turkish Government Foreign Policy, Justice and Development in the South Caucasus, *Strategy Quarterly*, Year 21, No. 63, pp. 151-131.
10. -Azarshab, Mohammad Taghi, Najmabadi, Morteza, BakhshiTaliabi, Ramin. (2017). The place of security in the Copenhagen School: A framework for analysis. *Political Science Quarterly*, 13 (40), pp. 146-119.
11. -AlizadehMoghadam, Badralsadat, Hashemipour, Zahrab. (2018). Study of the role of Armenians in Bushehr customs in the Qajar period based on the documents of this period (1210 to 1332 AH / 1795 to 1914 AD. *Historical Research*, 10 (4), 37-19.
12. -Armenia's imports 2020 by country(2020), Available at: <https://trendeconomy.com/data/h2/Armenia/TOTAL>
13. -Azimo, A. (2019). An Overview Of The Relations Between The Republic Of Armenia And The Islamic Republic Of Iran. *Review of Armenian Studies*, (40), 91-111
14. -Baghdarsaian, Edik (2002), *History of the Armenian Church (with a look at the religious beliefs and ideas of Armenians throughout history)*, Tehran: EdikBaghdasarian.
15. -Chaboki, Umm Al-Banin. (2010). Challenges of Iran-Azerbaijan relations. *Central Eurasian Studies*, 3 (2).
16. -Chugaszian, Babken(1997). «Reflection of the myth of Zal; The epic hero of Iran in the history of Armenia »Founder of Khornatsi, Hermetic translation of gentlemen, Peyman, pp. 3 and 4, autumn and winter.
17. -Erendor, M. E., & ÖZTARSU, M. F. (2019). Iranian relations with Azerbaijan and Armenia: a comparative approach in the case of pragmatist politics. *BoluAbantİzzetBaysalÜniversitesiSosyalBilimlerEnstitüsüDergisi*, 19(1), 157-176
18. -Eivazi, Haidar (2011), The encounter of the sage MujtahidMaraghi with the Armenians of Maragheh, *Knowledge of Religions*, 2 (3), pp. 18-5.
19. -Inbar, E. (2011). Israeli-Turkish tensions and their international ramifications. *Orbis*, 55(1), 132-146.
20. -Ghavam, Abdolali (2005), *International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, Tehran: Samat, Second Edition.
21. -Gholizadeh, Khosrow (2014), *Culture of Iranian Mythology*, Tehran, Parseh Publications

-
22. -Issavi, Charles (1369), *Economic History of Iran (Qajar Era: 1215-1332 AH)*, Translator: YaghoubAzhand, Tehran, Gostareh.
 23. -JavadiArjmand, Mohammad Jafar, KaykhosrowDolatiari, &Yazdan. (2012). Geopolitical analysis of Iran-Armenia relations in Anderson's theoretical framework and the design of a regional convergence after the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey.*International Geopolitical Quarterly*, 8 (26), 192-223.
 24. -Jafari, Ali Akbar(1388). Study and analysis of the relations between Nader Shah Afshar and the Armenians 1748-1730 AD / 1160-1142 AH. *AH, Iranian Journal of the International Relations Association*, 1 (1)
 25. -Javadi, Shohreh and Nikouei, Ali (1396), *Anahita Story in Ancient Iran and Armenia*, *Eastern Art and Civilization*, 5 (17)
 26. -Lindenstrauss, G. (2015). *Israel-Azerbaijan: Despite the constraints, a special relationship*. *Strategic Assessment*, 17(4), 76.
 27. -Logan, D. (2018). Mehran Kamrava (ed). *The Great Game in West Asia: Iran, Turkey and the South Caucasus*.
 28. -Fallah, Rahmatullah (2011); "The Political Environment of Shiite Islamism in the Republic of Azerbaijan", *Quarterly Journal of Strategic Studies of the Islamic World*, Twelfth Year, No. 45, Spring.
 29. -Mousavi, Mohammad Reza (2012), *Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Towards the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*, *Quarterly Journal of the Caucasus Cultural Center*, Third Year, No. 10, pp. 20-20.
 30. -Nalbandian, G.M (1996) "Revival of incomprehensible and lost words of Persian language with the help of Armenian language", translated by Arahunsian, *historical studies*,6(1)
 31. -Petros, T. G. (2003). *Evolution of Armenia's Foreign Policy*.*Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt*.
 32. -Saparov, A. (2014). *From conflict to autonomy in the Caucasus: The Soviet Union and the making of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and NagornoKarabakh*. Routledge.
 33. -Saeed Vosoughi and Ehsan Sheikhoon (2012) *The View of International Relations Theories on Information Transformation and Its Impact on the Concept of Security (with Emphasis on Theories of Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism, Political and International Approaches*, No. 30).
 34. -Rahimova, G. (2018). *Turkish influence on Israel-Azerbaijanrelations (Doctoral dissertation)*

35. -Tüysüzoğlu, G. (2014). How demand for security influence the shaping of foreign policy: Using the theory of securitisation to understand Armenia–Iran relations. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 5(2), 192-201
36. -Walt, S. M. (1991). The renaissance of security studies. *International studies quarterly*, 35(2), 211-239.
37. -Weiden Gran, Goo (1998), *Iranian Religions, Manouchehr Culture Translation*, Tehran, AgahanIdeh Publications,

Site:

1. -"1995 Country Reports on Economic Policy and Trade Practices", *US Department of State*, accessed March 20, 2021, Available at:https://1997-2001.state.gov/issues/economic/trade_reports/95_toc.html.