

Historical geography of Zangazur

Zangazur is one of the territories of Azerbaijan with a rich history.

The historical lands of Azerbaijan, which cover a wide geography from Derbent to Zanjan, from Kirkuk to Eastern Anatolia, were from time to time, divided and settled within the borders of the modern Azerbaijan Republic. The modern state of Azerbaijan itself is divided into two parts by the Zangazur corridor.

The territory of Zangazur covers part of the Zangazur ridge, the longest mountain range in the Lesser Caucasus, southwest of the border of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and southeast of the territory of Armenia. Part of the historical Zangazur within the borders of Azerbaijan called Eastern Zangazur, and the rest, on the territory of the present Armenian state - Western Zangazur.

In the ancient period and in the period of the early Middle Ages, the territory of Zangazur was a part of the kingdom of Media, the Scythian empire and the state of Athropaten called Syunik or Sisakan, as well as the Azerbaijani state of Albania. In the middle of the 6th century, because of the administrative reform of Khosrov I Anushiravan, was created the Adurbadagan region; the north and south of Azerbaijan were united under one name. At the beginning of the 7th century, because of the victory of the emperor of Byzantine Heraclius II, in the war with the Sassanian emperor Khosrov Parviz II, the desire for the independence in the countries under Persian rule intensified.

As a result, the principality of Syunik became independent. In his "History of Alban" Moses Kalankatuisky notes the existence of the independent principality of Syunik at the beginning of the 7th century.

In the ancient sources this region was called Sisakan or Syunik, and in Arab sources - Siajan. The researchers write that the toponym Sisakan is associated with the name of the Sakas, one of the ancient Turkic tribes that inhabited this area.

Albanian historian Moses Kalankatuisky in his book "History of Alban" provides information about the Albanian tribes living in this area, as well as about the Gargars, Khazars, Huns and other Turkic tribes.

Azerbaijan occupied a large territory, starting from the eastern part of the Albanian state - Zangazur and further along the Araz River, from Meghri to Akara, and in the north to the Kapidzhig and Khustup mountains, from the Zangazur ridge to the Bargushad Mountains.

In the second half of the 7th century, the Arabs occupied Zangazur, together with the Albanian state. During the period of the weakening of the Arab Caliphate, small Azerbaijani feudal states arose on the territory of the former Albania.

During the Mongol rule, Zangazur was a part of the Nakhchivan district of the Azerbaijani region. This situation persisted during the periods of the existence of the states of Garagoyunlu and Aggoyunlu, as well as during the first Safavids.

In the written sources from the XIV century, the term "Zangazur" is known as a toponymal.

The toponymal "Zangazur" is associated with the name of the Zangi tribes that living in these areas, distinguished by their courage and chivalry, and the arrival of the Arabs in these areas. In Arabic, "sur"

means a stone wall, fortress, tower. This warlike and freedom-loving tribe fought the Arabs to the end. Undoubtedly, over the years they built dozens of the fortresses and fortifications, and used local natural fortifications as a means of fighting the enemy.

In the 13-14 centuries, the lands of Zangazur were geographically part of the Nakhchivan district and the Arran province of the Azerbaijani region.

In the late Middle Ages, during the collapse of Syunik, most of Zangazur became part of the Gapanat and Nakhchivan provinces. Gapanat covered the southern part of Zangazur up to the Bargushad ridge. Sisian was a part of the Nakhchivan region. Gorus and Kashtag (Lachin) districts of Zangazur were a part of the Karabakh region.

During the Ottoman-Safavid war of 1578-1590, the Ottomans, who captured most of Azerbaijan, allocated the Nakhchivan province together with the Sisian and Gapanat regions from the region of Azerbaijan and transferred it to the Chukhursad province. District of Gapanat was divided into the districts of Bargushad and Urud. The small Bazarchay district separated from the Sisian region. The territories of Gapanat and Zangazur, together with the provinces of Bayazid and Alashkert of Chukhursad, formed into a separate Bayazid district. The regions of Keshtag and Khakar were part of the Karabakh (Ganja) region.

After Shah Abbas I conquered the Azerbaijani lands at the beginning of the 17th century, he again included Nakhchivan, Gapanat and Bargushad in the Azerbaijani region. Bazarchay region was annexed to Sisian. By the end of the 30s of the 17th century, the Nakhchivan and Sisian regions became a part of the beylerbey of Chukhursad.

In the 20s of the 18th century, the Ottomans again captured most of Azerbaijan. During their rule in the 1920s-1930s, part of the lands of Zangazur - Sisian and Meghri-Chukhursad regions, Bargushad, Khakar, Keshtag, Gulandar districts and part of Keshtak - were part of the Ganja-Karabakh region.

Until 1735, Nadir Shah Afshar, who took away all the Azerbaijani lands from the Ottomans, removed the Karabakh (Ganja) beylerbeks, Ziyadogullars, and Karabakh melikdoms from subordination, because they opposed his election as shah and handed them over to his brother Ibrahim, the ruler of Azerbaijan. ... After the assassination of Nadir Shah in 1747, his empire was divided into the many small states - khanates. The territory of Zangazur became part of the Karabakh Khanate, founded by Panahali Khan.

As an administrative-territorial unit, Zangazur emerged at the end of the first half of the 19th century. According to the Gulistan Treaty of 1813, these territories were included in the territories occupied by Russia.

After the Russians abolished the Karabakh Khanate in 1822 and turned it into a military district within the Muslim provinces, in the early 1930s was formed a large Zangazur district, uniting nine "minbashi" states within this province (minbashi is the head, or chief of a thousand soldiers - thousanders). These are the former districts of Sisian, Tatev, Zangazur, Garachorlu, Pusyan, Bargushad, Gapan, Meghri-Guney and Chavundur (Chuldur).

According to the new administrative structure introduced on January 1, 1841, the former Zangazur region within the Karabakh region of the Caspian area was divided into the two regions - Zangazur and Meghri.

According to the new administrative-territorial division of 1846, the Karabakh district was renamed into the Shusha district, and the Caspian region - into the Shamakhi province. In connection with the

formation of the Iravan province in 1850-186, the southern part of Zangazur as part of Meghri (the former province of Gapanat together with the Gapan, Meghri-Guney, Chavundur and Pusyan districts) became part of the Ordubad district of this province.

On February 25, 1868, when was formed of the Elizavetpol province, the Zangazur district was created as part of the territories of the Shusha district of the Baku province and the Nakhchivan district of the Iravan province.

This uyezd bordered with the districts of Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchivan of the Iravan province, and with the districts of Javanshir, Shusha, Jebail of the Elizavetpol province, and across the Araz River with Iran. The district of Zangazur was the largest among the districts of the Elizavetpol province. At the end of the 19th century, the territory of the district of Zangazur was 7.83 thousand square meters. km.

Historically, Zangazur was divided into 4 regions - Guney (Meghri), Gafan, Zangazur (Gorus) and Sisian (Garakilse).

During the time of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, the Zangazur district was considered an indisputable territory within the Ganja province. Most of the territory of Zangazur was occupied by the Armenian armed forces in 1918-1920, and only in 1921, the Zangazur region was formed in the western part of the historical district, which was included in the administrative territory of Armenia. The eastern part of Zangazur, which remained in the Azerbaijan SSR, became the Gubadli region. In the documents of 1925, Zangilan is mentioned as part of the Jebail region.

According to the administrative division, the territory of Eastern Zangazur covers Lachin, Gubadli, Zangilan regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Western Zangazur covers the territories of the former Sisian, Gafan, Gorus and Meghri regions, which are currently part of the Syunik region of Armenia.