AZERBAIJANI MANUSCRIPTS PRESERVED IN VATICAN LIBRARIES IN THE RESEARCH OF PROFESSOR FARID ALAKBARLI

Abstract

Professor Farid Alakbarli, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Head of the Department of "Translation of Manuscripts and Old Printed Books" of the Institute of Manuscripts named after Mohammad Fuzuli of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS) (hereinafter - the Institute) has achieved important scientific results (3) in discovering, researching and describing valuable sources about his history of Azerbaijan preserved in Vatican libraries. The director of the institute, academician Teymur Karimli, highly appreciating his activity, said: “Farid Alakbarli conducted research in the Vatican Secret Archive and Apostolic Library, and has brought copies of a number of manuscripts and documents belonging to Azerbaijan to our country. However, this is only a small part of the materials there. There is a need to expand the search and reveal the rich wealth of Azerbaijan as a whole” (4).

Key words: uncommon books, medieval authors, archive documents, ancient maps, Turkish-language manuscripts, Armenian sources.

Vatican Libraries - The Secret Archives of the Pope's Office, which has been operating for hundreds of years, and the Vatican Apostolic Library, a special treasure of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, are considered as the world's most magnificent book monuments with their rich ancient and historical archives. These archives are located in the territory of the independent Vatican State, ruled by the Pope. As a result of the scholar's research, documents belonging to the history of Azerbaijan discovered in the Vatican Secret Archives are in Italian, Latin, Greek, French, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Mongolian, Armenian and other languages. These sources cover the millennial period of Azerbaijan's history - the X-XX centuries and among them, the secret correspondence of medieval Azerbaijani rulers (Elkhani, Safavid, Afshar, Gajar, etc.) with the Popes of Rome arouse particular interest. Other sources are mostly related
to the religious activities and propaganda of the Vatican Church in Azerbaijan, which is one of the most noteworthy points from the religious-historical point of view. As a result of research conducted in the Vatican Apostolic Library, ancient manuscripts and numerous maps belonging to medieval Azerbaijani authors were found. “They are sources in Turkish (Azerbaijani and Ottoman), Persian and Arabic languages” (1). Professor F. Alakbarli provided the readers with the full list and brief description of the documents found during the research in his book “Manuscripts belonging to Azerbaijan kept in the Vatican archives” published in 2014.

Although valuable documents and manuscripts belonging to Azerbaijan collected over the centuries are preserved in Vatican libraries, unfortunately, no extensive research has been conducted by Azerbaijani scholars in order to discover and research them in the Vatican. Only on the basis of comprehensive cultural cooperation developed between Azerbaijan and the Vatican by the Government of Azerbaijan and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Professor Farid Alakbarli identified historical documents belonging to Azerbaijan in Vatican libraries in 2010-2014 and involved them in serious scientific research. The scholar brought to the institute photos of manuscripts belonging to Azerbaijan preserved in Vatican libraries in electronic version. It is gratifying that some of these manuscripts have been restored with the special support of President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Mehriban Aliyeva. According to the results of Professor F. Alakbarli's research in this field, the directions of research can be systematized as follows:

- Works on Caucasian Albania;
- Documents on the relations of Azerbaijani Nestorians with the Vatican;
- Correspondence of Azerbaijani rulers with Popes of Rome in the Middle Ages;
- Documents on the relations between the Vatican and the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic;
- Secret archival documents related to the religious policy of the Vatican in Azerbaijan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries;
- Azerbaijan on ancient maps;
- Medieval Azerbaijani manuscripts in the Vatican;
- Turkic-language manuscripts first described in the Vatican Apostolic Library.

The scholar noted about the documents identified during the research: “There are works of poetry and prose, manuscripts lightening the history of Azerbaijan, the history of the Eldenizs, Aghgoyunlus, Garagoyunlus, Safavids and other Azerbaijani states among the found manuscripts” (2).

Manuscripts in Armenian by the Albanian author Mkhitar Goshun (1120-1213), who was born in the medieval city of Ganja and discovered during research on Caucasian Albania, are of special interest. The author's three manuscripts, the Code of Law, "What is said during the liturgy (worship)" and "Prayers recited during the liturgy" are kept in the Vatican Apostolic Library. “Armenian authors unjustifiably declare Mkhitar Goshu as an Armenian writer and thinker. This is due to the fact that the works of Mkhitar Gosh have survived only in the Armenian language” (3, p.17). However, F. Alakbarli shows that in Mkhitar Gosh's books he calls himself an Albanian by nationality and his country as Albania. In this regard, it is worth emphasizing that the author of the Albanian chronicle Mkhitar Gosh was the Albanian author, that

Alakbarli also conducted important research in the study of Armenian sources about Caucasian Albania in the Vatican Apostolic Library. He involved the book "General History" by the medieval Armenian historian Varda (1198-1271) about the history of Caucasian Albania, its rulers and patriarchs (Catholicos) to his research. “Part of the text was translated from ancient Armenian (Grabar) into Latin in the Vatican Library” (3, p.17). The author has mentioned the names of the patriarchs of the independent Albanian Church and has provided a list of them.

Historical research also shows that Nestorianism (nasturilik), one of the currents of Christianity, has become widespread in Azerbaijan since the early Middle Ages. “According to the teachings of Nestorianism (nasturilik), the nature of God entered Jesus after his birth, and therefore the Mother Mary should be called the mother of Jesus, not the mother of God.” (3, p.19). That is, according to this teaching, Mary gave birth to an ordinary man, not to God. God then included his word in it. During his research, F. Alakbarli obtained a lot of information about the relations on the Popes with the Azerbaijani Nestorians. Thus, the letters sent by the Nestorian patriarchs of Azerbaijan to the popes were found during the research conducted in the Vatican Secret Archives. The letters written by the Nestorian partisan Mar Yabalakha to the Pope was of great importance. Of these, two letters sent by the Patriarch of the East, Yabalakhan to Boniface VIII (1302) and Benedict XI (1304) and a copy of the letter sent to him earlier by Benetic XI XI has been analyzed by F. Alakbarli. It is clear from the letters that Mar Yabalakhan had a great favour for the Catholic movement, and therefore developed comprehensive relations with the Vatican. He declared in a letter to Benedict XI in 1304 that he embraced Catholicism, but the Nestorians rejected this choice, and the union of the Nestorian and Catholic churches did not take place.

It is known that the relations between Azerbaijan and the Vatican have their roots in the distant past and have a rich history. For this reason, Professor F. Alakbarli’s research has a particular place of documents (letters) written in Azerbaijani (Turkish), Persian, Latin, Italian, Mongolian, Arabic and other languages, reflecting the relations of Roman popes with medieval Azerbaijani rulers in the Vatican Secret Archives. These are the correspondences of the rulers of the Elkhanids and Safavid with the Popes of Rome. There are the letters of rulers such as Shah Ismail, Shah Tahmasib, Shah Abbas, Nadir Shah, Gajar among documents. Correspondence of Uzun Hasan, the ruler of Aghgoyunlu, was also found. “It can be said about the word Persia (translated into Azerbaijani as Iran) used in these documents that from ancient Greek times, Europeans called certain areas of modern Iran and Azerbaijan as "Persia", but used the word not as a national concept, but simply as a place name, a geographical term.” (3, pp. 21-22). Analysis of the documents suggests that, the popes regularly sent diplomats and missionaries to the palaces of Abaga Khan (1234-1282) and Argun Khan (1258-1291), the rulers of the Elkhan state (1256-1335), as well as Uzun Hasan, ruler of Aghgoyunlu (1423-1478) and the Safavids (1501-1736) and tried to form an alliance with them against the Ottomans. Among them the letter sent by Argun khan to Pope Niccolo V in 1290, Kazan khan’s letter to Pope Boniface VIII in 1302, Pope Pius V’s reply letter to Safavid Shah Tahmasib in 1571, Pope Clement VIII in 1592, 1605-1620- Pope Paul V’s letters to the Safavid ruler Abbas I and other historical documents draw attention with their rich facts. “For instance, in a letter sent by Pope
Paul V to Shah Abbas I on July 20, 1605, Paul stated that he regretted that he could not prevent the assassination and apologized for it. Nevertheless, the Pope expressed hope that friendly relations with the Safavids, both in trade and in the military, would continue as before.” (3, p. 24). During the research, the researcher also suggested that it is possible to get an idea of the content of some documents through their names. We hope that a extensive analysis of all these important documents will eventually allow the addition of new facts to the history of Azerbaijan.

Historical research proves that Azerbaijan has always had close relations with the Vatican since the time of Caucasian Albania. Attempts to establish political and cultural ties with the Vatican were made during the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920), which was one of the brightest pages in the history of our country. The documents unknown to us regarding the activities of Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire found by F. Alakbarli in the Vatican Secret Archives are an important source to prove this. “According to these documents, the Azerbaijani ambassador was the initiator and participant in the project to erect a statue of Pope Benedict XV, a supporter of the Christian-Muslim dialogue. The Pope's representative in Istanbul sent a message to the Vatican about this issue” (3, p. 26). Unfortunately, the end of the sultan's rule in Turkey and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, including the collapse of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, led to the non-implementation of this project. Thus, after the death in 1918 of Pope Benedict XVI, a peace-loving man who always called for peace in the West and worked for the absence of hostility between Christianity and Islam, Y.V. Chamanzaminli, who initiated the erection of a statue in Istanbul, represented the will of the Azerbaijani government.

Professor F. Alakbarli's research shows that a large number of secret documents in Latin, Italian and French related to the religious propaganda in the territories inhabited by Azerbaijanis in the late 19th and early 20th centuries are preserved in the Vatican Secret Archives. An analysis of the sources revealed suggests that the promotion of Catholicism during this period was supported not only by the Vatican, but also by the French government, one of the main powers in the Catholic world, for which a large amount of money was allocated from the French budget. “This activity was mainly characterized by the support of Christianity and the promotion of Catholicism in southern Azerbaijan (Iran) and northern Azerbaijan.” (3, p.28). Of course, the main direction of this activity was the opening of churches and Christian schools in these areas and the full support of national Christian minorities. Armenians who converted to Catholicism also studied in these schools. Catholic schools were launched in Urmia, Tabriz, Shamakhi and Baku. It was mentioned that many Armenians who converted to Catholicism later returned to Gregorianism, complaining that they did not get any profit. The researcher stated in his work on the subject that the activities of the Vatican Church in religious propaganda continued even in the Soviet era in the territory of the South Caucasus republics.

Medieval European and Eastern maps belonging to the history of Azerbaijan found in Vatican libraries are of crucial scientific significance. The topicality of these geographical maps covering the XV-XVIII centuries is that they confirm the existence of a country called "Azerbaijan" in ancient and medieval times and define the boundaries of geographical areas such as "Azerbaijan", "Karabakh", "Medes", "Shirvan" and "Arran". Undoubtedly, despite the fabrica-
tions of Armenian scholars, the territory extending to Baku, Shamakhi, Ganja, Tabriz, Gabala, Karabakh, Yerevan and Kars is shown as Azerbaijani lands. One of the interesting facts is that some maps mention the Caspian Sea as the "Baku Sea". It should be stated that in the map compiled by Isaac Tyron, the territories from Lake Van to Gilan are presented as Azerbaijan (Adirbeitzan), Armenia is shown in a very small area within Turkey, around Lake Van. Professor F. Alakbarli also revealed that “Armenia is not on the map of the famous Ottoman cartographer Ibrahim Mutafarriga. The territory of the modern Republic of Armenia is integral part of Yerevan, Ganja and Azerbaijan provinces. The name of Ararat is given as Aghridaghi” (3, p. 32). Thus, these maps resolutely refute the myth that the toponym of Azerbaijan belongs only to South Azerbaijan (Iran) and that the lands of Karabakh are supposedly lands of Armenia.

The works of outstanding Azerbaijani authors, Nizami, Fuzuli, Nasimi, Shabustari, Suhrawardi and others, as well as manuscripts of medieval Azerbaijani authors unknown to us are deemed as valuable sources among the documents involved in the research. During the research, F. Alakbarli has found 10 manuscripts belonging to Mohammad Fuzuli. These are both complete manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts. Five copies of the great poet's work "Hadiikatus-suada" (Garden of Happiness) had also been identified. It should be noted that this work is dedicated to the religious tragedy that took place in Karbala in 680 and this is one of the best examples of Azerbaijani fiction. It has been determined that Fuzuli's work “Sahhat va Maraz” ("Health and Illness"), poetic divan, numerous rubai and ghazals are preserved in the Apostolic Library.

It is noteworthy that the rich artistic heritage of the prominent Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi also takes its place in the Vatican libraries. Of course, not only quite ancient and valuable copies, but also various incomplete copies and fragments had been found among them. During the research, F. Alakbarli identified 3 copies of Nizami Ganjavi's "Khosrov and Shirin" and one copy of "Leyli and Majnun" and involved in research. The miniature and non-miniature fragments of the great poet's work "Makhzanul-asrar" identified by the researcher are of great importance. “One of the valuable copies is Nizami Ganjavi's complete Khamsa. It was copied by Ibn Abu Turab al-Katib Nureddin al-Isfahani in 1071 AH. It is an elegant copy decorated with colorful ornaments” (3, p.35).

Poems belonging to our great poet Imadeddin Nasimi, who’s glorious 650th anniversary was celebrated last year, were found in his 10 manuscripts, as well as different poetry collections. Works of the ruler of the Safavid state, poet Shah Ismail Khatai are also preserved in the Apostolic Library. According to the researches Khatai is promoted in the Vatican not only as a Turkish or Persian author, but also as an Azerbaijani poet. It has been determined that Khatai's small collection of poems and a collection of poems containing 166 ghazals are kept in the library.

Professor F. Alakbarli noted that he found a valuable work on philosophy: “"Kitabul-hat allati sinifha ash-Sheikh al-Imam Shihabeddin as-Suhrawardi", consisting of the words of the prominent Azerbaijani philosopher Shihabeddin Suhrawardi (1154-1191) was kept in the Apostolic Libraries. The manuscript consists of 101 pages and was copied in the 18th century” (3, p.36).

As a result of the research, it is possible to show the works of medieval Azerbaijani authors such as “Kitabi-Sehri” by Abdul-Majid Shirvani, “Commentary on the work of Ahmad
bin Muhammad al-Hilli on Arabic grammar” by Abdul-Wahhab Zanjani, “Havvasul-asma al-Husna” by Jalaladdin at-Tabrizi, “Nafratul-Yemen fi ma yazul bi-Zikrihi ash-shujan” by Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ali Shirvani and other manuscripts found in the Vatican Archives and not yet widely known and studied in our country.

As a result of the research, 73 Turkic-language manuscripts, which have not been studied, described and included in any Vatican catalog in the Vatican Apostolic Library, were first studied and described by F. Alakbarli. These manuscripts include priceless works by Azerbaijani, Ottoman and other Turkic-speaking authors. Some of them are described in detail in the scholar's book "Manuscripts of Azerbaijan in the Vatican archives". For instance, the 17th century Ottoman historian Mohammad Edirnavi's Nakhjatut-Tavarikh deals with the history of the Garagoyunlu, Aghgoyunlu and Safavid states and has not been included in any catalog of the Vatican Apostolic Library. The manuscript was first described by F. Alakbarli. Abu Talib Salik's "Khamasul-Abvab", which consists of only 15 pages, is devoted to Sufism and describes the rules of the dervish way of life.

One of the 19th century Turkic-language works, the author of which is unknown, provides comprehensive information about the Safavids, Qizilbash and Gajars, their wars, and the Russian occupation of the Caucasus, Baku, and Tbilisi. The book was written in Turkish and is one of the unexplored, not cataloged manuscripts. One of them is the "Collection of Stories" in the Turkish language of the XV century. This collection is one of the ancient examples of the Azerbaijani literary language. There are examples of literature written in a language close to the language of "Dada Gorgud". Of course, this is an important fact that proves the antiquity of our language. Thus, the Turkic-language manuscripts found in the Vatican Apostolic Library were first involved in the research of F. Alakbarli, which is an important event for Azerbaijani science.

Professor Farid Alakbarli, as a prominent scholar and researcher, made a great contribution to the enrichment of Azerbaijani manuscripts with his scientific results obtained at the end of his intensive and long-term research in the Vatican libraries. It is possible to clarify a lot of secret moments in the history of Azerbaijan through the documents that he brought to our country. These sources contain a lot of information about Azerbaijan. It is noteworthy that the reports of the missionaries studied by the researcher contain a lot of significant information about the geographical position, economy, population, territory, culture, military force, languages spoken, national culture of Azerbaijan. For instance, the sources indicate what cities, what monuments there are in Azerbaijan, what peoples, tribes lived, whether there is a Christian population and so on. One of the main historical facts is that the reports mention the Turkic-speaking population in Ardabil, Tabriz, Khoy and Urmia. In many cases, our neighbors make territorial claims. Therefore, these records are of great help in identifying our historical lands. Our folklore, national traditions are mentioned. Information about secret agreements and military cooperation in the letters arouse special interest. Undoubtedly, their detailed translation is very relevant and significant from a historical and political point of view.
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Güllər Axundova

Vatikan kitabxanalardırında qorunan Azərbaycan əlyazmaları professor Fərid Ələkbərlinin tədqiqətlərində\n
XÜLASƏ

Məqalədə görkəmlə əlyazmaşınmasına-alim, professor Fərid Ələkbərlinin Heydər Əliyev Fon-
dunun dəstəyi ilə Vatikanın Məxfi Arxivində və Apostol Kitabxanasında müəzəfə olunan
Azərbaycan əlyazmaları haqqında apardığı tədqiqətlərdən bəhs olunur. Alim 2010-2014-cü illər
ərzində Vatikan kitabxanalardırıncak Azərbaycana aid tarixi əlyazmaları aşkar etməmiş
əzərəq tədqiqətə cəlb etmişdir. Araşdırmalarda Vatikanın Məxfi Arxivindən 700-dan çox mənbə təhlil
olunmuş və Azərbaycan tarixinə aid 85 qiymətli sanad müəyyənəşdirilmişdir. Onların arasında
Qafqaz Albaniyasında 4 tarixi mənbə də vardır. Vatikan Apostol Kitabxanasında aparılan
tədqiqətin nəticəsində 400-dan çox qədim əlyazma əsər öyrənilmiş və həmin kitabxanada orta
əsr Azərbaycan müəlliflərinə məxsus 80 dəyərlə əlyazma aşkar olunmuşdur. Bunlar Azərbaycan
(türk), fars, əsəb dillərinə dair yazılmas və orта əlyazma kitabxanalardır. Onların arasında həm məşhur
Azərbaycan müəlliflər - Nizami, Füzuli, Naşimi, Şəhəbərdi, Sühəvardi və b. əsərləri, həm də
bugünkü qəddər biza mədəni olmayan orta əsr Azərbaycan müəlliflərinin 11 əsər də vardır. Fərid
Ələkbərlə Azərbaycan dair bir sıra əlyazma və sənadərin rəqəmsal sürətlərinin ölkəmizə
gətirilmişdir.

Açar sözər: nadir kitablar, orta əsr müəllifləri, arxiv sənədləri, qədim xəritələr, türkdilli
əlyazmalar, erməni mənbələri
Гюлляр Ахундова

Азербайджанские рукописи, хранящиеся в библиотеках Ватикана в исследовании профессора Фариды Алекперлы

РЕЗЮМЕ

В статье рассматриваются исследования выдающегося ученого, профессора Фариды Алекперлы по азербайджанским рукописям, хранящимся в Секретном архиве и Апостольской библиотеке Ватикана при поддержке Фонда Гейдара Алиева. В течение 2010-2014 гг. Ученый обнаружил и занимался изучением исторических рукописей об Азербайджане в библиотеках Ватикана. В ходе исследования было проанализировано более 700 источников в Секретных архивах Ватикана и выявлено 85 ценных документов по истории Азербайджана. Среди них 4 документа, касающихся Кавказской Албании. В результате исследований, проведенных в Апостольской библиотеке Ватикана, было изучено более 400 древних рукописей, и в этой библиотеке было обнаружено 80 ценных рукописей, принадлежащих средневековым азербайджанским авторам. Это средневековые рукописи, написанные на азербайджанском (турецком), персидском и арабском языках. Среди них известные азербайджанские авторы - Низами, Физули, Насими, Шабустари, Сухраварди и другие. Есть 9 произведений средневековых азербайджанских авторов, которые до сих пор нам неизвестны. Фарид Алекперлы привез в нашу страну цифровые копии ряда рукописей и документов об Азербайджане.

Ключевые слова: редкие книги, средневековые авторы, архивные документы, древние карты, тюркские рукописи, армянские источники.