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DYNASTIC TIES OF DAGESTANI FEUDAL FAMILIES AS A FACTOR IN FIGHTING THE INVASION OF NADIR SHAH

Abstract. Based on the analyzed information from various sources and a wide range of literature, the author makes an attempt to assess the significance of the dynastic ties of the Dagestan rulers in organizing a joint struggle against the Iranian conquest in the 18th century, to determine the role of political marriage in the relationship of local rulers. To achieve this goal, the study considers a number of key issues, from which particular conclusions are drawn. The work applies general scientific and specific methods. When restoring dynastic ties, the information from written sources was critically analyzed. To structure the work, a typological method was used, which made it possible to group the information obtained. By examining the political and administrative map of the region, the potential complexity of the political relations of local dynasties that formed over the centuries in a tight space has been shown. In the context of global history, the ways of forming family ties between royal houses are determined: the presence of a common ancestor of the Dagestan dynasties, the separation of an independent branch of the dynasty through conflict, the peaceful division of the state between heirs, followed by the separation of independent dynasties, and the conclusion of political marriages. The same universal formula is used by the author to restore family ties between the Dagestan dynasties (Shamkhals of Tarky, Kaitag Utsmis, Kazikumukh, Quba and Avar khans) and their neighbors. Special attention is paid to the restoration of dynastic ties during the invasion of the Iranian conqueror Nadir Shah in the 18th century. Analyzing political alliances in the context of dynastic ties, the author considers the role of political marriage in organizing a joint struggle against the Iranian ruler. The study allows us to draw conclusions about the significant role of political marriage as a tool of diplomacy, but far from having a decisive role in specific historical events.

Keywords: political marriage, Nadir Shah, dynasty, ShamkhalKhasbulat, Dagestan.

ИСТОРИЯ

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ДИНАСТИЧЕСКИЕ СВЯЗИ ДАГЕСТАНСКИХ ВЛАДЕЛЬЧЕСКИХ ФАМИЛИЙ КАК ФАКТОР В БОРЬБЕ С ВТОРЖЕНИЕМ НАДИР-ШАХА

Аннотация. На основе проанализированных сведений различных источников и широкого круга литературы автором предпринята попытка оценить значение династических связей дагестанских правителей в организации совместной борьбы против иранского завоевания в XVIII в., определить какова была роль политического брака во взаимоотношениях местных правителей. Для достижения этой цели автором был рассмотрен ряд общих вопросов, из которых были сделаны частные выводы. В работе были применены общенаучные, а также частные научные методы. При восстановлении династических связей были критически проанализированы сведения письменных источников. Для структуризации работы был использован типологический метод, позволивший сгруппировать полученные сведения. Посредством рассмотрения политико-административной карты региона продемонстрирована потенциальная сложность политических отношений местных династий, формировавшихся на протяжении веков, на тесном пространстве. В контексте общемировой истории определены пути формирования родственных связей между монаршими домами: наличие общего предка дагестанских династий, выделение самостоятельной ветви династии посредством конфликта, мирное разделение государства между наследниками с последующим выделением независимых династий и заключение политических браков. Эта же универсальная формула используется автором для восстановления родственных связей между дагестанскими династиями (тарковскими шамхалами, кайтагскими уцмиями, казикумухскими, кубинскими и аварскими ханами) и их соседями. Особое внимание в работе уделено восстановлению династических связей в период нашествия иранского завоевателя Надир-шаха в XVIII в. Анализируя политические союзы в контексте династических связей, автор делает выводы о роли политического брака в организации совместной борьбы с иранским правителем. Исследование позволяет сделать выводы о значительной роли политического брака в качестве инструмента дипломатии, но далеко не определяющей роли в конкретных исторических событиях.

Ключевые слова: политический брак; Надир-шах; династия; шамхал Хасбулат; Дагестан.

Introduction

In the middle of 1741, Iranian troops under the command of Nadir Shah invaded Dagestan. The result of the campaign, which lasted a year and a half, was a crushing defeat and retreat of the Iranian army from the territory of “the land of mountains”. We know the circumstances under which the Iranian Shah was defeated and which peoples managed to defeat “the terror of the universe” and to write down the enemy in history as “Iran harab” (“the death of Iran”) [1, p. 71]. The historiography of these large-scale events is very extensive, which is substantiated by a large number of sources of very different origin (written sources of local origin, Iranian sources, epigraphic monuments, etc.).

Some prominent researchers, such as V. Gadzhiev, N.A. Sotavov, and T.M. Aitberov, devoted their works to the struggle of Dagestanis against Nadir Shah [2, p. 264; 3; 4]. However, the Dagestan conquest of the Iranian Shah have received little attention in the works of Iranian historians. Therefore, of particular interest are the studies that examine the works of foreign authors [5, p. 83-92; 6, p. 71-82; 7, p. 259-268].

With an extensive historiography, certain aspects of the topic have not been adequately explored. This study will discuss one of them.

Dagestan at the time of the events in question was not a unified state. The region consisted of many political structures, which can be divided into two main types – feudal entities and unions of rural communities. The former wielded great influence, primarily due to having a sole ruler, and determined the regional political agenda. This inevitably led to contradictions between the rulers of the feudal formations. Given that each of them was ruled by a different dynasty, the conflicts sometimes lasted for a long time.

It is well known that, with few exceptions, all the rulers took an active part in repelling foreign aggression. Did the old grudges, territorial and dynastic disputes prevent them from forming an alliance? Thus, in the 13th century Russia, princes could not find the general agreement, having lost their independence in the fight against the Tatar-Mongol invasion, given the fact that they were representatives of one kin, and in most cases, close relatives.

The kinship between Dagestani rulers was also present: some of them were cousins to one another, they often arranged dynastic marriages of their children, etc. The relationship between Dagestani rulers is known thanks to written evidences and historical facts reflected in them.

Thus, in the 18th century a Russian nobleman A. Lopukhin, who returned to Russia from Persia through the territory of Dagestan, left written testimonies of conflicts between local rulers. The Russian ambassador in Persia A. Volynsky sent

a letter to Utsmiy Ahmed-khan of Kaitag with a request to assist A. Lopukhin in passing the mountainous territory. He received refusal, motivated by the fact that Utsmiy did not recognize the authority of Shemakhi Khan and Derbent Sultan, as well as Shamkhal of Kazanische Umalat [6, p. 12]. Later, the Utsmiy and his allies, the Sultan of Utamysh and the Ruler of Buynak, attacked the mission of A. Lopukhin, thus demonstrating his stance on the foreign policy [8, p. 224]. Whereas the Shamkhal of Tarky, the Sultan of Derbent and the Ruler of Aksay, on the contrary, sided with the tsarist administration.

During Peter the Great's Persian campaign in 1722, the Dagestani rulers only confirmed their earlier principally different foreign policy positions. The Utamish Sultan and the ruler of Endirey categorically opposed Russian intervention. In contrast, the Shamkhal of Tarky and the Naib of Derbent welcomed the Russian Emperor. A young Quba Ruler Huseyn-khan was also sworn in to the Russian emperor [9, p. 16].

Regardless of the motives of the rulers in the abovementioned historical events, they show absence of a common course among Dagestan rulers even against external forces. This was the case before the invasion of Nadir Shah, against whom almost all rulers united. From this follows the aim of the work: to determine to what extent political marriages at the time under study affected the political alliances and, in principle, the political orientation of the Dagestani rulers; whether they contributed to the joint reflection of the Iranian invasion.

In order to achieve this goal, a number of tasks need to be accomplished:

- To consider the political-administrative map of the region at the time of the events in question
- To analyze the links that existed between the rulers of these territories
- To determine whether political marriages were a tool for establishing unions and how political conflicts affected inter-dynastic marriages.

Political-administrative map of the region in the second quarter of the XVIII century

By the 40s' of the 18th century, the coastal part of the Northeast Caucasus presented a complex political picture: state entities and unions of rural communities coexisted on a relatively small territory. In the north, one of the most influential entities of the region – The Shamkhalate of Tarky, – and the fiefs of the Zaslak Kumyk dynastic house – the Endireevskoe, Kostekovskoe and Aksayevskoe – were located.

The Endireevsky fief was ruled by the beks of four families: the Alishevs, the Aydemirovs, the Kazanalipovs, and the Temirovs. The Aksayev fief was ruled by

the Alibeks, the Eldars, the Akhmat-Khan Kaplanovs, the Utsmievs, and the Arslanbeks. The Kostekovfief in the first quarter of the 18th century was ruled by Girei or Burchi-Biy, who, having betrayed Russia fled to the mountains to avoid reprisal [10, p. 52]. His possession was transferred to the Endirey ruler AlishHamzin, great-grandson of Sultan Mut, who had founded the Zaslakfief, having separated during the conflict with his brothers from the Tarky Shamkhalate.

To the south of the Shamkhalate was the Utamysh Sultanate defeated by Peter the Great in 1722 [11, p. 42], and which existed from the end of the 16th century till 1748, i.e. till the death of its ruler Sultan-Mahmud.

To the west of the Tarkovsky Shamkhalate was a small Mekhtuli Khanate. According to one version, it was founded in the 16th century by a representative of a side branch of the Shamkhal house Khan Kara-Mekhti [12, p. 21].

Further up in the mountains were the Avar and Kazikumukh Khanates, which played a major role in the region. Near the coast was the Derbent Khanate, which lost its former power in the 18th century. During many centuries of its existence Derbent was ruled by various dynasties. In 1722 Peter the Great was welcomed by Imam Kuli-khan of the Safavid tribe of Kurchi [13, p. 169]. After the Treaty of Ganja of 1735, by which Russia ceded Derbent and Baku with their provinces to Persia, the Crimean khan was able to appoint Ahmed-khan Utsmyi as the ruler of Derbent. A bit later Nadir Shah replaced him with sultans from influential Ustajlu and Garachorlu tribes. After Nadir Shah's demise his appointed governor returned to Persia in 1747 [14, p. 259]. The citizens of Derbent proclaimed the son of Imam Kuli-khan Muhammad-Hasan a governor [13, p. 169; 9, p. 14].

The Kaitag Utsmyistvo stretched to the west of the Caspian coast, which occupied the central geographical and historical positions. A single clan connected to the Qurayshites had ruled there for a long time.

Tabasarandomains were divided into Maysum Principality and Qadi lands by the 18th century. As early as the 16th century, Tabasaran experienced a fierce feud. The surviving representatives of the dynasty moved their capital from Khuchni to Dzharag [6, p. 198]. The Qadis came to power in Khuchni. Thus, Tabasaran was divided into two parts and did not represent more than one political entity: Northern Tabasaran (Qadiystvo) and Southern Tabasaran (Maysumstvo). J.G. Herber wrote in 1728: Tabasarans "have their own maysum or governor, named Magummed, and one qadi, named Rustam bey, to whom the Tabasarans obey, while maysum and qadi are subordinated to the Sultan of Derbent, and nowadays to Naib and Russian commandant of Derbent" [6, p. 104].

Apart from feudal possessions, there were dozens of unions of rural communities with fundamentally different structures. These were the Dargin, Lezgin and Avar societies comprising several, and sometimes dozens of villages. Some of them, such as Akusha-Dargo, played a prominent role in the political life of the region.

The political-administrative map of the region and the geographical features of the mountainous zone, which created difficulties for communication, raise a reasonable question, how was the coordinated resistance to a strong strike by the troops of Nadir Shah ensured? Let us consider what reasons other than a common enemy made such an alliance possible.

Kinship as a factor of unification in the relations of Dagestani rulers

Foreign policy alliances and coalitions are usually the result of a stochastic process, justified by the action of a number of known variables that lead to a poorly predictable outcome. Variables in foreign policy are such geopolitical factors as: neighborhood of states, their common interests, presence of a common adversary, cultural and religious unity or ethnic roots.

These factors, as well as the close geographical space that the territory of Dagestan was, made kinship ties between local ruling dynasties inevitable. The study of monarchical states should take into account an important feature: inter-state relations become personal, and the personal ones become inter-state. Let us highlight the possible ways of forming these ties:

- Origination from a common ancestor. This could be either consanguinity with a certain person or a descent from a common “political father”. As an example of the first case we can refer to the Islamic world, in which from the very beginning of the existence of the Arab Caliphate and subsequently in other Muslim states the key role in legitimization was occupied by kinship with the family of the Prophet or at least the origin from the tribe of the Qurayshites. In the second case, the notion of kinship was rather figurative: we can consider Alexander the Great a “political father” whose empire was ruled by satraps who were not his blood kins, but were legitimized thanks to Alexander the Great’s service or his direct appointment. Subsequently, these satraps became the founders of dynasties legitimate due to their connection with Alexander.

- The division of the dynasty into branches as a result of the conflict. A good example of this is a feudal internecine strife in Ancient Russia, that led to the division for some time of Rurikovich dynasty on various branches.

- Peaceful division of the state among the descendants. An example of this rare phenomenon can be found in the history of Frankish Kingdom. After the death of Charlemagne, his sons concluded the Treaty of Verdun, according to which they divided the empire among themselves. Another interesting example from Russian history is when Vladimir Monomakh suggested at the Assembly in Lyubech: “each hold his own Fatherland”, which secured the division of the

state, and therefore of the dynasty. Although the latter rather illustrates a legal consolidation of the already actual division.

- The conclusion of political marriages. They were the most frequent and effective tool for creating and strengthening foreign policy ties. Inter-dynastic marriages bound not only the spouses and their parents, but in the long run led to the proliferation of the family circle of offspring with more and more bek-brothers from different dominions, and thus potential allies. In the case of internal clashes, the side which had more beks and hence more people had more chances to win [15, p. 119].

Kinship ties as an important component of foreign policy relations also took place between the rulers of Dagestan states in the XVIII century. Let us analyze their relations according to the scheme we used above.

- A common ancestor.

As in most Muslim states of the Middle Ages and Modern Age, in Dagestan one of the means of legitimization was the claim of kinship with the family of the Prophet.

In historiography, there are versions based on local historical chronicles about the Arab origin of Dagestani rulers. Thus, according to the Arab version of the origin of the Dagestani dynasties, provided by numerous sources (“Mahmud of Khinalug”, “History of Maz”, “History of descendants of Muhammad-khan of Kazikumukh”, “Derbend-nameh”, “History of Tledok”, “History of Karakaitag”, “Tarih Dagestan”, “Golestan-e Eram”, etc.), it goes that between the 8th and 9th centuries of Hamza and Abbas (uncle of Prophet) reached Caucasus and, having been in the “country of mountains”, left rulers “from their own people”. According to the “History of Tledok”, “History of Maz” and “History of Karakaitag”, “Genealogy of Rustamkhan”, Arabs invaded Haydak and killed the local ruler Gazanfar, appointing Amir-Chupan in his stead (probably, the aforementioned “Amir” is a title, written in sources as a part of a name), a descendant of Hamza [16, p. 1072; 17]. The “History of Maz” also tells an interesting story about the inter-dynastic marriage of the Amir-Chupan’s daughter with the Tabasaran ruler Maysum-bek [17], as well as the capture of the Kumukh domain by the Kaitag ruler and replacement of its ruler by his relative Shamkhal (the supporters of the Arab version explain the origin of the title “Shamkhal” by this name) [17, p. 100; 18, p. 6]. Despite the indication of the Qurayshite origin in several Dagestan dynasties, they did not consider that they had a common ancestor. But still, given the information of the local historical chronicles about marriages of the Dagestani ruling families, the Qurayshite blood should flow in practically all feudal houses of Dagestan and derive from a single ancestor from this tribe.

However, some historians have proved the inconsistency of the Arabian version of the origin of the Dagestani rulers [19, p. 25-26; 20, p. 102-108; 21, p. 20].

Despite the absence of a common Qurayshite ancestor, by the 18th century ties between feudal houses in Dagestan were of close and long-lasting nature.

- A dynastic conflict in which an independent branch with its own seized fiefdom was singled out.

The history of Dagestan state formations knows many examples of such a division of the dynasty. The main reason was a complex and uncertain system of succession that did not take into account many nuances and subtleties, and therefore regularly gave rise to conflicts over the issue of succession between heirs.

The first of the two sons claiming the throne, Alibek and Ilchav-Akhmed, born of different wives, died in the Kaitag Utsmyistvo at the beginning of the 14th century. The feud resulted in Ilchav-Ahmed's exile to the lands he inherited from his mother, the sister of the Shirvanshah Gershasp. Later, his descendants ruled the southern lands of the Utsmyistvo.

In the second half of the 17th century a conflict between the Majalis and Yengikent branches of the Kaitag dynasty broke out. As a result, the Majalis branch was practically annihilated [22, p. 52; 23, p. 98; 24, p. 95]. A survivor of this branch was taken as a child from the territory of the Utsmyistvo, and, having grown up, received from the Iranian shah the possession of a specially allocated, the Quba domain. He laid the foundation of the dynasty of Quba rulers.

Another state formation in Dagestan, the Kazikumukh Shamkhalate, had a relatively vast territory by the 17th century, and largely because of this it underwent decentralization of power. The Shamkhal had to govern the state alternately from two residences: Kazikumukh and Tarky. The latter was preferable because of its location on the plain. The consequence of such governance was the expulsion of the Shamkhals from Kazikumukh to Tarky. In Kazikumukh, power passed to an elected body. Subsequently, independent branches of Shamkhals with their own territories derived from the dynasty of Tarky Shamkhals.

3) Peaceful division of ownership. Years after the conflict between brothers Alibek and Ilchav-Ahmed described above, relations between two branches of the dynasty improved. Muhammad-bek son of Ilchav-Ahmed II received from his uncle Utsmiy Alibek in possession several southern villages, which subsequently passed to descendants of his branch.

4) Political marriages among Dagestani rulers were a constant practice. The inter-dynastic ties formed between the Dagestani dynasties by the period of the invasion of Nadir Shah's army will be analyzed. This will allow us to determine whether they could become a reason for rulers to unite against the enemy.

The role of dynastic marriages in organizing resistance to the forces of Nadir shah

We know numerous examples from the world history of inter-dynastic relations of monarchic houses, through which foreign political ties were established and consolidated. Thus, as early as in the Roman Empire inter-dynastic marriages were used for different purposes: to achieve internal and external political stability, as a means to strengthen the personal power of the emperor, to legitimize the ruling dynasty, and since the year of 335, marriages were used to solve a specific problem: the settlement of Roman-Persian problems [25, p. 1048].

In the 4th century BC Alexander the Great, in order to consolidate his relations with the conquered peoples, he concluded a marriage with Roxana, the daughter of the Persian satrap Sogdian [26, p. 142].

One of the notable examples of a successful dynastic union was the marriage of a representative of the Rurikovich dynasty, Yaroslav the Wise, and the Scandinavian princess Ingigirda, who made a significant contribution both to the development of the legislative policy of Kiev Rus and to the foundation of Veliky Novgorod. Also, their daughters were married off to representatives of various European dynasties [27, p. 91]. European history also knows the 'grandmother of Europe' Queen Victoria (1819-1901) whose descendants connected Britain with the Prussian, Russian, Danish, Spanish and other ruling dynasties.

The leaders of the national liberation movement in Dagestan included representatives of various feudal dynasties: Surkhai Khan I of Kazikumukh, his sons Muhammad-Khan and Murtazali Khan, Ahmed-Khan of Kaitag, Ahmed-Khan of Mekhtuli and Sultan-Makhmud of Utamish. Too small for direct participation in military operations was Avar Nutsal Muhammad-nuzal IV, nevertheless the territory of the khanate played a great role in the war, and the people in the resistance against the enemy. Shamkhal Khasbulat, who took Nadir Shah's side played big role in those events. All Dagestan dynasties are connected to each other in one way or another. For example, one ruler was a cousin, uncle, father-in-law, son-in-law, etc. Personal relations were not always a guarantee of the alliance's loyalty, but at times they became a key tool in diplomacy.

Let us consider the links between the Dagestani dynasties from the Tarky Shamkhalate dynasty.

There were no Shamkhals in the Tarky Shamkhalate between 1725 and 1734, and the territory was ruled by a commander-in-chief appointed by Russia [28, p. 26-36]. This happened because after the departure of Peter I, Shamkhal Adil-Giray, who had previously supported the Russian emperor, started recruiting allies to oppose Russia, whose new government had not given him sufficient support

[29, p. 269, 271]. The court soon learnt about it, and, after an unsuccessful attack on the Tersky redoubt, surrendered and was sent to the Astrakhan province [30, p. 300]. As punishment for his deeds and to prevent future disobedience on the southern borders, the Supreme Soviet decided to appoint a Russian commander-in-chief, General V.V. Dolgorukiy, who suggested the need to eliminate the title of Shamkhal [31, p. 10].

During the era of the palace coups, the Russian government was no longer able to exert significant influence on Dagestan territories, which caused the presence of other neighbors here, such as Iran, to intensify. After Nadir Shah's first campaign, during which he defeated the Kazikumukh Khanate, Khasbulat son of Adil Girey came to express his loyalty to the Shah. And in 1734 Nadir-shah restored the title and appointed Khasbulat Shamkhal of Tarky [32, p. 104]. For which the Shamkhal Khasbulat started siding with Nadir-shah. However, his "loyalty" to the Iranian shah, as it often happened with the Dagestani rulers, was nominal, and was justified by the desire to keep power and his domains intact. The complexity of the new Shamkhal's position was due to the fact that there were several contenders for his title at the same time. By the 18th century, the Shamkhal house was divided into several branches (Buynaksky, Kazanishensky, etc.), the representatives of which regularly put forward their rights to the Shamkhal throne. In the first years of his rule Khasbulat Shamkhal struggled with Mehti Buynakskiy; the struggle ended only with the help of mediators [33, p. 323].

So, in 1735 Surkhai-khan of Kazikumukh, the Utsmiy of Kaitag and Akushin deposed Khasbulat, putting in his stead Ildar-shamkhal of Murtazali I son Budai-shamkhal [34, p. 85], after which the Shamkhal Khasbulat managed to restore his power.

Confirmation that the alliance with the Shah of Iran was only the result of a policy of maneuvering is also the fact that the first thing Khasbulat did after gaining power was to ask Nadir Shah to release the captive Kazikumukhs; his request was complied. Later he also came out in defense of the Akushin people. In given context, it no longer seems strange that after the defeat of Nadir Shah, he was able to retain power and rule until his death in 1758.

Let us mention another pretender to the Shamkhal throne, Ahmed Khan of Mekhtuli (Dzhengutai) (1735-1747), the son of Uma-khan. He descended from the lateral line of the Shamkhal family [35, p. 84]. He is the most famous Dzhengutai ruler largely due to his resistance to the Iranian invasion. In September 1741 Nadir Shah approached the residence of Mehtuli Khanate in Lower Dzhengutai, where he met resistance led by Ahmed Khan of Mehtuli. Later, Akhmed-khan fought with Nadir-shah's troops in Aimakinsky gorge and Andalal. After the battle in Andalal, Ahmed Khan was received at the court of the Ottoman ruler Sultan Mahmud I in Istanbul, who proclaimed him Shamkhal, thereby restoring the

title after the exile of the previous Shamkhal Adil Girey. Akhmed-khan was also related to another influential clan – he was married to the daughter of Utsmiy Akhmed-khan of Kaitag, with whom he had one son, Mehti.

The Tarky Shamkhalate until the middle of the 17th century constituted a single state unit with Kazikumukh, until the residents of Kazikumukh expelled the Shamkhal to its second capital, Tarky. Halklavchis, elected by the social elite, started to rule Kumukh. In 1700, Halklavchi Alibek died. His sons Surkhai and Girey had died before their father, thus, the choice was between the grandchildren of the deceased ruler. According to the principle of seniority the choice was made among the sons of Surkhai's eldest son. However, the conversation with the widows of both brothers forced the elders to make the choice in favor of the only son of Girey Surkhai. The brothers who rebelled against this decision were defeated by Surkhai, who lost his left hand in the fight and received the prefix Cholak to his name.

During the years of struggle against Nadir Shah, it was Cholak Surkhai (1680-1748) who was the ruler of Kazikumukh until he was taken prisoner by Persians in 1741. There are different versions on how this occurred. According to one version, he betrayed the national liberation movement, and his sons started to fight against their father's decision. According to the other, Surkhai-khan was forced to recognize the supreme power of Nadir, thereby buying time for his sons, who were able to retreat to the mountains for further struggle [2, p. 151].

Surkhai was captured with his wife Aishat, a relative of the Khan of Khunzakh. There are numerous written sources about what happened to her in captivity, some of the information was covered in the work of T.M. Aitberov [4, с. 45-48]. After Surkhai-khan's captivity, power and leadership in the fight against the invaders passed to his sons: Magomed-khan and Murtazali-khan.

Officially, power in Kazikumukh passed to the younger son, Murtazali-khan (1741-1743). Murtazali-khan's kinship with Avar Nutsals considerably influenced further events: at that time, the centre of mountain resistance shifted to Sogratl, where Murtazali-khan's wife, the daughter of Muhammad-Qadi of Sogratl [18, p. 5], also came from. Murtazali-khan with his troops found shelter in Andalal [2, p. 252], as he was related with the rulers of the Avar Nutsal. There is a story about Murtazali Khan, according to which the Shah of Iran, struck by his bravery, asked Surkhai: "Who is this brave man on a white horse?" – to which Surkhai replied, "That's my son." Then Nadir Shah said that he would leave both Dagestan and Georgia to Surkhai for such a son [36, p. 106]. According to another version he replied: "I would give all my gold for your son Murtazali" [18, p. 6]. Murtazali Khan had one son, Eldar (d. 1774).

Elder son of Surkhai-khan Magomed-khan (1712-1789) also played an important role in liberation movement of Dagestanis, became khan in 1743 and remained his position until his death in 1789. He was married three times.

His first wife was Khasbulat Tarkovsky's daughter, with whom Magomed-khan had four sons. Whether this marriage influenced the political relations of the two fiefs is difficult to determine. On the one hand, in 1734, Shamkhal requested Nadir-shah to release all captives of Kazikumukh. On the other, this did not prevent Surkhai Khan from participating in the removal of Khasbulat from the throne in 1735.

At the end of 1730s Magomed-khan divorced and married the daughter of another Dagestani ruler Tishsiz-Bammat of Kazanische, whom he was married to during the invasion of Nadir Shah. In that marriage he had another son.

The third wife of the khan was a girl from the Turkic tribe Ustajlu. Having received power, Magomed-khan continued the policy of his father on expulsion of Kyzylbashis from the territory of Dagestan and Shirvan. In 1743 he besieged fortress Shabran, captured its population, cut off its garrison and killed its chief Abdul-khan Ustajlu. After that he married his daughter, who gave birth to the future ruler of the Kazikumukh Khanate Surkhai-khan II [37, p. 148-149].

As we see, Mohammed Khan's marriages were of dynastic nature and could be used as diplomatic tools to enhance personal prestige. Thus, Khasbulat Shamkhal was the ruler of an influential state formation, and Tishisi-Bammat represented one of the branches of the Shamkhal house. As to the latter marriage, it is important to note that Ustajlu is the name of a Turkic tribe, which had a high social status under the Safavids. Its representatives always occupied high ranks and significant posts in the Safavid Empire. And the marriage of one of its representatives, especially after the capture of the fortress and the murder of the head of its garrison strengthened the personal power of the khan. Thus, his political actions were more influenced by his interests than the concluded marriages.

After the death of Magomed-khan's former father-in-law Khasbulat in 1758, a bloody feud broke. Khasbulat had undertaken an unprecedented for Shamkhate attempt of power transfer: according to the will, he appointed Murtazali I Buynakskyi's son Mehtias a successor (the elected in advance heir). Taking advantage of uncertain situation, the nephew of Khasbul-shamkhal Tishsiz-Bammat (1747-1758) claimed his rights for the throne [37, p. 161].

During the feud, coalitions formed. Tishisi-Bammat was backed by the Kaitag Utsmyi Amir-Khamza, Fatali-khan of Quba, Alish Khamzin of Kostek, Temir Khamzin of Endirey, and Nutsal-khan of Avar. Murtazali was supported by his brother Bammat the ruler of Buyinak, the Akushins and Magomed-khan of Kazikumukh, who divorced the daughter of Tishsiz-Bammat of Kazanische in 1740s [3, p. 230].

In this struggle Tishiz-Bammat shortly succeeded in seizing the Shamkhal throne [37, p. 161]), but a few months later Murtazali returned the throne to himself.

Let us move on to another important state formation that played a major role in the fight against Nadir Shah.

The Kaitag Utsmyistvo was ruled by Ahmed-khan, son of Ullubiya, son of Rustam-khan, from 1712 to 1749(50) [38, p. 142].

In three decades ruling the Utsmyistvo, Ahmed-khan in 1742 resisted Iranian invaders at the head of his army. During which he even fought with Nadir-shah in single combat [3, с. 163; 39, с. 751–754].

During long years of his rule Akhmed-khan uzmiy pursued active foreign policy: he fought against kyzylbashs (Shiites), resisted Peter I during his Persian campaign [29, p. 306-308], cooperated with Iran and later participated in the anti-Iranian rebellion. This activity was accompanied by periodic attacks on some neighbors and alliances with others. Some of these alliances were secured by inter-dynastic marriages.

One of the daughters of the Utsmiy was the wife of Ahmed Khan of Mekhtuli (1735-1797/1802), whom we already mentioned above.

It is said that Nadir Shah, who seized a part of Kaitag in 1735, made the Utsmiy give one of his daughters, Patimat-khanum, to the Persian camp as a concubine. There, she became known as “the first beauty of the East” for her beauty [40, p. 485].

In addition, we know that another daughter of Ahmed-khan Peri-Dzhehan-bikeh was married to Guseyn-khan of Quba [41, p. 37, 120]. This is a noteworthy marriage, since it was initiated by Nadir-shah himself. It is possible that at first, she was the wife of Nadir Shah and then was married to Khan of Quba.

Ruler of Quba Guseyn Khan, still being a child, was made to swear to Peter I, and then Nadir Shah approved his position and married him to the daughter of Utsmyi Ahmed-khan. Many historians have assumed that Guseyn Khan of Quba was a representative of the Majalis branch of the Kaitag dynasty, which was nearly exterminated during the internecine strife. And Ahmed Khan (and consequently his daughter) was a descendant of Yengikent branch of the Utsmyis. It is possible that this marriage between representatives of two branches of the same dynasty was arranged by Nadir-shah in line with the conciliatory policy, known for his reformist and diplomatic activities in Iranian foreign policy [42; 43, p. 248].

Peri-Dzhehan-bikeh gave birth to Fatali Khan, the most famous ruler of Quba Khanate, who annexed Derbent with adjoining territories to his possession. He was also famous for using political marriages in his foreign policy. In particular, he was married to Ahmed-khan's daughter Tuti-Bike, and he promised to marry his sister Khadija-Bike to utsmiy Amir-Khamza the son of Ahmed-khan [44, p. 907]. But the marriage did not take place [23, p. 101].

Let us proceed to the next domain– the Avar Nutsal. At the time of the invasion of Nadir Shah, the power in the Avar Nutsal passed into the hands of an underage ruler Muhammad-Nutsal IV (born in 1730), son of Umma-Nutsal son of Dugru-Nutsal. Despite the fact that for obvious reasons a child could not directly participate in battles, the Avar Nutsal played a significant role in the resist-

ance against the invaders. In particular, the leaders of the anti-Iranian rebellion took refuge on its territory during the gathering of forces. For example, in 1741 in Khunzakh members of the family of the Kaitag Utsmyistvo received shelter. Close relations were established between the two dynasties, which resulted in the marriage of Muhammad-Nutsal IV and the granddaughter of Utsmyi Ahmed-khan, the daughter of Khan Muhammad Bahu. Muhammad-Nutsal himself married his sister Bahu-Meseda to the son of Utsmyi Amirhamza [45, p. 159].

Conclusion

From the information given and analyzed in the paper we can conclude that political marriages played the same significant role in Dagestan fiefs as it did in all monarchic states in history. Political marriages on the territory of Dagestan were concluded with certain purposes and acted as tools for solving a number of tasks:

- legitimization of the dynasty through marriage to a member of a kin of higher political or religious position;
- consolidation of personal power through a lucrative marriage;
- claiming the territories to be received by the heir;
- consolidation of a foreign policy alliance against a common enemy for the purpose of joint attack or defense.

By the 18th century, the political elite of Dagestani state formations was closely intertwined with each other by blood and marriage ties. Some of these ties existed even before Nadir Shah came to those lands and irrespective of external danger. Others were concluded during and after the fight against the enemy. Some even through the Shah of Iran himself, who pursued a skillful diplomatic policy in all the territories included in his field of interest. According to the sources, Nadir Shah initiated the marriage of the Khan of Quba with the daughter of the Kaitag Utsmyistvo. He secured support for one of the Dagestani provinces by restoring the title of Shamkhal of Tarky, which had been abolished by the Russian administration, and appointed Khasbulat, one of the sons of the previous ruler, to that post. However, the attempts of the Shah of Iran to manipulate dynastic ties could not affect the overall picture in the region, which had been developing there for centuries. And the situation was such that all the Dagestani dynasties were connected with each other not only by political marriages and blood kinship, but also by a long history of relations, which also largely determined the political vector of local rulers.

Bearing in mind the earlier events of Dagestan history (including the Persian campaign of Peter the Great, relations with Turkey and Iran in the XVII century), when the policy of Dagestan rulers was very far from unity, as well as our analyzed connections in the XVIII century, based on artificial and blood kinship we can conclude.

Despite the fact that political marriage played a prominent role in politics in the 40s of the 18th century (the Avar ruler granted asylum to his relatives from Kazikumukh and Kaitag, a request to release the Kazikumukhs from captivity by Khasbulat-shamkhal, etc.), it still was not decisive in political events, and at times it only hindered the political interests of the rulers. The main factors in the unification of the Dagestani people were the proximity of their possessions and their centuries-long common history.

The study also raises promising research questions about how close the ties between the Dagestani dynasties existed during other foreign policy threats and what role they might have played under different circumstances.

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