



A nation always in the spotlight

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Depending on its geopolitical location in the region, Azerbaijan has been in the spotlight at all times. In the past 500 years, Azerbaijan has attracted the attention of surrounding states due to its fertile soil, material and cultural assets, favorable geographical location and a territory covering a much larger area than now.

Azerbaijani lands have repeatedly come under attacks and seen heavy battles. Despite eventually losing a large portion of its lands, the most severe blow to a single Azerbaijan was dealt in the 19th century. By signing the treaty of Gulistan in 1813 and the treaty of Turkmanchay in 1828, two great empires, Russia and Iran, divided the people of Azerbaijan into two parts, thus depriving the nation of unity and of the opportunity to become a regional center for everyone to reckon with.

Notwithstanding the separation, the Azerbaijanis subsequently (especially in the late 20th century) managed to restore their unity, but a significant portion of the Azerbaijanis is still part of another country. The treaty of Turkmanchay, which legalized this historic injustice, has always been a topic of discussion as both empires and their successor states have done their utmost to keep this document away from public scrutiny for many years.

A Farsi copy of the much-coveted document has recently been made available to our magazine. We have translated it into Russian and English. It is to be hoped that the document will arouse interest and give rise to some kind of a debate in the academic community. As *Irs-Heritage*, we, for our part, are prepared to publish research articles on the subject that will certainly be of interest to our readers.

The claims on Azerbaijani territories did not end at that and were renewed in the 20th century, leading to a major military conflict. Armenia, a country that had never existed in the Caucasus before, emerged on the political map at the expense of Azerbaijani lands.

So please enjoy the summer edition of *Irs-Heritage* which contains stories on these and other subjects.