

On the crossroads of decades

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This issue of our magazine, the first in the new year and in the new decade, comes out under the sign of two main events. The first of them is the liberation, as a result of the war in autumn 2020, of the Azerbaijani territory that remained under Armenian occupation for almost 30 years. It was a war that drew a somewhat symbolic line under the second decade of the 21st century for Azerbaijan. The second event is the declaration of this year in Azerbaijan as a Year of Nizami. Both of these events are featured prominently in this issue of IRS-Heritage.

The story by Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov not only draws a line under the recent war, but also outlines Azerbaijan's post-war priorities related to the restoration of liberated territories.

An article by Russian historian and political scientist Oleg Kuznetsov about the background, circumstances and results of the 44-day second Karabakh war is certainly worth looking at. This war was of historic importance as it created new geopolitical realities in the strategically important Caucasus and Caspian regions.

In terms of content and context, three more articles are related to this topic – notes by a Russian reader who shares his thoughts on moral aspects of war and aggression against another people, another story about the situation of the Yezidi Kurds in Armenia, where they constitute the largest minority, and an article in which Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes of the early 20th century, also known as the “Armenian-Tatar massacre”, are described from the point of view of a number of Armenian authors.

Another central story of this issue is an article about the reflection of the works of great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, in particular his “Quintet” (“Khamsa”), on the culture of the Muslim East. In this context, the author examines the place of the “Quintet” in the art of medieval oriental miniatures, and describes Tabriz, the leading historical and cultural center of the Azerbaijani people, as a center of this art. In addition, the author describes the profound and multifaceted influence of the “Quintet” on the works of many later poets of the Near and Middle East over the centuries, including such outstanding personalities as Navoi, Fizuli, Dehlevi and Jami.

Along with the above, the issue also offers materials of ethnographic nature. In conclusion, I hope all our readers stay well and healthy in the difficult pandemic conditions. I am sure that despite the difficulties and limitations caused by this situation, we will continue to meet as usual. So stay with us!