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**WHEN WEST MEETS EAST: SIR ANTHONY JENKINSON'S JOURNEY  
TO THE SAFAVID EMPIRE**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the article is to present a comprehensive study of Sir Anthony Jenkinson's role in introducing the British a Safavid culture as a part of Eastern/Muslim world. The methodology of the research is based on the application of the principles of historicism, objectivity and comprehensiveness. In the research there have been used general scientific methods such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, and generalization. The scientific novelty of the article is that although there is a significant body of works on Safavid-English relations, this article represents the first attempt to study comprehensively Anthony Jenkinson's role in introducing Safavid culture to the English. The Conclusion.* The “Declaration...” of the journey to the Safavid Empire of a famous English traveller, mercer and diplomat Sir Anthony Jenkinson in 1561 – 1563, who was regarded as one of “the great pioneers of Elizabethan travel”, is a valuable source not only on the history and culture of the Safavid Empire, but also Safavid-English relations. Jenkinson's “Declaration” is the first English attempt to describe Safavids' diplomatic and military history, socio-economical, cultural, theological life, as well as lifestyle and even local mythology. The study of Jenkinson's detailed description proves that England's interaction with the Safavid Empire wasn't English colonization, as the majority of Western and Soviet historians used to present mistakenly, but discovery by the English of a new, previously unknown Eastern/Islamic world, i.e. Safavid Empire. As the first Eastern/Muslim country that Elizabethan England sought to ally, Jenkinson's “Declaration” of the Safavid Empire is one of the first mentions both in English and European contemporary sources about the religious distinction between Sunnis and Shiites. Jenkinson's unique map of 1562 as the result of his journeys is the oldest and first visual representation of the Safavid Empire in English sources that contain ethnographic information. Jenkinson's journey to the Safavid Empire in 1561 – 1563 opened a new chapter in the history of both Anglo-Islamic and East-West relations and cultural exchange on the basis of Islam-Christianity dialogue that revealed inadequacy of such Eurocentric concepts as predominance of Europe over the East, “cultural polarizing” of the continent, dispelled the myth of monolithic culture.

**Keywords:** Anthony Jenkinson, Safavid Empire, Elizabethan England, Safavid-English relations, culture, 1562, journey.

## КОЛИ ЗАХІД ЗУСТРІЧАЄ СХІД: ПОДОРОЖ СЕРА ЕНТОНІ ДЖЕНКІНСОНА ДО СЕФЕВІДСЬКОЇ ІМПЕРІЇ

**Анотація.** *Мета статті* – представити результати дослідження ролі сера Ентоні Дженкінсона у ознайомленні британців із культурою Сефевідів як з частиною східного / мусульманського світу. **Методика дослідження** заснована на застосуванні принципів історизму, об'єктивності та всебічності. У дослідженні використовувалися загальнонаукові методи, такі як аналіз, синтез, порівняння та узагальнення. **Наукова новизна** статті полягає у тому, що, незважаючи на значний обсяг робіт із сефевідсько-англійських відносин, пропонується розвідка є першою місцевою всебічного вивчення ролі Ентоні Дженкінсона в ознайомленні англійців із сефевідською культурою. **Висновок.** “Опис...” подорожі до Сефевідської імперії відомого англійського мандрівника, торговця та дипломата сера Ентоні Дженкінсона у 1561 – 1563 роках, який вважався одним з “великих піонерів елізаветинських подорожей”, є цінним джерелом не тільки про історію та культуру імперії Сефевідів, а також про сефевідсько-англійські відносини. “Опис” Дженкінсона – перша спроба англійців описати дипломатичну та військову історію, соціально-економічне, культурне, теологічне життя, а також спосіб життя і навіть місцеву міфологію Сефевідів. Вивчення докладного опису Дженкінсона доводить, що взаємодія Англії з імперією Сефевідів була не англійською колонізацією, як помилково уявляли більшість західних та радянських істориків, а навпаки – відкриттям англійцями нового, раніше незнаного східно-ісламського світу, тобто Сефевідської імперії. Як перша східна, мусульманська країна, з якою елізаветинська Англія прагнула стати союзником, “Опис” Дженкінсона про імперію Сефевідів є однією з перших згадок як в англійських, так і в сучасних європейських джерелах про релігійні відмінності між сунітами і шиїтами. Унікальна карта Дженкінсона 1562 р., складена у результаті його подорожей, є найстарішим та першим візуальним зображенням імперії Сефевідів у англійських джерелах, що містять етнографічну інформацію. Подорож Дженкінсона до Сефевідської імперії у 1561 – 1563 рр. відкрила новий розділ в історії як англо-ісламських, так і Східно-Західних відносин, а також культурного обміну на основі діалогу ісламу та християнства, виявивши тим самим неадекватність таких європоцентристських концепцій, як перевага Європи над Сходом “культурно поляризованого” континенту та розвіяла міф про монолітну культуру.

**Ключові слова:** Ентоні Дженкінсон, імперія Сефевідів, елізаветинська Англія, сефевідсько-англійські відносини, культура, 1562 р., подорож.

**The Problem Statement.** Safavid-English relations were an important part both of the history of international relations, the diplomatic, economic and cultural ties of the “West – East” and “Christian world – Muslim world” systems. With the accession of Queen Elizabeth I Tudor to the throne in 1558, a radical change was outlined in the history of England’s diplomatic relations, resulting in today’s rich history of Britain’s relations with the Muslim world.

The “*clash of civilizations*” was not always defined by conflict. England, like a sponge, quickly began to absorb previously unknown elements of the culture of the Islamic world, and the Safavid Empire was no exception in this regard. As Brotton notes, “for reasons unique to Elizabeth’s 45-year reign, including her dramatic excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church by Pope Pius V in 1570, Protestant England established relationships with a variety of Islamic kingdoms that played a decisive role in how English men and women came to understand their place in the 16th-century world. These connections influenced how the Elizabethans travelled and did business, what they ate, how they dressed and decorated their homes, how they understood religion, and how they played on a stage adorned by the world’s finest playwrights, including Shakespeare and Marlowe” (Brotton, 2016).

In her letter addressed to the Safavid Shah Tahmasp I dated April 25, 1561, the English Queen Elizabeth I Tudor expressed her hope that “...the Almighty God will bring it to passe,

that of these small beginnings, greater moments of things shall hereafter spring...”. Indeed, a new page was opened in the history of relations between the British and the new civilization represented by the Safavids – Islamic (!), which, as Matar notes, “caused mixed emotions in them [the British]: fear, impotence and ‘imperial envy’” (Matar, 2009, p. 213). Thus, Safavid-English relationship, which began with the first envoy of Queen Elizabeth Anthony Jenkinson, not only became an integral part of the global economy, but at the same time the global Renaissance, once again proving the inconsistency of the concepts of antagonism between the concepts “West – East”, “Christendom – Muslim world”.

Although there is a significant body of works on Safavid-English relations, this article represents the first attempt to explore Anthony Jenkinson’s role in introducing Safavid culture to the English.

**The Review of Recent Researches.** The only and basic source for conducting the research is Hakluyt’s very first edition of “The Principal Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation...” (Hakluyt, 1589), which provides us Jenkinson’s *Declaration* of his journey to the Safavid Empire. Although there is a significant array of scientific literature which deals with the study of Safavid-English relations, just few of them cover issues of intercultural relations between the two states. Due to the prevailing misconception in historiography according to which the Safavid Empire was of interest to Tudor England only as a source of cheap raw materials and profitable markets for English goods, i.e. was the object of its colonial policy, and most importantly, as a transit route to the markets of India and other states of the Far East, issues of intercultural influence and intercultural dialogue were not given due scientific focus. One of the first researchers to study Safavid-English relations were Shakhmaliev (Shakhmaliev, 1958), Akhmedov (Akhmedov, 1967), Ferrier (Ferrier, 1986), and K peli (K peli, 2012). However, the chief focus in their works was on the English trade policy on the territory of the Safavid Empire. Mahmudov is one of the first who did the research on the history of the Safavid Empire with the European states, including England (Makhmudov, 1991). Mahmudov’s scientific article “English traveller in Azerbaijan” (Mahmudov, 1977a) is the very first work that highlights specifically Sir Anthony Jenkinson’s diplomatic mission to the Safavid Empire in 1561 – 1563. Nevertheless, as in a series of his other works that covers to some extent Jenkinson’s intelligence on the Safavids’ customs and traditions, city life and lifestyle and in one of which Jenkinson was mentioned as “the first ‘harbinger’ of England’s colonial policy” in the Safavid Empire (Mahmudov, 1977b, 1980, 2012), this article covers superficially issues of cross-cultural interaction in Jenkinson’s *Declaration*. Following Mahmudov, Muga nlin’skiy in his article makes an attempt to highlight the Safavids’ religious affiliation (Muga nlin’skiy, 2013).

As well as Kambay-zade (Kambay-zade, 1991) and Nacafli (Nacafli, 2020), Gasan-zade, whose book “Anglo-Safavid relations in the late of the 16th – early 17th centuries (based on the English sources)” (Gasan-zade, 2007) is the first monographic work on Anglo-Safavid relations, also characterizes England’s policy as “...one of the characteristic pages of the early colonial politics of European powers in eastern countries” (Gasan-zade, 2007, p. 166). As a consequence, it is not surprising that issues of cross-cultural interaction were not covered by the author.

Although, unlike the above-mentioned researchers, Efendiev, whose work “The Azerbaijani State of the Safavids” (Efendiev, 1981) is one of the first fundamental works on the political and socio-economic history, state structure of the Safavids, denies the colonial

nature of the trade and economic policy of England in the Safavid Empire, nevertheless, Jenkinson's journey to the Safavid Empire was superficially covered in his work.

Although Meshkat's thesis "The journey of Master Anthony Jenkinson to Persia (1562)" (Meshkat, 2005) and article "The Journey of Master Anthony Jenkinson to Persia, 1562 – 1563" (Meshkat, 2009) are the first attempt in western historiography to do the research on Jenkinson's mission to the Safavid Empire in 1561 – 1563 as an object of a special study, intercultural interaction between England and the Safavids is covered in a fragmentary way, which does not allow a comprehensive consideration of the problem.

Mayers's book "The First English Explorer" (Mayers, 2016) can rightfully be considered the first comprehensive research that covers not only Jenkinson's journey to the Safavid Empire in detail, but also introduces his readers with the cultural differences between the West and the world of Islam, reflects Jenkinson's impressions of the encounter with an Eastern potentate and a local culture.

**The purpose** of the research is to highlight the role of Sir Anthony Jenkinson in introducing the British a Safavid culture as a part of Eastern/Muslim world.

**The Results of the Research.** On May 14, 1561, the departure of Anthony Jenkinson on the ship "Swallow" from Gravesend marked the beginning of an enterprise that not only marked the beginning of Safavid-English relations, but also left a significant mark on the history of the East – West and Christian world – Muslim world relations as one of the Elizabethans' first encounters with the Islamic world. It was Jenkinson, as Dulles points out, who "expanded the boundaries of the Western world..." (Dulles, 1931, p. 53).

"*A compendious and briefe declaration of the journey of M. Anthonie Jenkinson, from the famous citie of London into the land of Persia...*", the author of which is Anthony Jenkinson himself and in which he sets out in detail all his activities, everything new he saw and the difficulties that he had to face during his mission to the Safavid Empire in 1561–1563, is a valuable historical source both on Safavid-English relations and on the Safavid Empire in particular. Jenkinson's *Declaration* is the first attempt by the British to describe the military-political history, socio-economic, as well as spiritual life and even the local mythology of the Safavids.

From the description of the long-awaited meeting of Anthony Jenkinson with Shah Tahmasp I, which took place on November 20, 1562 in Qazvin, it becomes clear that for the Safavids England was *terra incognita*, i.e. unknown land. The Shah had not even heard of such a country as England, and he called the British, like all Europeans, by the general term "*Franks*." However, for the British themselves, the Safavid Empire was also the discovery of a completely new, unique world.

Despite all the difficulties of the journey that Jenkinson had to face, in early August 1561 he managed to reach the lands of Shirvan. The first city that Jenkinson visited was Derbent. Describing the city, Jenkinson draws an analogy between the architecture of Derbent and English buildings: "This citie of Derbent is an ancient towne having an olde castle therein, being situated upon an hill called Castowe, builded all of free stone much after our building, the walles very high and thicke..." (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 367).

From Derbent, Jenkinson with his retinue headed to Shabran, where he arrived on August 6, 1562. Jenkinson's *Declaration*, provides information about the economic structure of the local population, namely nomadic way of life, although he characterizes it in a negative way: "Where my barke discharged: the goods layd on shore, and there being in my tent keeping great watch for feare of rovers, wherof there is great plenty, being field

people... Here my ship was unloaded and goods were placed on the shore, and strong guards were placed in my tent for fear of robbers, of whom there are a lot here – all of them are nomads” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 367).

On August 18, Jenkinson arrived in the “beautiful royal city” of Shemakha, but he failed to find the ruler of Shirvan Abdullah Khan here. The reason was the traditional way of life of the local population – the practice of *yaylak/gishlag*, which is still relevant today in Azerbaijan, due to local climatic conditions. The summer months were characterized by unbearable hot weather and the only way out of the situation was temporary relocation to higher and cooler places, which was reflected in Jenkinson’s information: “...The next day being the 19 day, I was sent for to come to the king, named Obdolowcan, who kept his court at that time in the high mountaines in tents, distant from the said Shamakye twentie miles, to avoyd the injury of the heat...” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 367). The peculiarities of the lifestyle of the local population are also described when describing the further journey to the great Sufi. Thus, on the way from Javat to Qazvin, Jenkinson reports that he and his companions “...passing thorow a fruitfull cuntry, inhabited with pasturing people, which dwell in the Summer season upon mountaines, and in Winter they remoove into the valleyes without resorting to townes or any other habitation: and when they remoove, they doe journey in carravans or troops of people and cattell, carrying all their wives, children and baggage upon bullocks” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 369). It is noteworthy that for the British the way of life of the local population of the Safavid Empire seemed “wild”: “...Passing this wilde people ten dayes journey, comming into no towne or house, the sixteenth day of October we arrived at a citie called Ordowill...” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 369).

On August 20, 1561, Jenkinson was given a kind welcome. By order of the Shirvan ruler Abdullah Khan, Jenkinson took part in dinner with the ruler himself (**Fig. 1**). The richness of the decoration and food, the interior of the tent, as well as the attire of Abdullah Khan himself greatly impressed Jenkinson. His *Declaration* contains rich ethnographic information. Jenkinson attests to the great hospitality in the Safavid Empire (for Safavids’ hospitality see: Guliyev, 2022, pp. 36–39). From his report it follows: “This king did sit in a very rich pavillion, wrought with silke and golde ... he being a prince of a meane stature, and of a fierce countenance, richly apparelled with long garments of silke, and cloth of golde, imbrodered with pearles and stone: upon his head was a tolipane with a sharpe ende standing upwards halfe a yard long, of rich cloth of golde, wrapped about with a piece of India silke of twentie yards long, wrought with golde, and on the left side of his tolipane stood a plume of fethers, set in a trunke of golde richly inameled, and set with precious stones: his earrings had pendants of golde a handfull long, with two great rubies of great value, set in the ends thereof: all the ground within his pavilion was covered with rich carpets, and under himselfe was spred a square carpet wrought with silver and golde, and therupon was layd two sutable cushions. Thus the king with his nobility sitting in his pavilion with his legs a crosse, and perceiving that it was painfull for me so to sit, his highnesse caused a stoole to be brought in, & did will me to sit thereupon, after my fashion. Dinner time then approaching, divers clothes were spred upon the ground, and sundry dishes served, and set in a ranke with divers kindes of meats, to the number of 140 dishes, as I numbred them, which being taken away with the table clothes, and others spred, a banket of fruits of sundry kindes, with other banketting meates, to the number of 150 dishes, were brought in: so that two services occupied 290 dishes...” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 367).



**Fig. 1. Reception of the English envoy Anthony Jenkinson by the ruler of Shirvan Abdulla Khan. Artist O. Sadiqzadeh, the Azerbaijan National History Museum**

The exotic appearance of the ruler of Shirvan caused amazement in Jenkinson. During his second meeting with Abdullah Khan, which took place on August 24, 1562, Jenkinson's gaze was again drawn to the features of the Safavid vestments: "...Approching nigh to the entering in of his tent, and being in his sight, two gentlemen incountered me with two garments of that cuntry fashion, side, downe to the ground, the one of silke, and the other of silke and golde, sent unto me from the king, and after that they caused me to put off my upper garment, being a gowne of blacke velvet furred with Sables, they put the sayd two garments upon my backe, and so conducted me unto the king..." (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 368). At the next meeting with Abdullah Khan in Javat in April 1563, Jenkinson was again generously gifted by the ruler of Shirvan: "His highnesse [Abdullah Khan] did give mee two garments of silke, and so dismissed me with great favour..." (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 372). It should be noted that, despite the disastrous reception at Shah Tahmasp I's court on November 20, 1562, which ended with the latter's refusal to establish any kind of relations with England due to the fact that the Safavids did not need friendship with the "infidels", the shah "...the 20 day of March, 1562, he sent to me a rich garment of cloth of gold, and so dismissed me without any harme" (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 372).

This information is of great scientific interest to us not only because it testifies to the luxury, wealth and elegance of Safavid attire, but because it also demonstrates the customs and traditions of Safavid culture. Giving clothes to a guest had a hidden symbolic meaning. The tradition of presenting national clothing as a gift to a guest not only in the Safavid, but in many cultures of the Islamic world, was a visual manifestation of great respect, goodwill and honor to the host, symbolizing the value of the guest before the hosts. In clothing, every element mattered: from the material from which it was made, to the color and motifs of the patterns embroidered on it. The robe was intended to demonstrate the power and authority of its wearers. As Gratta notes, "the clothes worn at court, in addition to functionality and visual appeal, carried a political message. ...In the Safavid court the emphasis was on display rather than function, and clothing was worn as part of identity, it was their function" (Gratta, 2016).

It is noteworthy that Jenkinson, as an astute diplomat, did not remain a passive observer, but quickly adapted to Safavid traditions, as evidenced by the fact that he adopted the Safavid tradition of donating clothes of honor and presented the khilat given to him by Shah Tahmasp I himself to Ivan the Terrible at a meeting after in which Jenkinson achieved new trading privileges for English merchants in the territory of the Moscow principality.

Jenkinson's description of the traditional clothing of the ruling class of the Safavid Empire is of great scientific interest, because their attire performed not only a practical role, but at the same time served as a demonstration of social status, and most importantly, they were a manifestation of the political power of the sovereign and often served as an instrument of diplomacy, "*soft power*" in politics, as well as self-presentation (*impression management*) (Munroe, 2023, p. 47). As can be seen from the report, Jenkinson's particular attention was drawn to the Safavid headdress – a pointed *turban*, which, according to Prof. Matar, emerged as a preeminent symbol of Muslim power and hegemony (Matar, 1996, p. 39).

The *turban* functioned as a transmitter of social information and ideas about Safavid cultural identity, political and religious beliefs. The distinctive form of headdress in the form of a pointed turban was introduced by Sheikh Heydar, the head of the Safavid order, one of the spiritual leaders of the Safavid tariqa, the father of the founder of the Safavid state, Shah Ismail I, receiving the corresponding name *Taj Heydari* (i.e. Heydar's crown). Due to the fact that the Turkic-speaking followers of Sheikh Heydar wore a bright red turban, they began to be called *qizilbash* (literally "red-headed") (Baker, 1986, p. 301; Munroe, 2013; Shenasa, 2007, pp. 50–52). The twelve folds of the turban wrapped around the *taj* symbolized the Safavid adherence to the doctrine of *Twelver Shi'ism*, introduced in 1501 as the official religion in the Safavid Empire.

Besides, Jenkinson's *Declaration* is one of the first written sources to document the tradition of gifting a robe of honor to a foreigner by a local ruler as a sign of respect and honor, as well as one of the rare written sources to describe the Safavid robes of the ruling class and, in particular, the distinctive Safavid headdress – the *taj* (crown). Before Jenkinson's *Declaration* the readers could learn about this tradition only from foreign representatives in the Safavid court – Chardin and Tavernier. The courtly fashion of the early Safavids and the history of the modification of the *taj* could only be traced through Safavid works of fine art, in particular the illustrations of Tahmasp's *Shahnameh*, as well as other illustrated imperial manuscripts. Jenkinson became the second foreigner after the Venetian ambassador Michele Membré to describe in his notes the attire of the Safavid Shah.

Jenkinson's *Declaration* also helps to trace the history of evolution of the Safavid headgear. As Baker notes, "the early form [*taj*] was in the form of a pumpkin with thick quilted flutes ending in a small thick wand. It was worn without a turban, snugly attached to the head, passing to the forehead" (Baker, 1986, p. 302). Comparison of this information with Jenkinson's description shows that the *taj* has undergone stylistic changes over time.

Of great interest in Jenkinson's *Declaration* is the latter's attitude towards the specificity of Safavid court protocol. As Meshkat notes, during a reception with the ruler of Shirvan Abdullah Khan, Jenkinson, "was stunned" (Meshkat, 2005, p. 68), when at the end of the dinner feast the king "...called for a cup of water to be drawn at a fountaine, and tasting thereof, did deliver me [Jenkinson] the rest, demanding how I did like the same, and whether there were so good in our countrey [England] or not..." (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 368). For the British, not familiar with the peculiarities of the Eastern world, in particular with court etiquette, drinking from a cup that had already been drunk by someone might seem

unacceptable, however, it is well known that in many states of the Islamic world, including the Safavid Empire, this gesture of the ruler was a symbolic manifestation of his respect, honor for the guest, as well as readiness and openness to his proposals. More than half a century later, in 1615, the English diplomat Thomas Roe had to face a similar *faux pas* in the Mughal Empire, when the latter, not knowing all the rules of the Mughal court ceremony, refused Emperor Jahangir's offer to drink from a golden cup, answering, that "all he desires is that his countrymen, the English, may have free, safe and peaceful trade in his dominions", although before this Emperor Jahangir had already given Roe his *khilat* as a sign of agreement to grant trading privileges to the English (Ivermee, 2020). Thus, drinking from the cup of the ruler and donating *khilat* to the latter had a metonymic meaning in Safavid diplomacy.

Jenkinson also reports about the leisure and entertainment of the Safavids in detail. On August 24, Abdullah Khan invited him to hunt: "...He sent for me againe: unto whom I repaired in the morning, and the king not being risen out of his bedde (for his maner is, that watching in the night, and then banketting with his women, being an hundred and forty in number, he sleepeth most in the day) did give one commandement that I should ride on hawking with many Gentlemen of his Court, and that they should shew me so much game and pastime as might be: which was done, and many cranes killed" (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 368). As is known, falconry, or *bāzdarī*, which has retained its relevance today, was the oldest form of entertainment and sports for the privileged strata of society in the Islamic world, including the Safavid Empire. Hunting scenes, including falconry, were among the most common subjects in fine art, ceramics, and among patterns on silk textiles. The reverence for falcons in the Safavid Empire was so great that in 1592 – 1593 Shah Abbas I, in tribute to his only falcon Lavand, who died in a hunt, "...ordered the construction of a small, but an impressive mausoleum on the top of the mountain facing the city of Natanz" (A'lam, 1989).

Regarding polygamy, which Jenkinson testifies to, it should be noted that the practice of polygamy and keeping numerous concubines was characteristic of the entire Muslim world. It is well known that a Muslim is allowed to have up to four wives based on the religious laws themselves. A German traveller, who visited the Safavid Empire, Adam Olearius, reports that Sheikh Safi had three permanent wives and 3 thousand concubines and slave-girls in his harem (cited in: Rahbari, 2021, p. 22).

In October of 1562, on the way from Shamakhi to Qazvin, stopping temporarily in Ardabil, Jenkinson and his retinue witnessed Safavid hospitality at the state level: "...The 16 day of October we arrived at a citie called Ordowill, where we were lodged in an hospitall builded with faire stone, and erected by this Sophies father named Ismael, onely for the succour and lodging of strangers and other travellers, wherein all men have victuals and feeding for man and horse, for three dayes and no longe" (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 369). As is known, the *caravanserai* as an institution of hospitality had an ancient tradition in the Eastern world, and in the Safavid Empire itself there was an extensive network of *caravanserais* (O'Gorman & Prentice, 2008). By the way, in the administrative system of the Safavid Empire, one of the most significant was the position of *mehmandar-bashi*, whose main duties included welcoming, accommodating and providing all the necessary things to foreign official guests who arrived in the empire, for which he received a salary from the treasury (Ansari, 2007, pp. 83–84).

Policy of gift-giving also attracted Jenkinson's particular attention during his stay in the Safavid Empire. Jenkinson speaks enthusiastically about the gifts of the ambassador of the Ottoman Sultan, who arrived to Shah Tahmasp I's court four days before his arrival in



Qazvin: "...[He] brought with him a present in gold, and faire horses with rich furnitures, and other gifts, esteemed to be woorth forty thousand pound" (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 369). Among the possible reasons for such a cold reception by the Shah, the dismissive attitude and the unsuccessful outcome of Anthony Jenkinson's mission could be the scarcity of English gifts intended for the Shah, because Jenkinson does not mention a word about what exactly was granted to the Shah. Mayers suggests that "they [Jenkinson's gifts] must have looked small and stingy compared with the generous gifts of the Turkish [Ottoman] ambassador" (Mayers, 2016, p. 169). In the eastern countries, including the Safavid state, great importance was also attached to gift diplomacy in establishing bilateral relations. According to Prof. Matthee, "at the political and diplomatic level, the perception of Europe was represented more by pragmatism than by religious powers, namely, a combination of military power and its perceived usefulness, and the degree to which this power was presented in the form of external luxury and the quality and quantity of gifts offered by visiting embassies. Since visiting Europeans acted as official representatives of countries and commercial enterprises, the status of the latter, as well as their actual power and the splendor of their missions generally determined the quality of the welcome they received on the spot" (Matthee, 1998, p. 232). As the French traveller Abbe Carré reports, in 1673, French envoys managed to achieve an audience with Shah Suleiman, ahead of their English colleagues, because the value of the gifts of the former was much higher than the English ones, and in the future, it was precisely because of the less luxurious gifts to the Shah that the French lost the favor of the former (Abbe Care, 1947, p. 88, 810). In general, the process of gift-giving in the Safavid state was clearly institutionalized.

Despite a large number of scientific studies proving the Turkic origin of the Safavid dynasty, the question of the origin of the ruling dynasty remains one of the controversial in historiography to this day. In this regard, Anthony Jenkinson's *Declaration* can serve as a valuable source in determining the ethnolinguistic origins of the Safavid dynasty, since it provides direct evidence that the Turkic language was widely used in the administration of the Safavid Empire. Jenkinson, describing his reception with the ruler of Shirvan, points out that "at the end of the said dinner and banquet, the king said unto me, *Quoshe quelde*, that is to say, welcome..." (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 367). The Turkic word *basmackes* (bashmaks), which Jenkinson mistakenly characterizes as the Persian, can serve another significant proof of the Turkic-linguality of the Safavids.

Jenkinson's *Declaration* is also of great scientific interest because it is one of the first written evidence from the British about the peculiarities of the religious worldview of the Safavids. As is known, Jenkinson was unable to establish either friendly or trade relations between the two states. The "reason" why the Shah refused was the religious affiliation of the British. Nevertheless, the real reason was not religious fanaticism, but a political factor – Shah Tahmasp I's unwillingness to ruin relations with the Ottoman Empire (Kafar-zade, 2022). Just 4 years later, in 1566, the Shah was not hindered by religious differences between the two peoples and England was granted trade privileges. In his letter to the leadership of the Moscow Company, which describes the warm reception of Shah Tahmasp I on May 29, 1566, Arthur Edwards notes that it was strange for shah's crew to watch their long conversation, knowing differences in faith.

The difference between the two worlds can be seen from the following description by Jenkinson: "...In lighting from my horse at the court gate, before my feet touched the ground, a paire of the Sophies owne shoes termed in the Persian tongue (*Basmackes*) [in

Turkic! Jenkinson erroneously characterizes the word “shoes” as Persian], such as hee himselfe weareth when he ariseth in the night to pray (as his maner is) were put upon my feet, for without the same shoes I might not be suffred to tread upon his holy ground, being a Christian, and called amongst them Gower, that is, unbeleever, and uncleane: esteeming all to be infidels and Pagans which do not beleeve as they do, in their false filthie prophets, Mahomet and Murtezalli. ...None of my companie or servants might be suffered to enter into the court with me, my interpreter onely excepted” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 370). Jenkinson further reports that shah “...reasoned with mee much of Religion, demaunding whether I were a Gower, that is to say, an unbeleever, or a Muselman, that is, of Mahomets lawe. Unto whom I answered, that I was neither unbeleever nor Mahometan, but a Christian. What is that, said he unto the king of the Georgians sonne, who being a Christian was fled unto the said Sophie, and he answered that a Christian was he that beleeveth in Jesus Christus, affirming him to be the Sonne of God, and the greatest Prophet. Doest thou beleeve so, said the Sophie unto me? Yea that I do, said I: Oh thou unbeleever, said he...” Thus, categorically declaring that the Safavids did not need friendship with the “unbelievers”, Shah Tahmasp I kicked Jenkinson out of his palace. Until Anthony completely left the Shah’s palace, the Shah’s servant covered the path he had been through with sand, following him, thus removing traces of the presence of a non-Muslim on Muslim land (Hakluyt, 1589, pp. 370–371).

Savory attributes the reason for this behaviour of the Safavid Shah to the Safavids’ undeniable cultural superiority, of which religion was an integral part. Although the Safavids accepted Europeans as Christians, i.e. as the People of the Book (*Ahl-i Kitab*), who as such enjoyed a higher status than the pagans, but less prestigious than the Muslims, they still periodically encountered religious prejudice based on the *doctrines of najas and taharat* (Shiite concepts of pollution and purity). In the reports of a number of foreign observers one can find information that, being non-Muslims, they were considered unclean (*najis*), and pious Muslims even refused to eat with Christians or from the dishes that the latter used (Savory, 2003, pp. 441–442).

By the way, the arrogance of the Safavids was emphasized by Jenkinson himself: “These persons are comely and of good complexion, proude and of good courage, esteeming themselves to bee best of all nations, both for their religion and holines, which is most erroneous, and also for all other their fashions” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 373).

Moreover, unlike the ruler of Shirvan, whose hand Jenkinson kissed when greeting him, Jenkinson apparently failed to do the same to the Shah himself. As Jenkinson himself notes, “...comming before his Majestie with such reverence as I thought meete to be used, I delivered the Queenes Majesties letters with my present...” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 370). According to sources, the attitude towards non-Muslims in the Safavid Empire softened during the reign of Shah Abbas I. Thus, according to the Carmelite missionary Paul Simon in 1608, if earlier Christians were hated here and were considered a dirty race, then already under Shah Abbas the local population treated them on an equal basis with Muslims, because Shah himself spent time with them and even sat at the same table (Matthee, 1998, pp. 227–228). Europeans were even already allowed to kiss the Shah’s hand during an audience, while high-ranking officials themselves were allowed to kiss either the floor or the Shah’s leg. According to the Spanish Ambassador Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, when he met Shah Abbas I in 1618, he was the first to kneel and kiss the ruler’s hand, after which the Shah raised him, embraced him and greeted him (Chick, 1939, pp. 123, 238).

Moreover, the Safavids never accepted Europeans as equal to representatives of the surrounding Muslim countries. As a result, in the official historiography the history of

relations between the Safavid Empire and the states of Europe is given superficial attention. Even if certain Europeans are mentioned in some Safavid source, they are generally referred to as “*Franks*” without being specific.

In addition, Jenkinson’s *Declaration* also pays some attention to local mythology. Thus, Jenkinson notes: “...In the sayd cuntrye there is an high hill called Quiquifs, upon the toppe whereof (as it is commonly reported) did dwell a great Giant, named Arneoste, having upon his head two great hornes, and eares, and eyes like a Horse, and a taile like a Cow. It is further sayd, that this monster kept a passage thereby, untill there came an holy man, termed Haucoir Hamshe, a kinseman to one of the Sophies, who mounted the sayd hill, and combating with the sayd Giant, did binde not onely him in chaines, but also his woman called Lamisache with his sonne named After: for which victory they of that cuntrye have this holy man in great reputation, and the hill at this day (as it is bruted) savoureth so ill, that no person may come nigh unto it...” (Hakluyt, 1589, pp. 368–369).

Heading from Shamakhi to Qazvin, Jenkinson, stopping in Javat, was amazed at the beauty of the gardens in the royal palace: “...Came to a towne called Yavate, wherein the king hath a faire house, with orchards and gardens well replenished with fruits of all sorts” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 369). However, due to the lack of deep knowledge about the cultural and spiritual life of the local population, Jenkinson limited himself to only a visual description of the gardens, without delving into the deeper political and religious significance of the gardens for the Safavids. Gardens in the Islamic world, including the Safavid Empire, had a semiotic significance along with their traditional practical significance. Through the symbolic language of magnificent gardens and grand buildings, not only were political expressions of territoriality and imperial self-representation manifested, but also the religious beliefs of Muslims. As Walcher notes, “The Koranic concept of paradise was understood as the guiding motive and principle for the creation of the Safavid gardens, which were identified as an Islamic dynasty, both religiously and politically” (Walcher, 1998, p. 332). The gardens were the epitome of Islamic architecture.

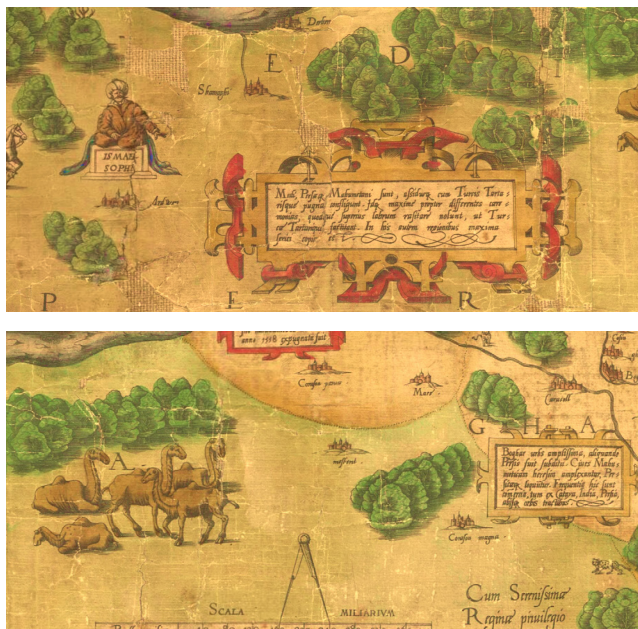
Jenkinson’s *Declaration* is also one of the first English written evidence not only of the two main directions in Islam in general – Shiism and Sunnism, but also of the religious peculiarity of the Safavids – adherence to Shiism, which, according to Jenkinson, was the main reason for the military and political conflict of the Safavids with the Ottomans and khans of Central Asia.

Being in Bukhara in 1558, Jenkinson witnessed a military confrontation between the Safavids and the Turkestan khans, to which he gave a religious colour. Thus, according to Jenkinson, one of the reasons for the wars between them is that the Safavids do not cut their hair on their upper lip, as the Bukharans and other Tatars do, who consider this behavior of the Safavids a great sin and call the Safavids *Kafars*, i.e. infidels. Later, having already visited the Safavid Empire in 1562, Jenkinson in his *Declaration* characterizes the religious denomination of the Safavids as follows: “He [Tahmasp I] professeth a kinde of holynesse, and saith that hee is descended of the blood of Mahomet and Murtezalli: and although these Persians [Safavids] bee Mahometans, as the Turkes and Tartars bee, yet honour they this false fained Murtezalli, saying that hee was the chiefest disciple that Mahomet had, cursing and chiding dayly three other disciples that Mahomet had called Ovear, Usiran, and Abebeck, and these three did slay the saide Murtezalli, for which cause and other differences of holy men and lawes, they have had and have with the Turkes and Tartars mortall warres” (Hakluyt, 1589, p. 373).

As Houston notes, “the contrasts between the Safavid and Ottoman Empires, and specifically Persia’s [the Safavid Empire] Shi’ite status, were used by the English travel writers during this period in order to create an image of Persia [the Safavid Empire] as a nation open to English trade and travel” (Houston, 2009, p. 149).

One of the main results of Sir Anthony Jenkinson’s mission to the Safavid Empire was his wall map called “*Nova absolutaque Russiae, Moscoviae, et Tartariae descriptio*” (**Fig. 2**) published in London in 1562 (for more see: Gafar-zada, 2022). The uniqueness of Jenkinson’s original map consists in the fact that it is not only the oldest and first visual representation of the Safavid Empire in English sources, but also influenced the further development of European cartography. It was an integral part of the world’s first modern geographical atlas “*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*” by Abraham Ortelius (1570) and Gerardus Mercator’s *World map* (1572).

This map is a visual reflection of Jenkinson’s observations during his stay at the Safavid Empire and helps to shed light on how Elizabethan England imagined the Safavid Empire. Jenkinson’s map contains not only geographical data, but also interesting information about the cultural and religious life of the Safavid Empire. One of the few physiographic elements of the Safavid Empire, given on the map, is one-humped camels (*Camelus Dromedarius*) and a leopard (**Fig. 2**), both exotic for England, but widespread in the Safavid Empire, which were depicted on rock images in Gobustan and was not only a part of the hunt, but also one of the most common motifs of Safavid textiles, miniatures, as well as copper bowls, carrying a symbolic meaning. Rahimi, based on Shiite rituals of camel sacrifice, suggests that camels, especially during the reign of Shah Abbas I, were an integral part of the political ceremonies dedicated to the creation of a “theatre” state (Rahimi, 2004, p. 452).



**Fig. 2. Fragments of Jenkinson’s map**  
“*Nova absolutaque Russiae, Moscoviae, et Tartariae descriptio*” (1562)

One of the inscriptions on the map gives us information of a religious nature, namely, about Shiite Islam professed by the Safavids:

*“Medi, Perfaeque Mahumetani sunt, aſidueque cum Turcis Tartariſque pugna conſigunt. Fdq [?] maxime propter differentes caremonias, quodque ſuperius labrum rasiare nolunt, ut Turca Tartariſque factitant” (Fig. 2).*

Translation:

“Medes and Persians [under the “Persians” Jenkinson meant subjects of the Safavid Empire] are Muslims. Constantly conducted hostilities with the Turcic Tartars [under the “Tartars” Jenkinson assumed the Turkmens of Central Asia]. Particularly great differences in ceremonies, they do not shave [the mustache] over the upper lip, as the Turks and Tartars do.”

In addition to the inscriptions that firmly indicate the Islamic religion of the population of the Safavid Empire, the silhouette of the founder of the Safavid state, the seated Shah Ismail I, is also depicted on the original map of Jenkinson. Jenkinson, having depicted the Shah with a long mustache and in the traditional Safavid attire – a long robe, belted on a slope, and in a special headdress worn by Muslims – a *turban*, managed to visually convey information about Islamic beliefs and partly about ethnographic features, traditional male clothes of the population of the Safavid Empire.

This map was not intended for compass navigation, but pursued the goal of visual transmission of what Anthony Jenkinson saw when traveling to new countries, including the Safavid Empire. According to Osipov, “...the purpose of the map was rather informative. This is a map-report rich in colorful palette, a large-scale, visual demonstration of new knowledge, ...it was a challenge map, a statement of achievements” (Osipov, 2008).

Although the information on the Safavid Empire presented on the map was not extensive and was of an encyclopedic nature, Jenkinson expanded the political geography for the English elite. His map strongly influenced the formation of the geographical, religious, geopolitical, cultural, social reception by the English elite of the East, the Muslim world, in particular the Safavid Empire, unknown to them.

**The Conclusion.** Safavid-English relations opened a new chapter in the history of international relations, not only Anglo-Islamic relations, but also the Christian states of Europe with the Islamic world. The interaction of the English with the Safavids not only enriched the local markets of Elizabethan England with exotic goods, decorated the homes of the English with exquisite silks and expensive carpets, introduced borrowed words into the English language, but also affected the worldview of the people. The strengthening of relations between the two states was not only limited to interaction on the political and economic spheres, but also left a significant mark on a cultural life of England: literature, art, theatre, everyday life, religious worldview, court fashion, and even sports.

Safavid-English relations became a precedent for further relations of Tudor England with the states of the Muslim world. If several decades earlier many, if not most, scholars ignored the significant role of Islamic states in the diplomatic and, moreover, cultural life of medieval England, today a number of researchers not only recognize, but also affirm this. As MacLean and Matar emphasize, “...the Islamic world played a special and important role in the formation of Britain” (MacLean & Matar, 2011, p. 2).

Although Jenkinson failed to achieve the goals set by the queen and the leadership of the Moscow Company, his mission to the Safavid state was considered a grandiose event, even by Queen Elizabeth herself, 17 years after Anthony’s reception by Shah Tahmasp I, in her letter to Shah Muhammad Khudabنده in 1579, characterized his mission as a “honorable

embassy". As Brotton emphasizes, "thanks to Jenkinson, the Islamic world became a little closer to England" (Brotton, 2016). It was owing to Jenkinson's merits that the Safavid Empire took its important place in the Elizabethan picture of the world.

Moreover, it is owing to Anthony Jenkinson that today modern Azerbaijan has a rich history of relations with Great Britain both in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres. Therefore, we consider Mathee's statement that "...his mission had no tangible results other than the first English description of Iran [the Safavid Empire], published in 1598 [1589!] in Hakluyt's popular collection of travel literature" (Mathee, 2013, p. 18) to be irrelevant.

Thus, the Safavid Empire, as a part of the Turkic-Islamic world, played a significant role not only in the system of international relations of the early modern period and the economic life of European states, including England, but also contributed to the development of European culture, leaving its mark on the European Renaissance.

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