

Article

Agha Musa Naghiev Karbala'i—The Man and His Multiple Identities: Between National-Azerbaijani, Shi'i Muslim, and Bahá'í Religious Identities

Soli Shahvar 

Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, The University of Haifa, Haifa 3498838, Israel; sshahvar@univ.haifa.ac.il; Tel.: +972-50-7905300

Abstract: Aqa Musa Naghiev Karbala'i (1849–1919)—an oil magnate from Baku and a significant figure in the modern history of Baku and Azerbaijan—and his multiple identities are the focus of this article. Alongside his National-Azerbaijani identity, Naghiev's religious identity was divided between the Shi'i Muslim and Bahá'í identities. The circumstances in which Naghiev was born and raised, and lived, especially during his adulthood—as a Shi'i who had converted to the Baha'i faith, living among the majority Shi'i Muslim population who were generally alien to Baha'is—dictated, at times, the need to carefully maneuver between these two religious identities. The Baha'i principle of *hikmat* provided Naghiev with the appropriate means for this during his lifetime. The problem, however, is in the way his identity has been engineered and presented in Azerbaijan's national historical consciousness as an Azerbaijani-Muslim, concealing his Baha'i religious identity, in spite of his public activities for Baha'is and the Baha'i community, which included financing the building of the Baha'i Spiritual Assembly in Baku (Ruhanie) and being the chairman of its management committee. In this article, I explain this complex picture of Naghiev's multiple identities through the use of primary (documents from national and private archives, and interviews) and secondary sources.

Keywords: Aqa Musa Naghiev; Baha'i faith; Ruhaniye; Baku; multiple identities



Citation: Shahvar, Soli. 2023. Agha Musa Naghiev Karbala'i—The Man and His Multiple Identities: Between National-Azerbaijani, Shi'i Muslim, and Bahá'í Religious Identities. *Religions* 14: 896. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14070896>

Academic Editor: Franz Winter

Received: 7 June 2023

Revised: 26 June 2023

Accepted: 7 July 2023

Published: 11 July 2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Musa Naghiev (1849–1919) was born in Balagari, in the Baku province of Tsarist Russia. During his childhood, he worked as a porter for a few pennies, but, towards the beginning of the 20th century (which is the starting point of our discussion), he was already among a very small group of leading Azerbaijani industrialists and tycoons, who, through their successful investments, also became influential people in the Baku province and city. Naghiev made his fortune in oil exploration during Baku's oil boom of the early 20th century and owned a factory for the production of oil products. Through his fortune, he managed to build 98 buildings in the city of Baku, while directing his donations and contributions mainly to the construction of educational institutions, actions that made him an asset and national pride in Azerbaijan. He stood at an important historical junction in the formation of the Azerbaijani national consciousness, and, as a man with multiple identities, managed to combine his religious identities with his national one. Dillara Nağıyeva-Muxtarova (read “Naghieva-Mukhtarova”)—Musa Naghiev's granddaughter (the daughter of Naghiev's adopted son, Faraj)—provides such details in the biography of Naghiev (Nağıyeva-Muxtarova 2015). In this biography—which is based on archival documents and memories of her family members—Nağıyeva-Muxtarova describes Musa Naghiev as a national Azerbaijani and as a Shi'i Muslim, namely, a national-religious identity that is true for the majority of Azerbaijanis.

The question that will be discussed in this article deals with the true identity of Musa Naghiev—was his identity of dual dimensions, namely, the national (Azerbaijani) and

religious (Shi'i Muslim) dimensions, or was there also a third dimension that Naġiyeva-Muxtarova chose to ignore or deliberately refused to accept (and if so, then why)? If the dual identity that Naġiyeva-Muxtarova attributes to her grandfather did define him in an earlier part of Naghiev's life, then what impact did the changes that he went through later in his life have on him and his identity? And if there was a third dimension in Naghiev's identity, then what was it and why had it been overshadowed by Naġiyeva-Muxtarova?

The above questions arise, given the fact that Musa Naghiev was also known to be a Bahá'í, a fact that is supported also by testimonies and memories of members of the Bahá'í community in Baku. Access to these testimonies and memories was made possible during research on the Bahá'í communities of the Southern Caucasus, in the framework of which exclusive sources, including materials from the private archives of members of the Bahá'í community of Baku, were collected and interviews carried out.

Through the attempt to appropriate the image of such a high-profile personality in the Azerbaijani public, a rather complex picture emerges. This is because all the research material available to us indicate that Musa Naghiev's personality was influenced by socio-political changes that took place in Azerbaijan, especially in the last two decades of his life, which almost coincide with the first two decades of the 20th century. While relying on primary sources from the state archives in Azerbaijan (in Baku) and private collections—including sources from the KGB archive found in a private collection—I will present here the dimensions of Naghiev's complex identity and the importance of his figure, a figure that is proudly appropriated both by the Muslim-Shi'a majority and the Bahá'í religious minority in Azerbaijan. From this, an early working assumption is that there is no room for a dual examination of Naghiev's religious identity, that is, whether he was a Shi'i or a Bahá'í, a question that has been brought up in research so far in an unbalanced way. In this article, I will try to answer the above-mentioned research questions, and endeavor to determine in which period of his life each of Naghiev's multiple identities stands out more than the others.

The main contribution of this article is the reliance on additional sources and collections that have not been consulted before on the topic under discussion and the innovative view in seeing Aga Musa Naghiev as a multi-identity figure. But, before turning to that, a relevant theoretical context and a short historical background are necessary.

2. Theoretical Framework

Given the title of this article, it seems most appropriate to set it in the theoretical context of multiple identities. Individuals and groups have various identities, depending—among many categories—on their race, culture, religion, ethnicity, language, and nationality, as well as status, class, occupation, and profession. These identities do not always operate in isolation, but they interact with other identities in particular situations. Thus, different identities are held by the same person, with some inherited at birth while others are gained during the course of one's life, such as by conquest and annexation. The constant change and evolution of identity is also the result of the ways in which peoples, groups, and individuals of a certain region or country perceive themselves and the difference between the self and the other. It is not the concern of this article to delve on this theoretical framework beyond what has already been dedicated to the topic, as there are in existence numerous theoretical studies (Josselson and Harway 2012; Spickard 2013; Gallardo and McNeill 2009; Lewis 1998).

As far as the region of the Southern Caucasus is concerned, there are a number of studies on identities regarding this region, but those mostly cover the post-Soviet period (Javakhishvili 2022, pp. 113–30), and, therefore, are not relevant to the Tsarist/pre-Soviet period. During the latter period, and for centuries before, the local peoples' primary identity was acquired by birth: by blood (i.e., family, clan, and tribe, developing into an ethnic nation), place (village, neighborhood, district, quarter, city, or province, developing into a country in modern times) and religion (Muslim, Christian, Jewish, etc., subdivided into sects). To those primary identities, a different category of identity—that of allegiance to a

ruler/sovereign (and his multifarious representatives, such as the governor of a province or city, district administrator, or village headman)—was acquired, whether by birth, annexation and transfer of power, or migration (Lewis 1998, pp. 5–7). Musa Naghiev was born and raised in such circumstances, to which were added the influences of modernity, nationality, and new religions.

3. Historical Background

Now, in the context of Musa Naghiev's multiple identities, it is important to situate them in the proper historical framework of the changes in circumstances that could affect the dominant expressions of any of his identities at a given time over his other identities.

Naghiev was born into a Shi'i Muslim family, in the district of Baku, which, two decades before his birth, came under the control of Tsarist Russia by virtue of the Treaty of Turkmenchai (1828) (Schippmann 2014). The Russian occupation did not cut off the cultural, commercial, and, especially, religious–spiritual ties between the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus, including the Muslims of the Baku district, and Iran (Schippmann 2014; and Issawi 1971, pp. 142–43) because the vast majority of the residents of these areas belong, as in Iran, to the Shi'i stream of Islam (Louër 2020, pp. 37–38). However, this does not mean that there were no attempts to reduce or even sever these ties. It was mainly the Ottoman Empire that was active in this, as part of its geopolitical struggle against Russia. The Ottomans tried to recruit the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus (and, as far as possible, all the Muslims of Russia) to their side through the pan-Islamic ideology, namely, the unification of all Muslims under the Caliph of the Muslims, a.k.a. the Ottoman Sultan (Meyer 2015). These attempts largely failed, being only partially successful, mainly in specific regions (mainly the North Caucasus), while the idea of referring to the Ottoman Sultan as a ruler of all Muslims was not accepted not only by the Shi'a Muslims (including the vast majority of the population of Azerbaijan) (Kireyev 2010, p. 379), but also among some Sunni Muslims, such as the Wahhabis (Evered 2012, p. 632).

The Ottomans attempted to weaponize the ideology of pan-Turkism—namely, the ideology aimed at uniting the Turkic peoples—for the same purpose (Lordkipanidze and Totadze 2010, pp. 17–20). It should be noted that the language spoken by the residents of the Southern Caucasus, who would later define themselves as Azerbaijanis, is very similar to the Turkish language. Without going into the subject of language's role in affecting the world of the perceptions and consciousness of the individual who considers it as his mother tongue, I wish to emphasize that an Azerbaijani national consciousness was gradually formed, with language being one of the means of this national formation, and this played some role in reducing the ties of South Caucasus Muslims to Iran and strengthening their ties with the Ottomans (Altstadt 1986, pp. 268, 273). The Ottomans' attempts during the First World War also contributed to this, when Ottoman forces invaded and occupied Iranian Azerbaijan and, during all four years of the war, promoted pan-Turkish trends in this region (Atabaki 2006, pp. 121–36). In the course of the research, many primary Russian sources from different years were found, the content of which warned against the Ottomans' attempts to take advantage of the linguistic–conceptual–cultural closeness presented by them as a denominator that unites them with the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus, in order to recruit non-Sunni Muslims to their side. For example, in a report from December 1876—namely, a few months before the start of the 1877–1878 Russo-Ottoman War—Shtabs-Captain Makarov, head of the Shamakha district in the Southern Caucasus, reported on the popular assemblies that have been organized therein by the leaders of the local Sufi orders. In his report, Makarov stated that an informer of his participated in one of those assemblies where a letter from the Ottoman government was read, asking for the locals' support of the Ottoman Empire in case of a war with Russia, encouraging their active uprising against the Russian government. Makarov's informer told him that the collection of donations was carried out during this assembly, to be sent to the Ottomans. Makarov's conclusion was that the Sufi orders, which were many in number, were able

to incite the Muslims of Shamakha against the Russian administration and in favor of the Ottomans (Makarov to the governor of Baku province, 10 December 1876)¹.

In the face of such constantly prevalent threats, which characterized the tense Russo-Ottoman relations up to the end of WWI, the Russians did not sit idle and joined the struggle to win the hearts of the very same population. For example, efforts were made by the Russian authorities to secure the co-operation and loyalty of the Orthodox Muslim clerics of the Southern Caucasus—who opposed the Sufi orders who challenged their authority—to keep an eye open and report to the Russian authorities anything that seemed suspicious to them, while, on the other hand, preparing their Muslim congregations, who accepted and recognized their spiritual-religious authority, to not be dragged after the malice preaching of the Ottoman enemy (Obruchev to Tatishiev, 12 December 1896)². This Russian move came after their defeat in the Crimean War (1853–1856), during which the Northern Caucasus Muslims (under the leadership of Imam Shamil) actively supported the Ottomans. This proved to be a bitter experience for the Russians, and a lesson in their future relations with and attitude towards the Muslim population under their control, and especially those bordering Ottoman territories, sharpening their need to oppose Ottoman attempts to influence the Muslim population of those territories (Kireyev 2010, p. 378). Thus, after crushing the rebellion of the Northern Caucasus’ Muslims (1864), Russia managed to bring relative stability to that region. According to Reynolds, “with the exception of the years 1877–1878 and 1905, the North Caucasus was relatively quiet and stable from 1864 until the Russian Revolution (1917). Even during the cataclysm of World War I, the North Caucasus failed to erupt in rebellion despite the hopes of the Germans and Ottomans” (Reynolds 2004, p. 12). The Russians also began to pay more attention to their attitude towards the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus, who, contrary to the majority Sunni Muslims of the Northern Caucasus, are of the majority Shi’i branch of Islam, and, thus, have less solidarity with the Ottoman Sunni Sultan. This change in Russian attitude was expressed in the preparations for the next round of Russian–Ottoman conflict which took place in the 1877–1878 war (Sluglett and Yavuz 2011), and also during a sort of ‘campaign between wars’, when it was clear to the Russians that another confrontation with the Ottomans was coming (which, indeed, took place in WWI) (Shiotkin to Martynov, 28 February 1912)³.

It should be noted that the aforementioned attempts to separate the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus from Iran resulted, in the last third of the 19th century, in a religious crisis among those Muslims. Many sects and Islamic currents began to emerge therein, with their leaders striving vigorously to convert souls to their own sects. A Russian document from late 1892 not only testifies to the appearance of the many sects and the struggle between the different Islamic currents, but also shows how the local Russian authorities welcomed them since they challenged the traditional Shi’a and Sunni leaderships. By so doing, the Russian authorities helped, on the one hand, to instigate the further fragmentation of the Muslim community, while, on the other hand, increasing the dependence and protection of the traditional Muslim leaderships on and towards them. These relations of dependence and patronage are also connected with what was said earlier regarding the Russian–Ottoman conflict over the hearts of the Muslims of the Southern Caucasus (Elizabetopol district governor to the Viceroy of the Caucasus, 30 November 1892)⁴. In this process, the Shi’i Shaykhi school also appeared in the region, out of which developed the Bábi movement and, later, the Bahá’í religion (Shahvar 2011, 1: 1–47). The Babis appeared for the first time in the Southern Caucasus already with the buds of the above-mentioned religious crisis, and on the fertile ground of the stiff struggle between the supporters of the different Shi’i schools in the Nakhchivan region bordering Iran (Ordubadi 1996, p. 7). However, in this article, we will not delve into the details of this struggle, but only focus on the Bahá’ís and only in the context of Naghiev’s affiliation with that religion. But before we deal with Naghiev’s dual religious identity, we move to discuss the national dimension in his multiple identities, and, in order to do so, it is also necessary to provide a background on the development of the Azerbaijani national idea.

4. Azerbaijani Nationalism Dimension in Naghiev's Identity

In the context of Azerbaijani nationalism, it is necessary to return to the Ottoman attempts to propagate the pan-Turkish ideology in the Southern Caucasus. Although, in general, this population did not rise up against Russia and in support of the Ottomans, still, the promotion of the pan-Turkish ideology did succeed, at least to some extent, to bring part of the Southern Caucasus population to support the Ottomans, and Naghiev was part of it. Evidence of this can be seen in Naghiev's massive financial support of the Ottomans in 1918, a testimony that stands out in light of his being very conservative when it came to financial donations and assistance. In the circle of Baku's millionaires, to which Naghiev belonged, it was customary to hold fundraising evenings for various purposes, including even purely ostentatious ones, but Naghiev, more than once, was portrayed in such evenings in an unflattering light due to his conservative tendency not to donate or to minimize his donations (Nağiyeva-Muxtarova 2011, p. 83). Against this background, his financial support and assistance to the Ottomans during WWI stand out. In 1918, when Anwar Pasha and his forces entered Baku, Naghiev announced that he would cover all their living expenses—such as housing, food, laundry, etc. He housed Anwar Pasha and all his officers and soldiers, at his own expense, in his luxurious houses and buildings in Baku, bearing all those expenses alone, by himself, without any need to hold a unique fundraising event for it (Gajibeli 1993, p. 123).

There is, however, room to slightly qualify what has been said about the success of the Ottomans in promoting the pan-Turkism ideology and to point out that behind the label of the 'Azerbaijani nation' stand a set of other factors. However, in the context of Naghiev's national consciousness, one can also highlight the decision of the Russian authorities, from February 1872, to cancel the payment of the fixed tax on the right to produce oil. This tax-exemption benefitted a small group from the local aristocracy who produced oil from the oil wells over their lands. But it also benefitted entrepreneurs, such as Naghiev and others, who could lease land for the purpose of oil exploration and production (Ushakov 1912, p. 108). Naghiev, thus, became one of a number of entrepreneurs who became rich and then began to distinguish themselves as a small group of Azerbaijanis who were oil industrialists and moguls. Members of that group contributed, among other things, towards the benefit of the Azerbaijani nation, such as to the construction of modern kindergartens and schools in Azerbaijan and also to the acquisition of academic and professional education for young Azerbaijanis in universities abroad (Gasimova 2022). Among this group, Naghiev used to stand out in demonstrably donating low amounts in the fundraising events; however, after learning that only 12% of Muslim Azerbaijanis attended schools, he began to channel massive investments towards increasing their percentage (Nağiyeva-Muxtarova 2011, p. 83).

It should be noted that, for the purpose of promoting Azerbaijani nationalism, the above-mentioned group of capitalists/millionaires was joined by local intellectuals, and the fruit of their joint activities was the establishment of an independent democratic republic of Azerbaijan on 28 May 1918, with the orientation towards pan-Turkism receiving a formal expression. This was shown most clearly by the documents of the historical archive of Azerbaijan, documents written by Lev (Arslan-Bek) Krichinsky—a historian and a jurist from the first independent period of Azerbaijan (namely, up to 28 April 1920). He was born in Poland in a Muslim-Sunni family. While still a law student at St. Petersburg, the young Krichinsky championed pan-Islam and stood vigorously for the rights of Muslims in Russia (Quliyev 2019, pp. 1249–62). But, in 1918, after being appointed to the post of the administrative head of the Azerbaijan government (Prikaz, 8 May 1919)⁵, he began to discover pan-Turkic perceptions and promoted a well-thought-out system for deepening these perceptions in the Azerbaijani identity. The pan-Turkic perceptions were not crystalized overnight in the process of the development of the Azerbaijani nation and were an influence on Naghiev and his generation. As mentioned before, Naghiev did indeed support the strengthening of the Azerbaijani national consciousness; however, it is not clear if he expected such a powerful promotion of the national idea on the basis of the pan-Turkic ideology, which was carried out by figures like Krichinski, who even provided it

with an academic–historical platform (Krichinsky to Jafarov, September 1919⁶; and Prikaz, 13 October 1919⁷).

In any case, according to Ramzan Asgarlı, the Secretary of the National Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly of Azerbaijan in Baku, among the Azerbaijani public today (2022), Naghiev is associated with the enthusiastic supporters of the national idea, and, in addition to that, they emphasize his being a Muslim rather than Bahá'í. Asgarlı emphasized that the trend of giving an Azerbaijani-Muslim image to leading non-Muslim figures is not only expressed in the case of Naghiev, but there is also a series of other such figures in Azerbaijan who are deprived of the Bahá'í dimension of their religious identity and are instead given a Muslim one. Asgarlı added that:

This discourse [which is prevailing in the Azerbaijani public today] places the national–religious identity of Azerbaijani-Muslim at the top of the scale of the cultural values in Azerbaijan. This discourse, which is prevalent in the official circles and among the majority Muslim public, does not recognize the achievements of Azerbaijani Bahá'í in the various fields—such as in the fields of culture or science—unless they are detached from their true faith and presented as Muslims and having a Muslim identity. Thus, in such fashion, a Muslim identity is given to some of the top cultural and scientific figures and famous actors instead of their Bahá'í identity. The feeling is that if that if such figures would be promoted in the above-mentioned discourse as Bahá'í Azerbaijanis, then it would be interpreted as a loss in terms of national pride, and of course harmful to those who promote such a discourse. [This is because from the point of view of the latter] it is not possible for the majority Muslim public to identify with such figures if they are presented by their religious affiliation, namely Bahá'í, but only if they would be presented as the bearer of the unified Azerbaijani-Muslim national–religious consciousness. For example, the first actress in Azerbaijan “Izzat hanum” [Izzat Orujova], the one chosen to star in Jaber Jaberli’s famous film *Sevil* (1929), was a Bahá'í, but in order to present her as a source of national pride the promoters of the discourse in question obscured her being a Bahá'í. Those promoters of the national–religious consciousness do not even reconcile with the fact that Musa Naghiev was a Bahá'í by his religion and present him as if he had been a [Shi'i] Muslim all his life. (interview with Asgarlı, 19 October 2022)⁸

I would like to point out another point that stands out both from Asgarlı’s interview and from Nağıyeva-Muxtarova’s tendentious attempt to give her grandfather, Musa Naghiev, a Muslim identity (although she further specifies this identity as a Muslim-Shi'i one) alongside his Azerbaijani national identity, in accordance with the prevailing discourse among the Azerbaijani public and her main target audience.

5. Naghiev’s Shi'i Muslim and Bahá'í Religious Identity

Naghiev was born into a Shi'i family and, therefore, grew up in the world of Shi'i values. When he wanted to get married (1871), it was probably not for nothing that a bond of marriage was forged between him and Umma Salme Carbalai Jafar-gizy, who came from a Shi'i family who emphasized their origins in Karbala, one of the holiest places for Shi'a Muslims (Nağıyeva-Muxtarova 2015, p. 127). The idea of Naghiev being a Shi'i Muslim and of him preserving Shi'i values continued to be expressed in later stages of his life as well. Dozens of times, he carried out the will of those from among the Shi'ites in the city of Baku who wished, after their death, to be brought for burial in Karbala, but they or their families could have not afforded it financially (Nağıyeva-Muxtarova 2015, p. 102). Another proof of Naghiev’s being a Shi'i and faithful to the concept of the holiness of Karbala can also be found in the fact that, at the end of his life, he asked to be buried there after his death (Nağıyeva-Muxtarova 2011, p. 86). However, despite the above, the theory of multiple identities allows us not to be satisfied with Naghiev having only a Shi'i or Bahá'í identity, but to examine to what extent he was Shi'i and to what extent a Bahá'í.

Naghiev did not try very hard to hide his being a Bahá'í, but, on the other hand, it seems that he did not flaunt it either. At times, when he faced sensitive social situations, he was required to humble his being a Bahá'í. For example, this happened in the case of the marriage of his only daughter, Ümmülbanu, in the late 19th century. At that time, Naghiev already belonged to the elite of the Azerbaijani capitalists and the moral codes of the Azerbaijani society of that time did not allow girls to find their desired husband by themselves, and the class and status differences also presented their own difficulties. The Azerbaijani capital elite was predominantly Shi'a, and this could have forced Naghiev not to display his being a Bahá'í, so that he could find a husband from the appropriate class and status for his daughter. And, indeed, Naghiev was able to marry his daughter to the son of an Azerbaijani-Shi'i millionaire named Shamsi Asadulayev ([Nağıyeva-Muxtarova 2011](#), p. 98).

As for the sensitivity of Naghiev to disclose his Bahá'í identity (in the context of harming his daughter's chances of getting married), it is possible to present here a number of relevant testimonies by three members of the Bahá'í community in Azerbaijan, who preserved the memories of their ancestors about the period in question.

The first testimony was given by Salahaddin Ayyubov, a member of the Bahá'í family from the city of Sheki, who immigrated to Baku at the beginning of the twentieth century, as a result of harassment by the local Shi'a. Ayyubov also had grandparents (on his mother's side) in the Bahá'í community of the city of Saliyani, where, unlike Sheki, there was no harassment of Bahá'ís. However, even in Saliyani, when Salahaddin's great-grandparents found out that they had married their daughter to a Bahá'í (i.e., Salahaddin's grandfather), who had concealed his being a Bahá'í from them, they began treating their daughter as an apostate (interview with S. Ayyubov, 29 September 2022)⁹.

The second testimony was given by Marziya Rizayeva, a member of the local Bahá'í community at Balakhani and currently one of the elders among the Bahá'ís in Azerbaijan (88 years old as of 2022). Although the Bahá'í religion was well-absorbed in Balakhani, Rizayeva testifies that Bahá'ís who wished to conduct a dialogue in religious matters with the local Muslims avoided identifying themselves as Bahá'ís, because if they did, then they would have been met with contempt and exclusion. However, they would identify themselves as such only after seeing that their theological ideas were accepted by their Muslim interlocutors (interview with Rizayeva, 24 October 2022)¹⁰.

The third testimony was given by Amir-Khan Ayyubov, a relative of Salahaddin and a member of the Bahá'í community of Sheki. In his testimony, Amir-Khan mentioned the event of the opening of the school for girls in Baku at the beginning of the twentieth century by Zeyn al-'Abidin Taghiev (an event which Salahaddin also referred to during his own testimony). The latter used to hold house gatherings in his own house in which Bahá'í theologians took part. At the turn of the century from the nineteenth to the twentieth, Taghiev sought to implement one of the lofty principles of the Bahá'í religion—the provision of education to children, especially to girls—but he encountered strong opposition, even though he was one of the top local tycoons, who enjoyed extensive and close ties with the Russian government. Amir Khan emphasized that the principle of providing education to girls was so high among the Bahá'í that if Bahá'í parents have a son and a daughter but are unable to finance the education of both, the daughter (who will be a mother and educator of her children) is given preference. Amir-Khan made a reservation that Taghiev was not a member of the Bahá'í religion, but only sided with some of its principles, including the principle of providing education to girls. The authorities were afraid to approve Taghiev's request in light of the expected reactions to the education of girls in the local public, which, at the time, clung to its Shi'a traditionalism. Only after a stubborn struggle did Taghiev come out with the upper hand and managed to establish the long-awaited school (interview with A. Ayyubov, 23 October 2022)¹¹, presumably in 1901 ([Rice 2018](#), p. 189).

The caution of Naghiev to disclose his Bahá'í identity, as well as the three above-mentioned testimonies, can also be explained through the Bahá'í attitude towards 'dissimulation' (taqiyyah) ([Manuchehri 2000](#), pp. 219–51) and the principle of 'wise judgement' (hik-

mat). According to Susan Maneck, “while dissimulation was condemned in Bahá’u’lláh’s writings, many aspects of the practice persisted under the name of hikmat” (Maneck 1996). According to Bahá’u’lláh, “we can neither approve the conduct of the fearful that seeketh to dissemble his faith, nor sanction the behavior of the avowed believer that clamorously asserted his allegiance to this Cause. Both should observe the dictates of wisdom, and strive diligently to serve the best interests of the Faith” (Bahá’u’lláh 1988, p. 343). This required Bahá’ís, especially in circumstances that were highly dangerous to them or, in their judgement, contrary to the interests of the Bahá’í faith and community, to practice hikmat. Indeed, according to Fereidun Vahman, “concealing one’s [Bahá’í] Faith at the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá [which corresponds to Naghiev’s period of Bahá’í belief] was not rare.” (Vahman, 24 May 2023)¹². According to Vahman:

[It was only] at the time of Shoghi Effendi [Guardian of the Bahá’í faith, 1921–1957] when the Bahá’í administration took shape, especially with registration cards, etc., [that] he exhorted the Bahá’ís to be truthful about their beliefs. More than that, concealing one’s Faith and pretending to adhere to an established religion is against the fundamental teachings in both Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá of truthfulness and righteousness. (Vahman, 24 May 2023)

If so, although it is possible that Naghiev avoided, in sensitive social situations such as his daughter’s wedding, to identify himself as a Bahá’í, his actions (which I will discuss shortly) highlighted that he did act according to the principles of the Bahá’í religion. Even in the context of the above-mentioned noble principle of giving education to girls (which, as mentioned, faced opposition in a traditional Shi’a society at the time), it can be noted that Naghiev frequently made sure to channel his investments in favor of girls’ education. For example, apart from the fact that he invested the necessary capital for the construction and operation of a large educational institution in Baku (which is currently used as a state university of economics), he expressly committed himself to annually financing the tuition fees for 25 girls who would study at that academic institution (Javadov 1909, p. 50). Another Baha’i custom which Naghiev implemented was to name his granddaughter Ümmülbanu after her mother (Naghiev’s daughter), who died during the birth of her daughter. According to Mahila Kasumova—a Baha’i-zadeh and fourth generation of the Balakhani Baha’i community—this is a distinct Baha’i custom. For example, Kasumova’s mother bore the name of the Babi poet Qurat al-‘Ayn (who was executed by strangulation in 1850) after she inherited that name from her aunt who died of a serious illness at a young age, with the latter also inheriting that name when she was born. Abd al-Bahá himself gave the name of the poetess to the daughter of Kasumova’s great-grandfather, Amir Khalil Jafarov (who was a Baha’i oil industrialist and tycoon in Balakhani), in order to give life to Qurat al-‘Ayn’s spiritual legacy (interview with Kasumova, 22 October 2022)¹³.

Naghiev was also one of the founders of Mahfal-i Ruhani (Bahá’í Spiritual Assembly) in Baku, which was registered in the records of Baku municipality as an association titled ‘Ruhanie’, with one of its main goals being the spread of knowledge, education, and enlightenment (Momen 2011). Naghiev’s name appears first in the list of individuals who, on 27 October 1909, approached the Baku authorities with a request to approve the establishment of the Ruhanie and its statutes, a request that was approved (file covering the period of 27 October 1909–17 December 1914)¹⁴. Naghiev himself also chaired the Ruhanie until 19 February 1910, when he became an honorary member of it (Ruhanie Representatives to the mayor of Baku city, 19 February 1910)¹⁵.

According to the Ruhanie regulations, priority was given to the spread of education and training among the members of the Bahá’í community, but it is clear from those regulations that the spread of the Bahá’í faith among non-Bahá’í was not less important. The following activities were also specified among the Ruhanie’s regulations: printing textbooks as well as books for the purpose of spreading enlightenment; conducting presentations and text readings among the public, accompanied by the presentation of illustrations; arranging evening conversations with the public; and many other activities, all being part of the

program of spreading the Bahá'í faith and enlightenment. Furthermore, the Ruhanie's regulations stipulate the following: children from poor families who are Bahá'í and who cannot afford to finance the education of their children will be financed by the Ruhanie; such sponsorship will also be extended to the orphans (even if they are not Bahá'ís) who are of school age; a new generation of teachers will be trained for the existing schools (not necessarily Bahá'í schools) and the new ones that will be established (the statutes of the Bahá'í Association Ruhanie, 1910)¹⁶.

The above-mentioned regulations of the Ruhanie in Baku city, of which, as previously stated, Naghiev was the founder and first chairman, make it quite clear that the promotion and spread of the Bahá'í faith—and, with it, what the Bahá'ís refer to as enlightenment—were one of the main ends of its foundation. The purpose of spreading the Bahá'í faith is also evidenced by the annual reports that the organization submitted to the local authorities. The reports detailed the composition of the Ruhanie's management, the amounts of donations received by it, and the manner in which they were used. From the study of those reports, it appears that the spread of the Bahá'í faith was indeed one of the main goals that the Ruhanie promoted. In the annual reports for the years 1911 and 1912, Naghiev's name appears first in the composition of the Ruhanie's management committee, and, in brackets after his name, it is stated that he concurrently serves as the chairman of the distinguished members' committee of the Ruhanie (Reports of the Organization Ruhanie in Baku for 1911, 1912, and 1913)¹⁷.

An analysis of the aforementioned annual reports also shows that, year by year, the investment in education gradually decreased to the point that, in 1912, it was even three times less than the salary paid to the guard at the entrance to the Ruhanie. The section in the reports concerning the funds allocated to the education of poor Bahá'í children has also decreased, so that even the section titled 'Miscellaneous' (namely, all kinds of small expenses) almost equals it, and, all this while, only the donations (without membership fees) received at the Ruhanie in 1912 were more than a hundred times what was ultimately allocated for the education of the children of Bahá'í families (Report of the Organization Ruhanie in Baku for 1912). Furthermore, in the Ruhanie's annual report covering the year 1913, the gap increased even more in favor of the salary amounts of the employees and activists of the Ruhanie (the salary of the latter, by the way, was not stated in the previous reports) in relation to investments in education (Report on Expenses)¹⁸. A possible explanation for this gap could be that most of the funds donated to education could have been instead channeled by the management committee of the Ruhanie to other fields, such as the propagation of the Bahá'í faith.

According to Nağyeva-Muxtarova, Naghiev had a second wife by the name of Elizaveta Jankarova—Jewish by origin and Bahá'í by religion—and their marriage was registered in the Ruhanie. Nağyeva-Muxtarova adds that Naghiev lived with Jankarova, who was younger and much more enthusiastically Bahá'í than him, starting in 1889 (Nağyeva-Muxtarova 2015, p. 169). This means that Naghiev and Jankarova lived together before the Ruhanie building was founded, but it seems that the Ruhanie, as a gathering council and without a specific building that housed it, did exist before their marriage. According to Momen, the first of such councils (Mahafil-i Shaur) "was formed secretly among prominent Bahá'ís in Tehran around 1878", and, in the 1880s, Bahá'ís in Persian cities began to establish them as well (Momen 2011). In time, such councils were also established in Bahá'í communities outside Iran, and we can, therefore, surmise that Bahá'í religious services were provided by the Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly before Naghiev built for it a specific building, and, once built, it was registered at Baku municipality under the name of 'Ruhanie'. Thus, it could be that his period of marriage to Jankarova (who, as mentioned before, was an enthusiast Bahá'í), contributed to the strengthening of Naghiev's Bahá'í belief and identity to such an extent that, after he became rich, he decided to finance the cost of the building for the Ruhanie, where Bahá'í religious, spiritual, and other services could be offered and provided to the Bahá'í community in Baku. As mentioned before, he not only chaired the Ruhanie's management committee but also became a member of the Bahá'í Spiritual

Assembly in Baku ([Javadov n.d.](#), p. 21). Naghiev also sponsored the only known sculpture purported to be of the Bab that is prominently displayed at a public site in Baku, decorating the Presidium of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences building ([Masumian and Masumian 2013](#), pp. 171–90).

Naghiev died in March 1919 and, already, on March 8 of the same year, his first wife who was Shi'i by religion, followed by his other family members, were all applying to exercise their right to his estate. The verdict given in this case by the district court in Baku was based on Shi'i Shari'a law. This was customary also during the Tsarist period, before the establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in cases where the plaintiffs were Shi'a. It is important to note that Naghiev's first wife's claim resulted in her being quickly awarded her share of the inheritance ([Nağyeva-Muxtarova 2015](#), pp. 169–71), but the whole case continued for a whole year. In December 1919, Elizaveta Jankarova, Naghiev's second wife who was a Bahá'í, also claimed her share of the inheritance. On the one hand, Nağyeva-Muxtarova points out that the court ruled that, according to the Shari'a, Jankarova's marriage to Naghiev in the Ruhanie is not valid, implying, at best, that Jankarova was her grandfather's lover, attempting to strengthen the claim that Naghiev was Shi'i who had a Bahá'í lover, but, on the other hand, Nağyeva-Muxtarova says that the court heard testimony about a case in which Naghiev served as a witness in a legal hearing during which he refused to swear on the Quran and agreed to swear only on the book of Baha'u'llah, most probably the Kitab-i Aqdas (the Most Holy Book). Likewise, while, on the one hand, Nağyeva-Muxtarova sees Jankarova as her grandfather's "lover", on the other hand (and few lines later), she describes Jankarova as Naghiev's "second wife". In addition, on the one hand, she relies on the claim of a representative of the local Shi'ite establishment in Baku who testified in court that Naghiev had served in a mosque (in his youth) as evidence of his being a Shi'i, while, on the other hand, she discovers that even though the judges relied on Shari'a law and did not recognize the marriage certificate from the Ruhanie, the judges still accepted Jankarova's claim, and ruled that Naghiev's first wife—in whose favor the court had earlier decided—had to equally share her part in Naghiev's estate with Jankarova ([Nağyeva-Muxtarova 2015](#), pp. 169–71).

A final issue that still remains unresolved in the context of the debate under discussion is why a court based on Shari'a law ultimately ruled in favor of Jankarova whose marriage to Naghiev was registered in the Ruhanie, which Shari'a law did not recognize. The answer to this question can be found in copies of documents from the KGB archive, and are located, with many other documents, in the private archives of some of the members of the Bahá'í community of Azerbaijan. Before listing important details from those documents, it should be explained why documents related to estate claims found themselves in the NKVD and later in KGB archives. Nağyeva-Muxtarova goes into great detail about how often, sometimes in the dead of night, her father Faraj (Naghiev's adopted son) was invited to these offices in an attempt to investigate and trace the source of Naghiev's fortune. During his life, Faraj changed his residence many times, but, every time, he was required to register himself in the offices of the above-mentioned security organizations, where he was repeatedly questioned about Naghiev's wealth ([Nağyeva-Muxtarova 2015](#), p. 109).

In the framework of their investigations, the investigators of the aforementioned organizations also investigated lawsuits filed by relatives of Musa Naghiev. One of those was filed by 'Ali-Naghi Karbala'i, Naghiev's younger brother. In 1917, a relative of the wife of 'Ali-Naghi passed away. The deceased owned a piece of land in Sabunchi (today part of Baku city) which included an oil well. 'Ali-Naghi's lawsuit was filed with the purpose of depriving the deceased's wife of her right to the inheritance of her husband, and it is from that case that an answer can be found to the question regarding the ruling of the Shari'a court in favor of Jankarova.

From the content of the discussion in 'Ali-Naghi's lawsuit, we can see that the final decision in this lawsuit is from September 1917, namely, nine months before the establishment of the independent Azerbaijani state. In spite of the case still being under the Christian rule of Tsarist Russia, the final ruling was also based on Shari'a law, as in the trial in 1919 over

Naghiev's estate. In this case, too, the plaintiffs relied on the interpretation of Shari'a law in order to deprive the deceased's wife from her right to inheritance. But, this time, the court explained at length about the differences that exist in the interpretation of Shari'a law in the legal practice of similar legal discussions from around the world, bringing many examples of such legal discussions and rulings based on the interpretation of Shari'a laws, including examples from British India. The court argued that, in cases where the interpretation of Shari'a law can be ambiguous or subject to several interpretations, the court, in its ruling, must rely on a broader platform of state legal practice ('Ali Naqi Karbala'i's (and others') lawsuit, 28 September 1917)¹⁹. It seems that this example can also explain the deviation from strict Shari'a law (which was made in the discussion about Neghiev's estate), ruling in favor of Jankarova's right to inheritance. Naghiev, for his part, chose not to leave a will. After all, if he was a Shi'i Muslim, as Nağıyeva-Muxtarova (and the prevalent trend in Azerbaijan) try to present him, then surely he could have had excluded Jankarova from his inheritance by producing a written will, in favor of his first wife, but he did not leave a will behind, probably believing that such a will would have proven to be against his second wife, thus putting his trust on the legal justice system and its interpretation of Shari'a laws.

6. Conclusions

Naghiev was a complex personality who lived in a complex time, during which the Azerbaijani national idea was being formed, with him undergoing a crisis in his religious beliefs. This was expressed in the fact that he was born as a Shi'i Muslim, and, later, he became Baha'i, but still continued to express his loyalty to some Shi'i values, which created confusion regarding his religious identity, in view of the attempts in Azerbaijan to appropriate Naghiev by determining his identity to be Muslim. The theory of multiple identities allows us not to split decisively between Naghiev's identity as a Baha'i and his identity as Shi'i Muslim, especially given the sensitive circumstances—social, cultural, religious, and national—that he faced at the time, which allowed him, on the one hand, to emphasize the dimension of his Shi'i identity over the Baha'i one (for example, so that his daughter's marriage could go ahead), while, on the other hand, emphasizing the dimension of his Baha'i identity over the Shi'i one (for example, in his marriage to his second and young Baha'i wife, and his living beside her, a period of time during which Naghiev could have forgotten his Shi'i values or strengthened his Baha'i ones).

As it was shown in this article, such changes in stressing one religious identity over the other could also be explained through the practice of the Baha'i principle of hikmat. Moreover, in one or another part of his life, a person can also believe in different beliefs or hesitate between them, especially given the fact that the Bahá'í faith allows the believer to not deny his original religion, but to see it as a chain of religions and revelations, through different revelations of the same God. It seems that the following actions by Naghiev clearly show that, at least in the last twenty years of his life, he was more a Bahá'í, embracing Bahá'í values, rather than a Shi'i: first, the foundation of a building for the Ruhanie—an organization for the spread of the Bahá'í faith and its noble principles, such as education—that Naghiev not only founded but whose management committee he also chaired; second, Naghiev's commitment to pay the fees for the education of girls—another noble principle among the Bahá'ís—in a period when even the percentage of Azerbaijani boys receiving an education was quite low; and third, especially the fact that Naghiev was one of the heads of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Baku.

Naghiev's more daring period of showing his Bahá'í religious identity could also be explained through the changing circumstances, from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, in the Southern Caucasus in general, and in Baku city in particular, from the mid-1850s, but more so following the development of the oil industry in Baku in the 1870s and the increasing demand for labor pulled increasing numbers of laborers to Baku city and its environs. Such a demand was mainly, but not only, for the oil industry, as labor was needed also in a variety of other fields, such as forestry, fisheries, construction, and more, which were all visible signs of development. Thus, the region witnessed a transition

into an industrial and cosmopolitan society, which, together with the establishment of secular education and processes of modernization, gradually created a hub which became more open or tolerable towards non-Muslims, such as Bahá'ís.

Funding: This research was supported by THE ISRAEL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (grant no.1784/21).

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: I wish to thank Ramazan Asgarlı, Amir-Khan Ayyubov, Salahaddin Ayyubov, Mahila Kasumova, and Marziyah Rizaveya, for the time they dedicated and the information which they so kindly provided to my research; Anatoly Mishaev, my research assistant, for conducting the interviews; Heydar Mohammadavali, for his kind assistance in providing relevant material and information; and Fereidun Vahman, for his valuable insights.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- 1 Shtabs-Captain Makarov to governor of Baku province. 10 December 1876 (secret). NHARA/524/1/7.
- 2 Nicolai Obruchev (Chief of the General Staff) to Rosen Ivan Tatishiev (Chief of the Caucasus Military District Staff, Deputy-head of the Caucasus Districts' Administration). 12 December 1896. No. 41 in NHARA/524/1/55.
- 3 Col. Shiotkin to Col. Martynov (Baku city mayor). 28 February 1912. No. 475 in NHARA/45/1/222.
- 4 Elizabetopol district governor to the Viceroy of the Caucasus. 30 November 1892 (top secret). NHARA/524/1/53.
- 5 Prikaz [the order] no. 17, n.p. (Baku). 8 May 1919. NHARA/524/1.
- 6 Krichinsky to M. Jafarov (Azerbaijan Minister of Foreign Affairs). September 1919 (day not specified). NHARA/524/1/1.
- 7 Prikaz [the order] no. 59 of Jafarov. 13 October 1919. NHARA/524/1/1.
- 8 Ramazan Asgarlı. Baku. 19 October 2022.
- 9 Salahaddin Ayyubov. Baku. 29 September 2022.
- 10 Marziyah Rizaveya. Baku. 24 October 2022.
- 11 Amir-Khan Ayyubov. Sheki. 23 October 2022.
- 12 Fereidun Vahman. 24 May 2023.
- 13 Mahila Kasumova, Baku, 22 October 2022.
- 14 File covering the period of 27 October 1909–17 December 1914. Dept. no. 1 (Dept. relating to the affairs of organizations and associations). Bureau of Baku City's Mayor. NHARA/4546/2/127.
- 15 Ruhanie Representatives to Mayor of Baku city. 19 February 1910. No. 4545 in NHARA/45/2/127.
- 16 The statutes of the Bahá'í Association Ruhanie (approved by the authorities on 13 January 1910). NHARA/45/2/127.
- 17 Report of the Organization Ruhanie in Baku for 1911 and 1912. Appendix in Ruhanie's Administration [Management Committee] to Office of the Mayor of Baku city. 25 April 1913. No. 36/73 in NHARA/45/2/127; Report of the Organization Ruhanie in Baku for 1913. Appendix in Ruhanie's Administration [Management Committee] to Office of the Mayor of Baku city. 17 December 1914. NHARA/45/2/127.
- 18 Report on Expenses. Enclosure to Ruhanie's Administration [Management Committee] to Office of the Mayor of Baku city. 17 December 1914. NHARA/4645/2/127.
- 19 'Ali Naqi Karbala'i's (and others') lawsuit. Baku. 28 September 1917. The Private Archive of Salahaddin Ayyubov, no. 8917.

References

- Altstadt, Audrey L. 1986. Azerbaijani Turks' Response to Russian Conquest. *Studies in Comparative Communism* 19: 267–86. [CrossRef]
- Atabaki, Touraj. 2006. Pan-Turkism and Iranian Nationalism. In *Iran and the First World War: Battleground of the Great Powers*. Edited by Touraj Atabaki. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 121–36.
- Bahá'u'lláh. 1988. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. Translated from the Original Arabian and Persian Text by Shoghi Effendi. Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Available online: <https://bahai-library.com/writings/bahauallah/gwb/gleaningsall.html#343> (accessed on 30 May 2023).
- Evered, Emine Ö. 2012. Rereading Ottoman Accounts of Wahhabism as Alternative Narratives: Ahmed Cevdet Paşa's Historical Survey of the Movement. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 32: 622–32. [CrossRef]
- Gajibeli, Jeikhun. 1993. *Izbrannoye [Elected]*. Baku: Azerneshr.

- Gallardo, Miguel E., and Brian W. McNeill, eds. 2009. *Intersections of Multiple Identities: A Casebook of Evidence-based Practices with Diverse Populations*. New York: Routledge.
- Gasimova, Turkey. 2022. *The Intelligentsia and the Oil Barons in Nineteenth-Century Baku*. Ph.D. Thesis, European University Institute, Baku, Azerbaijan.
- Issawi, Charles. 1971. *The Economic History of Iran, 1800–1914*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Javadov, Azer. n.d. *Bahaya Dini Azerbaijanada [The Bahá'í Religion in Azerbaijan]*. Baku: n.pub.
- Javadov, Azer. 1909. *Azerbaijanda Xeyriyyəçilik Harakati (XIX Esrin Sonu ve XX Eserde) [The Charitable Movement in Azerbaijan (End of the 19th Century and Beginning the 20th Century)]*. Baku: n.pub.
- Javakhishvili, Nino. 2022. Identities in the South Caucasus: Still Salient and Contested. In *Non-Western Identity: Research and Perspectives*. Edited by Byron G. Adams and Fons J. R. van de Vijver. Cham: Springer, pp. 113–30.
- Josselson, Ruthellen, and Michele Harway, eds. 2012. *Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kireyev, Nikolay. 2010. Turetskiy Panislamizm i Rossiyskiy Kavkaz v Pervoy Chetverti XX Veka [Turkish Pan-Islamism and Russian Caucasus in the first quarter of the twentieth century]. In *Rossiya i Islamskiy Mir: Istoricheskaya Retrospektiva i Sovremennyye Tendentsii [Russia and the Islamic World: Historical Retrospective and Modern Tendencies]*. Edited by Viacheslav Belokrenitskiy. Moskva: Kraft, pp. 371–88.
- Lewis, Bernard. 1998. *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Lordkipanidze, Vazha, and Anzor Totadze. 2010. *The Population of the Caucasus*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Louër, Laurence. 2020. *Sunnis and Shi'a: A Political History of Discord*. Translated by Ethan Rundell. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Maneck, Susan. 1996. Wisdom and Dissimulation: The Use and Meaning of Hikmat in the Bahá'í Writings and History. *Bahá'í Studies Review* 6. Available online: https://bahai-library.com/maneck_wisdom_dissimulation_hikmat (accessed on 28 May 2023).
- Manuchehri, Sepehr. 2000. Taqiyyah (Dissimulation) in the Babi and Bahá'í Religions. *Australian Bahá'í Studies* 2: 219–51.
- Masumian, Bijan, and Adib Masumian. 2013. The Bab in the World of Images. *Bahá'í Studies Review* 19: 171–90. Available online: https://bahai-library.com/pdf/m/masumian_bab_world_images.pdf (accessed on 1 June 2023). [CrossRef] [PubMed]
- Meyer, James H. 2015. *Turks across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856–1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Momen, Moojan. 2011. “MAHFEL-E RUHĀNĪ.” *Encyclopædia Iranica*. Available online: <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/mahfel-e-ruhani> (accessed on 31 May 2023).
- Nağıyeva-Muxtarova, Dilarä. 2011. *Aga Musy Nagievin Heyriyyechilik ve Ichtaimai Fealiyyeti [Charity and Public Activity of Aga Musa Nagiev]*. Baku: Elm.
- Nağıyeva-Muxtarova, Dilarä. 2015. *V Poiskakh Proshlogo: O Zhizni i Deiatel'nosti Aga Musy Nagieva—Millionera, Neftepromyshlennika, Mefsenata [In Search of the Past: On the Life and Activities of Aga Musa Nagiev—A Millionaire, Oil Industrialist, Donor]*. Baku: Elm.
- Ordubadi, Mamed Said. 1996. *Hayatim ve Mihetim [My Life and Environment]*. Baku: Azernashr.
- Quliyev, Vilayat. 2019. Azərbaycan Cumhuriyeti'nin (1918–1920) Devlet Yönetimindeki Polonya Tatarları: Leon Kriinski [The Tatars of Poland in the Administration of the Azerbaijan Republic (1918–1920): Leon Krichinsky]. *Uluslararası Türkçe Edebiyat Kültür Eğitim Dergisi Sayı 8*: 1249–62. Available online: http://www.tekederisi.com/Makaleler/228820231_29vilayet.pdf (accessed on 25 May 2023).
- Reynolds, Michael A. 2004. *Myths and Mysticism: Islam and Conflict in the North Caucasus: A Longitudinal Perspective*. Kennan Institute Occasional Paper #289. Washington DC: The Kennan Institute, The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholar. Available online: <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/136922/OP289.pdf> (accessed on 25 May 2023).
- Rice, Kelsey. 2018. *Forging the Progressive Path: Literary Assemblies and Enlightenment Societies in Azerbaijan, 1850–1928*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- Schippmann, Klaus. 2014. Azerbaijan iii. Pre-Islamic History. *Encyclopædia Iranica*. Available online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/azerbaijan-iii> (accessed on 22 May 2023).
- Shahvar, Soli. 2011. The Baha'í Faith and Its Communities in Iran, Transcaspia and the Caucasus. In *The Baha'is of Iran, Transcaspia and the Caucasus*. Edited by Soli Shahvar, Boris Morozov and Gad Gilbar. 2 vols. London: New York: I. B. Tauris, vol. 1, pp. 1–47.
- Sluglett, Peter, and Hakan M. Yavuz, eds. 2011. *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- Spickard, Paul R., ed. 2013. *Multiple Identities: Migrants, Ethnicity, and Membership*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Ushakov, Mikhail. 1912. *Neftyanaya promyshlennost' v Rossii [Oil Industry in Russia]*. St. Petersburg: Smirnov Press.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.