Falsifications of history - the “Armenification” of the material cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani people - monuments of architecture, religion and samples of intangible culture have a long history, dating back to the end of the 19th century. This campaign is an integral part of the policy of Armenian nationalists and extremists for the annexation of ancient Azerbaijani lands. It is necessary to consider the actions of the Armenian authorities in the occupied territory of Azerbaijan - in Karabakh precisely in this vein, including the demolition of some monuments and the Armenification of others under the guise of “scientific research”.

According to the results of complex archaeological research conducted by Azerbaijani scientists in Karabakh in the second half of the last century, 2 million years ago here in the basins of the Guruchay and Kondelenchay rivers there were favorable conditions for the resettlement of the primitive man. In 1960, the...
Azerbaijani archaeologists led by Mammadali Huseynov are examining the Azikh cave. The 1960s.
archaeological expedition of the Institute of History of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences under the supervision of Mammadali Huseynov worked in the area, revealing the world-famous Azikh and Taglar Paleolithic sites. Until 1986 the expedition conducted field excavations at the Azikh settlement every year, discovering extensive material. So, samples of Eneolith were found in the first and second cultural strata, Mousterian in the third, Middle Acheulean in the 5th, Lower Acheulean in the 6th, and unidentified cultural material in the 7th-10th, which, taking into account specific features, was taken separately as Guruchay archeological culture. It turned out that tools of Guruchay culture are close to the Olduvai culture of East Africa. In total, more than 7,000 stone products and bones of more than 700,000 animals killed in hunting were found in the deposits of the site.

In 1968, during excavations in the Middle Acheulean cultural layer of Azikh, along with tools, the jaw of a prehistoric man was discovered. Judging by the specific features of its structure, this jaw is characterized by proximity to the jaws of the Pithecanthropus, especially the Mauer man (Germany) on the one hand, and on the other - to the Preneanderthal man, whose remains were found in the Acheulean layer of the Caune de l’Arago (France) site. Along with that, this jaw, belonging to a 30-35-year old woman, is the most ancient human jaw found not only in

Azerbaijani archaeologists led by Mammadali Huseynov are examining the Azikh cave. The 1960s
the Caucasus, but also in the USSR as a whole - its owner lived at least 350,000-400,000 years ago.

The richest repository of materials of the Mousterian culture in Karabakh is the Taglar cave site. In the course of complex archaeological excavations at the site conducted in 1963-1986, more than 7,000 stone items and remains of hundreds of thousands of animals were found. It should be noted that Taglar is the only archaeological monument in the Caucasus and the entire Middle East that allows for the study of the development of tools over a long period of time. The research carried out here clearly showed the peculiar features of the Mousterian culture in the territory of Azerbaijan.

If the Azikh Paleolithic site indicates the time when primitive man settled in Azerbaijan, the Mousterian camp Taglar gave scientists the evidence that the evolution of the Neanderthal man in this region led to the emergence of distant ancestors of modern man.

In addition to the Paleolithic sites of the primitive man such as Azikh, Taglar, Shusha, Zar and Orta-Shurtan, the Garakopek-tepe, Gunash-tepe, Meyne-tepe, Tug-tepe, Kul-tepe and Uzerlik-tepe multi-layer sites and barrows relating to the Neolithic, the Eneolithic and the Bronze Age were found. Cultural materials found by Azerbaijani archaeologists in Karabakh were repeatedly presented to participants of representative international scientific conferences and demonstrated in prestigious foreign museums. For example, fragments from the Azikh and Taglar sites were exhibited in the Paris Museum of Man in 1981-1982, while in 1984 a Czechoslovak anthropological journal published an extensive article on samples of material culture from the Azikh cave. In 1998, the world-famous French scientist Henry de Lumley published the book “First Human”, which details the jaw of the primitive man found in the Azikh cave. The author emphasizes the most important significance of this discovery from the point of view of world archaeological science. In general, it should be noted that the research conducted by Azerbaijani archaeologists in Karabakh has consistently been appreciated by the world scientific community. Over the past 40 years, scientists from different countries, including France, Russia, Germany, Spain, Italy, Georgia, the United States and Ukraine have repeatedly visited Azerbaijan and personally got acquainted with archaeological finds in Karabakh.

Taking into account the importance of the materials of the Paleolithic sites on the territory of Azerbaijan from the point of view of studying the history of mankind as a whole, scientists of several countries - France, Italy, Spain, Holland, Russia, Azerbaijan and Georgia - prepared the international program INTAS-2000, which began operating in 2001. Within the framework of this
program, from September 7 to October 1, 2002, a group of 32 eminent scientists from various European countries was studying samples of material culture from the Paleolithic sites of Azerbaijan in Baku.

Over the past 50 years, Azerbaijani scientists have published more than 30 monographs and more than 500 scientific articles on materials from the primeval sites of Karabakh.

In spite of the aforesaid, some Armenian authors come out with deliberately groundless or even illiterate publications about the materials of the primeval sites of Karabakh. For example, a work by Suren Osipyan speaks about large clay pitchers found in the Azikh cave, the age of which is 150,000 years. In fact, no clay jugs were ever found in Azikh, since such dishes were made only in the Neolithic i.e. from the 9th millennium BC. On August 30, 2003, the website of Arminfo news agency published a report headlined “Excavations continue in the Azokh (Vorvan) cave of Nagorno-Karabakh.” It says that excavations in Azikh are carried out by paleontologists, although any scientist knows that excavations in an archaeological monument are carried out only by archaeologists, while paleontologists or representatives of other disciplines can only be present. The same report claims that the jaw of the woman found in the cave during excavations in 1968 has an age of 50,000-100,000 years, although Azerbaijani scientists even then proved that this woman lived, as already noted above, 350,000-400,000 years ago, and this version has long been accepted by the international scientific community. The report about 300,000-year-old bear bones found in the Azikh cave in 2003 is equally inconclusive. Azerbaijani scientists long before found here the remains of a cave bear, a primordial deer, rhinoceros and other animals that date 600,000 years back.

We should also mention the book “Architectural and Historical Monuments of Nagorno-Karabakh” by Sh. Mkrtychyan, clearly ridiculous in content, published in Irevan in 1988. The author of this opus went as far as saying that a statuette ... of an Armenian woman belonging to the Acheulean cultural layer was found in the Azikh cave! The clothes of this woman are allegedly very similar to the modern Armenian women’s costume ...

In 1971-1973 and in 1975, the Mil-Karabakh archaeological expedition of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan worked in the city of Shusha under the leadership of the same M. Huseynov, which included the author of these lines. The excavations car-
ried out were very fruitful. On the Jidir plain near the city, a Paleolithic site was found, and the studies carried out here proved that the primitive man began to populate these places 200,000-250,000 years ago. In addition, the remains of an ancient fortress wall were discovered near the cave site south of the city. This indicates the presence of a significant urban settlement with defensive installations here even before the new era.

It should be noted that in 2001 the Armenian occupation authorities of Karabakh began to conduct excavations in the Azikh cave. In this excavation, along with Armenian scientists, their colleagues from a number of other countries took part. On September 29, 2003, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan issued a special statement in connection with illegal excavations in the Azikh cave. The statement states that, according to international law, foreign citizens do not have the right to excavate without the permission of the country’s government. Proceeding from this and from the fact of military aggression, which was already accompanied by countless cases of barbaric destruction of monuments of Azerbaijani culture, Azerbaijan has all grounds to worry about the fate of archaeological monuments of global importance on its territory.

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