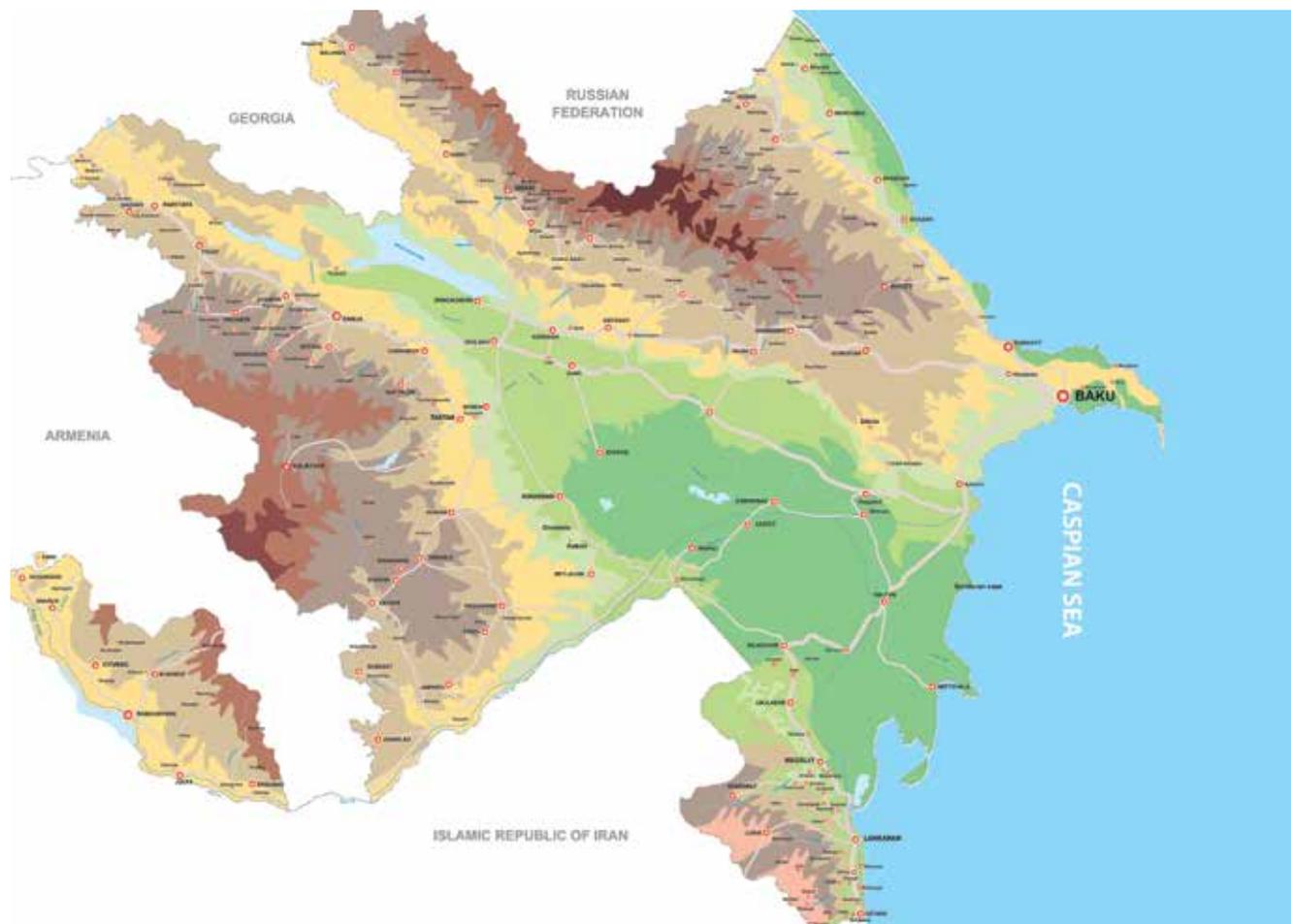


ARMENIAN OCCUPATION AND SOME EXAMPLES OF THE FALSIFICATION OF THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJANI CULTURE

Physical map of the Republic of Azerbaijan

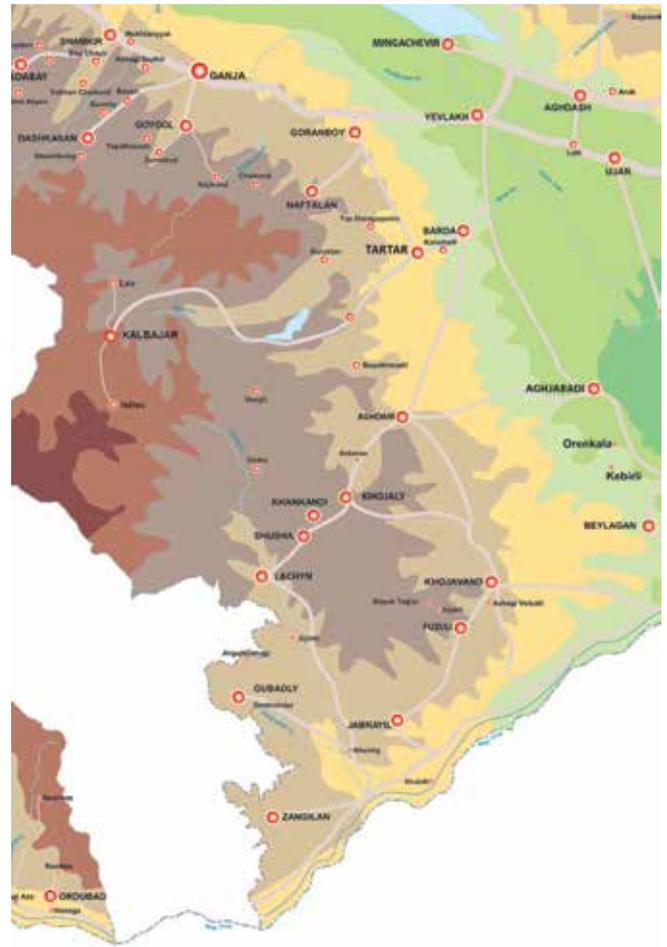


Physical map of Karabakh

In the interpretation and use of cultural, in particular, archaeological heritage, one can see development from political ideology to a scientific approach on the one hand and a reverse movement on the other. In today's troubled world, the archaeological heritage sometimes becomes part of the political system and its ideological attitudes, and nationalists and aggressors try to use archaeological data in their aggressive plans (1, p. 5-6). Such extreme manifestations are typical of Armenia. As a result of Armenian aggression in the 1980-90s, 14,000 square kilometers of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan were occupied, 11,000 of its population were killed, 30,000 people were wounded and about 5,000 Azerbaijanis are missing. (2). Significant damage was done to the cultural heritage of Azerbaijan. For example, in the occupied lands, Armenian vandals destroyed many monuments of culture and history. Armenian scientists traditionally continue the criminal activities of their predecessors, who once misappropriated the history of ancient Azerbaijan by destroying Albanian written monuments. In the post-Soviet period, this aggression and falsification took on a particularly wide scale and is carried out mainly in three directions:

- misappropriation of the archaeological heritage of the Azerbaijani people for the elevation of their own history;
- alienation of the archaeological heritage of Azerbaijan through falsifications and by attributing monuments of the material culture of the Islamic period of the Azerbaijani people to the Persians or Turkmens;
- destruction of traces of material and spiritual culture, in particular, archaeological monuments of the Azerbaijani people.

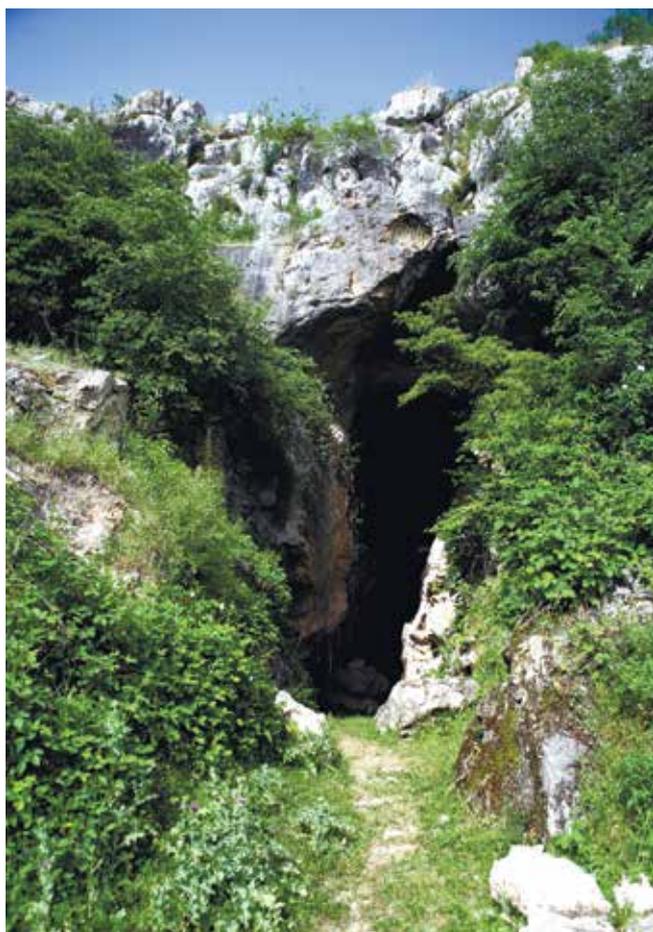
Armenia ignores the normative acts of UNESCO on the protection of cultural heritage, in particular, the Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations adopted by the 9th session of the General Conference of UNESCO (December 5, 1956). According to Paragraph 32: "In the event of armed conflict, any Member State occupying the territory of another State should refrain from carrying out archaeological excavations in the occupied territory. In the event of chance finds being made, particularly during military works, the occupying Power should take all possible measures to protect these finds, which should be handed over, on the termination of hostilities, to the competent authorities of the territory previously occupied, together with all documentation relating thereto." (3, pp. 115-125)



Paragraph 32 of the Recommendation is systematically violated by Armenia, which conducts illegal archaeological excavations in the territory of Karabakh. The purpose of these excavations is to create fake archaeological data about the millennial presence of Armenians in the occupied territories. For example, the archaeological expedition of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia illegally conducts archeological excavations in the occupied Agdam, Khojavend, Agdere districts of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Excavations are being carried out in the Azikh cave on the territory of the Armenian-occupied Khojavend District of Azerbaijan. Paleontologists, climatologists, paleobotanists, paleoecologists and geologists from Spain and Great Britain are mainly involved in the illegal excavations. To the credit of archeologists, experts in the ancient Stone Age from Russia and Western European countries, despite attempts by the occupying authorities, are not taking part in this adventure (4). The settlement in the Azikh cave was discovered by M. M. Huseynov in 1960, and



Azykh cave, one of the main object of Armenian falsification



under his leadership, 14.5 meters of sediments were excavated, where 10 layers were found (5). The quality of complex studies conducted by Azerbaijani and Russian scientists in the Azikh cave in the last century meets the requirements for such studies. These studies are still in demand in the scientific world (4). The settlement in the Azikh cave is a monument of the heritage of humanity, and the illegal excavations there are directed irrevocably at looting and destroying this unique monument.

With its illegal excavations, the expedition of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, headed by the head of the Department of Culturology of Yerevan State University, Doctor of History G. Petrosyan, is destroying the Albanian monastic complex Amaras. This complex is a unique architectural and archaeological monument and is of great importance for the history of the early Christian period of Caucasian Albania. This monument, studied in the 1960s, has cultural layers of the ancient, early medieval and medieval periods. As a result of archaeological excavations of the last century, remains of dwellings, public and religious buildings and industrial centers were discovered. And in the cemeteries of Amaras, ground and pit burials and burials in stone boxes were discovered and studied. Graves, where burials were performed according to Christian rites, were also



Monuments of Shusha are systematically being destroyed by Armenian invaders

studied. The grave of Albanian Catholicos St. Grigoris was discovered and studied (6). The data obtained as a result of archaeological works of the last century are valuable sources on the history of the culture of Caucasian Albania. To somehow justify their illegal activities on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Armenian archaeologist makes absurd criticisms of R. B. Goyushov, who researched the Amaras monastic complex. The main goal of the invaders' expedition in the excavations at the Amaras monastery is not scientific, but political – to misappropriate the Albanian Christian heritage in order to substantiate the thesis about the Armenian presence in the territory of Karabakh.

The activities of the expedition of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the NAS of Armenia in the occupied territory of Agdam District of the Republic of Azerbaijan are a vivid manifestation of the aggressive policy of the Republic of Armenia. Carrying out a political order, Armenian scientists announced that they allegedly discovered the city of "Tigranakert" (near Agdam) built by the Armenian king Tigran II in the 1st century BC. However, this identification is not substantiated by reliable ancient written sources, as well as by the factual materials discovered during the archaeological excavations. This is another lie and ravings by the occupiers trying to settle in the occupied territories. For the sake

of achieving their goals, Armenian scientists are ready to take any antiscientific actions. Thus, Armenian scientists, members of this expedition, placed cubes processed by modern technologies in the pits they dug and tried to present their handiwork as "historical evidence" (7). Apparently, Armenian scientists traditionally continue the criminal deeds of their predecessors, of which Ilia Chavchavadze once wrote: "We have many examples when Armenians tried to erase and destroy traces of Georgian origin on Georgian churches and monasteries, scratch off or erase Georgian inscriptions from stones, remove the same stones from the buildings and replace them with others with Armenian inscriptions, as written in Russian and Georgian newspapers." (8). Armenian scientists even managed to present copper coins of the 12th-13th centuries issued by the Atabays of Azerbaijan as ancient Armenian coins of the 19th century BC, which caused a sharp protest from Academician B. B. Piotrovsky. The outstanding Soviet scientist wrote about Armenian scientists' falsifications: "The bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR (Earth Sciences, XVII, 6. Yerevan, 1964, pp.73-81) published a bronze "personal stamp" and coins with Hayasian neroglyphs, "preceding the signs of the ancient Armenian (Hyksos) neroglyphic alphabet", (p. 78) which S. Ayvazyan briskly translates.

B. Mkrtchyan's article, published in English (The



*Alban temple of Agoglan in Lachin District.
5-6th centuries.*



Mystery of Metsamor) in the Czech journal "New Orient" (VI, 1967, No. 3, p. 76), besides sketches of 'Hayasian coins of the 19th century BC', also shows their photographs. When these coins were handed over to the numismatics department of the Armenia History Museum for identification, the following conclusion was obtained: "The copper coins depicted in the New Orient magazine are completely incorrectly presented as monetary units of the 19th century BC. In fact, these coins (with erased inscriptions) belong to the 12th-13th centuries AD and were issued by the Atabays of Azerbaijan from the Ildegizid dynasty (1133-1225 AD). These were widespread in medieval Armenia and adjacent areas of the Transcaucasia.

As you can see, the sketches published by S. Ayvazyan and reprinted in B. Mkrtychyan's article are falsifications and have nothing in common with reality, and one can only be surprised at how the author decided to publish deliberately forged sketches" (9, pp. 302-303).

Thus, the falsification and appropriation of some-

body else's history and cultural heritage for the elevation of their own history are the favorite method of Armenian scientists.

Recently, in order to alienate monuments of the medieval material culture of Azerbaijanis on the territory of their ancestral lands and to substantiate their territorial claims, Armenian adventurer-scientists came up with the idea of Turkmen monuments supposedly built by Armenians, which is far from being in accord with the existing historical, archaeological and architectural realities. An Armenian archaeological expedition surveyed a vast Muslim burial ground and two mausoleums in the central part of this burial ground in the territory of the occupied Lachin District of the Republic of Azerbaijan in August 2000. In his article published in Turkmenistan, archaeologist A. E. Simonyan reports that "in August 2000, the expedition of the Editorial Board of the Collection of Armenian Monuments at the Administration for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of the RA (headed by A. E. Simonyan) surveyed a vast Muslim burial ground and two mausoleums, hitherto not reported in scientific literature, in the south-eastern part of the republic" (10, p. 94). This article by A. E. Simonyan has a clearly tendentious character, intentionally falsifies historical facts and is aimed at alienating monuments of medieval Azerbaijani architecture. First, the mausoleums, which he declares to be new, are located not in the territory of Armenia, but in the village of Jijimli, Lachin District of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which is occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Secondly, they have been known to science since the 1930s. These interesting monuments of the medieval architecture of Azerbaijan were reflected in the works of I. P. Shchepblykin (11; 12), A.V. Salamzadeh (13, 14), L. S. Bretanitsky (15), F. G. Mammadov (16), J. A. Giyasi (17) and other scientists.

One of these monuments was known among the local population as the Malik Azhdar mausoleum and the other Kar Kumbaz. The Malik Azhdar Mausoleum was more popular and revered among the locals as a sacred shrine. This monument, which has more developed forms than Kar Kumbaz, stands out due to its octagonal shape, a hipped roof and underground and above-ground chambers (15, p. 129). A. E. Simonyan, while describing this monument, deliberately distorts it. He writes: "The walls of the hexagonal construction are gradually narrowing upwards and end with a simple cornice made from flat plates." In fact, this mausoleum is octagonal in shape, which is clearly visible even with the naked eye from the published picture of the

monument. The subjective, prejudiced approach led Simonyan to say about the monument's belonging: "... It was Armenian masters who were creators of Muslim architectural monuments in Armenia, combining the centuries-old achievements of the Armenian architectural school with the principles and requirements of Muslim customers." This is a pure falsification of the history of Azerbaijan, since this territory was not part of Armenia and Armenians did not live here. Secondly, both in terms of the spatial and planning solution and its artistic design, the Malik Azhdar mausoleum is a typical monument of Azerbaijani architecture. Such memorial monuments, representing octagonal structures, without a strongly pronounced vertical orientation, are also the most widespread in the medieval architecture of Azerbaijan (13, p. 238, 18, p. 47-51).

The Kar Kumbaz mausoleum, built of quarry stone with an outer covering from well-hewn stone slabs of reddish color, has a massive and square shape completed with an octagonal dome. This mausoleum attracts attention also because the traditions of the Christian architecture of Caucasian Albania are clearly traced in its architectural appearance. It is known that the construction of Albanian religious buildings continued until the abolition of the Albanian Church, i.e. until 1836.

To somehow draw the attention of Turkmen scientists and involve them in his provocative activities, Simonyan emphasizes: "Both mausoleums are undoubtedly typical examples of Turkmen tombstones erected over the graves of prominent persons both in Turkmenistan itself and beyond its borders." A. E. Simonyan reaches absurdity, declaring that Mausoleum No 1 (Kar Kumbaz) belongs to Pir-Budag and Mausoleum No 2 (Malik Azhdar) to Sultan Kara Yusuf himself. To achieve his goal, Simonyan dates the monument to the 15th century, although it was established long ago that the Malik Azhdar mausoleum dates back to the 13th century and the Kar Kumbaz mausoleum to the 17th-18th centuries. We are sure that Simonyan's pseudoscientific approach is unlikely to question the scientific study of the Malik Azhdar and Kar Kumbaz mausoleums. Mausoleums of this type were erected over the graves of not very prominent representatives of the nobility and in memory of persons of average social status.

Undoubtedly, the Armenian archaeologist acts out of political considerations, and his deeds are a clear and deliberate provocation.

The aggressors, Armenian vandals, are destroying



Mausoleums of Malik Ajdar and Kar Gumbez near Jijimli village in Lachin District. Photo of early 1980s





Abandoned monuments of Karabakh

ancient settlements, funerary monuments, religious buildings, etc. in the occupied territory. They take looted archaeological finds to Armenia. In the occupied territory of Azerbaijan, seven archaeological monuments of world importance and 173 archaeological monuments of national importance have been deliberately destroyed. The process of destroying archaeological monuments continues even now. The unique monument of Garakopaktepe - a multi-layered settlement - is deliberately used for military purposes and is being destroyed. The stone sculptures of the early Middle Ages and the tombstones of the Islamic period are mercilessly destroyed. In Karabakh, Azerbaijani archaeologists recorded 19 stone statues in 1964-1987, dating from the 4th-7th centuries. (19; 20) They were found in Agdam (the villages of Mollalar, Shafibayli, Suma, Gulluja), Barda (Shatirli), Agdere (Janyatag) and Terter (Seysulan) districts. And in the village of Signakh a workshop was found, where statues were made (21, p. 3). These stone statues and other archaeological facts confirmed the reports of Albanian historian Moses Kalankatuatsi about the preservation of idolatry in Christian Albania in the 4th-7th centuries.

Stone sculptures were characterized by their stele shapes, solidity, the absence of images of the legs and neck in most cases, embossed hands on the body and the intentional use of the conventional schematic style of sculpture. Undoubtedly, these canonized features are associated with the ideological characteristics of the cult (20, p. 102). Researchers emphasize the similarity of a number of elements of iconography and the style of Karabakh statuettes with ancient Turkic sculptures, as well as Central Asian reindeer stones (20, p. 102, 22, p. 106, 23, p. 85-86). The stone sculptures of Karabakh are an important source for studying the ethno-confessional composition of the population of early medieval Caucasian Albania, as well as the stone crafts of Karabakh in this period (21).

Of the seven stone sculptures found in the village of Janyatag, only one survived, which was delivered to Baku in 1964 by archaeologist Rashid Goyushov and is currently kept in Icheri Sheher near the Maiden Tower. (20, p. 103). The fate of other stone sculptures in the territory occupied by the Armenian armed forces is not known.

According to the Hague Convention of 1954, "damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its contribution to



the culture of the world". The UNESCO Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage, adopted on 17 October 2003 in Paris, notes: "A State that intentionally destroys or intentionally fails to take appropriate measures to prohibit, prevent, stop, and punish any intentional destruction of cultural heritage of great importance for humanity, whether or not it is inscribed on a list maintained by UNESCO or another international organization, bears the responsibility for such destruction, to the extent provided for by international law."

Thus, the destruction or deliberate destruction of historical and cultural monuments is contrary to UNESCO conventions and declarations. However, the international community is not taking measures to prevent such atrocities.

Summarizing the above, it can be stated that "Armenian archaeological science" is a purely politicized propaganda school that works only in one direction: to falsify the history of the culture of the region and misappropriate other people's cultural heritage. ❁

Photographs from the book "Karabakh over the centuries" (IRS Publishing House, 2016) are used in this article

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*Stone sculpture.
Agdam District of Karabakh, Boyahmadli village*



*Stone sculpture.
Khojavand District of Karabakh*

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Medieval Muslim tombstone in Baglipaya village of Kalbajar District