



SHAHEN MKRTICHIAN

WHY  
**NAGORNO KARABAKH**  
AND AZERBAIJAN  
CANNOT COEXIST

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## PREFACE

*The materials in this book cover a period of alarms, suffering and hardships, a dramatic period for Nagorno Karabakh and the people living there, the severe decades under the yoke of Azerbaijan (1920-1988), when the fair protests, lawful claims and furious outcry of the wounded soul crashed into the moldy walls of the hypocritical Soviet government agencies and were severely suppressed halfway. In such circumstances, the heroic Armenians of Karabakh could do nothing but resist, resist patiently, come together; nevertheless, an incessant silent struggle went on under the Soviet rule. And this struggle finally led to a victory and saved Nagorno Karabakh from the jaws of Azerbaijan, which threatened to exterminate Armenians.*

*Hence, the aim of this work may be considered to reveal the main motives of the powerful Artsakh movement and especially the national liberation struggle. New, still unpublished facts are cited to protest against the sacrifice of the interests of an entire nation to some distant political turmoil, false pledges. The work shows, in fact, that the severe liberation war of Artsakh was a long-lasting complicated process which naturally adopted different methods and ways of struggle in different stages and under certain conditions, considering that under the Soviet totalitarian regime the escalating national issue could not be solved in an open confrontation and by force. Indeed, without a period of serious preparation, preceding the powerful Karabakh movement, there would not be a successful outcome of the stormy liberation struggle. Both the movement and the struggle are closely related to each other. They complete, sum up the achievements of our undefeatable nation.*

*It is also notable that the majority of the facts and information included in this book are published for the first time and cannot be found in any other sources, for under the Soviet dictatorship combined with the ruthless ferocity of Azerbaijan the serious drawbacks, ethnic discrimination, terrorist raids were, as a rule, carefully concealed, or distorted, falsified and presented in a different light. For the sake of their posts and, why not, big bribes and presents, Moscow kept lying, falsifying and whitewashing. A typical example of what was said above is the opinion of the USSR KGB Chief Yuri Andropov on the famous events that took place in Stepanakert on July 3, 1967, in top-secret memoranda N 1637-A (July 4, 1967), N 1677-A (July 8) and N 1812-A (July 20) presented to the Political Bureau of the*

### Shahen Mkrtichian

Why Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan Cannot Coexist  
(translated from Armenian by Arpenik Ghahriyan, Yerevan 2006)

This unique work tells about the nightmare of 70 years of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians under the Azerbaijani yoke. Forceful facts, personal observations, and hundreds of unpublished top-secret documents allowed revealing the stern policy of ethnic discrimination against the Armenians of Artsakh-Karabakh, openly pursuing a single aim – to cleanse Karabakh of Armenians.

The life of the Karabakh Armenians is presented as it was in reality. In this respect, the work acquired a quite new publicist shade of new methodological approaches and an unprecedented scientific, ideological and political bias. The work has a power based on facts to favour the settlement of the problem of Artsakh and to reveal the falsifications of Azerbaijanis. In fact, tremendous work has been done. An abundance of facts and arguments put down in a fiery language is an exceptional phenomenon in the sphere of Artsakh studies.

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*Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party. This is the reason why the materials of this work acquire the value of a primary source, an exceptional documentary and historical significance. Consequently, it is highly important in trying to understand the 70 years of violence in Karabakh and generally in filling in the gaps of the modern history of Artsakh.*

*At the same time, the work has an ideological, political and educational emphasis, as well as the power of facts to reveal the lies and falsifications of Baku slanderers.*

*These materials are genuine diplomatic arguments that can be used in the lasting negotiations to reveal the political genocide committed by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians for 70 years, and not to allow imposing the Azerbaijani yoke on the people of Artsakh again. In brief, this work will help the reader to get a full picture of the true nature of Azerbaijan and its ferocious ethnic policy against the Christian Armenians of Karabakh.*

*It was with a painful feeling in my soul that I gathered and put down the materials in the selection. So much pain, hardship, repression and suffering did the Armenians of Artsakh undergo and incessantly battle, that this is not only a heroic life but also something typical of Karabakh. Throughout the long years of my scientific activity I perceived the secrets of viability of my compatriots, the meaning of struggle, their urge for freedom, struggle for existence. The history of the past 70 years of Nagorno Karabakh once again proves that it is immoral, politically short-sighted to force part of an ancient civilized nation to join a republic, which is new on the political arena, was artificially created for political ambitions, has no national identity, culture, historical territory. Therefore, Azerbaijan, was obsessed by appropriating others' property, history, culture, and having savage customs, craved for exterminating the native people who had a different language, a different religion, and a different nationality.*

*This decades-long struggle against the colonist suppression culminated in the historical decision of the Regional Soviet of Nagorno Karabakh (February 20, 1988), when the Armenians of Karabakh declared about their independence. Nagorno Karabakh seceded from Azerbaijan, won the war imposed on it, and established a free and independent state. This process was based on the indivisible right of nations for self-determination and was in full accordance with the Constitution of the former USSR. Over the past*

*15 years the Armenians of Artsakh have been free and independent from Azerbaijan, and from now on no force will be able to force them to join Azerbaijan again.*

*We should not forget that a) the centuries-long history of Artsakh-Karabakh is the history of our national trait – endurance; b) the Armenians are one of the first peoples in the world to convert to Christianity openheartedly at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; (the evidence to this are the Christian Armenian churches in the world and thousands of monuments built later and preserved in their original form in the Armenian region); c) owing to the long-lasting heroic struggle of the Armenians of Artsakh-Karabakh Christianity was spread and preserved in the east of Transcaucasia, the southeastern “suburb” of the Christian world. In this reference the Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords Caroline Cox said that the Europeans should be grateful to the people of Karabakh, who defend the border of the Christian belief and freedom (Messenger of the NKR Ministry of Foreign Affairs), #1 2003, p. 46); d) it should also be mentioned that by God's will the heroic Armenians of Karabakh were to become the first epicenter of the collapse of the Soviet totalitarian regime. And finally, e) the world should recognize that Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and the Republic of Azerbaijan are ethnic and administrative units, which are on two different political planes, and have nothing in common in moral-psychological, religious, educational, cultural, historical and ethnographical aspects. They absolutely cannot be identified and they cannot be forced to co-exist in a “family-hell” like the Bolsheviks had done.*

*Armenians have never cherished the hope that Turk-Azeris would ever become civilized. For, I repeat, the Armenians have a great number of times experienced the uncontrollable disaster of Turk-Azeris, and the bleeding wounds from the pogroms by the Azerbaijani authorities have not healed yet. Consequently, the calls for peaceful co-existence with this blood-thirsty mob and their authorities is equal to a rapid cleansing of NKR of Armenians, if not complete extermination of Armenians.*

*Moreover, Artsakh-Karabakh has always been a factor of stability in the Caucasian region, which has become a hindrance for the establishment of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. Besides, thanks to this urge for Western and particularly Russian values Karabakh acts as a bridge between the East and the West, the North and the South. Therefore, Nagorno*

*Karabakh actually influences the entire South Caucasus and not only. This might be the reason why this "hard nut" arouses so much interest.*

*Everyone should admit this, and especially the international organizations and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.*

*The religious world also should recognize this, for not long ago not only the Armenian population fell victim to the barbarity raging in the region but also the entire Christian Armenian cultural heritage created throughout centuries.*

*The political genocide of the Armenian population by Turk-Azeris had as an aim to hinder the social and economic development of the Armenian region, growth of the population, violated the interests and rights of the Armenian population and provided such unbearable conditions as to expedite the resettlement of the native Armenians from their native region.*

*In fact, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century an overall program of violence, resettlement and extermination of Armenians was freely implemented in Artsakh-Karabakh (and not only). And only the tremendous national liberation struggle of Artsakh thwarted this monstrous plan of cleansing the Armenian region of Armenians. Yes, as Andrey Nuykin wrote about the terrorist war that broke out in Azerbaijan, the Armenians of Karabakh "did a heroic thing which will be glorified by the historians of the entire world when they finally become wiser and are able to realize what these people did for the human race."*

*Therefore, it is necessary to defend the independence gained through years of hardship, bloodshed and great losses, and I believe that the international recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic is not far. Moreover, I am sure in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic will become an international center of resort and tourism. This will be favored by the wonderful landscape, climate, and magnificent monuments. Despite its small territory, NKR, the most beautiful highlands of Transcaucasia, resembles a large carpet from the height of a bird's flight. Yes, it is not large, about 5.2 thousand square km but as our compatriot Leonid Hourunts writes in his "Poem of Karabakh", "no matter it is small, a nightingale is also small but when it sings, the world is fascinated." Nagorno Karabakh is rich in mineral resources, and has a magnificent landscape. Sometimes it even seems that all the earthly treasures and beauty have been sprouted here.*

## CHAPTER 1

### THE ORIGINS OF THE PROBLEM OF ARTSAKH-KARABAKH

*It is always difficult to speak when  
keeping silent is already a shame.  
La Rochefucault*

There is not a more difficult problem than cases, which remain unsettled after being raised for a number of times. This means, the complaints either were ignored or were solved not in favour of the protestors. The worst is when the raised questions were ignored and remained unsolved. This is a general characterization of almost every righteous complaint raised twice, three or four times. In this respect, the problem of Karabakh is typical: piles of applications, requests, claims, explanations and evidence have already been accumulated.

Nevertheless, I have to and cannot avoid writing about all that I directly participated in, heard and witnessed. Especially that my profession was such that I have had opportunities to search archives, read lots of secret documents, talked to and argued with a number of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijani high officials. And what is not less important, I have visited every settlement, historical monument, orchard, field, farm and factory in the Armenian region. I know by heart the indices of production. I know in person all the old and new rulers, leaders in industry, patriots devoted to their work, living with the hope of prosperity of Karabakh. I also know well the adventurous scoundrels, playing on the chords of the patriotic feelings of the Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples. I know the ancient and modern history of Karabakh. I know what grows and gets dry in every field. For forty years I have followed the events, which caused sorrow and destruction to my native region.

Every time I remember those sad and upsetting events, when the Armenian population of Karabakh underwent terror, mockery, when its best sons were made to suffer, I start burning with the desire to write about all these things. However, at that time I did not write anything in order not to appear under the influence of fresh impressions from the events.

Much time has passed already, the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh have won the war imposed on them, gained independence and created a state, thanks to which the atmosphere has become calmer. However, the anti-Karabakh provocation, blockade, obstacles created by Turk-Azeris to hinder economic development of the region have not stopped. Therefore, I have to return to the events, which took place in Nagorno Karabakh, resulting in a crisis and aggravating the problem.

Studying the past 70 years of life of the Karabakh Armenians under the Azerbaijani yoke, a life that was worse than hell, I saw that the basic human rights were wildly violated in the region. The inhabitants of Karabakh either had to keep up with the estimates of production or to pack their things and leave their homes. I repeat that these were the only cases when the rights of Armenians were not taken away. It is difficult to say whether the Communist Party and government officials in Karabakh were to take care of the needs and aspirations of the Armenian population of the region. And it was because of the fact that the Armenians of Karabakh had lost the most important thing – human dignity, the belief in the future. In the years of totalitarian rule in Karabakh the Azerbaijanis could kill and rob Armenians, dismiss them from work, slander, make bankrupt, keep in unawareness and get away with it. The Armenians could not demand justice and reach it. Witnessing numerous Armenian settlements, ravaged without shooting a single bullet, hundreds of hectares of orchards and fields completely destroyed, villages and towns left waterless, empty shops, robbed industrial enterprises, comparing the results of the population censuses in the region over the past century, talking to Karabakhis, listening to their tragic stories about their bitter past, violence, hopeless complaints, the following questions occur.

- 1) Why was the population of the region (which has a glorious past and, in addition, made more efforts and shed more blood to defend the Soviet rule and its achievements) treated so severely?
- 2) Why were the innocent, hard-working, law-abiding people suppressed and gradually displaced from their native country?
- 3) Why were the complaints of the Armenians ignored for decades?
- 4) Why were the native people denied the right to unite with their motherland?

- 5) Why should all the vital questions of Karabakh be discussed and solved outside its borders and, what is more, without the engagement of the people of Karabakh?
- 6) What were the motives of the crimes committed against Karabakh, the insolent fraud strange to socialism, Leninism, the ethnic policy of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)?
- 7) Finally, what nation would get reconciled with the aggressive actions undertaken by another nation against its greater part?

We should mention at once that it was not easy to answer these questions under the Soviet rule. Especially that the fossilized Bolshevik ideology considered speaking about these questions an offence, because the preachers of the Soviet country had learnt by heart only the abbreviations of the front side of the medal. They used to say: "Socialism solved the ethnic issue in the fairest way, and there is no need for reconsideration of the problem." They also used to say: "In our country nations flourished, acquired human dignity, enjoyed equal rights." Moreover, official Baku publicly declared that the Armenian population of Karabakh "gained national dignity and also self-governance only within Azerbaijan." Consequently, any mentioning of the national question was characterized as an encroachment, local nationalism, even echoes of the bourgeois ideology. Here are groundless but serious and forceful political accusations. And everyone who was accused of or at least suspected in local nationalism was sure to have serious trouble. What they had to endure! No protest, no request, no explanation was taken into account. Local "nationalism", more exactly patriotism and fidelity to principles was suppressed, poisoned with the bitterest venom of totalitarian chauvinism and abuse of authority. Because we had been taught, more exactly made to speak of only "good", "achievement", "assistance", "success", "prosperity", "stepping the threshold of Communism" because everywhere the Soviet rulers were followed by a swarm of imitators, and the system hid its inability behind worn-out, trite populism and rhetorical pledges. If it is true that every action has some logic, and whenever one could not or was afraid or was reluctant to understand this logic, one always avoided analyzing it and would say, "We do not have a national problem, it was resolved in the 1920s." Certainly, the Azerbaijanis, Georgians, Russians, Uzbeks, Ukrainians must have been happy with the results of the resolution of the national problem in the 20s. However, if we ask Tajiks, Armenians,

Moldavians, Ossetians, Abkhazians whether they were content with how the national question was resolved 70 years ago, they will immediately give the example of part of a nation annexed to the neighbor state to show that in no other spheres of life as many willful actions were taken as in the Soviet national policy. Moreover, it should be noted that most ethnic minorities within Soviet Azerbaijan, Soviet Georgia had not witnessed as much ethnic aggression throughout their history as during the past seven decades. And why not to mention that the resolution of the national question in the 1920s was mainly dictated by the political and economic circumstances of the time, and in Transcaucasia it took place through intervention, demagoguery and coercion from outside.

Life had changed, the nations had come round, claimed equality of rights, protested against violence and discrimination, and sought for freedom. Even schoolchildren wondered why there should be an Autonomous Republic of Osetia and an Autonomous Region of Osetia side by side, the first as part the Soviet Socialist Federative Republic of Russia and the second within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia. Even shoemakers were surprised why there should be an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Nakhidjevan within the Republic of Azerbaijan. Even the Committee of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR had to state with surprise that near the border of Soviet Armenia the Armenian Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh had been annexed to Soviet Azerbaijan. Why were the eastern regions of tiny Moldavia annexed to bigger and more powerful Ukraine? Why were several strips of land belonging to Soviet Tajikistan annexed to the Soviet Socialist republic of Uzbekistan, and the requests of Abkhazia ignored over 70 years? These and other whys proved over and over that the fair claims of nations were ignored in the Soviet country. Hence, the necessity for reconsideration of the national question had occurred long ago, especially that since the end of the 1920s neither the CPSU, nor the Supreme Soviet and the government of the USSR had attended to the national question. We will show the dramatic consequences of delaying the resolution of this fair question by revealing the anatomy of the problem of Karabakh.

It is difficult for me to write without emotions about the people, whom I knew and who were my friends. It is difficult to tell about the wounds dealt to NKR, its ravaged (once flourishing) villages, chopped orchards, dried springs, hurt national feelings, sufferings of the native

population, hundreds of assiduous, patriotic and devoted specialists repressed cruelly and displaced from their home country. Also about the hardships and suffering I went through during the years I worked in Nagorno Karabakh (1965-1972), when the KGB, tasked by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, kept me under surveillance, not allowing to work and publish my works. In brief, we went through a tragedy of being homeless at home.

However, in order to help my native region all the difficulties must be overcome and all kinds of deliberate abuse of Karabakh (done in thousand ways, carefully concealed but often openly) should be revealed so that people know about that utter ignorance, lack of principles, indifference towards people, and the Azerbaijani chauvinism and ethnic discrimination policy.

The foes of a fair settlement of the Karabakh problem shouted isms, which were strange to the methodology of Marxism-Leninism. What can be said in this reference? Only one thing: a lie won't become a truth even if it is repeated for thousands of times (although it might have been accepted under the Soviet rule). Whatever noise is made in answer to the righteous claims of the Karabakh people, whatever provocations are undertaken, abusing the so-called "Armenian nationalism," it is a fact that the history of the past 70 years of Karabakh is a vivid example against human reason.

Therefore, it is high time to reveal the campaign of Azerbaijani propaganda, the falsehood that they had allegedly taken care of the needs of the people of Karabakh, observed the principles of internationalism. Whereas, in fact, everything was on the contrary.

The anti-Armenian forces had never acted in such a negligent manner before, violating the interests of one of the ancient nations in the world, resorting to massacres, arrests, displacement of the Armenian population, violation of the basic human rights.

At the climax of these events in Karabakh the essence of the national policy of official Moscow revealed itself at full. Moscow failed to make the least effort to foil the plans of the anti-Armenian sets in Baku. Actually, it cast Karabakh under the feet of Azerbaijan for the second time in 1988. Azerbaijan ruined dozens of Armenian villages, persecuted thousands of Armenian specialists, leaving them jobless and homeless, displaced tens of thousands of Karabakh natives from their homeland and waged a large-scale terrorist war against tiny Karabakh. During the

events in Karabakh, Moscow, which was burning with the desire to lend a hand to "fallen", "liberated" nations, did not utter a single word to condemn the organizers of the genocide in their native country, let alone real steps to prevent these crimes. It is still early to draw a line under the tragedy of July 3, 1967 in Stepanakert and the war in 1988-1993 in entire Karabakh. Today, however, we can already draw a conclusion: the courage and resistance of the people of Karabakh resulted in a bitter political and moral defeat of Baku and its supporters in the town park of Stepanakert. The barbarians did not manage to cross out the question of Karabakh from the agenda neither through terrorism, nor through economic and political repression.

Finally, the long lasting national-liberation struggle of the people of Karabakh revived by the February 20, 1988 decision of the NK Regional Soviet was a success. Nagorno Karabakh seceded from Soviet Azerbaijan and on September 2, 1991 Nagorno Karabakh Republic was declared independent, which was ratified by the December 10 referendum in the same year.

\* \* \*

So when did the Karabakh problem occur and when did the tragedy of the Armenian people originate? To answer this question we need to go back and reveal the roots of this problem, which gradually grew like a rolling snowball. The point is that the tragedies, which took place in NKR, were directly related to the crucial historical mistake made in the question of Karabakh in the early 1920s.

After the October revolution, the Armenian National Council was constituted in the capital of Artsakh-Karabakh Shushi on December 16, 1917, which was renamed the Government of Nagorno Karabakh on July 22, 1918. The independent home and foreign policies of the government was reflected in the decisions and declarations of the people's deputies of Karabakh during the nine sessions held between July 1918 and February 1920.

In those years the struggle of the Karabakh people was essentially directed against the aggressive policy of the Musavatist Republic of Azerbaijan, founded by the Turkish invaders in Baku in 1918, which sought for seizing Nagorno Karabakh by all means from the very first day of existence. However, neither the Azerbaijani forces outnumbering

them ten times, nor the Turkish assistance could bring Artsakh-Karabakh down to its knees. Nevertheless, the Musavatists provoked ethnic confrontations, ruined a number of Armenian settlements, robbed and set to fire the Armenian quarters of Shushi. More than 20 thousand Armenians were massacred.

Here is a passage from an archive document, "In Karabakh the Armenian population of the town Shushi was totally massacred, the Armenian part of the town was set to fire and the settlements around the town were plundered, all the settlements from Askeran to Shushi were ruined. The Azerbaijani forces and gangs led by the former commander on the east front Khalil Pasha and General Salimov moved in the direction of Zangezur, burning and destroying everything on their way. In the district of Khachen almost all the Armenian villages were ravaged and people, who had weapons, were massacred" (*The Genocide of Armenians, the Responsibility of Turkey and Duties of the International Community*; Moscow 2003, vol. 2, chapter 1, document N 666, p. 48-49).

The genocide of Armenians in Shushi carried out by Turkish weapons and planned by General Nuri Pasha and Musavatist Governor Khosrovbek Sultanov was only part of the policy of the Young Turks on extermination of Armenians.

In the meantime, the 11<sup>th</sup> Bolshevik Army of Soviet Russia stationed in Transcaucasia in April 1920 seemed to have come only to support Turkey, the "hearty friend of the Soviets, reddened by the red revolution," and the Musavatists, dressed in red uniforms and "converted to Bolshevism" in a single night, to assist in their aggression against the Armenians. In May the army of Soviet Russia occupied Karabakh within 15 days. In the beginning, the central Soviet government "was against annexing Armenian Karabakh to Azerbaijan." After the Soviet rule had been established in Armenia, Baku sent a telegram informing that "the territorial disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan were settled" and "Nagorno Karabakh and ... Nakhidjevan are recognized as indivisible parts of the Soviet Republic of Armenia." Stalin's address dwelling on this question was published in the Pravda. In the June 3, 1920 session the Caucasian Bureau of the Russian Communist Party decided unanimously "to confirm the declaration of the Armenian government that Karabakh belongs to Armenia" (History of the Party of

Armenia, fund 64, schedule 1, file 1, page 1). This declaration was published in the *Bakinski Rabochi* on June 22, 1921.

All this proceeded from the historical fact that Artsakh had never been an Azerbaijani territory, it had never been part of the illegitimate state of Azerbaijan, which was founded in Transcaucasia in 1918. Therefore, the Azerbaijani claims to Artsakh are doomed to failure, as it happened in 1920 and 1988-1993.

The regional disputes seemed to have been settled finally. Hopes were cherished that at last the knot of the Azeri-Armenian relationships would be untied. Unfortunately, however, the Azerbaijani rulers were again inspired by the March 16, 1921 agreement signed by Turkey and Russia in Moscow (according to which a vast area of Armenia, including the region of Kars, was annexed to Turkey and the region of Nakhidjevan was declared an autonomous republic within Azerbaijan). Hence, in the 1920s Armenia was actually divided: it is enough to state that over one third of the Armenian territories controlled by the Revolutionary Committee of Soviet Armenia was yielded to Azerbaijan. In fact, the Kremlin did not treat the question of internal borders of the Union seriously. However, the events of the past 70 years showed to what dramatic consequences this demarcation of republics led. For the inhabitants of Karabakh and Nakhidjevan autonomy meant a colonial regime: racial, cultural and economic discrimination, displacement of the native population from their homes (*The Karabakh Crisis*, I. Babonov, K. Voyevodsky, St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 3). Afterwards, Azerbaijan's approaches changed suddenly, and new claims to the Armenian territories were made. On July 4, 1921 the Caucasian Bureau of the Russian Communist Party reviewed the question of Nagorno Karabakh. The Caucasian Bureau decided that the region should join Soviet Armenia (*Nagorno Karabakh*, historical reference, Yerevan, 1988, p. 23-26). However, Stalin suddenly arrived in Tbilisi from Nalchik, and the Armenian region was annexed to Soviet Azerbaijan without explanations and discussions, promising to grant "vast rights to the autonomy".

Later the question of Nagorno Karabakh was heard at the session of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party on July 7, 1921. With Lenin chairing the meeting, it was decided that the settlement of territorial disputes should be based on the ethnic factor and the rights of the nations for self-determination. Yet on the next day, July 8, Stalin sent a telegram to Ordjonikidze and insisted "on settling the disputes

in favour of Azerbaijan and Turkey." Stalin again behaved willfully, pleasing the strong and oppressing the weak. Hence, the will of the Armenians comprising 96.4 per cent of the population of Nagorno Karabakh, as well as the historical, cultural, ethnic and territorial factors were ignored.

In this game, which is a typical example of political immorality, the simple calculations of Bolsheviks to "please Turkey, the bosom friend of the Soviets and involve it in the world revolution" played a crucial role, said the great Russian writer, Nobel Prize winner A. Solzhenitsyn. The French expert on Central Asia Rilivier Roy expressed a similar idea. He wrote: "The reason for joining Nagorno Karabakh to Azerbaijan was Stalin's aspiration to set up friendly relations with Ataturk and involve the Muslim card in the game. Thus he offered his support to Azerbaijan against the interests of Armenia" (*Artsakh*, Shahen Mkrtichian, Yerevan, 1991, p.62). In fact, we may state relying on archive documents that Armenia and the Armenian people were sacrificed to the interests of the hypothetical worldwide revolution.

Hence, the Bolshevik leaders handled the life of Karabakh, ignoring the will of the people living there. Whereas, in the first decree of the Caucasian Bureau the necessity to hold a plebiscite in the region was upheld, "Nagorno Karabakh must unite with Armenia, a plebiscite must be held only in Nagorno Karabakh." The second decree does not even hint at the possibility of conducting a poll of the public opinion; the results of such a poll would not be difficult to foresee.

All this was done deliberately to meet the territorial claims of Azerbaijan and its inclination for Turkey. At that time Turkey was considered Moscow's ally in battling imperialism and exporting the revolution to the Muslim world. Kremlin used the Armenian territories as small change for the world revolution and the alliance with Turkey.

Before the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh, as Stalin confessed during the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Russian Communist Party, "an extremely open chauvinistic tendency persisted" in Azerbaijan, who claimed that "we the Azerbaijanis are natives and they the Armenians are comers." And then follows, "Forming a majority in Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijanis massacre the Armenians, as in Nakhidjevan, where almost all the Armenians were killed" (The Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the RC(p)P, Moscow, 1968, p. 487, 660).



Nevertheless, after two years of trouble the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh was founded on July 7, 1923, which, however, did not include all the Armenian provinces that had been an integrated ethnic and territorial unit for centuries. The start of the discrimination policy against the Armenians of Artsakh was marked by the official renaming of the autonomous region. All the states and autonomous regions in the Soviet Union except Artsakh and Nakhidjevan were called by the name of their native peoples. And it was not accidental that one of the prime claims of the Armenians was to rename the region "Armenian Autonomous Region of Artsakh." Further on, during the administrative and territorial division of the newly established autonomous region almost half of its territory, the entire North Artsakh with the districts of Shahumian, Khanlar, Dashkesan and Shamkhor with 107 Armenian villages were cut from the region. Actually, the right of the Armenian population for self-determination was ignored in their own country. The cultural heritage of the Armenian nation was also ruined. This amputation was performed with incredible ease, in a dirty political game. By bitter fate what was impossible to do by weapon in the past, was carried out by the mere establishment of the Soviet rule.

In order to prevent direct communication between the Armenian region and Soviet Armenia, a number of Armenian settlements, which were an important link between Syunik and Artsakh by their position and significance, were cut from the autonomous region and attached to the Azerbaijani territory by some "magic force." They did not get satisfied, however: on the ragged map of NKAR one can observe that in the important river valleys, between Armenian settlements strips of land were cut off from the region, preventing free communication between Stepanakert and the regional centers (within the territory of the autonomous region) and making people cross the borders of the region to travel to villages and regional centers. The consequences of this policy became more evident during the events in Karabakh in 1988-1993, when Azerbaijan blocked the roads running via these strips of land, paralyzing both external and internal communication. On top of all, Azerbaijan began using a new method of cutting off pieces of land from the region. In the territory of NKAR four Azerbaijani hamlets (with 10-30 inhabitants) situated at the important road junctions were cut off from the region and joined to neighboring Azerbaijan. And after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation the Armenian villages of Hogher

and Harar were separated from the Armenian region of Hadrut and attached to the Azerbaijani regions of Fizuli and Lachin. This was not sufficient either. The Azerbaijani rulers used the opportunity of the farm consolidation policy in 1950-1970 to bring into being their anti-Armenian policy. First of all, they went on with the resettlement of the population of seven Armenian villages situated along the Armenian border. Each of these villages had 500-700 inhabitants, who were included in separate collective farms. Then the worst happened. Large plots of land were cut off from the villages and given to the Azerbaijanis, who settled down in the region. In joining small villages into larger ones neither the historical, nor the ethnic factors were taken into consideration. The process was accompanied by anti-Armenian atrocities, which resulted in the disappearance of hundreds of Armenian villages from the map of Artsakh.

Yet several stripes of the "vital territory" left to the region were donated to the neighboring Azerbaijani districts in the 1980s by the first secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party of Nagorno Karabakh on the request of his benefactor Heidar Aliev. In this way they shaped and patched the administrative map of NKAR, which shrank like the skin of chagrin. What was this, a tactic or a strategic goal? It turns out that they could establish an autonomous Armenian region near Soviet Armenia, separate Armenian regions located side by side and annex them to Soviet Azerbaijan together with hundreds of Armenian villages in different parts of Azerbaijan. This was the core of the barrack socialism, the Bolshevik method of "establishing international peace between the Muslims and the Armenians."

Even after having robbed the national territory of NKAR no practical efforts were made to set down the status of the autonomous region and the promised "vast autonomy" in the Constitution or in any other official document. Moreover, there was not even a consideration of the relations between the republic and the ethnic unit of Karabakh within it. In such uncertainty, more exactly illegality, discrimination, willfulness, regime remained the essential mechanism of handling the nation. This order was commended by Baku, resulting in more destruction and tragedies in NKAR.

The Armenians of Artsakh righteously detected real danger for their life and culture in the policy of misappropriation of Armenian territories. Besides, it was forbidden to use the historical names of places. (Ru...)

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drawing" of borders. however, did not settle the question. Later, especially starting with the 1960s, the goal was to settle the midland of the region with Azerbaijanis. For this purpose over 20 new settlements were founded in the region and Azerbaijanis, whose former occupation had been stealing cattle, were settled here at privileged conditions.

The leadership of Soviet Armenia certainly knew about this situation. However, realizing the danger of raising they did not dare to call things by their names and protest. Realizing the danger of raising the issue, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia G. Harutyunov, nevertheless, wrote a letter to Stalin.

**"Central Committee of the C(p)PSU,  
to Comrade Stalin**

**Iosif Vissarionovich,**

**The Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh adjacent to Armenia has been part of the Azerbaijani SSR since 1923.**

**The majority of the population of the region is Armenian, 137 thousand out of the 153 thousand inhabitants are Armenians.**

**The agriculture of Nagorno Karabakh is identical to the agriculture of the mountainous part of Armenia. Unification of Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia would greatly contribute to its development and improve the management of the economy.**

**Conducting the mass cultural and political life of the population in the mother tongue would be facilitated in case of being controlled by the government of the Republic of Armenia.**

**Joining the region of Nagorno Karabakh to Armenia would enable the local manpower to proceed with higher education in their mother tongue at the higher educational institutions of Armenia. On the other hand, the Armenian SSR would be able to receive from the region of Nagorno Karabakh national manpower, distinguished by their assiduousness, who presently cannot be employed in Azerbaijan.**

**Proceeding from this and the will of the Nagorno Karabakh population, the Central Committee of Armenia and the Soviet of People's Commissars propose that the C(p)PSU and the Union government consider the question of seceding the Autonomous**

**Region of Nagorno Karabakh from the Azer. SSR and joining it to the Armenian SSR as the region of Karabakh.**

**In case of a positive settlement of the question the Central Committee and the Soviet of People's Commissars will extend a proposal on the reconstruction of the former capital of Karabakh, the town of Shushi, which had been ruined before the establishment of the Soviet rule, to the government.**

**Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia G. Harutyunov.**

Yerevan, November 11, 1945."

This letter did not change the situation of the Karabakh Armenians. Moreover, it became worse. Using Moscow's policy on winning over the Islamic world, the Azerbaijani authorities were in a hurry to implement the program of ethnic cleansing in NKAR. Thus they tried to eliminate the right of Armenia and the Armenian nation for Karabakh once and for all. The Azerbaijani government tried to settle in NKAR the Turk-Azeris who had moved to Azerbaijan from Armenia. They simply made the people of Karabakh accommodate one or two Azerbaijani families each. "Fights and brawls were usual things. Very soon the new settlers, who had a nomadic lifestyle, turned the fertile fields and orchards into deserted wilderness" (*The History of Artsakh*, V. Balayan, Yerevan, 2002, p. 350). Nevertheless, the nomads did not get accustomed to the hard economic conditions in the region and moved to North Artsakh "becoming a new disaster for the local Armenians." Because, as the historian B. Ulubabian wrote, Moscow and Baku had a policy on displacement of the Armenian population from Armenia in the summer of 1957 to reduce the population of Armenia to lower than one million and deprive them of the right to be a separate republic in the Soviet Union. Then Soviet Armenia would be divided between Georgia and Azerbaijan. It was also planned to annex the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Dagestan to Azerbaijan (*The War in Artsakh*, B. Ulubabian, Yerevan, 1994, p. 185). Most probably, having a far-reaching plan to "swallow" Iran, it was favorable for Stalin to have a powerful marionette-proxy, such as Azerbaijan, in the east, at the doorstep of the Islamic world. This expansionist policy, indeed, had been deeply rooted among the Azerbaijani intelligentsia. This explains the campaign of the Azerbaijani falsifiers to distort the history of

Transcaucasia, separate episodes of which will be presented in the next chapter.

In the mid-1960s the people of Karabakh again turned to the USSR leadership for the unification of the Autonomous Republic of Nagorno Karabakh and Soviet Armenia. However the vital question was deadlocked, and the small intelligentsia of NK was persecuted. Nevertheless, relying upon the address of representatives of the intelligentsia of Armenia, the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU passed a resolution on August 8, 1966 and instructed the Central Committees of Armenia and Azerbaijan to come up with proposals on Nagorno Karabakh within a month. Unfortunately, the discussion of the question was cancelled due to M. Suslov, the second secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

However, the people of Karabakh did not give up. When the draft Constitution of the USSR was being discussed in 1977, thousands of people applied to Moscow for the resolution of the problem of Karabakh. The Moscow commission stated this time, "Under a number of historical circumstances Nagorno Karabakh was annexed to Azerbaijan... The history of the region, its ethnic pattern, the will and economic interests of the people were not taken into consideration. Decades have passed, and the issue of Karabakh remains unsettled, causing disagreement between the two nations attached by long-lasting friendship. It is necessary that Nagorno Karabakh and Soviet Armenia become united. In this case everything will be settled" (the minutes N 61 of the November 23, 1977 meeting of the USSR Council of Ministers, K-4133). The problem of Karabakh Armenians remained unsolved, and their situation grew worse.

Today it is not a secret any more that Moscow ignored the claims and protests of the Armenians. What is more, these protests were extended to those against whom they were directed. As a rule, these protests were considered as manifestations of "bourgeois nationalism," and their authors were persecuted.

This sinister condition in all the spheres of life in NKAR testified to the fact that the ethnic discrimination policy implemented in the region pursued the aim of hampering the social and economic development of the Armenian region (*Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, April 30, 1989), neglecting the interests of the Armenian population, creating an unbearable situation, thereby speeding up the displacement of Armenians from the region.

It is here that the origins of the modern or the third period of the Nagorno Karabakh issue should be looked for, which grew into the Artsakh or Karabakh movement, especially after the elimination of the Transcaucasian Federation (1936).

The Karabakh movement was the first manifestation of democracy in the Soviet Union, which woke up other nations. In spring of 1988 one could see groups of blond people in Stepanakert, who had arrived from Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States, and even Moscow and Leningrad to study and later use the experience of the Karabakh movement at home. They were surprised how organized and well-behaved people were during protest meetings, at their ability to keep to the principles of democracy in solving problems.

The Russian physicist Andrey Sakharov also visited the capital Stepanakert of Artsakh-Karabakh. He compared the events of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Nagorno Karabakh in 1988, the Berlin wall and the Lachin corridor, the rights for self-determination of Baltic States and Artsakh, because Artsakh was separate from the motherland on the maps and in party decrees but Armenia and Artsakh had always been together in their hearts and souls, in their dreams, moments of joy, in matters of life and death, and unification is the sacred right of the Armenian nation.

Yes, the powerful national liberation movement of Artsakh taught a lesson to many nations, woke them up from a lethargic sleep, stirred East Europe, the Baltic States, and they gained independence whereas the outcry of the people of Artsakh under the Soviet rule sounded like "a voice in the wilderness."

The question occurs why the problem was not resolved under the Soviet rule. From February 1988 till late 1990 seven Union resolutions on the Artsakh problem were made (plus the decisions of the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh). U.S. President George Bush characterized the July 18, 1988 resolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium as a cheap farce performed according to a plot, typical of the Kremlin, which made it clear that democratic rule is impossible in the USSR. According to him, it is impossible to believe that the Soviets seek for maintaining peace in the world when the Kremlin, with cynicism typical of communism, stepped over the national pride of one of its nations and attacked it with all the authority of power (Shahen Mkrtychian, *Artsakh*, Yerevan, 1990, pages 78-80). Nevertheless,

why didn't the powerful country wish to resolve the minor problem of tiny Karabakh?

The reason is, according to the German scientist Tessa Hoffman, that the central Soviet government continuously sacrificed the needs of the Armenians for the "supreme concept of foreign Soviet policy" and the slogan of "internationalism and fraternity" of the nations of the USSR (*Tanks Against Perestroika*, Tessa Hoffman, Bremen, FRG, 1989. The review of this book was published in the *Grakan Tert*, March 16, 1990).

The article published in the *Time* on October 23, 1989 is also characteristic. Noting that Armenia and, strange though it may seem, Azerbaijan fight for Artsakh, the author of the article concludes that it is a strange struggle, in which one demands Artsakh back, and the other furiously opposes and builds fortresses of falsification, using every method, even such a political crime as the blockade. However, the author continues, it is strange that the arbiter (i.e. Moscow – S.M.) still is biased for the boxer in the green corner of the ring with a crescent. I think there is no need to comment.

At the same time, there is another essential circumstance. The Russian people have never had the problem of "vital territory." Because wherever the Russian soldier set foot (from the tsar to the last muzhik), it was considered as their own territory and the local people as their subjects. Moreover, General Alexander Lebed was absolutely right when he wrote, "Russia has always been ruthless. The Moloch of the Russian power destroyed individuals, families, entire nations. It tore to parts, skinned, slaughtered without being disturbed by the thought who was just and who was guilty" (*Mourn for the Empire*, Alexander Lebed). And all the Soviet rulers, Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachov, always violated the interests of smaller nations. When a word was uttered about this, it immediately appeared to clash with the interests of the "proletariat," more exactly the "empire." This is where their indifference, even disdain for the vital issues of small nations threatened by elimination and loss of their homeland comes from. This is where the inhuman policy of Moscow to overlook the claims of the people of Karabakh comes from. This is the reason why the second secretary of the Azerbaijani Central Committee, Russian by origin P. Yelistratov considered the shrinking Armenian population, emigration, ethnic cleansing in Armenian villages of Karabakh as something ordinary.

"Why should the people of Karabakh necessarily live in Karabakh?" he asked.

And the second secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Nagorno Karabakh Volodin, again Russian by origin, simply announced, "We don't care who lives in Karabakh."

Moreover, in February 1991, V. Polyanchko, the second secretary of the Central Committee of Azerbaijan, the notorious adviser of the Afghanistan adventure, announced during the session of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan. "The territory of Karabakh is our territory, and we must occupy it for our children."

Thus, the genocide in Karabakh was backed and directly assisted by corrupt officials who were of Russian origin. Let alone General Safonov and other scoundrels, who caught innocent Karabakh people and sold them to Azeri-Turk cannibals. However, fortunately, there were Russians who kept the side of the victim, the Armenians of Karabakh, displaying morality and thoughtfulness, and assuming a proper civil position. Honor and praise to all of them!

\* \* \*

As an author of 30 works on Artsakh, I must state that chronologically the problem of Karabakh is not just what was stated above. The problem is over 300 years old. Reliable sources and facts maintain that Artsakh was like a defense wall of Armenia in the east, preventing the attacks of the nomadic tribes, preserving their national identity – the most vivid feature of the Armenian nation (*The Anthropological Pattern of the Population of the Caucasus*, V. Bunak, *The Vestnik* of the state museum of Georgia, 1946, p. 96).

However, creating an artificial marionette state with the artificial name "Azerbaijan" in the historical Armenian territories in East Transcaucasia in 1918, the Turkish pashas intended to eliminate the Armenians and open a window to Central Asia, the home of their ancestors. This complicated the problem of Artsakh-Karabakh, which had three main stages.

The first stage lasted from the 1720s to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Armenian liberation forces led by meliks (i.e. princes), commanders and religious leaders, tried to liberate Armenia and restore the Armenian statehood with the help of the Christian European countries. However, the tyrants were not sleeping. In order to bring the Armenians to their

knees and change the demographic pattern of Karabakh in favor of Muslims, they established the Muslim khanate of Karabakh in the territory of the Armenian region. Although, the khans appointed by the Persian shahs for big bribes did not have a firm footing, and were not the legitimate leaders of the region, in other words, the khanate of Karabakh did not have a geographic, economic, historical, cultural or ethnic feature, they caused much suffering and destruction to their "subjects," the Christian Armenians.

Together with the Muslim khans a large number of nomadic Turkic tribes settled down in the Armenian territories and in the result of their atrocities the map of the Armenian region was torn to parts on the one hand, and on the other hand, provoked the liberation struggle of the Armenians.

The second stage lasted from 1800 till the Russian October revolution in 1917. In this period Armenia and Artsakh became the theater of the Russian-Persian and Russian-Turkish wars. Actually, the three powers Persia, Turkey and Russia with their aggressive aspirations, as A. Hakobjanian wrote, attempted at dividing Artsakh-Karabakh into mountainous and lowland parts. Successfully cleansing Karabakh lowlands of Armenians and digesting it, they tightened the noose around the neck of Mountainous Karabakh to eliminate the last support of Armenia. In other words, the Armenians were again unlucky because the Russians occupied the entire Transcaucasia including Artsakh with the powerful assistance of the meliks of Artsakh but afterwards they allied with the bitter enemy of Armenians, the Persian khans. The purpose of this alliance was to subject the savage Muslim hordes, who appeared in Transcaucasia thanks to the khans, for the far-reaching political goal of allying with the Islamic nations and reaching the sea. It was already Russian diplomacy and, unfortunately, the interests of Armenians were sacrificed to it, and the Armenian state with the capital of Shushi was not restored although Russian Queen Catherine had promised. In 1801-1878 Russia pushed Turkey and Persia off from Transcaucasia and took their place. It lasted for 77 years...

The division of Transcaucasia into states, as a rule, did not take into consideration the history and geography of the peoples living in this region. Later this circumstance gave rise to territorial disputes, conflicts and wars between the nation states.

Losing the war with Russia in the Caucasus, Crimea and the Balkans. Ottoman Turkey had to change its tactics, going on to weaken and dismantle Russia from the inside. Making use of the disorder and disunity there in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Caucasus was flooded by Turkish agents, preachers of Islam and military instructors, who set up close relationships with the local officials, governors and a group of revolutionaries, who had declared themselves Bolsheviks (in the Caucasus these were I. Stalin, L. Beria, N. Narimanov, A. Karayev, M. Baghirov and others). Moreover, for the sake of unification of Turkish-speaking peoples, the nationalist Musavat Party was set up, which declared its loyalty to Pan-Turkism. They promoted disagreement, conflicts within the nation, which grew into massacres of Armenians in certain provinces. Shushi, the capital of Karabakh, did not avoid these terrible massacres.

In fact, after the October Bolshevik Revolution Shushi became the victim of the aggressive Turk-Azeri policy of Pan-Turkism. Assisted by Turkey, the second Turkish-Azerbaijani state was founded in Transcaucasia in 1918. Azerbaijan, which was not recognized internationally then, had to take into consideration the question of self-determination of the people of Nagorno Karabakh, reach an agreement with the National Council, to report the question of the status of Nagorno Karabakh to the peace conference in Paris in accordance with the international law.

The Republic of Azerbaijan conducted an aggressive policy to misappropriate vast territories in Transcaucasia (from Baku to Batumi), but since it had not been recognized internationally, it was denied membership to the League of Nations in 1918-1920.

In fact, the Bolsheviks and the government of the USSR were very often under the influence of myths and underestimated the ideological attack of Turkey. Moreover, there were scholars and politicians, who tried to present Kemalist Turkey as a friendly democratic state. In fact, Turkey was never a friend to the Soviet country.

In fact, it was again too late when the Kremlin realized that Turkey cheated them in exporting the revolution, moreover, it went to the other side of the barricades and worked out plans on occupying the Soviet territories settled by Turkish-speaking peoples. Therefore, it tried to set the Caucasian Tatars against the Turkish people and distinguish them

historically. They even started to write that Azerbaijanis are not Turks but "Indo-European people."

Although, the Azerbaijani authors having the instruction of the government, used unacceptable, condemnable methods to "prove" that the Azerbaijanis were the predecessors of the Caucasian Albanians and consequently were one of the old-established peoples of Transcaucasia. However, it cannot be denied that East Transcaucasia had not known a country called "Azerbaijan" and people called "Azerbaijanis" until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even on May 18, when negotiations were underway in the city of Batumi (where the question of Nagorno Karabakh was discussed as well) for the nation states to be founded in Transcaucasia, it was announced that three states should be created in the region: Georgia, Armenia and East Transcaucasia. The latter was not an ethnic union. Why? Because the Republic of Azerbaijan emerged as an administrative area on July 4 of the same year (*Azerbaijan: Brief Historical Essay*, V. Sisoiev, Baku, 1925, p.5). A. Kremisky, E. Pakhomov and other historians wrote almost the same thing about the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The prime goal was to enlarge the territory of the newly formed republic and have a border with Turkey, which meant occupying the entire Caucasus. Turk-Azerbaijani askyars (i.e. soldiers) sang a march, "Bir, iki, Kavkaz bizimki" ("One, two, the Caucasus is ours"). This cheerful march has not lost its meaning yet.

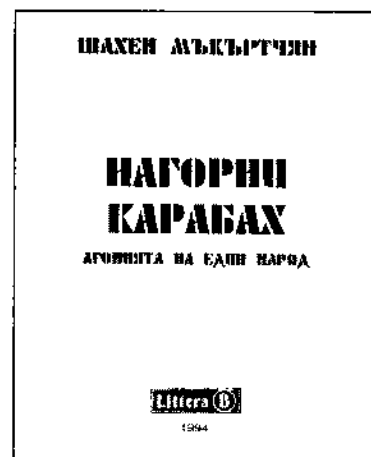
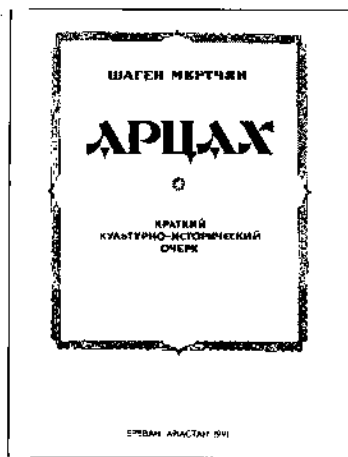
Indeed, these aspirations threatened by new victims, if not physical elimination of Armenians. Undergoing the horrors of the genocide committed by Turks (during which 1.5 million Armenians were slaughtered) and opposing the attacks of the Turkish forces in the west, Armenia had to take care for its defence in the east as well.

The people of Karabakh managed to prevent the occupation of the region, although the forces were unequal and the toll was extremely high. Even under these circumstances the Republic of Azerbaijan had to sign an agreement on the claims of the Armenians of Karabakh and agree to have the question of the status of Karabakh discussed at the peace conference in Paris, on the basis of the international law. In fact, Artsakh remained an "independent Soviet area" till mid-1923.

The third stage was marked by the foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in East Transcaucasia and ended in the glorious victory of Artsakh in 1988. If the Ottoman Turks did not manage to subdue Karabakh to "Azerbaijan" they had created themselves, the Bolsheviks

succeeded in doing this through false slogans and vows. After the establishment of the Soviet rule and the emergence of Soviet Azerbaijan the notion of "Azerbaijani" occurred. Initially, however, this word denoted a place, not a nation, such as "African", "Caucasian", "European". This geographical term later began to be used to denote a nation. At least until 1914 Azerbaijanis were marked as "Turks" in the column "nationality." The invented names "Azerbaijan" and "Azerbaijani" were circulated on purpose. The aim is clear: maintenance of a legal basis for the artificially created Republic of Azerbaijan in Transcaucasia and occupying forcefully a place for the Turk-Tatar tribes beside such worthy nations as the Armenians, the Persians. It was the spirit of the epoch. For the Soviet rule "brought together" people and nations, establishing brotherhood between them, and Stalin the "father of peoples" was occupied with leveling peoples day and night.

Thanks to Stalin Azerbaijan was "presented" with others' statesmen, military figures, culture, as well as the historical values of the neighbor countries. Although Stalin assured in 1921 that the Caucasian Tatars were Turkish-speaking tribes, which had not become a nation yet, he nevertheless had an ancient and rich history and culture invented for the mentioned tribes. The first example was set by himself: the great Persian poet Nizami was declared an Azerbaijani poet. All this surely had a negative impact on the relationships of the peoples living in Azerbaijan. The evidence to this is the 70 years of rule of Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, which is a political genocide, an international crime.





## CHAPTER 2

### FALSIFICATIONS OF PAST AND PRESENT

#### Or how they falsified and continue falsifying the ancient and modern history of Artsakh-Karabakh in Azerbaijan

History is the memory of people.  
And in order to change people  
it is enough to change their memory.

**Andre Malton**

What was the science of history in Azerbaijan trying to achieve in Soviet times and what is it busy with now? In fact, with an instruction of the government, serious efforts were made until 1950 to prove that the Azerbaijanis were not Turks but the predecessors of the state Mana (Ar-Mana), which existed in the 9-8<sup>th</sup> c. BC and was located near Lake Urmia. However, soon it became clear that such conjectures were absolutely groundless, and were laughed at not only in Iran and Turkey. However, Baku did not lose hope and pursued their trip through history, "discovering" for themselves new ancestors, people called Albanians with a "history of centuries" and "rich and developed culture," which had never existed in reality. And then under the strong influence of fundamental nationalist chauvinism and Pan-Turkism the well-known historical facts were edited with incredible persistence. In order to offer the desirable instead of the reality a completely changed and modernized history was made up on invented materials. Actually, through pseudo-scientific methods a topsy-turvy and false history was created within a short period of time, which naturally had nothing in common with the reality.

In brief, the history of Azerbaijan turns historical facts and events upside down, relying on the public and geopolitical amnesia, resulting from the lack of information, and brazenly falsifies the history of millenniums of Artsakh and not only. The "works" proceeding from the dominance of Azerbaijanis over the ancient peoples living in the territory of the present Republic of Azerbaijan are impregnated with chauvinism and Pan-Turkism. The history and culture of the native peoples of

Transcaucasia, namely the Armenians, the Lezgi, the Tat, the Talish, the Udi people, were misappropriated by them without remorse.

What is more, such distortion of history is not just the opinion of separate authors, but an official policy, a "scientific line," imposed for a definite purpose. In support of this idea it is proper to quote the percepts of the president of Azerbaijan Heidar Aliev to his "almighty" scribes, "In the future too, it is necessary to invent such works which will constantly and consistently prove that the territory where Armenia is located belongs to Azerbaijan. We must do that. We must clear the way for the future generations" (*The Bakinski Rabochi Newspaper*, February 8, 1999). This is where the state order for lie and falsification, the insane instruction to get the lies and falsification to the "deaf ear" of the world came from. Almost the entire historical and philological science and the mass media of Azerbaijan were set for the implementation of this program. Unfortunately, the first victim of this history was again the Armenian population of Artsakh, whose heroic past of thousands of years was ascribed to the Azerbaijanis and Albanians alternately, but never to their real masters, the Armenians. Moreover, considerable efforts were made "to prove" that the Armenians of Karabakh are not Armenians; at one time the Armenians are newcomers, at another time they are Albanians, who became assimilated with Armenians, and so on. In brief, a propagandist demarche was made to "withdraw" a number of Armenian regions from historical Armenia, such as, for instance, Artsakh-Khachen, Syunik, Nakhidjevan, Gardmank, etc. At the same time, pseudoscientific efforts were made to present the Armenians of Artsakh-Karabakh as separate from the Armenian nation. This propagandist babbling is usually accompanied by constant provocation to discredit the Armenian nation, insulting their dignity, destroying their culture, hiding the truth about their righteous claims.

A Karabakh Armenian does not want to see the history and culture of his native region and identity the Armenian nation damaged, whereas the Azerbaijani rulers and intelligentsia, pretending friends, have been constantly interfering with our life and fate to achieve such results. It is true that in this republic effort and energy, time and means were wasted on distortion of well-known historical facts, figures, the culture and history of Artsakh, strange and false versions of the crucial historical events and persons were offered, the national liberation movement of the Armenians was shadowed, the horrible image of invaders, slaughterers,

khans, pashas, sultans and bandits was made up. Naba, for instance, was described by the Russian writer Maxim Gorky as a bandit, whereas Azerbaijanis made a national hero out of him, composed songs about him. What else can be added, this is Turkish "logic"?

### HOW HISTORY WAS WRITTEN AND OTHERS' RELICS MISAPPROPRIATED

The distortion of the Armenian history, and the history written so as to present Azerbaijanis older by several centuries, was solemnly presented as "research" by Turkish historians, and this pseudoscientific production was often decorated with the phraseology of Marxism and Leninism. Whereas, the lining of this "new history" was woven from the ideology of Pan-Turkism, and directly echoed to the key concepts underlying the works *Pan-Turkism Waits*, *The Map of Great Turkey* (including the entire Caucasus, Central Asia and many regions of Russia), *The Principles of Pan-Turkism* and especially *The Idea of Uniting Turks Under the Aegis of Turks*. Probably, this is the reason why the Azerbaijani historians do not wait for the opportunity to occur to speak on behalf of "Muslim nations," praising and misappropriating the Persian, Kurd and Arab historical figures, khans, bandits and viziers. The historical names of the Armenian and Russian settlements in the present territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan were often changed and replaced by names which have nothing to do with the present territory of Azerbaijan and the ancient peoples living there. And this may be the reason why the Azerbaijani authors misappropriated the history and culture of ancient nations, which had already disappeared or still existed "at the heart of the Islamic world?" Yet this is the reason why they claimed that the Armenian population of the east of Armenia is Albanians, who became assimilated with Armenians, and therefore they were not natives. It is not accidental that this campaign of the Azerbaijani historians was encouraged and upheld by the apologists of the ideology of Pan-Turkism.

The Azerbaijani "scholars", like an untidy butcher, chop up the history of Transcaucasia, ignore the historical facts, put forward false conceptions, and then proceed from their false facts to "create" a colorful history for their nation.

We cannot disagree with Doctor M. Kapustin, who said the pseudoscientists easily slip into the history and culture of the region and "transfer" old classics from one national "colony" to another, thus considering them the relics of their nation forgetting that in the period of Nizami (a Persian poet of 12-13<sup>th</sup> c.) the Azerbaijanis did not exist as a nation yet.

The Azerbaijani falsifiers picked out of chronology of centuries only the facts, which fitted into their ill-meaning intentions, imitating their teachers and colleagues in Ankara. Then they kindled Pan-Turkist chauvinism among the fanatic religious crowd and engaged this mob in anti-Armenian, anti-Russian, anti-scientific atrocities. Besides, there appeared to be an internal arrangement between the Turkish and Azerbaijani falsifiers on the division of Armenia. If in 1923 the Turks drew the eastern border of Anatolia along the River Arax, 45-50 years later the Azerbaijani authors extended the western border of Azerbaijan up to the Arax. That is why Baku commended the speech of the Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, visiting the Soviet Union in 1969, where he stated that Turkey and Azerbaijan have a common border and are considered one nation. Although, in fact, these two countries have never had a common border, neither historically nor geographically. They are separated by the Republic of Armenia. When necessity occurs to remind about this, both Azerbaijani and Turkish historians assert that Armenia "has no right to be called Armenia because this is a territory that can be called only by geographical names."

Unfortunately, in the beginning a number of people failed to realize the meaning of the new Pan-Turkist division of Armenia. Actually, nobody explained duly the aim of distorting the content of the terms "Anatolia" and "Albania", the political intention of placing these side by side after two and half thousand years. Indeed, neither the ambitious Russian democrat, nor the helpless and cowardly Armenian and the vainglorious Georgian bourgeois managed to realize on time why the Turkish words "chai" (river) and "dagh" (mountain) were placed beside historical names of rivers and mountains of Transcaucasia in textbooks of geography and maps in Azerbaijan. They made no objection, and actually tolerated this, and as a result in front of the eyes of a generation the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Nakhijevan was cleansed of Armenians; a peaceful genocide was implemented here.

And now it was the turn of vandalism. They ignored, pretended to be blind and did not notice how in the present territory of Azerbaijan the names of dozens of Armenian and Russian settlements were changed and made to sound Turkish. Nukhi became Shaki, Karyagino – Fizuli, Mokhreneh – Sousafegh, the region of Dizak was renamed Hadrut, the region of Stepanakert became Askeran, Petrovka was renamed Sabirabad, Astrakhan-Bazar became Jalilabad, Tartar was replaced by Mir Bashir, Gyoran became Kasum-Ismayilov, Yelenedorf was renamed Khanlar, Zubovka was replaced by Ali Bayramli, and so on. And this happened under the Soviet rule. Let us see what willful actions were taken in this sphere in the Republic of Azerbaijan later, after gaining independence.

In 1992, soon after the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh became an independent republic, the National Mejlis of Azerbaijan rapidly replaced the Armenian names of settlements in Artsakh by Turkish names. Having read the list of renamed settlements, published in the Khalkhi Gazeti Newspaper (January 6, 1993), I want to ask the authors of this fake document: didn't the craving for devouring the history and culture of Armenian Artsakh-Karabakh gnaw your soul? It was disrespectful offending willfulness in a typically Turkish manner. This shows once again how they think in Baku and what is offered in what manner. This is obsession to invade Armenian Nagorno Karabakh Republic the pseudo-scientists and degenerate officials cannot get rid of. The efforts to rename the names of place in a sovereign state cannot be described otherwise than absurd and adventurous. One should ask the shameless members of the Azerbaijani parliament "Who are you and do you have the right to Turkishize the names of hundreds of settlements where not a single Turk-Azeri has ever lived, and where nothing reminds of Turkish culture?" (*The Azat Artsakh Newspaper*, May 15, 2003).

Those who were supposed to, failed to ask why no regions and settlements were named after the commanders of the Russian army Tsitsianov, Paskevich, Madatov, Ter-Ghukasov (the latter two were born in Nagorno Karabakh), who liberated the present territory of Azerbaijan from Persian satraps, Soviet Marshal Baghramian, Air Marshal Khudiakov, Marshal Babajanian, Admiral Isakov (who were also born in the territory of the Soviet Socialist Republic Azerbaijan, i.e. in historical Artsakh). In 1978, however, the Azerbaijani Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Supreme Soviet decided to name a new region

and its center in the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Nakhidjevan after a Persian Babek (8<sup>th</sup> c.), who was described by the historian and chronologist Movses Kaghankatvatsi as a slaughterer, plunderer, bloodthirsty beast (M. Kaghankatvatsi, Yerevan, 1969, p. 255, 256, 259). The same Babek, who slaughtered about 15 thousand people in the Armenian province of Gegharkuni and burnt the capital of Makenians and made 100 thousand people to leave their homes. We may only imagine what other atrocities this bandit would have committed if the Armenian prince of Artsakh Sahl Smbatian had not arrested him.

You will not be surprised to hear that 1144 years later, in 1982 a long poem devoted to Babek was written in Baku, which was translated into Russian and published in the Bakinski Rabochi, the official newspaper of the Azerbaijani Central Committee of the Communist Party. As it could be expected, the historical facts and events in the poem were presented upside down, and the Persian "bloodthirsty beast" became an innocent victim, whereas Sahl Smbatian and his fellow soldiers defending their country were presented as "despised enemies, beasts." However, not getting satisfied, the author of the poem Rasul Rza expresses his pathological hatred for the Armenian nation in these words, "Be accursed forever, you dogs, unbidden aliens" and then appeals to his fellows,

"Sons of motherland going to the battlefield,  
Strike ruthlessly the despicable enemy,  
Sumbat was one of those  
Who still live  
There are sumbats, they are many,  
Be accursed forever,  
Unbidden guests, dogs."

What is this, primitive patriotism, vulgar nationalism or out-and-out fascism? I wonder if the Persian bandits and the Azerbaijanis have anything in common between. Perhaps, only Islam, and perhaps also the desire to exterminate Armenians. Whereas it is a fact that in the epoch of Babek and even Nizami and Fizuli the Azerbaijanis did not exist as a nation. But this did not prevent them from presenting Babek as an Azerbaijani commander.

Therefore, we need not be surprised when the Azerbaijanis, who declared the slaughterers of Sumgait and Baku national heroes. Unfortunately, the Russian newspapers were often and easily influenced

by these nationalists and Pan-Turkists, underestimating the destructive force of their populism and deception, based on hatred for Armenians.

Such efforts endanger relations between nations. "The sons of the motherland" did not benefit from this, for during the Karabakh-Azerbaijani war they suffered more losses than the Armenians.

However, provocations do not end. The Azerbaijani mass media changes the history as well as any event. In their programs they use different epithets such as "an undeveloped nation" for Armenians. Constantly repeating those "realities," the ideologists of Baku have almost persuaded the Azerbaijani public that the lands where the Armenians have been living for 4-5 thousand years already, and lived when the nomadic Turks first appeared in Transcaucasia, are considered Azerbaijani territories. However, according to the diplomat Vladimir Stupishin, the "nativity" of Azerbaijan counts less than a century, since 1918. Whereas, the history of Armenia, including Artsakh, is counted by millenniums, when the Azeris, as well as their nomadic Turkish ancestors had not set foot in Transcaucasia or Minor Asia. "Unfortunately, Stupishin writes, not only Washington and Strasbourg but also Moscow lend an ear to this nonsense, monstrous for being pseudoscientific. Otherwise, we would have already heard about at least the "anxiety" of the foreign ministry of Russia about the slander of Heidar Aliyev and his team of propagandists that at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia allegedly "divided" Azerbaijan by the agreements signed in Gyulistan and Turkmenyay. For until 1918 there was no Azerbaijan in Transcaucasia, whereas such geographic, historical, cultural and ethnic units as Armenia and Artsakh were well-known to the entire enlightened world" (*The Noev Kovcheg Newspaper*, Moscow, October 2001).

Government officials instigate militaristic passions along with the intelligentsia. Remember notorious Vezirov, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, who shook his finger during his artistic speeches, and repeated that his 7 million fanatics would slaughter the people of Karabakh. His successor, the first president of Azerbaijan Ayaz Mutalibov threatened to raze "accursed Karabakh" to the ground. The next president Elchibey assured that soon he would be swimming in Lake Sevan and drinking "tsai"(i.e. tea) in Stepanakert. And finally the next president of Azerbaijan, former KGB general and member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of

the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Heidar Aliyev ordered his subjects to organize a military demonstration in Stepanakert as a celebration of triumph over the people of Artsakh. Well, everybody knows what the outcome was. Here it would be proper to quote the verse of Vagif, Azerbaijani poet, reflecting like a mirror the image of both the Armenians and the anti-Armenians.

Whatever they say, however they speak,  
They'll tell you nothing but falsehood,  
Do not trust mullahs and sheiks,  
You'll find nothing sacred in them.

### EFFORTS TO ERASE EVERY ARMENIAN THING FROM HISTORY

Since the mid-1960s books, albums, newspapers, even textbooks and tourist itineraries have kept silent about the history and culture of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh, as if the Armenian region had not existed at all, as if Soviet Azerbaijan consisted of only Azerbaijanis and not other people had ever lived in that territory. And whenever they had to write or tell something, the glorious history thousands of years old, the wonderful architectural monuments, the famous people of the region of Karabakh were as a rule ignored. They also kept silent about the atrocities and deceptions of the ruthless khans and Musavatists. Instead, events, figures, strange stories were invented for NKR, which had nothing to do with it. Generally, it appeared as if the Azerbaijani authors did not remorse when they handled the real history of Artsakh-Karabakh. Thus, they deliberately ignored various sources and cultural materials, and the result was distorted statements, which simply aroused laughter.

What can be expected from an author who was taught and educated according to the Pan-Turkist ideas, falsified textbooks, with hatred for the neighboring nation? These anti-Armenian textbooks and historical-philological literature pseudoscientific and highly illogical. Is it possible to refer to the defenders of the country as invaders, and praise savage plunderers instead, regard the native population as newcomers and vice versa?

Every nation has its history. Everyone has the right to speak about their ancestors, and everyone can make a mistake but encyclopedias and textbooks cannot contain deliberate mistakes, changing the history and

playing with the dignity of an entire nation. Unfortunately, this is the goal of historiography in Azerbaijan, which distorts facts without winking an eye, burning with the desire to present everything as Azerbaijani (*Falsification of History with a Hidden Political Motive*, Mikhail Meltukhov, Alla Ter-Sargissian, Genady Trapeznikov, Moscow, 1999, p. 3-35).

The Azerbaijani falsifiers generally have adopted a condemnable method, which consists in offering accidental facts, figures, numbers and then refer to them as a source to support their viewpoints. The "theories," which have appeared over the recent years, were worked out by the same method. In this way false histories, invented articles, and researches have been written. To support my words, I will refer to one of these authoritative works. In 1971 (in Moscow) a book entitled *Azerbaijan* was published in the series on the Soviet Union. On the title page of this thick illustrated book it is written, "This work is distinguished by its high scientific level." Shall we believe this? In fact, we are not going to evaluate the scientific contents of the entire book. Going through the few pages of the chapter about the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh, one will immediately feel that it is based on invented judgments and facts. The aim is to disorient Russian readers, offering them a deliberately changed history so that the foreigners would not get even an approximate idea of the real history of the region. On page 252 it is written, "Until the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC Karabakh was part of the ancient state of Albania, and was called Artsakh." Such a statement is devoid of any scientific basis. Armenian, Persian, Greek and Roman writings, as well as cultural monuments testify that in the 1st millennium BC Artsakh-Karabakh was part of the Armenian kingdom of Urartu first, then the Armenian kingdom ruled by the Yervanduni kings. The united Armenian state (since the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC) included Artsakh, as well as the Armenian region reigned by the kings of the Aranshahik dynasty, which remained within the Armenian state until the early 5<sup>th</sup> c., the decline of the Arshakuni dynasty. Later under the Persian rule the regions Artsakh and Utik of East Armenia and Aghvank formed a province. The region was also called Aghvank, the country of Aghvans (or Albanians). There are various sources and literature on this in many languages, and the enumeration of all of them would take too much space.

On the same page we read, "After the invasions of Tatar-Mongols in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Karabakh again appeared under the Persian rule. At

that time the khanate of Karabakh was established in this territory, led by a local feudal, Panah Ali bek. He founded the fortress of Shushi to defend themselves from invaders."

Here are three sentences, all of them distorted. First, the 1500 years of the history of Artsakh-Karabakh is ignored in order to create the impression that Albania (i.e. Aghvank) and the Albanian state, within which Artsakh allegedly was, existed until the creation of the Azerbaijani khanate of Karabakh. In other words, the Albanians voluntarily became Azerbaijanis, although it is known that Albania was situated on the other side of the River Kura in the Caucasus, and their relations with Artsakh were confined to being included in the same province of Persia in the early Middle Ages. Besides, Albania as an administrative unit and the Albanians as tribes got assimilated and disappeared in the 6-7<sup>th</sup> centuries, during the Arab invasions. The Azerbaijani falsifiers know these facts very well. However, their "pro-Albanian" position pursued a definite purpose. It was for creating "Historical Azerbaijan" and extending its western border to the eastern border of "Historical Turkey," therefore the medieval history of Artsakh-Khachen full of historical events was denied, the ancient monuments of the region were destroyed, and the native Armenian population was displaced. In other words, it is for detaching the eastern provinces of Armenia that Albania is brought to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the khanate of Karabakh is made older by 400 years, and Panah Ali bek is presented as a khan and a "local feudal" 3 centuries before his birth in 1693. There is not a single word that before the establishment of the khanate of Karabakh in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Armenians settled the region, and more than 20 thousand architectural monuments created by them are still preserved there.\* They also keep silent that a majority of these monuments was created in the early Christian period, the Middle Ages and later. They keep silent that these monuments symbolize the glorious past of Artsakh-Karabakh. These are the stone-carved

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\* The khanate of Shushi, i.e. the khanate of Karabakh existed from 1752 till 1812. But this fact was enough for the Azerbaijani authors to consider it an indivisible part of Azerbaijan (which one, Irani, or Soviet?). Even historiographers had no idea of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijanis. If we were guided by this logic, Finland and Poland, for example, could be considered the territory of Russia, and Hong Kong and India the native lands of Great Britain.

lithography of our history, stone manuscripts in which the patriotic spirit, the unbreakable will and morale of the nation defending its freedom and independence are reflected. Unfortunately, these stone monuments of Nagorno Karabakh were kept under lock on the order of the Central Committee of the Azer. Communist Party, no word was written about them, and the Armenians of Karabakh were not allowed to preserve their own monuments. Otherwise, how can one explain that in the above-mentioned book about Azerbaijan the large colored photo of the mosque of Kirovabad (19<sup>th</sup> c.), was thrust between the pages devoted to NKAR? Probably, they wanted to tell the reader that the monuments of Nagorno Karabakh are also Azerbaijani. They ignored over 1500 Armenian monasteries and churches in the region and placed the picture of the mosque in the chapter devoted to NKAR.

The ancient and medieval history of Nagorno Karabakh was handled almost similarly in the Soviet Encyclopedia of Azerbaijan, in textbooks and researches published with a scientific label. Actually, the distortion of the history of the Armenian region was carried out to a common code, a definite scheme. There are no deviations from this scheme in this matter. As if before the emergence of the khanate of Shushi in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Karabakh was wilderness, and no events had taken place, no noteworthy works had been created there. As if the manuscripts, chronologies, thousands of stone inscriptions telling the history of Artsakh, the khachkars, monasteries, churches, fortresses and cemeteries had disappeared, whereas today one will come across them at every step. Fortunately, they have been preserved and tell us that (according to the geography by Anania Shirakatsi) Greater Armenia was divided into 15 states; Artsakh, one of these states, was situated between the rivers Kura and Arax. As if at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Christianity was not spread here and the first Catholicos of Armenia Grigor Illuminator found a church in the ancient settlement of Amaras, his grandson Grigoris, the first bishop of Artsakh, did not finish building it. As if in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century together with the other Armenian states Artsakh did not prosper and go through the Golden Age marked by the creation of the national alphabet. And in this very period Mesrop Mashtots opened a number of Armenian schools in Artsakh. As if the glorious cavalry of Artsakh, the heroism of which did not wither for centuries, did not fight in the powerful revolt against the Persian rule

known as the war of Vardanank. I feel obliged and tempted to give an example of utter devotion of the Armenian nation to the Russian nation. In June 1805 the Persian army of 40 thousand soldiers, ruining and plundering Armenian villages, monasteries and churches, was led by the Mohammedan khans of Karabakh and their viziers to the heart of Artsakh, the valley of the River Karkar, endangering Shushi and the Russian military unit stationed there. The commander chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus Tsitsianov appealed to the Armenians of Karabakh, "Recall your courage, get ready for victories and show that you are the same valiant Armenians of Karabakh, who formerly terrified the Persian cavalry."\* The Armenian volunteers released the Russian soldiers from the siege, and the population of the Armenian villages put them up.

The Azerbaijani ideologists, considering themselves defenders of nationalists, kept silent about this and cruelly persecuted everyone who dared to prove that in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century Artsakh gained considerable independence from Persia and was declared a kingdom. The state founded by Vachagan Barepasht had legislation, the *Constitution Canonical*. They became furious and persecuted the Armenian population of Karabakh, whenever they mentioned that under King Vachagan as many churches were built in Artsakh as there are days in the year.

They behave furiously, when they are told that under the Arab rule the Armenian Aranshahik kings in Artsakh led the progress in the

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\* For exhibiting the mentioned citation, as well as the silver coin of Tigran Great (1<sup>st</sup> c. BC), the inscription of Sopy, the daughter of the king of Dizak Gagik testifying to the events of the 10<sup>th</sup> c., the picture of Mesrop Mashtots in late 1967, the commission of the Azerbaijani Central Committee of the Communist Party recorded, "The exposition of the Museum of History and Local Lore does not comply with the Marxism-Leninism methodology." For this reason the director of the museum and the author of this book was to be dismissed from work. However, the bureau of the regional committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party considered a strict reprimand enough. It is put this way, "For the lack of principles and irresponsibility to include ideologically raw material in the exposition of museum, the director of the museum Comrade **Mkrtichian Sh.** receives a strict reprimand in his card of record" (extract of the protocol N 6/8 of the 14.05.1968 session of the Nagorno Karabakh Regional Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party).



political and spiritual life in Artsakh. They supported the development of such cultural centers as Amaras Monastery in the province of Myus Haband, Katarovank Monastery, Gtchavank, Okhte Drni Vank, Jrvshtik or Apostle Yeghisheh's Monastery in the province of Metsakoghants, Dudi or Khuta Vank and Khdravank in Vaikunik, St. Hakobavank and Gandzasar in the province of Metsaranayts, etc. In the early 9<sup>th</sup> century the two branches of the princes Aranshahik (one ruled in Khachen in the valley of the rivers Khachenaget and Tartar, presently Askeran region, NKR, the other ruled in Dizak, in the valley of the rivers Ishkhanaget and Tartar, presently the region of Hadrut, NKR) battled successfully against Arabs. The prominent figures of the liberation movement Sahl Smbatian, Yessayi Abu Museh and their fellow countrymen defended their region from Arab invasions. And at that time Babek who had come from North Persia to invade Artsakh and exterminate the Armenian population received a due punishment.

Historical Artsakh (in the 9-13<sup>th</sup> centuries known also by the name Khachen) underwent the attacks of the Seljuk Turks in the 12-13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Then it united with Northeast Armenia, liberated from Seljuk Turks by the Zakarian princes. During the short peace in the 13<sup>th</sup> century glorious architectural monuments were created in the region. Among these St. Hovhannes's Church (1216-1238), Dadivank Church (1214), Gtchavank Church (1241-1248), the khachkars of Bri Yeghtsi Monastery (1230-1270), the church of Khatravank Monastery (1204) and the porch of Gandzasar Church and other magnificent creations of the Armenian architecture. These were also ignored or considered Albanian heritage. They kept silent about the great prince of Khachen Hasan Jalalian and the Mongol-Armenian alliance achieved by him, owing to which the Armenian principedoms and Cilicia avoided the atrocities of invaders.

The Azerbaijani historians would not write that the severe period of invasions of the Turkish tribes named Kara Koyunlu and Ak Koyunlu following Mongol-Tatars (15-16<sup>th</sup> centuries) paralyzed the development of culture in the Armenian regions. Frequent revolts, plunder and destruction did not let the Armenians take a breath and restore their cultural centers, build new buildings, monuments of architecture. On the contrary, in this republic they write about the atrocities of Turks with special pride, treat with love the few gravestones bearing the symbol of Kara Koyunlu Turks – the ram. Even in 1970 Baku started awarding the people of NKAR with medals bearing the symbol of the ram. (On the

flag of the Turkish tribes Kara Koyunlu a black sheep or ram was drawn: kara means "black" and koyun means "sheep".)

For the stories about the construction of the fortress of Shushi and the khanate of Karabakh, there is no end to the dreams of the Azerbaijani authors either. They never take into consideration real facts and documents, even the information about Karabakh provided by the Azerbaijani clerks of khans, famous Azerbaijani historian Abas-Kuli Agha Bakikhanov and Russian historians and commanders of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They even ignore the established opinion in history that Shushi had been a fortress long before Panah khan appeared in Karabakh. Famous historian from Artsakh Bagrat Ulubabian in his work *Golden Chain* (Yerevan, 1969, p.357-365), Shahen Mkrtychian in his book *The Historical and Architectural Monuments of Nagorno Karabakh* (Yerevan, 1980, 146-164), relying on a great amount of data from historical writings, ancient stone inscriptions and khachkars, proved that Shushi as an Armenian settlement and a fortress existed in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and in the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the historical archives of Moscow, Leningrad and Tbilisi the letters and reports of the commander Avan and his brothers-in-arms written in the 1720s in Shushi are still preserved.

The Azerbaijani authors distort these facts, too. They do not even mention a word that before the khanate, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when Russia invaded Karabakh, it was divided into five Armenian melikdoms (principedoms), each of them had a government and an administrative center, the seat of the melik. Shushi was in the Melikdom of Varanda. Melik Shahnazar II of Varanda, in order to gain influence over the other meliks, allied with Panah who moved from the Persian province of Kabirli, the fortress Bayat together with his nomadic tribe to the archaeological town of Tigranakert built in Karabakh by the Armenian king Tigran II Great in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, intending to settle down in the invincible fortress of Shushi. In 1752 Panah khan accompanied by Melik Shahnazar moved to Shushi and reconstructed the vulnerable parts of the wall. A lot of data testifying to these facts are found in the Azerbaijani historical writings. Mirza Jamal, the scribe of Panah khan writes that the khan descends from the branch Sarijanlu of the tribe Bahmanli that came from Turkestan in ancient times. According to the scribe, Panah came from nomadic tribes. But over two centuries later authors emerged, who deny the history, the manuscripts inherited from their ancestors, throw back the carrion of the khanate of Karabakh

to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and present the representative of a nomad as a local feudal. As the written and archival data confirm unanimously, Panah Ali Khan was the first foreigner who almost accidentally, as a result of a coincidence of political circumstances, appeared in these plains in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was persecuted in Iran and ran away to find asylum but was eventually put to death in Iran. Out of human sympathy the Armenian meliks gave him shelter in the central province of Khachen. But their sympathy became a source of disaster, caused great sufferings to the local Armenian population, exploiting them and bringing them under the yoke of the nomadic tribes. The latter did not have an ethnic name and in literature were also defined as Muslims, and later were called either Caucasian Tatars or Caucasian Turks. Therefore, even the khans of Shushi (Panah-Ali and his son Ibrahim) whom the Azerbaijani scientists consistently regard as Azerbaijanis, had no idea of such an ethnicity. All the documents about the khan, which were published in Baku, testify to this.

In general, when writing about the period of the Karabakh khans, more exactly the Shushi khans (1752-1822) and the modern history, Azerbaijani authors were guided by emotions only, the craving for praising Azerbaijan everywhere, the temptation of accepting the desirable for the real. They think thus they do a great favor to their people, whereas one cannot go far with a false history and ideas. People are not asleep, people are not fools. The evidence to this are the reviews, articles, books, reports, complaints, letters of the last decade uncovering the Azerbaijani falsifiers who, according to the precise characterization of the scientist from Leningrad Anatoly Jacobson, "only litter the science of history" (See "Vestnik", 1977, N 12, p. 76).

#### **ATTEMPTS AT PROMOTING AZERBAIJANIS AND PLAYING DOWN ON ARMENIANS**

When the national liberation and revolutionary movements in our region are concerned, these are, as a rule, ignored, the Armenian and Russian famous persons are forgotten. They do not remember at all the contribution of the Karabakh people to the establishment of the Russian-Armenian relationships, the heroic defense of Shushi in 1826, the valor of Armenians in the Russian-Turkish wars. The Armenian, Russian and foreign chronologies, abundant archive materials, and the foundation of Shushi are consistently ascribed to the khans and their viziers, and what is

especially pseudoscientific, the latter are presented as a progressive force, which united Karabakh, instigators of the liberation movement, and the struggle of the Karabakh meliks is considered as riots.

The centers of the liberation movement, revolts, underground organizations and important events in Nagorno Karabakh are never mentioned. Moreover, beside the international and Russian prominent revolutionary, one of the founders of the Communist Party, the brother-in-arms of Lenin B. Knunyants several ordinary peasants are placed, whose being revolutionaries was unknown until the 1970s. Here it would be proper to quote the following lines of page 252 of the book *Azerbaijan*: "After the revolution (in Karabakh) in 1905 professional revolutionaries appeared in Karabakh. Among them were Teymur Aliyev and the delegate of the second session of the Russian Social Democratic Party Bogdan Knunyants." It was written in this way. But how could Teymur Aliyev born in 1896 who was not even a party member, become a professional revolutionary in 1905 and even oust B. Knunyants? The roles of the important figures of the region were thus diminished.

35 per cent of the NKAR population was enlisted during World War II. More than 45 thousand soldiers were mobilized from Karabakh, 22 thousand fell to the war, 25 became generals and marshals, 21 became heroes of the Soviet Union. And there was only one Azerbaijani hero. In order to maintain balance here, and not to show the number of the Armenian heroes, they first wrote about the deeds of the Azerbaijani hero, then added the name of an Armenian hero and considered the question settled. As there were no Azerbaijanis in the command, the Armenian generals and marshals would not be remembered at all. Writers, artists and scientists were pigeonholed by this new method of internationalism. When writing about Shushi the Armenians were not mentioned at all, as if it had not been founded by the commander Avan, and the town was not in Nagorno Karabakh. Whereas, between 1828 and 1920 22 periodicals were published in Shushi, including 20 Armenian and 2 Russian. Besides, the three publishing houses of the town published 150 volumes of books and brochures. In Shushi the first Armenian book was published in 1828. In 1897, 20 584 inhabitants Armenians lived in Shushi, 5 out of the 6 schools were Armenian.

As if there were not for the hospital of Zhamhariants, the Armenian theatre of Khandamirian, the Armenian library and the reading hall with 10 thousand books. Famous statesmen and politicians Al. Bekzadian,

S. Kasian, S. Ter-Gabrielian, S. Baghdatev (Baghdatian), P. Knunyants, A. Hovanissian, 2 of the 26 commissars of Baku B. Avagian, A. Kostandian, General Ter-Ghukasov, General A. Ghazarian, academicians I. Zenin, A. Taghtajian, I. Knunyants, writer Muratsan, noted historian Leo, sculptor H. Gjurjian, artist S. Aghajanian, 5 Armenian People's Artists of the USSR, great statesman I. Tevossian, 4 Armenian heroes of the Soviet Union, twice hero of the Soviet Union Nelson Stepanian, and many other prominent persons were born in Shushi.

There were Armenian churches and one Russian Orthodox church, tens of other marvelous architectural monuments, cultural and public buildings, water reservoirs, thousands of two-storey buildings in Shushi. In 1898 in Shushi B. Knunyants organized the first social democratic organization in Karabakh. In the same year an underground printing house and groups of liberation movement were operating in Karabakh. Between 1918 and 1920 eight meetings of farmers were held, the Bolshevik Regional Committee was founded in Shushi. In the night of March 23, 1920 the Musavatist gangs, assisted by Turkish agents, ravaged the Armenian part of Shushi. About 7 thousand two-storey houses, tens of public and administrative buildings were set to fire. 65 percent of the town's population were killed in a single night. S. Ordjonikidze visited Karabakh in May 1920 and saw the ruins of Shushi. In 1936 he told the Soviet Azerbaijani delegation in Stalin's office, "Today I remember the picture we saw in Shushi with horror. The Armenian town was destroyed, razed to the ground." However, the amazing and exasperating fact is that the officials, who considered themselves internationalists, kept silent about all this. Only a Turk can neglect all these facts and announce triumphantly, "Shushi is the homeland of many Azerbaijani poets, writers, composers, musicians, singers!" (*Azerbaijan*, p. 258). What they want to say is that Shushi is the home of Azerbaijanis.

The main and the only reason for eyewash and negative attitude of the Azerbaijani leadership and intelligentsia towards the Armenians, particularly Karabakh and its native population, is that they do not have their own history. They cannot bear to refer to this mountainous region with the word Armenian. They become furious and cannot tolerate that the people of Artsakh have monuments, many outstanding people, and of course, brave and courageous patriots. They try every possible way to prevent the Azerbaijanis and the foreigners from learning that Karabakh was and will be an Armenian region. Therefore, they forbade calling the

theatre of Stepanakert Armenian. They did not allow calling the football team of Stepanakert Artsakh. They closed down the café and restaurant called Artsakh. They did not permit to expose Armenian khachkars and stone inscriptions in the museum of history and local lore, these precious objects, these tacit but at the same time eloquent witnesses of the ancient history of Artsakh. They did not allow having the works and portraits of the Armenian classic writers at the libraries, persecuted the singers of Armenian folk, battle and work songs... In brief, these were serious efforts to deprive the native Armenians of Karabakh of their memory. Instead they flooded the Armenian region with Eastern mughammat songs, music shows and songs about bandits, savages, who had repressed the Armenians. Obligatorily, they organized for the Armenian population of NKAR meetings with the anti-Armenian Azerbaijani intelligentsia, murderers and bribe takers. Day and night, they praised the condemnable, worshipped shabbiness, upheld pettiness. In jubilee publications, modern researches, reports of leaders, newspaper articles nothing was ever mentioned about the Armenians, the Russian and other ethnic minorities of Soviet Azerbaijan, as if this was the essence of internationalism. Now let us see how the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party upheld "the remarkable traditions of proletarian internationalism." The deputies of the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Azer. Communist Party were elected according to the principle one out of every 260 communists. However, this principle did not work for the Armenian communists. If one out of 235 Azerbaijani communists, one out of 220 Russian communists were elected, the Armenian representatives were one out of 317 communists. Moreover, during the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the CPSU, the Armenian communists, who comprised 13.7 percent of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, were only 4.2 percent of deputies.

However, these facts did not prevent the chairman of the mandating commission of the session R. Mamedzadeh from announcing under thunderous applause, "The ethnic pattern of the deputies is a vivid example of faithfulness of the Azerbaijani Communist Party to the traditions of internationalism."

In the same period the Armenians comprised 15.7 percent of the population of Azerbaijan but the Armenian students totaled 0.7 percent, in science 0.1 percent, 0.02 percent in government.

## WHO, WHEN AND WHY FOUNDED THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

What can we tell the falsifiers, who barricaded in the peninsula of Apsheron? The history of Transcaucasia and, why not, mankind did not know people called Azerbaijanis until the 1930s. Even the great leader of Iran Imam Homeyni repeated for a number of times, "I do not know such a nation as the Azerbaijanis." The word "Azerbaijani" was first used in 1936. Under the USSR Constitution and on Stalin's order, the Caucasian Tatars were willfully declared Azerbaijanis. Though in 1921 Stalin stated that the Caucasian Tatars were tribes, not a nation yet, this circumstance did not prevent him from ordering to create history for these people in the late 1930s and he personally set the model by declaring a great Persian poet an Azerbaijani.

Meanwhile, real Azerbaijan is in the ancient Persian province, called Aturpaten by Strabon ("guardian of fire"), "Adarbaigan" by Persians, "Azarbeijan" by Arabs, "Atrpatakan" by Armenians, and in the late Middle Ages it became Azarbaijan by Turkish pronunciation. It is known that this Persian province was constantly attacked by Turkish-speaking nomadic tribes. In the late Middle Ages some tribes settled down and got assimilated with Iranians. Although they adopted the national traditions of the Persian people, they did not change their language. "Aturpaten" mentioned by Strabon has nothing to do with ethnicity (this word was used to denote a geographical area) but the Azerbaijanis gave the made-up name "Azerbaijani" to part of the population of East Transcaucasia "hidden in the depths of history," but in fact, the Turk-Tatars. In history there is no nation, tribe or family with such a name. Besides, Strabon wrote about it 2000 years ago, whereas the Republic of Azerbaijan and the word "Azerbaijani" are hardly a hundred years old. For the first time the word "Azeri" was used by V. Gorky-Kriazhin in 1926 as the brief form for "Azerbaijan" without implying such a nation. However, on Stalin's instruction the mentioned terms were circulated for purely political purposes.

Again on Stalin's order a group of Soviet historians headed by I. Diakanov rapidly undertook the creation of ancient history for the "Azerbaijani people." [They even said they descended from either Albanians or Indo-Europeans, forgetting that the "Azerbaijanis" were Turk nomads and their homeland was considered Turan. Moreover, after the collapse of the Socialist rule in 1991 the Azerbaijanis tore their mask

and confessed being Turks. Even the ex-adviser to the president of Azerbaijan Vafa Guluzadeh realized eventually that the "Azerbaijani people formed" as a new socialist nationality only under the Soviet rule (*The Zerkalo*, Baku, June 16, 2003).

This is the reason why until the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was never mentioned in any historical source written in any language that there was a state called Azerbaijan in Transcaucasia, to the north of the River Arax. Even in such a voluminous (460 pages) selection of documents as the work "The Colonial Policy of Tsarist Russia in Azerbaijan in the 1920-1960s" (Moscow, Leningrad, 1936 vol. 1) published by the USSR Academy of Sciences, including more than a hundred original documents the word "Azerbaijan" is mentioned only once, and the Persian province is referred to (p. 300). The word "Azerbaijan" as a name of an area, a state was first used only in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, more exactly after World War I, thanks to Rotshild, the English and Turkish intelligence and the amazing night blindness of the Bolsheviks. After the decline of the Commune of Baku the so-called Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was proclaimed under the Turkish expansionism. This republic was founded on an artificial basis; the idea belonged to Mustafa Kemal and the Bolsheviks; it was intended to bridge Turkey with Central Asia (see the article of the Turkish diplomat Shyukro Elekagha published in the Turkish Times, quoted in the February 10, 1993 edition of the Armenian newspaper Yerkir.) It would be wrong to think that the purpose was so open. First of all, an effort was made to keep Bolshevik Russia away from the Baku oil and prevent the influx of the Russian capital to Iran and the Persian Gulf rich in oil. Second, as Ottoman Turkey was defeated in World War I and lost the Arab countries, it was natural that Turkey would make use of the disorder in the Caucasus in an effort to gain new colonies and influence on the political life and natural resources of the Caucasus and Central Asia under the guise of Pan-Turkism. Therefore, Ottoman Turkey was greatly interested in creating a buffer area in Transcaucasia. Moreover, the nationalist Musavat Party supported Turkey and Pan-Turkism. This is easy to explain. The thing that remains obscure is why the Soviet Bolshevik leaders failed to predict the far-reaching consequences of all this, and pursued the crazy goal of exporting the revolution to the East, preserving the Republic of Azerbaijan and thus directly facilitating the Anglo-Turkish intrigues against the Soviets. Turkey hurried up to benefit from the situation.

Today Azerbaijan is Turkey's proxy in the Caucasus. A vivid example of this is the bloodshed in Chechnia, which resulted from the defeat of Russian diplomacy in the Caucasus.

General Anton Denikin, who led the struggle against the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia, wrote about this marionette state, "Everything in the Republic of Azerbaijan was artificial, unreal, starting with its name derived from the Iranian province. The artificial territory is mixed from Zakatala of the Lezgi people, the Tatar-Armenian Baku, the state of Elizavetapol, Russian Mughan and the Turkish policy as a defense wall for Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism in the Caucasus. In the beginning, the artificial state was preserved by the bayonets of Nouri pasha and General Thompson, later by the force of inertia" (*Essays on Russian Discord*, General Anton Denikin).

It is also interesting to know the opinion of historians. Academician V. Bartold wrote, "The name "Azerbaijan" was chosen for the Republic of Azerbaijan to facilitate the proclamation of the Republic of Azerbaijan the Iranian Azarbaijan and the Republic of Azerbaijan would be identified... Therefore, the name was chosen. Of course, when "Azerbaijan" is used, it is often necessary to ask which of them is meant, Persian or Soviet Azerbaijan" (Selection of Works, vol. 1, 2, p. 703). Therefore, as it was mentioned, the existence of Azerbaijan was not set down anywhere in any language until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And it is not accidental that presently in Baku they are racking their brains to decide a name for their nation and choose an alphabet, as they do not have their own and have to switch from the Latin to the Russian alphabet. Perhaps, we should not be surprised if all of a sudden the Albanians become Turkish tribes and their kingdom – the Azerbaijani state of Caucasian Albania. For besides the Albanians the Sumerians and Scythians were also declared Turk-Azerbaijanis (*Communist of Azerbaijan*, 1989, vol. 3, p. 56-65).

Finally, Noah was also said to have been Azerbaijani. In other words, an overall "nationalization" of others' history and culture took place (*History is the Memory of Generations*, Paruyr Muradian, Yerevan, 1990, p. 118).

Thus, if by creating the Republic of Azerbaijan the Turks pursued support in Transcaucasia and a link with Central Asia, the far-reaching aim of the USSR government was to use Azerbaijan as a "a bright leading light for exporting the revolution to the Islamic East", as well as to seize the

vast Iranian province Atrpatakan and annex it to Azerbaijan. Therefore, the so-called fifth column of the Iranian expatriates was set up in Baku to carry out a coup in Iran at a convenient moment and to establish the Soviet rule there. However, the intrigues of Moscow and Baku always ended in a failure because they did not get the support of the Iranians. Nevertheless, the network of agents has been preserved here and is currently working for Azerbaijan. Hence, the expansionist ambitions of Turk-Azeris, the eternal tradition of exploding Iran from the inside, inherited from the Soviets, still persists.

Therefore, as a first secretary of the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan, Nariman Narimanov regularly reminded the Bolshevik People's Committee of Moscow about the "sacred mission of revolution in the East" and related this to the invasion of the Armenian territories with the help of the Bolsheviks. Thus, they violated the national and human rights of the five main native peoples living in the east of Transcaucasia for millenniums already, the Armenians, the Lezgis, the Talish, the Udis and the Tats, refusing to use the historical names of their native lands. An English-speaking reader might need more information on the establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

After the October revolution in Russia in 1917 the Caucasian Tatars, i.e. Turks, obsessed with aggressive nationalism, immediately appeared on the line of Turkey's expansionist policies. However, the ethnic and political balance in East Transcaucasia did not favor them. Therefore, in spite of the efforts of Turkey the Musavatists and the leaders of the Caucasian Tatars failed to come to power in the province of Baku in 1917. The Council of Baku, including local Armenians, came to power.

The fact that first the city of Baku and later the greater part of the province of Baku appeared under the control of the authorities backed by the Armenians was the reflection of the ethnic and political dominance of the Armenians in East Transcaucasia. Under capitalism the Armenians had achieved a dominating role in the economy of the region, therefore capitalist development was certainly be preferred by Armenians. The Musavatist government of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic proclaimed in Tbilisi in 1918 could not arrive in Baku, for the political power there belonged to the legitimate Council of Baku, backed by the Armenians, which had the situation under its control. The Caucasian Tatars, who had declared the birth of the new state with Turkey's

support, did not possess sufficient political and military potential to impart a legal status to the artificially proclaimed state.

Actually, the Republic of Azerbaijan had intentions concerning East Transcaucasia. Besides being outside its borders and political influence, over a year before the local peoples had established their legitimate self-governance in these territories, rejecting the Azerbaijani rule. The governments of both Baku and Shushi (Karabakh) were Armenians, which excluded the creation of an independent nation state of Caucasian Tatars there. When it became clear that the illegitimate Musavatist "government" failed, Turkey lent a hand. First, in order to bring together the other Muslim peoples living in East Transcaucasia the Muslim National Council was established with Turkey's support instead of the Republic of Caucasian Tatars. Thus Turkey could influence the deputies of Russian Duma, elected from different Muslim peoples of Transcaucasia (Tatars, Persians, Lezgis, Tats, Kurds, etc.) and convinced them that they wished to create an Islamic republic called Azerbaijan in East Transcaucasia and not a Republic of Tatars, i.e. a Turkish state. In this way, Turkey managed to shift the ethnic and territorial questions to the sphere of religious confrontation, disguising its Pan-Turkist idea of establishing a second Turkish nation state in Transcaucasia. The goal was the same, when the new republic was not named either Turkish, or after the Caucasian Tatars. This republic was created because Turkey used the opportunity to intrude in Transcaucasia and interfere with the conflict between the Armenians and Caucasian Tatars, more exactly Caucasian Turks, over the ethnic and territorial dispute, using the forces and weapon of Caucasian Tatars.

East Transcaucasia had never been called "Azerbaijan". It became a state and political reality in the history of Transcaucasia after the occupation of Baku by Turkish forces (September 1918), disbanding of the local government and inviting the Musavatist government. This was the first pre-Cypriot attempt at creating a new Turkish state through intervention. The Turkish gangs and forces massacred the defenders of Baku for over three days. This was the continuation of the Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey in 1915. Settling the question of Baku, the regular Turkish army and the Musavatist militia moved to Nagorno Karabakh, burning Armenian and Udi villages on their way. Nagorno Karabakh, the main fortress of the Armenians in the east of Transcaucasia was endangered. In fact, in Russia's absence in the region

Turkey pursued not only its own interests but also the interests of Azerbaijan at the expense of Armenia, which had survived genocide. Under these circumstances the main conflict in the region was the confrontation of Armenia and Karabakh against Turkey and Azerbaijan. This was the struggle of the native Armenian population for their rights and the territory historically belonging to them for thousands of years. The effective militia led by the Armenian National Council of Karabakh managed to prevent the movement of the Turks. On April 28, 1920 the 11<sup>th</sup> Red Army of Russia entered Baku, overthrew the marionette Musavatist government and proclaimed Soviet power on the behalf of the "revolted working class". The fact that the establishment of the Soviet rule in Transcaucasia started in Baku had a crucial role for many peoples of the region. Bolshevism had "revolutionary plans" for the region, and chose Baku as its proxy in expanding the red revolution in the Islamic East, especially that Yerevan and Tbilisi continued to be the capitals of non-Soviet states, which had been recognized by the League of Nations. Bolshevik Moscow saw the end of its plans in a global socialist revolution. In this ideology the interests of the Armenian nation were less important than the interests of the world revolution. In this context, it becomes clear why the Bolsheviks followed the Musavatists and kept the northwest province of Iran for the new socialist republic. The Bolsheviks grasped the idea of Pan-Turkism on the move to establish Great Azerbaijan to export the socialist revolution to the Islamic East. It is known that historically and politically the Bolsheviks had imperialist approaches, and in the beginning East Transcaucasia was a country of Armenians and Muslims for them. It is not accidental that immediately after the establishment of the Soviet rule in Baku the Decree on Land was published in three languages: Armenian, Russian and Turkish.

On August 10, 1921 (the day when the agreement of Sevres was signed) Soviet Russia and yet non-Soviet Republic of Armenia signed an agreement, which maintained that the occupation of Nagorno Karabakh by Soviet Russia did not determine the settlement of the question of this land in favor of Soviet Azerbaijan or the Republic of Armenia. Thus, Nagorno Karabakh was viewed as a disputable territory by the Soviet Union. Apart from everything, Russia thus displayed loyalty to the international law and legitimacy. However, very soon the "global revolution" changed the attitude of the Bolshevik government towards



Nagorno Karabakh. It was logical to expect that after the establishment of soviets in Transcaucasia the ethnic policy of the Soviet power would be applied here. However, the contrary happened. Political conjuncture, the idea of exporting the revolution to the East, the oil of Baku and Stalin's dictate made 10 members of the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party of Russia to decide on July 5, 1921 to annex Karabakh with a 94 percent Armenian population to Azerbaijan, granting it autonomy. Actually, this was a decision on occupation of Karabakh, and Karabakh rose against it.

It is notable that the autonomy was not named after the nation living there, as it should have been; it was called by the geographic name of the territory. Obviously, this approach intended to hide who this territory really belonged. The foreign political considerations were no less important. The Bolsheviks estimated that pleasing Kemalists Turkey was one of the first steps towards socialist development. By slogans about the supranational nature of Soviet Azerbaijan, Moscow dispelled the doubts of Iran, worried by the establishment of another Turkish state at its northern border. In March 1920 the Bolshevik government decided to establish a Soviet state in East Transcaucasia as a powerful support for spreading the revolution in the East, which was against the interests of the Armenian nation. According to the idea, this was to be a new type of a common socialist republic. The first sign was naming the state "Azerbaijan" instead of "Soviet Socialist Republic of Caucasian Tatars", which was the misappropriated name of the northern province of neighboring Iran. The establishment of a common republic of East Transcaucasian peoples was just an excuse to found a new Turkish state. Russia went for the line of pleasing Turkey and strengthening its position in the region immediately after joining it to Russia. In the beginning the aim was to eliminate the Iranian influence in the region, which was possible only through the traditional enemy of the Persians – the Turk-Tatars. Calling the new republic "Azerbaijan", Bolshevik Moscow prepared ground for claims to Iranian Azerbaijan later. It should be mentioned that during World War II Moscow was close to the implementation of the plan of annexation of Iranian Azerbaijan by Soviet Azerbaijan, worked out in the 1920s. Thus, the plan of "Great Azerbaijan" was passed over in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The idea was Turkey's, which used it to get hold of the South Caucasus and Iranian Azerbaijan. Later, the same idea appeared in the arsenal of the Bolsheviks and was

used by them for their expansionist plans in the Islamic East (see Alexander Manasian's article published in the editions 151-153 of the Azat Artsakh in 2003, "Conflict Settlement Without Mentioning Victim's Name"). In this sense, the agreement signed between Bolshevik Russia and Turkey in March 1921 was a violation of the international law. Both countries decided to annex Nakhidjevan, which was recognized as an indivisible part of Soviet Armenia, to another country. Soviet Azerbaijan, not having the consent of any of the latter two countries. On March 4, 1921, 12 days before signing the agreement in Moscow, a certain A. Sachko, Stalin's aide, published an article "Armenia and Turkey in the Upcoming Conference" in the Zhizn Natsionalnostey. The author (most probably Stalin) called on Armenia "to sacrifice formerly its own territories and part of its nation to Turkey for the sake of the global revolution".

Stalin's cynicism was indeed measureless. Actually, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper was calling the Armenians to sacrifice both their territory and people. Stalin was not afraid of the anger of Armenians, at least because Armenia would not be represented at the conference where its fate would be decided. Thus, on Stalin's instruction, the author of the article writes, "if for the government of Angorya (the former name of Ankara) pursuing state and national interests it is extremely important to protect and perhaps even expand the Turkish territory, for the socialist republics, territory and national integrity are not important."

Andrey Nuykin wrote that Stalin presented Kars, Ardahan and Surmalu to Ataturk not because he considered this territory Turkish. No, the only purpose was to arouse a revolutionary burst among the repressed working class of the East. For the sake of such an important purpose they would not have spared even territories of others. For the revolution, Lenin would hardly spare Russian lands as well.

As a native of the Caucasus, Stalin knew indeed that both Nagorno Karabakh and Nakhidjevan were Armenian regions but he wished to spur the revolutionary process in Russia, and to receive more "kerosene" from grateful Caucasian Tatars ... As a result, Christian Armenia underwent another forcible circumcision. And though this reshaping of borders proceeded from a "serious" document, such as the decree of the Caucasian Bureau, the progressive international community still protects the immunity of this act of international banditry. Why? Because it was favorable for the bosom friend Turkey. Second, more "kerosene" was

discovered at the shores of Azerbaijan, which was at one time so highly appreciated by Stalin.

How about the genocide? No, I do not mean the one carried out at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by Turks, after which they simply chided Atatürk in a friendly manner. In 1917, 40 percent of the population Nakhidjevan, 53.9 thousand were Armenians; by the beginning of "democratization" not a single Armenian had remained there. In 1923, 94.4 percent of the population in Karabakh were Armenians. In the years when Azerbaijan strode towards communism (around 1979) the number of Armenians declined to 75.9 percent and about one hundred Armenian villages were devastated. In the city of Sumgait the Armenians were killed or displaced. This is a real genocide, and the Armenians of Karabakh had to struggle to save their lives (Andrey Nuykin, *Indivisibility of Borders or Nations Right for Self-Determination?*, Ryazan, 2003, p. 16)?

Baku and Moscow gave the same reply to all the protests of the population of Artsakh-Karabakh: the Armenians need not worry because the Soviet power has solved the ethnic problem by establishing the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan as an unprecedented supranational republic without a leading nation (at that time the Azerbaijanis called themselves Caucasian Tatars).

Some time later the phrase "supranational Azerbaijan" was replaced by the phrase "international Azerbaijan". In the decree on the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh Baku upheld the same point, characterizing Soviet Azerbaijan as an "integrated union" of Muslims and Armenians (the article by Alexander Manasian). Thus, the mentioned facts imparted serious legal contents to the political idea of an integrated union of the Muslims and the Armenians. However, the real contents of the relationships during 70 years deviated from the political idea.

One of the crucial steps of the local Turks was the derivation of a new name. The Turks called Caucasian Tatars suddenly became Azerbaijanis, thereby becoming a title-bearing nation. This step had been worked out inside the political laboratories of Istanbul and Ankara at the beginning of the century. Among the East Caucasian peoples in Soviet Azerbaijan there appeared one that bore the name of the republic, thereby acquiring certain political advantages. Established as a supranational republic, it transformed into nation state, for now a nation emerged, bearing the name of the republic (Alexander Manasian).

After this the economic and political repressions in Azerbaijan became overt. This was a process of internal colonization and exploitation of nations, facilitated by Moscow's connivance and hid disguised in slogans of friendship and equality. The goal of the Azerbaijani government was to depart gradually from democracy by displacing the Armenians, who did not assimilate, and assimilating the native Muslim peoples – the Kurds, Talish, Lezgis, Tats. The same goal was pursued during World War II, when every third Armenian of the republic was enlisted. This was the highest rate in the entire Soviet Union (A.M.). In the Soviet years, unlike other regions, the model of the nation state division and annexation was applied to Artsakh-Karabakh, which had begun under Turkey's dictate. And if in the beginning this was somehow possible to explain by export of the ideology of a world revolution, it is impossible to understand why the mistakes were not corrected later. The question of status and borders of ethnic states were settled in the other regions but not in Karabakh. The efforts to correct these mistakes were local, and ended up in tragic consequences.

And they say no national question was solved under the Soviet rule. Not only a vast territory was given to the Turk-Tatars of East Transcaucasia, but also they were placed beside the neighboring Armenians, Georgians and Persians as one of these ancient nations. It was the mode of the time. The Soviet rule made nations "brothers", and "the father of peoples" Stalin was day and night busy equalizing, leveling these nations. The Azerbaijani authors keep silent about this, as the truth contradicts to the false and mistaken ideas and slander they spread.

#### HOW AZERBAIJANI AUTHORS EDITED HISTORICAL SOURCES

What scientific consciousness may be concerned if the science of history in Azerbaijan is busy editing historical writings and literature distorting them to their liking? I will give examples.

There is important information on Artsakh-Karabakh in the writing of Mirza Jamal Jevanshir Karabaglu *The History of Karabakh*. It appeared in Baku in 1955 in three languages: Persian, Russian and Azerbaijani. Originally, it was written in Persian, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The first translation into Russian was done by A. Berzheh, abridged and published in the Kavkaz in 1855. The Azerbaijani translation was also done "freely" and as a result there appeared such words as "Azerbaijan" and

"Azerbaijani", which naturally did not and could not have existed in the Persian original. Whereas the Institute of History of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences characterized the work as one of the best sources of the history of Azerbaijan of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, or simply as one of the monuments of the Azerbaijani history.

The heirs of the Karabakh khans instructed Mirza Jamal to write his History, where the khans are praised in prejudice to real historical facts. Nevertheless, the author of "this wonderful monument of the Azerbaijani history" mentioned that he wrote about the events he and his parents had witnessed, who, when and from where came to Karabakh and what their occupation was. "The first town founded in Karabakh was Barda, at a distance of 9 miles from the Kura River. The ancient inhabitants of this town were neither Armenians, nor any other people." By the way, see what the outstanding Russian historian S. Solovyov wrote about the early medieval town Barda in Karabakh in his work *The History of Russia Since Ancient Times*. Describing the Russian invasion of Transcaucasia in 943-944, he writes, "They went up the river Kura and suddenly appeared at Partav-Barda or Aran, the capital of Karabakh at that time. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century Barda, one of the oldest towns of Transcaucasia, still belonged to the Armenians." (*The History of Russia Since Ancient Times*, S. Solovyov, Moscow, 1959, volume 1, p. 151).

Now let us see how in Baku the work of the 14<sup>th</sup> century German traveler Hans Schiltberger was edited. The German traveler, who visited Artsakh, wrote that Artsakh was in Armenia. Translating this work, the Azerbaijani falsifier of history Buniatov deliberately deleted all the facts regarding Armenia and the Armenians (*Hans Schiltberger's Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa*, Odessa, 1966, p. 110, and the translation by Buniatov).

Here are more facts. Another Azerbaijani scientist R. Geyushov omitted from the Byzantine source the correspondence of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine Emperor K. Tsiranatsin with the principality of Khachen-Artsakh province of Armenia (*On the Ceremonies of the Byzantine Court*, K. Tsiranatsin, book 2, chapter 48). Moreover, in 1946 the *History of Armenians* by Kirakos Gandzaketsi was published in Russian in Baku. First, the word "Armenian" was left out of the work, then the expression "Armenian by origin" regarding the Armenian prince of Artsakh Hasan Jalal in order to deprive his heir Yesayi Jalalians 400 years later of the right to bear his family name and present him as a Turk. The falsifiers in

Baku did not care at all that this book was published in its original form in Moscow in 1858, in Tbilisi in 1909 and in St. Petersburg in French in 1870. In the preface of the Baku edition "the Armenian prince Hasan Jalalian" is alleged "the heir of an Albanian (to be deduced Azerbaijani) outstanding family".

The next anti-Armenian juggling is an important testifying referring to the population of Artsakh-Khachen, according to which the anonymous Persian chronologist of the 13<sup>th</sup> century wrote in his manuscript, "Khachen is an impregnable region surrounded by mountains and forests... Armenians live here. The Abkhaz (Virik) people call their padishah king" (N.D. Miklukho-Maklay, *Geographic Works of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century in Persian, Scientific Notes of the Institute of Oriental Studies*, 1911, volume 9, p. 204). The Azerbaijani authors were in the habit of leaving out this information. One more fact: in 1968 the *Book of Shusha* was published in Baku. The author F. Shushinsky mentioned only one of the 21 Armenian periodicals published in Shushi, the Shushinski Listok.

Another Azerbaijani author M. Mammedov granted himself the right to edit archive documents. From the letter of the first secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia Harutyunov addressed to Stalin in 1945 he deleted the sentences "137 thousand of the 153 thousand inhabitants of NKAR are Armenians" and "Soviet Armenia can receive from NKAR specialists distinguished by their practicality and devotion, for all of them naturally cannot find employment in Azerbaijan" (Harutyunov's letter is in Chapter 8 of this book, and M. Mammedov's article was published in the *Zerkalo*, Baku, September 20, 2003).

The Azerbaijani authors also easily passed by numerous archival data, demographic facts about the Armenian population of Artsakh, such as the fact that "as in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century there were 110 thousand extended Armenian families in Karabakh" (*Complete Selection of Laws of the Russian Empire*, vol. 24, p. 76). Or, according to the report of Iustianov, commander of the Russian troops in the Caucasus, written to the tsar on December 30, 1804, "Ibrahim khan had 60 thousand Armenian families in Karabakh subject to him." Here it is not mentioned how many Armenian families there were in Karabakh that were not subjects of the Khan. Or, as in 1823 the Russian state adviser Mogilevsky and Lieutenant-Colonel Yermolov testified, Armenians comprised 84.6 percent of the population of Karabakh, Tatars or Azerbaijanis 14.7 percent, Kurds 0.7 percent (*Description of the Province of Karabakh*, Tbilisi, 1866, p. 260).

Eventually, the president of Azerbaijan at least arouses a smile when he asserts in an interview, "The Armenians started migrating to Transcaucasia during the Russian-Persian wars in 1804-1813 and 1826-1828. Most of them moved to Karabakh and as a result at the beginning of the century one fifth of the Karabakh population were (more exactly became) the Armenians" (the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 28, 1996).

Well, if the head of state tells lies, the situation is really crucial. Hence, lie and falsification have become a mode of life, underlying the government policies of Azerbaijan. There is no need to comment.

### HOW THE TENTACLES OF AZERBAIJANI PROPAGANDA REACHED CEMETERIES AND MUSEUMS

Nevertheless, I have to ask the question why they demolish Armenian cemeteries and monuments, spoil gravestones with epitaphs and khachkars in Azerbaijan.

Considering that there are thousands of gravestones with Armenian inscriptions dating from the 8-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the intention of the nomadic Azerbaijanis becomes apparent. Isn't the existence of Armenian cemeteries too forceful an argument against the Azerbaijani falsifiers? They keep trumpeting that Karabakh is a "native" Azerbaijani territory, and the first Armenian immigrants allegedly appeared in the hospitable Azerbaijani country in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, according to Heidar Aliyev (see his above-mentioned interview). Funny, isn't it? Only in the territory of NKR about 2000 old Armenian cemeteries are found with hundreds of thousand graves and khachkars with Armenian inscriptions dating from the 8-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is impossible that our neighbors do not know this, especially that there are a number of publications about these gravestones and inscriptions in many languages. The question that occurs is how they can proclaim Karabakh an Azerbaijani land if all the cemeteries are Armenian there, and there is only one Azerbaijani cemetery where the first graves date from 1920, after the genocide of the Armenians. In order to prevent this question, after cleaning up the ruins of the Armenian part of Shushi, the Turk-Azeris began destroying the cemeteries and Armenian monuments saved by miracle.

I think it is useless to continue giving more examples and arguments as Baku falsifiers are convinced that nobody will accuse them of falsification, and they continue enthusiastically to "terrorize" historical

facts, archival documents and get away with it. The task is to "prove" that the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan has belonged to the Azerbaijanis since ancient times. The order was given in a Turkish manner: "A special theory should be worked out about how the Turks settled down here, presenting them as ancient inhabitants of East Transcaucasia. Moreover, everything that has archaeological value is considered as relics of ancient ethnic Turkish culture, whereas there is a considerable amount of literature on the Azerbaijani nomads, as well as those written by local authors" (*October and the Development of International Relationships in the USSR*, Y. Bromley). This is the desire of the Azerbaijani authors, which has nothing to do with the reality and history, to see the history of their nation improved, civilized and ancient. Whereas, the science of history has unambiguously proved that in the valley of the rivers Kura and Arax Turkish speaking tribes appeared in the 12-14<sup>th</sup> centuries and gradually spread the nomadic lifestyle here. The main source of income of the Turks was plunder. As to the highlands and lowlands of Artsakh, the Turkish nomads appeared there in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

However, their pseudoscientific attempts do not end thus. Very often they publish photos of khachkars, grave monuments, high relief, stone inscriptions, and the legend below tells, for instance, "Stone with Albanian inscription." Sometimes, it is also mentioned that the stone was discovered in the region of Lachin or some other place in Soviet Azerbaijan. This is all the information about the monument. The date of creation, the place where it was discovered, and the contents of the inscription, which is more important, is not mentioned as a rule. Only a barefaced announcement that it is Albanian, whereas on the photos Armenian letters are easily distinguished. A newly born falsifier in this sphere M. Aliyev's scientific "discovery" was revealed by Henrik Svazian (On an "Albanian Inscription", H. Svazian, the *Lraber*, 1987, N 3, p. 42-45).

Thousands of exhibits of Armenian culture are kept and shown in a number of Azerbaijani museums. They are introduced to visitors in the same manner, "Stone with ancient Azerbaijani inscription." Here we have an Azerbaijani science of studying museum exhibits.

Generally, our "almighty" neighbor's judgments ignore the factors of place and time. They generously supply senseless stories, false arguments that they themselves have set forth. Although what is the



point of facts if there is no conscience, no scientific approach, no morality? Everything is done in a Turkish manner, invading, plundering and robbing not only the territory but also the history and culture of others. After all, should we be surprised if at the museum of Kelbajar the Armenian commander Davit Bek was named Davut Bey and Mkhitar Sparapet became Mukhtar pasha. Moreover, it turns out that these "Azerbaijani" commanders fought for the brotherly Turkish army against the ghouls, the Armenians, and defeated them. In the pride of place of the museum the Map of the Azerbaijani Republic of Gyokcha-Zangezur was pinned up. They did not forget about the flag, the coat of arms and the state seal of the imaginary republic. In this manner the tentacles of the Azerbaijani propaganda penetrated into the exhibition halls of museums.

However, the series of falsifications continues. Hard as they tried to erase the names of the ancient Armenian settlements from the map, these have been preserved. Some names were bobbed or adapted to Turkish pronunciation, others were translated literally from Armenian. This became known from the list of names of settlements taken from the desk of the chairman of the Kelbajar Regional Soviet as trophy and the book entitled *Administrative Division of Azerbaijani SSR* published in Baku in 1979 (p. 53-54).

Here is another example. In the historical province of Aghvertso, liberated by the Artsakh people, the mausoleum of Khoja Movses (16<sup>th</sup> century) was reshaped by the Azerbaijanis. The new lintel above the door of the mausoleum did not fit into the composition of the monument at all. Besides, a new inscription was made on the wall, and the age of the monument was increased by 400 years, and Khoja Movses became Muhammad Al Khojayi. How could an apostle of Muhammad appear in these places in the 12<sup>th</sup> century if it is a fact that the first foreigners with their sheep appeared to the north of the Arax river, in the valley of the Hagaru river only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century? This is how the Azeris reconstructed but, in fact, misappropriated the Armenian monument. And this is not the only example.

Why did Azerbaijan morbidly hurry to destroy the Armenian historical and cultural heritage? Or why are the famous historical facts and events continuously and brazenly defied or reshaped? First of all, this testifies to the short-sightedness and isolated thinking of Turk-Azeris. Besides, as Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian said in the 33<sup>rd</sup> conference of UNESCO in Paris, "Azerbaijan is a country which

lives with the sense of fear of the past" (October 1, 2003). In other words, a thief lives in a constant fear. By announcing the stolen territories, history and culture belonging to Azerbaijan, the question is not settled, moreover, it becomes more complicated. Sooner or later they *will* have to account for their actions. There *will*, indeed, appear the problem of returning what has been stolen.

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Statistics and historical facts are falsified not only by scientists, writers, journalists and statesmen but also diplomats. For example, the ambassador of Azerbaijan to Moscow Pasha Rustamzadeh raved in his interviews with Russian newspapers that 18 thousand Azerbaijanis had allegedly been displaced from Stepanakert. Whereas, as on January 1, 1988, 4.5 thousand Azerbaijanis lived in Stepanakert. The hypocrite Azerbaijani ambassador keeps silent about the tragedy of 208 thousand Armenians in Baku. He does not mention that the Armenians, who migrated from Azerbaijan, outnumbered the Azerbaijanis, who fled from Armenia, 2.8 times. He does not mention that the Armenians who left Azerbaijan in 1988-1990 left behind them 103.7 thousand flats, 132 Armenian villages or 8 thousand square meters of territory, whereas the Azerbaijanis had only 27.6 thousand flats in Armenia (*Artsakh*, Shahen Mkrtichian, Yerevan, 1991, p. 98-101).

Why did the historiography of Azerbaijan appear so soon in the hands of the people suffering from anti-Armenian fever? Where did this tendency to knead "new history" originate? The answer to these questions are found in the footnotes of works by Azerbaijani historians. They speak about the caves between the Armenian villages of Azokh and Mets Taghlar, supporting their words by data they have invented. They write about the twin bridges of Khudaperin and again make a reference to the "initial source" of the ideology of Pan-Turkism. They distort important historical events, offering false information instead. Actually, they season all their empty judgements and viewpoints with slander from the cuisine of falsifiers. Other similar facts may be cited but in the given case they are not decisive. On the one hand, they resort to falsification, distortion, eyewash, and on the other hand, they pretend observing the "principles of internationalism". The funniest thing is that they compel or bribe foreign scientists and even natives of Karabakh to become participants of this dirty game.

Summing up the facts mentioned or not mentioned above, we can see the morbid mania of certain Azerbaijani circles to misappropriate the history and culture of the ancient peoples living in the territory of their republic. The political intention of this is the following, to assimilate or to displace the ethnic minorities forming part of their republic from their country and also history, and take their place in history. In fact, this is done without a guise, "scientifically feathered", academically and officially, in conformity with Pan-Turkism.

It should be noted that the independence of Azerbaijan did not change either the Marxist-Leninist ideology (typical of totalitarianism), or the standards of distortion of history by the Azerbaijanis. As to logic, Arsen Melik Shahnazarian wrote that in Azerbaijan they have no idea of this scientific discipline (the Golos Armeni, July 3, 2003). Otherwise, they would not have mingled centuries and epochs, historical figures and events, they would not have imagined kinship with Turkish military statesmen and nomadic Muslim bandits, who appeared in Artsakh in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and would not have set forth so much nonsense.

Whereas, it is known that the nomadic Muslim tribes, which came to Transcaucasia from Central Asia and Iran were hostile with one another and often attacked, robbed or killed weaker families. Therefore, they had no idea of national and vital territory.

Hard as the guluzadehs of Baku try to distort the history, the administrative division of Transcaucasia by Iran, and to ascribe the khanates to themselves, we have to remind again that these had no relations to either Azerbaijanis, or Turks.

## CHAPTER 3

### PERSONNEL JUGGLING

*In Nagorno Karabakh "... they name people who do not have necessary skills for leading positions, and sometimes even people chosen at random who do not inspire confidence." (from the materials of the 25<sup>th</sup> regional conference of the party, the Communist, Baku, January 25, 1971, N 22)*

In the beginning I would like to quote another typical document, which indirectly but fully reflects the problem.

"So far 90 percent of the Zangezur villages have not been disarmed. This is worrying, but the fact that the Armenians of Zangezur villages have not been beheaded (left without leaders) so far is even more worrying. Their intelligentsia and military leaders are still in the villages. Work day and night, try your hardest to have the outstanding Armenians arrested. Give up humanism and you can found states and invade countries. The local comrades are not quite pleased with the members of the Armenian revolutionary committee of Goris; try to reelect the revolutionary committee and elect only Muslims or Russians known there. To weaken Armenians, kill a Russian in a place where the force is strong and blame the Armenians, learn from Russians. Do not leave in Zangezur a single decent person or wealth, so that this accursed tribe could not rise to their feet. Asad Karayev, July 21, 1920"

(Central Archive of the Central Committee of the CPSU, fund 64, schedule 1, file 10, list 3).

This circular can give the full picture of the "unfriendly" attitude of Azerbaijani leaders towards the Armenian nation, particularly one of its parts, between 1920 and 1980. Apparently, we may say that the common ideology of the anti-Armenian policies of the Azerbaijani leaders and their strong desire to displace the Armenians of Karabakh from their native region, where they have lived for 4-5 thousand years, are determined by their claims to the territory.

It cannot be denied that their innate historical, religious and cultural hatred for the Armenian people is particularly determined by their pro-



Russian and pro-European orientation and especially the struggle for Karabakh lasting for already 300 years. Therefore, one of the main factors of violence against the Armenian population of Karabakh can surely be considered national hostility. Why not, also the highly developed culture of the Armenians, education, way of life, the ability to squeeze bread from stones – things, which arouse envy and anger among Turk-Azeris living beside them. It was them who with their religious brothers, the Ottoman Turks, instigated the massacres in the capital of Karabakh Shushi on March 23, 1920. And the whole farce is that the Turk-Azeris announce today that Shushi is a Turkish town. But if it is really a Turkish town, why did they burn and plunder Shushi?

A soldier of the Azerbaijani army named Alimardanbekov, who witnessed and participated in the destruction of Shushi, boasted in a letter to his brother on April 7, 1920. "Armenian Shushi, which you saw, burnt to ashes. We spared only 5-10 houses. Over one thousand Armenians were put to prison. We killed all the men, even the khalif [the bishop], all the famous and wealthy people. The Muslims robbed the tremendous wealth of the Armenians and have even become brazen." (NKR Museum of History and Local Lore, fund 11, list 107). It is strange and horrible that the genocide of Armenians in Shushi and the destruction of the Armenian capital without remorse are presented as "the glorious past of the Azerbaijani nation" (Sh. Mkrtichian, Sh. Davtian, *Shushi – Town with Tragic Fate*, Yerevan, 1977, p. 104).

### ADVENTUROUSNESS

If we write about a state policy of repression and violence against the population of Nagorno Karabakh, we should recall the recent event. This is necessary to explain the major stages of repression and reveal the motives that caused the problem to aggravate and go far beyond the borders of the region, transforming into a complicated national crisis and attracting the attention of the international community. Let us begin with the 1920s.

Asad Karayev's name is not unknown. Anyone who is interested in the political life of Soviet Azerbaijan of the 1920s can observe him in different responsible positions. The above mentioned policy of expansion, the secret letter of the chairman of the revolutionary committee of Karabakh Asad Karayev to his aides, which is at the same

time a key to understanding the shocking drama of the Armenian population of Karabakh, is undoubtedly the cornerstone of the policy of the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan, derived from the Musavatists. It was dictated by Narimanov, the first chair of the Azerbaijani Revolutionary Committee, whose political demagoguery was displayed with regard to the famous decree of the bureau of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party on the unification of Karabakh and Armenia, adopted on July 4, 1921. "If Nagorno Karabakh does not join Azerbaijan, Narimanov announced, it will provoke anti-Soviet moods in Azerbaijan, so it is necessary to promote the revolution, otherwise the Soviet People's Committee denies any responsibility" (Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Central Party Archive, fund 35, schedule 13, p. 1).

Preference was given to coercion, which both dealt a serious blow to the integrity of the Armenian nation and cleared the way for those who played tricks on the Armenians of Karabakh. This also appeared to be a special plot of an anti-Armenian campaign carried out freely in Karabakh in the past and carried on in the future.

Moreover, there are facts that Narimanov did not want the unification of Karabakh and the Motherland and even opposed to the idea of establishing an autonomous region.\* Therefore, the enactment of the decision adopted by the Bureau of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee to declare Karabakh an autonomous region was postponed for over two years. Only the active interference of Suren Shadunts, Sergey Kirov and Levon Mirzoyan enabled establishing sovereignty but not in all the districts, which used to be a geographical, historical, ethnographic Armenian unit under the name of Melikdoms of Artsakh. The rulers of Azerbaijan, believing that sooner or later the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh would become united with the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia, mechanically cut from the Armenian region Gardmank with 105 Armenian villages and the province of Gyulistan (the present region of Shahumian with 17 Armenian settlements) and put them aside for a rainy day. Besides, a number of Armenian villages, which were important links between the regions of

\* When the decree of granting autonomy to Nagorno Karabakh was issued in 1923, N. Narimanov wrote a letter to Moscow from Baku and demanded not to grant sovereignty to Nagorno Karabakh. (This letter was published during the October 1989 session of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan.)



Syunik and Artsakh due to their geographical position and strategic role, were later cut from the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh as well. Thus, in order to tap a wedge between the subdistricts of foothill Edillu and Togh in the district of Dizak (presently Hadrut) the Armenian village of Hogher was separated and joined to the district of Karyagino (Fizuli). The village of Marar of the same province of Dizak (on the left side of the River Hakiaru), which used to link the regions of Syunik and Karabakh for centuries, was annexed to the region of Lachin in the late 1920s and renamed Jafarabad (after Jafar Bagirov's name). One of the masterpieces of Armenian architecture Dadi or Khota Monastery (12-13<sup>th</sup> centuries) and the adjacent Armenian village of Mesropavan serving as a link between the valley of the River Tartar, the historical province of Khachen, and the basin of Lake Sevan, was separated from the province of Jraberd and annexed to the region of Kelbajar. All these villages were made Azerbaijani. At the same time, within Nagorno Karabakh the Azerbaijani village committees Verin Veysali (Martuni region) and Aghdaban (Martakert region) were created and indicated to belong to Fizuli and Kelbajar respectively. The Armenian village of Hin Shen with its adjacent settlements was annexed to Lachin forming an artificial cavity between the regions of Hadrut and Shushi. As a result, the map of NKAR looked like a patchwork. Thus, of the 11.5 thousand square km and 12 provinces of the historical state of Artsakh only 4.4 thousand km and 5 provinces were left to the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh with only 248 settlements.

Whereas, after the establishment of the Soviet rule in Transcaucasia the Armenian population of Karabakh and the entire Armenian nation cherished hope that the Armenian-Azerbaijani "knot" would be untied eventually, territorial disputes would be settled, and friendly relationships would be set up between the two neighboring nations. In addition, the Armenian population of Karabakh would have freedom to display their talent and infinite energy. However, it would be too good if the expansion of the Azerbaijani leaders ended with Karabakh only. With the same self-confidence they sought for ways to capture the important Armenian regions of Zangezur, Nakhidjevan and Gardmank. Through diplomatic tricks, coercion and Turkish pressure they easily got hold of Nakhidjevan. The expansionist plans of Azerbaijan, however, failed in Zangezur owing to the Armenian soldiers fighting there at that time. Later these plans were, nevertheless, implemented through the

same and other methods in the Armenian regions annexed by Soviet Azerbaijan. Only in 1920-1990 over 1700 Armenians were displaced from Azerbaijan, and about 2 million Azerbaijanis resettled there. Tens of thousands of Armenian families were displaced from Nakhidjevan, Gardmank and Nukhi. Their expansionist plans were brought into being in Karabakh. Human rights were commonly, systematically and severely violated in Karabakh and other places in Soviet Azerbaijan with an Armenian population.

The 1988 events in Nagorno Karabakh were ascribed to either the Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Armenian nationalism, or skirmishes provoked by separate people, and sometimes to Soviet Armenia. They obstinately denied that these events were a fair protest against unsettled problems or problems settled against the interests of the local Armenian population. The guileful Azerbaijani leaders presented these events to Moscow as "Armenian nationalism".

The Azerbaijani leaders did everything to disguise their desire to swallow the Armenians of Artsakh. Somehow they had to legalize violence against the Armenian population, particularly the progressive intelligentsia.

In the 1920s the generation of devoted Karabakh revolutionaries, who worked for the Bolshevik Party, prepared and armed the public to defend the achievements of the October revolution, were accused of attempts at creating "Greater Azerbaijan" and expatriated. They stood up against the Musavatist militants, the regular army of Turkey, liberated Azerbaijan with the 11<sup>th</sup> Red Army and hoisted the red flags of October upon the highest mountains of Artsakh. However, as soon as the Soviet rule was established in Karabakh, these brave people were left in the shadow, and they were barred from leading positions to go on to organize the peaceful life of the region. All kinds of scumbags, who had never had anything in common with the party and the red revolution, were appointed to high posts in Karabakh. The enemies of the Soviet order, all kinds of agents, Musavatists, thieves, bandits, illiterates became the leaders of the region, whereas the Karabakhi soldier-revolutionaries with 20-25 years of membership to the Communist Party, such as S. Shadunts, T. Ter-Mirzabekian, A. Sahakian, S. Baghdatev, S. Hambartsumian, H. Kamari, A. Bekzadian, V. Babayan were denied access to these positions.

"How did it happen that the newly established revolutionary committee of the region included officers of the Turkish army,



adventurer Kh. Sultanov, the Musavatist agent Zeynalov, the former bandit Zilpoughar (the chair of the executive committee of Jraberd, who never signed his name under official and non-official documents, perhaps to hide his dirty past), Ashot Yeritsian, real criminals Behbud Khurshudov, Andranik Martirosian, vainglorious and careerist Karakozov (Gharagyozyan), Aroushanov, literally illiterate Mukuch Arzanian...?"

Why were such people made regional and provincial leaders instead of educated and professional ones? Thinking to myself I reached the village [Mets Shen]," wrote the secretary of the executive committee of Jraberd T. Ter-Danielian on October 6, 1923 in his diary (T. Ter-Danielian's memoirs, *The Brief History of Mets Shen*, p. 182).

In this relation the first extraordinary and plenipotentiary representative of the Azerbaijani KGB in Karabakh Haik Sargisov wrote, "On May 22, 1920 assigned by the chairman of the revolutionary committee of Azerbaijan N. Narimanov I made up a list of completely illiterate natives of Karabakh and Zangezur living near the oil mines in extremely hard conditions, took them to the bath, dressed them in clothes provided by the revolutionary committee of Azerbaijan, delivered cards of red partisans to them and took them to Karabakh. They counted about 500. By the decree of Asad Karayev, the chairman of the Karabakh revolutionary committee, they were appointed chairs of regional, village revolutionary committees, commissioners, secretaries of party affiliates, commanders of forces fighting against Tevan Stepanian, civil servicemen, KGB agents, and other positions" (*Notes on Artsakh*, Yerevan, 2001, p. 274). There can be no doubt that all this was done by a specially worked out plan.

At one time all these questions were definitely answered by the chairman of the revolutionary committee Asad Karayev in his above-cited military appeal, "Try to reelect the revolutionary committee and elect only Muslims or Russians known there, work day and night, try your hardest to have the outstanding Armenians arrested. Give up humanism and you can found states and invade countries."

I have no doubt that people fond of praising everything, "objectivists" ready to justify everything in the world, people with fossilized approaches may object saying that Karayev said those words in reference to Zangezur. But do not forget that Zangezur is situated to the southwest of Karabakh and the roads leading there run across Karabakh. Besides, the

Karabakh-Zangezur highlands form a historical, geographical, military, strategic and ethnographic unit, and in 1918-1922 Persians, Turks and Azerbaijanis did not spare effort to weaken it.

How could a native of Jraberd know that all that was done for the aim of invading others' land according to a plan worked out beforehand? Karabakh, which had an Armenian population of nearly 300 thousand in the early 1920s, in the beginning of the Soviet rule (1920-1923) was deprived of its best sons for the first time in its history, and beheaded, frustrated, exhausted, was surrendered to "the mercy of the anti-Armenian Azerbaijani leaders, who changed their vests but not their souls." A great number of documents show that in choosing personnel for the government agencies in Nagorno Karabakh Armenak Karakozov followed instructions from above and the Russian proverb that a fisherman recognizes a fisherman from afar. Otherwise it is difficult to explain why 5 secretaries of the regional committee were changed between 1923 and 1925. secretaries H. Kamari, M. Manutsian, A. Karamian and K. Sargisian were Bolsheviks, who became victims of arbitrariness. And in the early 1930s the leaders of Nagorno Karabakh were accused of nationalism and deviationism, efforts to unite Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia and insufficient efforts against the ideas of Dashnaksutyun (the Armenian Revolutionary Federation) (the Zarya Vostoka Newspaper, May 24, 1931). All of them were indicted and exiled from the region. Moreover, almost all the regional organizations of the party were dissolved. Then the newly appointed heads of the region Poghosov, Badamian, Karkarian and Arzanian were exiled to Siberia, and Armenak Karakozov was shot in Baku.

The establishment of the Transcaucasian Federation (1922-1936) violated the rights and suppressed the protests of peoples included in it, by the order of the authorities a policy was launched, which can be characterized as showing off false brotherhood. In those years the slogan "The place of NKAR is in Azerbaijan" was trumpeted. However, the Armenians of Karabakh never accepted this bitter destiny.

In 1930-1940s the ruler of Karabakh Bagirov consistently carried on with a policy of invading the Armenian regions launched by his predecessors. In this sphere his willfulness had no measure and limits, especially after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation in the period of the cult of Stalin. This tyrant did not hesitate to declare the Armenian specialists working in Azerbaijan and a significant part of the



Armenian population "enemies of people", and personally shot outstanding Armenians involved in building socialism in Azerbaijan, exiled tens of thousands of innocent people, drove them to the battlefields. Here I have to quote the chair of the regional executive committee of Nagorno Karabakh in the 1930s, who spent the years of 1937-1954 in exile and prisons. "What can we say about the anti-Armenian, anti-Karabakh actions of the Azerbaijani authorities? It was somehow possible to bear when they squeezed and misappropriated the earning of the native people of Karabakh. But it was impossible to tolerate when the policy of exterminating the Armenians in the region isolated from the motherland Armenia was carried out through the Azerbaijani bandits Nagorno Karabakh was swarming with. Moreover, the most innocent protest or silent complaint was repressed, and the protester soon disappeared, often together with his family." During the years I worked in the Museum of History and Local Lore in Stepanakert (1965-1972) I made the list of Bagirov's innocent victims. In my estimates, 386 Karabakh Armenians were shot on Bagirov's order, over 75 thousand Armenians were displaced from the region for one reason or another, which was more than the half of the region's population.

Those who were shot were former heads regional committees, executive committees, other officials. The number of ordinary educated, working people who fell victims to this policy was much higher; their only "sin" was their protest against Azerbaijan's violence and arbitrariness, the expressed or supposed urge for unification with Armenia, which was the only fair solution. Moreover, all those victims who had either struggled for the liberation of the Armenian region, or had dreamt of liberation, were charged in the worst thing - "foes of the Soviet order".

One of these tens of thousands of Karabakh's "foes" was Haik Balayan, people's commissioner on education of Nagorno Karabakh, chair of the regional executive committee of Hadrut. It took 64 years from his son Zory Balayan to find the ashes of his father in GULAG, the Republic of Komi, and rebury in the cemetery of the village of Kyatuk. S. Badamian said, "The Armenian villages were swarming with terrorists who could shoot anyone they disliked with the connivance of Azerbaijani leaders. If they invited an Armenian official to Baku, there was almost no hope that he would return home. We went to a number of

meetings in large groups of officials and returned leaving many of us there" (B. Ulubabian, *Struggle in Artsakh*, Yerevan, 1994, p. 167-168).

#### WHAT WOULD STALIN HAVE SAID?

In case of resistance to this monstrous policy of genocide Bagirov organized cruel massacres, and 30 years would pass until Armenian Karabakh could come round. World War II was an excellent opportunity, and 35 percent of the population of the Armenian region or 45 thousand people were enlisted. In his book *The Headquarters in the Years of the War* General S. Shtemenko wrote, "... in 1949 in his summer house Stalin asked me in the presence of the members of the political bureau, "What was the highest number of our troops during the war?" "A little more than 11 million." "And what percentage of the population did it comprise?" "About 6 percent." "That's right, but this is not all. It is also necessary to take into account the losses because the killed and dead from wounds are also included in the number of soldiers..." We counted it as well. "And now, Stalin said, let us count how the affairs were going with Hitler, who had 13 thousand soldiers including the losses with a population of 80 million." We counted. It was more than 16 percent. "Such a high percentage of mobilization is either the result of ignorance, or adventurousness. Most probably, the latter," Stalin concluded. "The experience of history, the general rules of waging war teach that no country will stand such a load; there will not be workers in factories and plants, there will be no one to grow grain, supply people and the army. The commanders of Hitler, brought up according to the dogmas of Klausevits and Molotke, could not or did not want to realize this. The consequence was that the Hitlerians weakened the country" (S. Shtemenko, *The Headquarters in the Years of the War*, Yerevan, 1977, p. 649-651).

I wonder what Stalin would have said if he were told then that a tiny region of the country he ruled, Nagorno Karabakh, had been emptied and 35 percent of its Armenian population or 45 thousand of 154 thousand people (4-5 times more than in the adjacent Azerbaijani regions) were enlisted. Or if he were told that 3431 of the 5214 members of the Communist Party of Karabakh fought in the war or that in the same region no male specialists with higher education, no officials, artists, and cultural workers remained, all of them were taken to the army.



It is difficult to guess what Stalin would have said puffing away on his pipe but at least one of the members of the politburo would have thought to himself that it was not adventurousness but the continuation of the policy of genocide against the Armenians initiated by Turkish pashas, extermination of the Armenian population in Azerbaijan, implementation of the government policy of mobilization of Azerbaijanis at the expense of mobilization of the Armenians in Karabakh. The Azerbaijanis who took part in the war comprised 1.5 percent of mobilized Karabakh Armenians (although the Azerbaijanis comprised 10 percent of the population of Karabakh).

Today we recall with pride everybody who contributed to the crush of fascism. We are grateful to 45 thousand "Armenian nationalists" who fought for the liberty of their native country. 28 private soldiers grew into generals, marshals, 21 became Heroes of the Soviet Union, 6 were awarded the Medal of Three Stars of Glory, 15 thousand were awarded different medals, 22 thousand sacrificed their lives for the fatherland. Moreover, all the marshals and admirals of Transcaucasia came from Artsakh-Karabakh (H. Baghramian, A. Babajanian, A. Khamperian (Khudiakov), H. Isakov).

The picture will not be complete unless we recall the heroism of the women, children, old people of Armenian Karabakh, who worked day and night at farms, fields, orchards, factories, not only implemented the estimates but also paid additional 16 million rubles, 50 kg of gold to the country's defense reserve to buy tanks and planes, supplied 32 760 tons of grain, 8190 tons of meat, 6552 tons of potatoes, 20 million eggs, 3276 tons of wool, 2457 tons of fat, 500 thousand buckets of mulberry vodka and other agricultural products.

Besides, the population of the region sent to the glorious defenders of the country 80 thousand warm (woolen) clothes, 48 thousand collective and personal parcels (Museum of History and Local Lore of NKR, fund 1, file 188, catalogue 1, page 24). This was not little, especially for a region which had only 80 thousand hectares of farming land, 28 thousand hectares of pastures and less than 154 thousand inhabitants of which, as it was already mentioned, 45 thousand were at the front.

Entire Karabakh (except for Shushi, where a number of Azerbaijani "patients" of tuberculosis caused by soapsuds and tobacco, privileged officials and disguised enemies of the Soviet rule avoided mobilization) worked like bees in a hive. Everybody was busy with work, from kids to

elderly people. Only manual work in all the spheres of industry, no electricity and transport. The agricultural production was carried to warehouses on the back of donkeys, mules, and even people.

It is impossible to forget about the orphanage of Shushi and its privileged directors. At that time I was at Orphanage No. 4. I remember parentless children from Belarus, Ukraine and the western of Russia. The Azeri staff of the orphanage pilfered the food and clothes provided for the orphans, leaving them to starve. Many children risked their lives climbing over the walls of the orphanage, and went to the ruins of the Armenian quarters of the town to graze (yes, to graze like animals) and brought grass for smaller and weaker children. Every day many children were poisoned with grass, swelled and died. The most horrible scene was when the Turks loaded the dead bodies of children on vehicles, took them to the place near Shushi called Jeder Duz and threw the bodies to the gorge of the Hunot, where the magpies pecked the bodies. Nothing has been written about this.

The German murderers were tried and punished, whereas the Azerbaijani cannibals got away with it, they were not even reproached. Moreover, later they were appointed to profitable positions, received awards and became "champions of traditions of internationalism and friendship of peoples". Horrible...

Later when I told the first secretary of the regional committee of Nagorno Karabakh E. Grigorian about this, he said he knew everything but he was unable to do anything as these inhumane directors were appointed by Baku. There should have been strict control over what the state provided for orphanages, and careless and impractical people should have been punished. I repeat that the thieves of the food for orphans caused hundreds of children from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, Armenian and Azerbaijani children to starve to death but so far none of these cannibals has been called to account.

The war ended. Guns went silent. Karabakh mourned for his sons. The survived soldiers returned home. Political tensions eased. The country stepped up the fourth five-year plan of reconstruction. Everywhere people were treating the wounds of the war. However, the Armenians of Karabakh were again left in the margins of history. The wounded soldiers had hardly taken off bandages when the sky of Karabakh was again covered with hail clouds. Renewed monstrous actions were taken against the Armenian nation.

In the night of June 14, 1949 all over Transcaucasia thousands of Armenian families were forced to leave their homes, collective farms, workplace and were made to get on into cargo trains, which headed for Altai. "There were about 50 thousand people; 32 trains were sent with an average of 1500 people in each" (NKAR, *Another Crime*, book 1, chapter 1, p. 1).

Numerous archive files, memoirs and complaint letters of the exiles testify that the lists of the Armenian families to be exiled had been drawn up long before that night. They were enlisted in the category "political suspect", "unreliable", "nationalist", "Dashnak" (i.e. member of the political party Armenian Revolutionary Federation), and even "spies of one of the imperialist countries". No exception was made, even for old people and pregnant women.

The slaughterers knew very well that none of the exiles would stand the hard conditions in Siberia. Over 13 thousand people from Artsakh died of hard conditions in Altai.

There are facts testifying that this "top secret operation" was implemented in a single night, at the same hour, without any noise, in accordance with a written plan. The evidence to this is the decision of the board of the USSR Ministry of State Security "to exile for life the Armenian nationalists and dashnaks from Transcaucasia to the region of Altai", adopted on October 26, 1949.

In the night of June 14, 1949 a top secret meeting of the Party activists of the region was held at the club of the military unit stationed in Stepanakert on the basis of a note signed by Sedrak Abramov, the first secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party. Colonel Zailov, the head of the regional department of state security, opened the meeting. He informed that at that night an important operation was to be carried out to arrest and exile people who had been included in the dashnak government and their supporters, as well as former captives in Germany. Moreover, these Armenians were to be exiled together with their families. On that day of 1949 thousands of innocent Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh were exiled to Siberia, the region of Altai. Among them was the director of the Russian school of Stepanakert H. Ghukassian, the warehouse keeper of Karabakh Silk Factory K. Asrian, the musician G. Khachatryan.

Tens of thousands of Armenian families were exiled in June, whereas the decision on their exile was made in October, when hundreds of exiles

had already died, unable to bear hardship and terrible conditions. But this did not prevent them from adopting a decision for dead people dictated by anti-Armenian Baku. Hence, first they killed then sentenced to death.

At the end of the next year another disaster befell to the Armenians of Karabakh. Tax officers from Baku intruded into the houses of the Armenians, tore their quilts with knives and gathered 200 tons of wool to implement the estimate of Soviet Azerbaijan. However, those who replaced Bagirov demanded even more. They could not bear when the displacement of Armenians from Karabakh was delayed or hindered by something. To provide the towns of Mingechaur and Sumgait with cheap labor, the Azerbaijani leaders began to destroy and plunder the national wealth of the Armenian region. They closed down 18 workshops employing 1054 workers, 6 factories of building materials with 317 workers, 5 silk factories in the regions with 926 workers. For alleged consolidation of collective farms the army and militia displaced Armenians from the villages of Tezkhara, Petrosashen, Spitakshen, Arpagyaduk adjacent to Soviet Armenia. The six state and collective power plants, the Armenian pedagogical college of Stepanakert, the teacher training college of Hadrut, the Young Bolshevik Newspaper were closed down. They destroyed and plundered everything that had been created before and during the war. They ruined the 116 km Yevlakh-Stepanakert railroad, felled 1200 hectares of mulberry orchards. Beekeeping, goat breeding, orchards, the most profitable branches of economy of Karabakh, were on the verge of destruction. Karabakhis were not allowed to use the water of rivers and springs for irrigation. The works by Armenian authors were banned from libraries, over one hundred Armenian historical monuments were ruined, 7 thousand buildings, plundered and ruined by Azerbaijanis in 1920, were razed to the ground by bulldozers. Then the equipment of the food processing factory of Stepanakert was sent to Azerbaijani regions, thousands of hectares of forests were felled, impoverishing the wildlife of the region.

In brief, the complete decay of the economy of Armenian Karabakh was instigated openly, with the consideration of not allowing "that accursed tribe (i.e. Armenians) to rise again to their feet" (see the letter of Asad Karayev cited above). The state of the Karabakh Armenians aggravated. This economic terror made people forget about the horrors of war, the losses of the past. Tens of thousands of Armenians were left homeless and jobless, with no means to live on. Collective farms



squeaked under the burden of heavy plans. Most farms were poor, and farmers received peanuts for a workday lasting for 10-14 hours, whereas they both had to support their families and produce meat, eggs, wool and fat for the government.

Meanwhile the Attorney General of the Republic of Azerbaijan ordered to start chopping mulberry trees. Starting with collective orchards they did not spare even the trees growing in front of houses. Those who resisted were beaten. The weeping wives and children of killed soldiers was a heartbreaking scene.

I can still remember my difficult childhood, which overlapped with those hard times. Although Armenians produced more grain than the neighboring Azerbaijani villages, for the greater part of the year the Armenian farmers were half-hungry, and if the ordinary Azerbaijanis did not help them, the losses of Armenians would be greater. The cause was neither the war, nor the post-war reconstruction. They took away the earning of the Karabakh people whenever Baku wished.

Besides 80-85 percent of grain and 100 percent of dairy products, meat, wool which were taken away from Nagorno-Karabakh collective farms by imposing various plans, each Armenian family had to hand in to the state 51 kg of meat, 76 eggs, 2 fleeces of either sheep or goat, 2.7 kg of wool from every sheep, 1.6 kg of hair from every goat, 4.8 kg of butter, 49 kg of potatoes annually. Besides, farmers had to pay various taxes, such as income tax, tax of not having children, state insurance, social insurance, tax on living area and land near the house, as well as a military levy at wartime. It should be noted that people who failed to pay taxes and products in time, underwent violence, assault, confiscation of property and sale by auction. This was a disgrace for the people of Karabakh from both the economic and moral-psychological aspects, therefore the Armenian farmer, who produced so much wheat, ripped off the tin of their roof houses and exchanged for grain in the neighboring Azerbaijani villages.

Many of them could not bear these conditions any more. Hunger and hardships forced them to leave their homes and try their fortune outside the region. The Armenians of Karabakh were persecuted and underwent economic terror, such as in the collective farm of Ghzghala, Martuni region. In 1943 this farm produced 1184 tons of grain. After the implementation of the plan the farm paid 4.5 kg of grain for each workday. But when in 1948 the same farm produced 1429 tons of grain,

workers got 0.4 kg of grain and 19 kopecks per workday. In the same year the village loaned 0.5 million rubles to the government. Hard social conditions forced farmers to leave the village in great numbers. If in 1946-1947 800 people worked on the farm, in 1950 only 548 remained.

Stalin, big moustache  
Leaning on mount Dizapad,  
You take at sowing and at reaping,  
Leaving nothing for our living.

These four lines are very characteristic. In fact, what could make the old man Babajan Ohanjanian sing about his sorrow? Of course, poverty, hunger, hardships. Not because the land in Karabakh is not fertile, or people there are not hard working, but because the Karabakh Armenians were humiliated, ruthlessly peeled off their property, deprived of everything they had created. And they were deprived of any rights as slaves. Uncle Babajan\* (village Petrosashen, Hadrut) expressed the protest of the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh, when the country was celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of Stalin, when the men of culture racked their brains over comparing Stalin to the sun, the universe, when hundreds of people had made an idol, a saint out of him. It is notable that the Karabakh peasant protested against Stalin 8 years before the 20<sup>th</sup> plenum of the Communist Party, when the cult of person was condemned.

Everywhere the sigh of sorrowful people could be heard. The melodies of sad Armenian folk songs sung by the peasant, the shepherd, the old women of my native country have left a deep trace in my memory.

Years later I repeated these songs to myself at the Finnish Bay defending Leningrad. Even in frosty weather, on sentry duty, when I

\* The villagers tell that the day after when Uncle Babajan was ploughing and singing this song about Great Leader Stalin, a small militia unit comes to Petrosashen, surrounds the land plot where the old man was working the land, dragging his feet after the plough. Directing the barrels at the tired old man, the "men of law" quickly cam up to him, and in the half-ploughed furrow they twisted the hands of the old man and took him away. They did not even allow him to take his worn overcoat and the bag with a loaf of barley bread in it. Nobody ever learned what happened to him.



remembered the deep voice of Zarounts Rafik, the call of my roots, I became alert at once, and the difficult and responsible service passed unnoticed. Everything started to seem more pleasant, blood started running faster through my veins. One cannot help remembering and loving the traditions that reached us through centuries like murmuring streams.

In Karabakh people used to gather after work, usually at their friends', who were ill, discuss their anxieties, household chores, fields, orchards, the harvest, tell fairy tales, epic stories seasoned with witty jokes, mysterious images and fascinating songs.

Every time I listen to the lyrics of the horovel (the song of the ploughman) of Karabakh, I ask myself where this song took its origin that there is so much sorrow for the son, who went away and did not come back. Maybe the Russians, Arabs, Seljuks, Mongols, Turks, or the Musavatists took him away. Maybe he died in the barricades of the October revolution, got killed in the Great Patriotic War, or he was exiled to Altai. Maybe he was shot in Bagirov's office, or went to work abroad to repay his debts, or was slandered and forced to leave his home. Maybe this happened one thousand years ago, or three hundred, or fifty, thirty; one may get confused in numbers. However, the father and his grandson live on the Armenian land with hope and belief in their souls.

### SERIES OF CRIMES

The hard social conditions, violence and the feeling of doom made tens of thousands of natives of Karabakh leave their birthplace to find means for living and spiritual repose outside their region, getting scattered all over the Soviet Union. Only in the period between 1949 and 1956 about 30 thousand Armenian workers (27 percent of the region's population) left for shelter in Baku, Mingechaur, the North Caucasus, as well as Transcaucasian republics, hoping to earn a decent living.

In 1948 the Armenian poet Avetik Isahakian visited Karabakh. The regional committee and the staff of the pedagogical institute of Stepanakert dared to receive him. This was enough for the *lord* of Soviet Azerbaijan Bagirov to convoke an extraordinary meeting of the regional committee, disband the regional committee, launch ideological blackmail, launch a series of arrests and exile the secretary of the regional writers union of Soviet Azerbaijan Bogdan Janian, the rector of the pedagogical institute Aghasi Safarian, professors Artavazd Avagian,

Ruben Alaverdian, Khoren Balayan and other representatives of the intelligentsia. Thus, a common meeting with outstanding representatives of their nation was condemned, so that no one dared even to dream of Yerevan, to meet and talk to any famous person from Armenia. And not only under Bagirov's tyranny but always; even in the so-called "period of melting of the ice" under Khrushchov (*Struggle in Artsakh*, B. Ulubabian, Yerevan, 1994, p. 176-177).

The outcome of this disaster would not be difficult to guess if Stalin did not die, Bagirov did not fall into one of his traps, and the 20<sup>th</sup> conference of the CPSU did not take place.

The 20<sup>th</sup> conference of the CPSU was transient fresh breeze in the life of the Soviet country, which came too late and passed very early. In this short period significant changes took place in the ideological and political life of the country. Everybody had an opportunity to take a look in retrospect to sum up the losses and achievements, comparing these to the neighbors', thinking about the future duties, because the air was partly clarified and people were somehow overwhelmed with the irresistible urge heroic acts. Nevertheless, life was still full of hardship.

The people of Karabakh also reconsidered the way they had passed (especially in the period of annexation by Azerbaijan). It turned out that we had much to be proud of, to mourn for and to reflect on. We were happy that this small region gloriously fulfilled its duties before the Soviet country and the Communist Party in all stages of its way. We were full of sorrow because after the annexation of Nagorno Karabakh by Azerbaijan we lost Armenian Shushi with a 30 thousand Armenian population. Dozens of prosperous Armenian villages, industrial capacities were ruined, thousands of hectares of fruit orchards were chopped, tens of thousands of Armenians were persecuted and displaced from their native country, over 30 thousand natives of Karabakh died in severe conditions, and the population of the region decreased by 35 percent. We reflected on the fact that we could not go on living that way any longer, and forty years of our life resembled that of a man who is sifting flour on a river. We reflected and firmly decided to connect our lives with the motherland.

When the autonomous region of Nagorno Karabakh had just been founded, when the Transcaucasian Federation still existed, when (in the years when S. Kirov, L. Mirzoyan worked in Azerbaijan) there were hardly literate but dignified leaders among Azerbaijani officials, when

the "monarch" of Karabakh was Armenak Karakozov, for a short period of time Karabakh started developing equally with other regions. When the first two Soviet five-year plans were worked out, the leaders of Karabakh were empowered to decide the directions of development of the economy of Karabakh. In fact, in 13 years (1923-1936) over 30 factories, including the large factories of silk in Stepanakert and Karabakh Winery were built, 4 collective farms were set up in the wilderness, the history, nature, resources of the region were studied, scientific works and fiction were published, the map of the region was drawn, 230 village clubs, libraries, hospitals were built (with the support of the Karabakh people living abroad), 300 km of dirt roads were laid out in the mountains, 4 Armenian vocational colleges were set up, 7 newspapers and a magazine were published, a teacher training college was opened, the railroad Yevlakh-Stepanakert was operated, the water power plants of Stepanakert, Mataghis were built... And finally Stepanakert was developed, illiteracy was eliminated, sovkhoses were set up, 45 thousand soldiers were sent to war to defend the motherland. However, after the Transcaucasian Federation and especially after the war, no new factories, public, cultural and educational institutions were built, not a single leaflet was even published within 20 years. Moreover, the industry, social and economic institutions created in the previous decade were destroyed. In fact, before the war industry of Karabakh developed in 40 settlements. In the late 1950s the only industrial enterprises were situated in Stepanakert and Shushi.

The reason? The reason was one. The Azerbaijani leaders followed a common line, implementing the policy of Pan-Turkism aimed to displace Armenians from Karabakh. They shouted "progressive" slogans and at the same time they acted in accordance with the dogmas borrowed from the Musavat Party, inherited from the mentioned militaristic call of Asad Karayev. This was a signal that Marxism was decaying, so did the national policy of the Communists. This was an openly performed plot to displace the native people of Nagorno Karabakh, a constitutional unit of the USSR. Moreover, in publications about Azerbaijan the Pravda criticized inconsistency between words and actions of Azerbaijani leaders (July 19, 1979, N 200). This inconsistency between words and actions was nowhere as obvious as in Soviet Azerbaijan. By the way, almost all the first secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan were dismissed for serious mistakes and

drawbacks, including in the sphere of the national policy, "which hampered international relations within the Union." In other words, within the period between 1950-1980s the Central Committee of the CPSU mentioned six times about the same depraved actions in the same republic – Azerbaijan. But even after this the Kremlin did not think about the reasons of this dangerous phenomenon. The main reason of this policy was not the dogmatic bluntness of the leadership of the country but the fact that the party nomenclature never hurt, as Lenin said, "its own scoundrels" (see *Gorbachov and the Tragedy of Nagorno Karabakh*, G. Martirosian, Ryazan, 2000, p. 208-209).

At the same time it is worthwhile to think on why NKR was the only autonomous region in the Soviet Union where after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation the native population started to decrease dramatically. Whereas in the same period the population of the Soviet Union increased by 9 percent, Soviet Azerbaijan 23 percent, Soviet Armenia 32 percent and the number of the Azerbaijanis, who resettled in Karabakh, grew 4 times. The reason was not only the Great Patriotic War and exile, as certain orators assert, but the policy of uprooting the Armenian population of the region which was consistently implemented in Karabakh after the Transcaucasian Federation had stopped existing.

Was it a revenge on the cultured, modest, law-abiding, assiduous people that had gone through the trial of history or an effort to keep up with the bloodthirsty gene of their tribe? Both are condemnable.

In accordance with the UN conventions, for which the USSR voted too, genocide is not only physical extermination of a nation or part of it. Providing unbearable conditions to make the population of a given area leave the country is also genocide. It is necessary to put in the pillory everyone who organized the peaceful genocide and put an end to their crimes.

The truth, however, requires admitting that after the nightmare of Stalin's cult, willfulness and violence, Karabakh lived a short period of revival. In this revival Baku figured out the danger of losing Karabakh. Baku was sure that one day the entire region would stand up and shake off the heavy Azerbaijan yoke, claim unification with Armenia, freedom and independence. The people of Karabakh had every reason to speak and act so, especially that under N. Khrushchev similar questions were settled. Remember the unification of Crimea with Ukraine, the territorial compromise between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

The working people of Karabakh were glad for the construction of two blocks of 48 apartments, the cultural center of the village of Chartar built to classic Armenian architecture, the villages of Ashan and Noragyugh brought down from the mountains to the valley, the bust of the twice Hero of the Soviet Union Nelson Stepanian, the park after one of the founders of the Bolshevik Party B. Knunyants, the exhibition of Outstanding People of Karabakh, the performance of the great Armenian actor Vahram Papazian, the performance of the newly founded choir and the ensemble of dance, the growth of population by 13 thousand in 1969 compared with 1965, more active intelligentsia in Stepanakert, the center of the region ...

Meanwhile, Baku pursued its endless efforts to find new ways and methods for another stage of the policy of displacement of Armenians from Karabakh.

In the late 1950s the new leaders of Azerbaijan managed to make the session of the Supreme Soviet adopt a decision declaring Azerbaijani the official language of Azerbaijan, and all paperwork, clerkship, meetings were to be conducted only in Azerbaijani. The authors of this initiative (namely the chair of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet Mirza Ibrahimov) first of all sought to oust foreign specialists from the republic, as well as the considerable technical thought.

While Moscow could come round, thousands of Russian, Armenian and foreign specialists were ousted from Azerbaijan. This first of all affected the economy of the republic, local nationalism was sparked, and customs that were strange to the society began to be felt.

Besides, as the Pravda wrote on August 1, 1979: "It is not a secret that there were serious drawbacks, mistakes, faults in the activity of the party of Azerbaijan, as well as in the ideological and moral education. This provided fertile soil for the revival of the remnants of the past in the consciousness and behavior of people."

Bitter truth. However Moscow realized this too late, whereas as long ago as in 1965 the Communists of Karabakh wrote about this to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, citing forceful facts and names of people. The people of Karabakh asked for help to get rid of the disaster of Pan-Turkism and chauvinism in Azerbaijan but, unfortunately, the complaint letter again drew a circle and returned to its writer.

There is no need to prove the enthusiasm and guile of Baku when declaring these letters as criminal and crying for help from the Armenian nationalism. The Azerbaijani leaders persecuted Armenian specialists on the one hand, and increased the estimates of agricultural output three or four times without making investments and destroying the cultural centers. In other words, they tried to suppress the Armenian people impoverishing them materially and spiritually. They resorted to anything to preserve the diminishing Azerbaijani influence in the region and imagined the future of Nagorno Karabakh without Armenians.

This attitude was already outlining clearly and it fundamentally contradicted to the will and interests of the population of the region, causing disappointment and open protests among the people against murders, persecution of the native population of the region, hindrance to the social and economic development of the region, destruction of the national culture. In the early 1960s the actions of the Azerbaijani ruling elite proved again that they had not given up the anti-Armenian policy of their predecessors. The only difference was that they had to take into consideration the time they were living in. Power abuse, violation of centralism, social economic plan levers, falsification, blackmail, terrorism were again put into use after an eight-years pause. However, there were serious obstacles on this way, Baku was already unable to treat the population of the region according to its liking and get away with it as it had been the case throughout decades. Neither economic terror and political demagogy, nor persecution of Armenian specialists broke the willpower of the Karabakh people. An unequal struggle began, which continued taking victims and causing sufferings up to the cherished day of unification of Soviet Armenia and Karabakh. The self-defense allowed preventing Baku's new plans of displacement of Armenians and execution of dozens of honest and unbiased Communists.

It was then that over 40 thousand people from Karabakh, representing the will of the entire Armenian population of the region, again turned to Moscow hopeful that the situation would improve.

Here, however, it is impossible to reveal all the crimes committed in Armenian Karabakh for 70 years. We cannot enumerate all the crimes and persecution of Armenians in Karabakh. It is impossible to list the names of everybody, who chose to stay there and martyred, who migrated hoping to earn a living abroad, who were slandered and forced to leave their native region. It is impossible to write in detail about all the



destruction, spiritual damage, humiliation the root population of Karabakh regularly underwent. It is impossible to tell about the sufferings of thousands of widows, orphans, parents having lost their sons, all the blood and tears shed, the sighs for having been deprived of the source of their difficult existence.

It is impossible to forget how many villages, factories, historical monuments, orchards, schools, libraries were destroyed, how many lives were ruined in the region of Karabakh. We would be guilty if we forgot about the desert of Der el-Zor, Shushi, Auschwitz and Maidanek, Hiroshima, Khatin... the ashes of these people would fill the largest museum in the world.

In this condemning letter we told about a small part of the bitter reality in Karabakh because a greater part of evidence to these crimes has been destroyed. We demand setting up an authoritative and unbiased commission to investigate the crimes committed in Karabakh. The Armenian nation claims justice and humanism.

#### TACTICS OF THREAT AND BRIBERY

Very many people were dazzled by high posts, Volga cars, good life that Baku and its emissaries sent to Karabakh promised generously. All these promises, however, were given to unworthy people fulfilling their two important plans: persecution of honest, educated and competent personnel and appointment of incapable and uneducated people instead of them.

Some time later the campaign calmed down when thousands of Armenians had been already slandered, exiled from the region, when schools, libraries, pharmacies in many villages had been closed down, when serious blows had been dealt to culture, education, industry, building, health care, when the estimates of agricultural output had been increased, whereas retail, supply of building materials, machinery had been reduced twice. And already hundreds of Azerbaijanis had arrived to receive positions, apartments in the Armenian settlements, where separate classes were organized for 5-6 Azerbaijani children at Armenian schools, while in other places where there were 30-40 Armenian children, the Armenian schools were closed down to economize.

Baku then launched a new stage of repression in the framework of the policy Karabakh without Armenians, implemented since 1920s. Again they started with specialists, and did not even spare officials named by

themselves 2-3 years ago to serve them as robots. They were especially cruel to those who started to perceive the horror of ethnic discrimination and repression. First Baku conducted a policy of neglect, then supported those among their inferiors who were dissatisfied, often wrote notices of slander and made them sign these notices. Then they set up an invisible carousel of surveillance and standard accusations, in separate cases they did without any accusation to dismiss a number of officials just because the Central Committee of the region wished to.

In such a Turkish manner political labels were stuck to the secretaries of the regional committee and the chairs of the regional executive committee. When it became clear that Hrant Shahramanian would be appointed secretary of the regional committee, the ruler of Azerbaijan M. Bagirov warned him by telephone, "Comrade Shahramanian, I do not have anything special to say but I have a requirement; never turn to Armenia or your head won't stay on your shoulders." Nevertheless, once Shahramanian made a mistake and threw a glance at the mountains of Armenia. He was immediately dismissed, and fortunately he was only dismissed from work.

After the visit of the Armenian poet Avetik Isahakian Bagirov telephoned the first secretary of the regional committee Tigran Grigorian from Baku and said, "Why did you allow that Dashnak rubbish to visit Karabakh? Either you're a fool, or a foe... Where was your political alertness?" Several days later T. Grigorian who had been appointed 6 months before, was dismissed from his post. Earlier the first secretary of the regional committee Mikael Manoukian was suddenly dismissed only because he had not accepted the list of suspects to be displaced, extended to him by the head of the regional KGB. Sedrak Abramov was fired because he did not resettle Azerbaijanis in all the Armenian villages adjacent to Armenia.

Eyewitnesses said in the regional conference of the Communist Party in 1955 the secretary of the regional committee on propaganda Hayro Sarkissov did not hesitate to enumerate all the questions which remained unsettled for years, the closed and ruined factories, which led to grave consequences for the region. He pointed to the fact that only in 1952-1955, when Yeghisheh Grigorian was the first secretary of the regional committee, 30 thousand people emigrated from the Armenian region. He was immediately labeled as politically retarded and unreliable and was dismissed from his post.



By the way, Yeghisheh Grigorian was appointed first secretary because his wife was Azerbaijani and he spoke excellent Azerbaijani. He was said to hardly read and write in Armenian and Russian, which however, did not prevent him from becoming editor-in-chief of the official newspaper of the Azerbaijani Central Committee, the Armenian version of the Communist. The Azerbaijani leaders needed a reliable person to uphold and carry out the anti-Armenian policy and not someone who would make a literate editor or secretary of the regional committee. However, Grigorian was dismissed as soon as he stepped outside the circle drawn for him by Baku and understood what the post of a first secretary of the regional committee in Nagorno Karabakh implied (B. Ulubabian).

The next first secretary of the regional committee N. Shahnazarov was dismissed because he often raised urgent social and economic problems of Nagorno Karabakh.

After the shocking events of July 3, 1967 in Stepanakert the Azerbaijani Central Committee prepared a voluminous report and made the first secretary of the Nagorno-Karabakh regional committee Gurgen Melkumian raise the issue of internationalist education of the workers of the region, drawbacks and improvement in the plenum of the regional committee. However, after discerning the anti-Armenian contents of the document he refused to carry out the instruction of the Central Committee. Heidar Aliyev called Melkumian and told him that if he failed to obey the Central Committee, they would be obliged to undertake rotation in the Karabakh regional committee. A few days later the secretary of the regional committee G. Melkumian was elected secretary of the republic council of the trade unions of Azerbaijan. They dismissed Melkumian without making a fuss. Some time later the chairman of the regional executive committee M. Ohanjanian was also dismissed.

Then Baku generously offered glory, posts and power to all kinds of incapable marionettes, who readily approved the condemnable events taking place in Karabakh. The first job of these leaders was to diminish the work done by their predecessors, discredit and slander them, mock at them in newspapers published in Baku and the region and "crush" them during all kinds of republic, regional, district and village meetings. Then came the doomsday, and some former leaders were accused of

nationalism and dismissed from the party. Many of their relatives were also persecuted and even executed.

In exceptional cases owing to Moscow's interference Baku "was merciful" and some of those innocent guilty people were admitted back to the party but only at the condition that they should leave Karabakh together with their families. Thus, what they failed to do through weapon, they managed through luring posts, glory, economic and spiritual terror, hurting national feelings, severe persecution, threats on behalf of the party and the government, abuse of powers of the Azerbaijani Communist Party and the Nagorno-Karabakh regional committee through genocide, internationalism and Leninist friendship of peoples. And all this happened with the connivance of Moscow. If only once Moscow had attended to the problem of Karabakh, which had already turned into a crisis, that would have probably put an end to the sufferings of Armenians, persecution and intrigues in the region. Moreover, the broken friendship and cooperation between the Armenian and Azerbaijani publics would be restored. Encouraged by Moscow's indifference, Baku intensified openly conducted policy of repression to displace the Armenian population from the region.

After all this there is no need to be surprised that only between 1960 and 1975 seven directors of the department of propaganda and six directors of the cultural department of the regional committee, five chairmen of the town soviet of Stepanakert, four directors of the state museum of history and local lore, five editors of the radio, four directors of the regional library, five directors of the state theatre of Stepanakert, five directors of the regional centre of folklore, four secretaries of the regional committee of the party (on propaganda and culture), four deputy chairmen of the executive committee of the regional soviet, four first secretaries of the town committee of Stepanakert, five chairmen of the district soviet of the same district, three secretaries of the regional department of writers, four first secretaries of the regional committee of Young Communists, and so on, were changed. In addition, directors and leading workers of dozens of collective farms (kolkhoz), soviet farms, offices, enterprises, educational institutions were changed often. As to the party organizations, health care institutions, shops, "filtration" here happened so quickly and suddenly that the lists of arbitrarily fired employees would fill pages.



In choosing employees Baku usually preferred people, who had graduated from Azerbaijani universities because they were said to have been brought up and educated in an atmosphere of internationalism, in other words, away from the Armenian nation. These specialists, who knew nothing about the Armenian culture and values, "understood better" and were servile flatterers. And generally they were not mistaken. There were a number of chairmen of collective farms, secretaries of the regional committee, judges, prosecutors and directors who had been trained as teachers. Many of them became known as excellent leaders, representatives of the intelligentsia despite having made things worse through inefficient service, applause, flattery, denunciation.

As for rare specialists educated in Yerevan, they were estranged. Graduates from Armenia had the same impact on the Azeri leaders and their protégés as the red cloth on the bull. Therefore, they were usually kept under strict surveillance, persecuted and dismissed from work, made to leave their native region.

A few words about these imported specialists. First of all, they had to be from Baku and other settlements of Azerbaijan, have no idea about the history and culture of the Armenian nation, language, customs, concerns and demands of the ethnic population of Karabakh. Those who stood forth in the name of these people approved abuse of Armenians, and ruined the best local specialists enthusiastically. They did not know basic facts of history and culture of Karabakh and even current events, let alone the nearest past. Moreover, they were armed with swords and instructions and sent by the Central Committee, as they boasted, to uproot "Armenian nationalism" in Karabakh. This was determined slander against the Armenian nation used by Baku in an effort to produce the false impression that the Armenians pursued other aims apart from that of unification with Soviet Armenia. This was a cheap trick, attempted at confusing uninformed people. Whereas, the aim was to displace the Armenian population from Karabakh like in Nakhidjevan, and Baku used every method to reach this aim.

This was the origin of protests of Karabakh Armenians, which was artfully hidden by the Azerbaijani leaders behind alien isms. But their curtain was, fortunately, made of transparent plastic, which could not screen the crimes committed against the native population of Karabakh, contradicting to the "Leninist principles of equal prosperity of nations". Under this guise, the protests were repressed for years on, and the way

was open for leaders suffering from chauvinism and nationalism to do in the intelligentsia, to ruin religion, to ruin the economy and culture of the region and displace tens of thousands of innocent people from the country of their ancestors.

Usually, most leaders sent from Azerbaijan could not make head or tail of official service because of narrow thinking, lack of education, experience and skills, and could not make right decisions. Especially, those who had arrived from Baku, the capital city, were privileged and certain of being safe from punishment transgressed every limit. They calmly described their offences as actions necessitated by "maintenance of law and order in Karabakh."

Many of them abused their position to multiply their wealth. They did not become rich on their salary, of course, although it was much higher than the average salary in the region. The main source of their wealth was connections relating the personnel of the Central Committee with all kinds of moneymakers, especially cattle thieves. Due to these connections theft, extortion, bribery and abuse of power spread in Azerbaijan. These actions, destructive for Karabakh, brought about a series of disgusting phenomena, such as peddling, the cult of gold and the rube and the insatiable desire for wealth. Bribery, political and financial racket had reached record levels.

According to these adventurous leaders, often threatening on behalf of the Central Committee of the CP of Azerbaijan, truth has only one direction – downward, otherwise it will not have any influence. The authority of Baku will be shattered, the inferiors will be spoilt and start protesting, going in for nationalism, treachery, which would lead them nowhere. This is an epoch of lie, falsification, flattery, bootlicking. The principle is to do what the master tells to do.

Guided by this principle of centralism, Volodin (the second secretary of the regional committee), Bistrov (the head of the KGB of NKAR under the Soviet of Ministers of Soviet Azerbaijan), Askerkhanov (the deputy chair of the regional executive committee), Beglarov (deputy chair of the regional executive committee) and others made money at the expense of farms and factories, shops, through racketeers, even cooks, waiters and storekeepers, gave extravagant birthday parties, expecting expensive presents, went to all kinds of parties. They compelled the directors of collective farms, Stepanakert factories of wine and brandy, cheese and butter, to supply them free of charge. Cars, carpets, imported



furniture and clothes were sold for twice, even three times higher prices, and part of those products was sold by them abroad. Only they and their relatives could buy those goods at much lower prices. They compelled the directors of shops to write in documents that part of these products were damaged during transportation and were therefore sold at cheaper prices.

Those who dared to criticize these illegal actions were immediately accused of disobedience, neglect of principles of democratic centralism and were fired. More obstinate ones were dismissed from the party and tried. In this way the director of Stepanakert Town Trade G. Baghdassarian, director of the kolkhoz "Harav" R. Tovmassian, director of the sovkhos of the village of Baluja A. Babayan, director of the collective farm of Dashbulagh D. Ghahramanian, director of Stepanakert wine and brandy factory Y. Jhangirian, director of Stepanakert factory of butter A. Poghosov were dismissed. It seems useless to enumerate the names of everyone employed in trade, transport, education, culture, who were persecuted, fired and even tried only because they refused to pay illegal monthly "taxes" to Azerbaijani leaders.

Nevertheless, there was enough of the scum, who agreed to do everything to creep up to warm, profitable corners, become protégés of their chiefs. For such people the doors of offices of corrupt officials were always ajar. With this type of mutual agreement it was natural that the briber should set forth requirements, and the bribe-taker, extorting money, should make more efforts to increase the size of bribes. One of the bribers wanted to get rid of his accountant, another gossiped of his boss, the third said he could have paid more if there were not for his colleague, the fourth asked for license and protection from the state machine (by organizing a business trip) to leave for Georgia, Armenia, Russia, further regions of Azerbaijan and bring such products as fresh fish, oranges, lemons, nuts, caviar, which could hardly be found in the region.

Now try to hurt one of those people backed by the triad Bistrov-Volodin-Askurkhanov, make an innocent remark in their address. Troubles befell to those who were supposed to ask them obey the law. While trying to investigate cases involving real offenders they were suddenly dismissed. The triangle of the abovementioned officials, misusing their power, tried hard to appear as saviors and protectors. Threatening in every direction and at the same time preaching humanism to damage the principles of peoples' friendship (because most bribers

were Azerbaijanis), they avoided punishment and carried on with embezzlement, misuse of power, and crimes with renewed ardour. Officials sheltering offenders pretended innocent and unaware, and continued shaking hands with ones and stepping over others. They knew very well their good and bad, their sails were always directed to fair winds.

Sometimes, the far-reaching goals were so skillfully hidden that even the experienced eye failed to notice that not everybody could save from their labyrinth. Deception, traps, slander, offering poison with a smile, dishonest acts described the style of most people invited to Karabakh. Here are two examples to illustrate the statements above. On July 20, 1968 the second secretary of the regional soviet Kostrulkin invited the second secretary of the Stepanakert town committee S. Israelian with whom he had parted a while before in the canteen of the regional committee and stated brazenly, "Comrade Israelian, you are indifferent towards the secretary, who is superior to you. We had great expectations from you, whereas you think about yourself only." While Israelian could realize what was happening, Kostrulkin started to unbutton his shirt making Israelian take off his shirt he was wearing for the first time (it was a present from the secretary of the Lachin district committee), which Kostrulkin liked very much. After the exchange of shirts Israelian told his chief that he had been foolish and was unable to realize his duty.

The driver of the Volga car of the regional department of culture used to disappear together with the car for several days. Whenever he was reproached, the driver who could hardly read and write, announced self-confidently that he could do whatever he wanted because, he said, Bistrov himself backed him, as he did everything for the boss. Unfortunately, it was so. In Stepanakert the car was often seen in the yard of Bistrov's house, in front of the KGB, where the driver took of things from the boot. They also saw that Volodin also had his share. They only could not see from where the driver brought those products. It is notable, however, that the same driver infringed trouble on the head of the regional department of culture, the chief accountant and all the others, who criticized his roguish behaviour.

This, however, did not satisfy these officials. They started to plunder precious values of culture by similar vicious methods. The first official who set the first example was Yelistratov, the second secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, the same

person, who considered the decreasing Armenian population and the reducing number of the Karabakh villages as a regular thing. "Why should the people of Karabakh live in Karabakh? Our home is the USSR and not Karabakh," he said. The same Yelistratov obliged the heads of the regions of the republic to give him old carpets, silver jewelry and belts, archaeological objects. He had no difficulty obtaining these. Finishing with treasures belonging to the Azerbaijani people, he passed to the Armenian culture Karabakh was so rich in. He used to invite Armenian officials to his house, and tell them with an offended air, "I have no souvenirs of Karabakh in my house. All I have was given to me by the Azerbaijanis. It would be nice if I had Armenian carpets, jewelry. The Armenian art amazes the world, besides, we are communists and must keep to the principles of internationalism in everything." Unfortunately, wanting to keep up with the others and pleasing the secretariat of the Central Committee they gave him a number of precious objects created by the talented masters of Artsakh.

The example of Yelistratov spread all over the republic as an infectious disease. Museum exhibits suited the appetite of certain officials sent to Karabakh from Baku. The luxurious exquisite silver belts exhibited in the Stepanakert regional museum of history and local lore, tempted Volodin, Bistrov and Seidaliyev who was earlier deputy chair of the regional executive committee. If the latter came and explained his intention and asked to lend him one of the belts to look a "kish" (manly) in his wife's eyes, the first two demanded and even threatened the director of the museum to take them out of the exhibition and give one to each of them. They were surprised at the obstinacy of the museum director and did not even hesitate to try to break the glass behind which the belts were lying. Only owing to the decisive steps of the director was it possible to prevent the theft of the belts.

After this incident, which happened on November 4, 1971, they organized a real carousel of audits to find faults with the young director and crush him. Moreover, all kinds of slanderers, blackmailers joined this campaign competing with one another as if a prize had been promised to the best. Within six months 7 commissions were sent to the museum, which combed the museum but were unable to prove the accusations against the director.

Volodin, furious, threatened to find proofs. He knew his accusations were absurd and he simply made the head of the regional cultural

department dismiss the director of the museum. In this matter he was supported by the department of propaganda of the Azerbaijani CC of the CP. When Jean Andrian refused to fulfil Volodin's order, the latter took revenge on him. After this incident Jean, who had made a great contribution to the preservation and development of culture in the region, went through terrible hardship. Besides being fired and expelled from the party, Andrian was not allowed to continue to do his job.

People who pretended indifferent towards these indecent actions, including the members of the bureau of the regional committee, peoples' deputies, thousands of members of the Communist Party, were afraid and kept silent abjectly. The result of the willful placement was that the officials sent from abroad roughly violated the order and rules of the party and the state, giving rise to moral decay, corruption, ethnic discrimination and repression.

Considering this, what communist approach could be expected from such unworthy and greedy people as Volodin, Bistrov, Askerkhanov, Beglarov, Kevorkov, who had appeared at a leading post? Indifference towards their willful actions cannot be justified. Nevertheless, why did honest communists prefer pretending blind and deaf while the deceivers got away with their crimes? Maybe the reason was that top officials disapproved criticism. And if bribe-takers and unreliable people easily came to power in the party and the government, the voice of criticism was severely suppressed, and eyewash and political machinations became common within the Communist Party.

Of course, this is not all of the offences committed by the officials in Karabakh appointed by Baku. On the one hand, they became rich at the expense of the people of Karabakh, the tears of thousands of innocent people, on the other hand, they swore by the name of classic Marxists, tried to conceal the condemnable actions taken in Karabakh. The crueler the violence against large numbers of Armenians in Karabakh was, the easier it was to accumulate wealth and enjoy the love and support of Baku. The Azerbaijani leaders were in rapture that the officials appointed by them uprooted Armenian nationalism (to be read Armenian customs, patriotic feelings, language). Baku was fascinated by the determination of Bistrov, Volodin, Askerkhanov, Kevorkov.

However, some time later the people of Karabakh succeeded in revealing their intrigues, corruption, abuse of power, violation of the rules of the party and the state. These facts burst like soap bubbles in one

sphere or another, and Baku hurried up to replace them. And in order to prevent complete revelation of the manpower policy conducted by the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party they blamed those who had formerly occupied high positions for the grave consequences of the anti-Armenian policy launched by them. In other words, Baku changed its tactics in an effort to strengthen its position and weaken the integrity of the Karabakh people and prevent their unification with Armenia.

These standard, tried-out methods, which were always accompanied with noisy propaganda in Karabakh, did not alter the essence of the political, ethnic, social and economic repression against the Armenian population of the region. The false accusations made against the victims of the willfulness of the former officials discredited in Karabakh in 1965-1987.

### **MANPOWER "MASSACRES" A LA GOYA**

Baku made efforts to give rise to public disorders in Karabakh, which would facilitate justification of killings of many innocent Armenians, robbery of houses and cattle by Azerbaijani gangs. At the same time, Baku used every means to keep the Armenian population in constant fear. In such a situation they could invite the secretary of the regional committee M. Gasparian to Baku and say to him, "As you do not defend Volodin, who is our eyes, ears and hands, we dismiss you from work, go wherever you want." They could invite the deputy chair of the regional committee E. Baghdassarian and say to him, "You got your Ph.D. in Yerevan so you are not reliable." They could they say to the head of the department of propaganda of the regional committee Z. Davtian, "As you did not meet the personal request of the representative of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party Gindis to organize subscription to the works of A. Duma in Stepanakert, you are dismissed." This situation allowed them to say to the prominent judge E. Maroutian on behalf of the regional committee, "You did not conduct the trial in the way the second secretary of the regional committee had asked and you did not dismiss the charge on the criminal, you must say goodbye to justice and you cannot have anything to do in this system." This is not all. The head of the regional statistics service A. Zakharian (a veteran of the Great Patriotic War) was accused and fired because in a statistical bulletin he compared certain economic "achievements" to the

economic indices of 1913. The regional committee characterized this as a "politically wrong work". They did not want comparisons with 1913 because the decline and misery of NKAR became obvious against the rates of 1913 and even 1895. This was the meaning of the political mistake of Communist Zakharian.

The young director of the school N 1 of Stepanakert B. Davtian, whose father and uncle had sacrificed their lives to the liberation of the homeland, was dismissed without any explanation. When Davtian tried to find out the reason, he was asked in answer, "Why do pupils take greater interest in the Armenian language, literature and history? Why did the fourth-year pupil Arayik sing about Andranik when he was playing in the yard?" The song of the ten-year-old boy about the national hero, a participant of the liberation struggles of the Armenians and Bulgarians, attracted the attention of the government. A number of commissions arrived and held interrogations at school, in the town. A lot of money was spent, the parents of pupils had a lot of trouble because Arayik knew the name of Andranik, the people's hero, as Stepan Shahumian had referred to him, and wanted how the child learned about him, who taught him, whether it was the influence of Yerevan. Marx said ignorance is a monstrous force, and we are afraid it will cause a lot of tragedies. The reason of the dismissal of the reporter of the Soviet Karabakh Newspaper was recorded as "for reading harmful poems". It was the poem "Ararat" written by Aramayis Sahakian, translated into Russian and published in Moscow. The head physician of the regional pediatric hospital of Stepanakert, Deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet S. Harutiunian, was dismissed and displaced from Karabakh because she had explained the high death rate among children by hard living conditions of pregnant women, undernourishment, lack of drinking and irrigation water, stress, hospitals lacking basic conveniences, absence of maternity wards.

They were especially severe towards one of the activists of vocational education in Azerbaijan, the head of the curriculum department of Stepanakert pedagogical college Y. Mkrtichian. In order to show off their political alertness, I'd rather say bluntness, these people erased 17 years of work of the faultless worker and professional. In his best age he was made to leave with an aching heart the college he had founded and cherished. For years on he devoted his skills to training young specialists. He had a thick papercase with diplomas and parchments he



had received from the regional, republic and union committees and organizations. And only once he took his two children and wife to Yerevan for three days. This was a fatal "sin", and he was dismissed from work.

Another shocking fact of violation of human rights was the fate of S. Hovsepian, candidate of sciences, specializing in bee keeping. For many years the famous beekeeper complained to superior organizations that decline of bee keeping in the farms of the region is an offence, striking the country's economy. All his applications crushed into the rock of "conscience". No one cared that the climate and the geographical position of Karabakh are favorable for this branch of agriculture, which has always been developed and profitable, and Karabakh honey was famous far beyond the Caucasus. And in 1938 in the Union Agricultural Expo Karabakh honey took the first place for its quality and productivity per hive, and was awarded a first class diploma.

Baku (the Ministry of Agriculture and State Planning) detected shades of "idealization of the past" and "nationalism" in Hovsepian's complaint. He was accused of referring to the library of ancient manuscripts in Yerevan to support his viewpoint. In short, all the Azerbaijani Ministry of Agriculture wanted was to get rid of Hovsepian. They dismissed Hovsepian, closed the family bee-keeping farm, the shop of beeswax, hives, and in 1970 eliminated the position of specialist of bee keeping in the regional department of agriculture occupied by Hovsepian. The qualified specialist was left jobless for a long time, without any means to live on. The devoted communist, experienced and conscientious worker was forced to repent and never ever speak about bee keeping in the region. Only then the "re-trained" specialist, the candidate of sciences, having just understood the essence of the economic policy of Baku, was appointed as a specialist in pig breeding at the experimental. In the same year the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted a special decision on development of bee keeping, but Hovsepian was already unable to stand more persecution and economic terror. Untimely death brought peace to his soul. The decayed branch of bee keeping in Karabakh lost one of its devoted champions forever.

E. Lalayan, the editor of the regional newspaper The Kolntesakan published in Hadrut, and Captain Atayan, military commissar, were dismissed from work and expelled from the party, and displaced from

Karabakh because the latter had written an anonymous letter to the CC of the CPSU about destruction in the region and hard life of people. The "unbiased" inspectors were not interested in the truth of the questions raised in the letter. They only wanted to know who "worked in the rear of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan".

The authors of the letter feared (they did not mention their names) and they had reason for this. In 1965 a group of communists from Nagorno Karabakh addressed a long letter to the CC of the CPSU about the situation in the region. The letter was a display of the moral and ideological character, the sense of social, patriotic duty and responsibility of the people of Karabakh for their native region. As the lords of the land they claimed a fair settlement of the Karabakh problem, elimination of power abuse, violence, social and economic terror that hindered the development of industry, national institutions in the region, and poisoned the peaceful life of the Soviet citizens. The authors of the letter mentioned their names, their job and the number of years of membership to the party.

The trial and sentence of the authors of the letter were severe. Accused of "working in the back of the party of the republic", the energetic chairman of the town soviet of Stepanakert S. Shakarian, the editor of the Soviet Karabakh L. Gasparian, secretary of the regional branch of the Writers Union B. Ulubabian, the editor of the regional radio station G. Stepanian were dismissed from work, and the head of the department of agriculture of the regional committee S. Aslanian was punished for helping them to gather signatures in support of the above-mentioned comrades. All of these people were participants of World War II. One of them lost his leg in Russia, the other lost his hand, the third was badly wounded in Berlin. However, this was ignored as well. Who was supposed to be responsible for those who decided their fate, maybe "judges" who had avoided the war for one excuse or another?

They did not spare the director of the furniture factory of Stepanakert S. Adamian, who was disabled of World War II; he was expelled from the party, accused of unreliability and made to leave Karabakh. They did not respect the Hero of the Soviet Union A. Gasparian. For a single critical speech he was isolated and deprived of any chance to speak in public. The commander of the military unit of Stepanakert Lieutenant-Colonel Terentev, the chief of the frontier post of Hadrut Colonel Ivanov were immediately demobilized and exiled from Karabakh because

they had criticized persecution and economic terror in Karabakh in their addresses to the Communist Party of the region.

The talented poet, patriot B. Janian was dismissed from work and banished from Artsakh. After returning home from the victorious war he headed the Writers Union of Nagorno Karabakh. He was arrested for publishing patriotic poems and receiving the Armenian poet Avetik Isahakian in Karabakh on Bagirov's order and was released on the eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> conference of the CPSU.

Although the decision of the Azerbaijani Writers Union was to appoint him back to his former post, this did not happen due to the intrigues of the local "court" of writers. He began working in the Soviet Karabakh. Here also the honest poet remained true to his vocation and published patriotic poems, critical essays and favored young writers greatly.

In the regional meeting of the board of the party Communist Jhanguirov criticized Alikhanov's call, the chair of the Soviet of Ministers of Soviet Azerbaijan to launch a campaign against "Armenian nationalism". The experienced teacher said, "I have lived among Armenians for over 70 years. I swear by my white beard that I have not noticed any manifestations of Armenian nationalism. Armenians are peaceful, humanist, internationalist and assiduous people. You should not blacken them." Alikhanov could not listen quietly to this confession and in the presence of 300 people he shouted and interrupted the old man, "Sasen kyas, kyaftar. ("Shut up, old fool.") You have been bribed by Dashnaks." This bright man could not bear this insult. He passed away a few days later.

On the whole Alikhanov's speech was full of hostility and hatred against Armenians, especially Karabakh Armenians. And especially after the July 1967 protest meeting in Stepanakert for unification with Armenia. Baku tried to forget the bloodshed, the tragedy, pretending that these were the consequence of disorders instigated by some people, which would not have happened if patriotic Armenians had been exiled from Karabakh. Thus Baku tried to neglect the fair protests of the Karabakh Armenians, their right to unite with Armenia, and reduced the fundamental solution of this problem to assistance to the region within Azerbaijan, false promises of prosperity, as they called it.

## "BOYS" WITH "CIRCUMCISED" SURNAMENES AGAINST KARABAKH

Boris Kevorkov was first secretary of the regional committee appointed in 1973 by Baku. He was completely unknown to the people of Karabakh, illiterate, unaware of the local customs but highly ambitious and impudent. Soon it turned out that the important thing for him was to make impression by "GESTAPO methods", an outrageous anti-Armenian policy and flattery and support to the Azerbaijanis. On the first day of his office he announced that the personnel was not allowed to leave the office before him at the end of the day. And as he had not brought his family from Baku, he had nowhere to go. During his visits to the regions the head of the regional department of home affairs, the head of KGB and other bootlickers forming his retinue accompanied him.

This illegitimate first secretary, just appointed to this position, had already done a great number of willful actions. This protégé of Baku declared that Nagorno Karabakh was full of extremists and nationalists, and loyal to the "sodomasochistic" principles of the godfathers of the Azerbaijani Communist Party and himself, he had to destroy in order to "keep Karabakh within Azerbaijan". Actually, Kevorkov and his gang had come from Baku to implement the ferocious anti-Armenian policy involving destruction of the human resource in Karabakh. Very soon it became apparent that H. Aliyev appointed them instead of G. Melkumian to destabilize the situation in the region, that is to say, stir the water to fish more easily. "I was the only native among the secretaries of the regional committee, and there was only one native deputy chairman of the executive committee of the regional soviet," wrote Yeghisheh Sargisian. At best there were 3-4 natives in the bureau of the regional committee of the party, consisting of 13-15 members. Kevorkov sternly prevented every complaint or protest, and the others defended him. In law enforcement agencies the leading positions were almost never occupied by natives. Gradually the turn of the regional leaders came.

Kevorkov used every opportunity not to lose Aliyev's trust, thus becoming a tool in Aliyev's hands" (see Yeghisheh Sargisian, *Tracing Back the Past*, Nork Magazine, N 12, p. 80-81).

In the plenum of the regional committee the first secretary of the regional committee Kevorkov gladly agreed to read the anti-Armenian report prepared in Baku years before and edited by Heidar Aliyev. This report was twice extended to G. Melkumian to discuss in the plenum



of the regional committee but he refused for the reason that it was a provocative document, and was sure to be condemned not only by the people of Karabakh.

During the plenum of the regional committee on March 23, 1975 Kevorkov read the report cherished by Aliyev. This was not a report but the verdict of the intelligentsia of Nagorno Karabakh and the entire Armenian nation. The report was based on the following principles: Nagorno Karabakh had become a region of Armenian nationalists, where the Leninist friendship of peoples was violated. Nationalist and separatist encroachments were made on "peaceful Azerbaijan living with the spirit of internationalism". Finally, it was stressed: "the problem of Karabakh is solved once and for all by the great national policy principles of Lenin and it is an indivisible part of Azerbaijan."

There were people in the Central Committee of Moscow (the secretary of the regional committee Y. Sargisian remembers), who disapproved of this plenum. Mikhail Morozov, a senior official of the department of propaganda, specialist of oriental studies, who perfectly knew the history of Armenia including Artsakh, said, "I am absolutely against this plenum. You the people of Karabakh are innocent. You are repressed therefore you raise your protest" (from the notes of Sargisian a copy of which is in the personal archive of the author of this book). However, Kevorkov thus became the favorite "brother-in-arms" of Aliyev. His actions were not limited.

When the question of A. Yeghiazarian, District Attorney of Hadrut, was "discussed" by the bureau of the regional committee, an ordinary worker Vahan Gasparian was invited too. Although he had been told what to say, he actually defended the district attorney, arousing Kevorkov's anger. In order to prove that the worker was dishonest, he suddenly shouted, "You swine worker, what is there in your mouth? Open it!" Vahan slightly opened his mouth and the other told him to open it wider. Then Kevorkov asked the head of the department of organizational work of the regional committee G. Tsatrian to count the "golden teeth" of the worker. He counted and reported to the ruler: eight. And do you know why this scene was performed? In order to prove that an honest person could not afford golden teeth, forgetting for a moment that almost all the teeth of the members of the regional committee bureau and himself were golden.

One day Kevorkov called the shepherd of the village Jamillu Uncle Sargis, who had informed the police about the secret route of the Azerbaijani cattle thieves. "Sarghis, never ever tell anyone about it or your head will not be left on your soldiers. Big people are standing behind those Turkish thieves. Part of their theft goes to their pockets." By the way, under Kevorkov every year over 10 thousand head of cattle was stolen from Karabakh, which is about 2 thousand tons of meat. This was already outside Kevorkov's competence, and he had to keep silent and even carefully hide this.

In another case Kevorkov's victim was the writer Leonid Hurunts. The noted writer had written a personal letter to Souren Gasparian, his disabled friend living in Baku, telling him about the illegal actions carried out in Karabakh. Kevorkov's protégés learned about this letter, seized it from the friend confined to the wheelchair and took it to Kevorkov. Hurunts was invited to the regional committee. "He pointed to the vacant chair for Hurunts, as if for a convict, the present were not aware of the essential aim of the gathering. Kevorkov started reading the letter where Kevorkov's anti-Armenian and anti-national actions were revealed one by one. It was also mentioned that Kevorkov was a tool in the hands of Heidar Aliyev for stifling, squeezing Artsakh region of its economic wealth and ousting its root Armenian population from the region. The author cited facts when the Armenian villages were devastated, Armenian schools were closed down, and the Azerbaijani population grew like mushrooms after rain. Without asking the opinion of the members of bureau, Kevorkov attacked Hurunts and shouted wildly, "You're a swine, and as the swine pokes its snout in garbage, so as you do... Now stand up and get away from here. Never ever set your foot in Karabakh," remembers Levon Mkrtichian, an eyewitness (the head of the department of propaganda).

In the years of Azerbaijani rule Baku made the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities recruit young people at Armenian villages and send them to Baku for permanent residence. The chairman of the Hadrut district committee Sergey Barseghian was dismissed from work and the party for trying to prevent this criminal plan of cleansing Karabakh from Armenians, as well as raising the question of resettlement of Azerbaijanis, who had illegally settled down at the abandoned workshop of timber near the Armenian village of Badara (their main occupation was stealing cattle). When the first secretary of the district committee V.

Grigorian informed Baghirov, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the latter retorted angrily: "What the hell are you interested what the Azerbaijanis are occupied with?" (Komitas Daniellian, "Artsakh Unbridled Steed", Yerevan 2001).

They treated the head of the regional department of culture Jean Andrian worse. He was suddenly dismissed from work for his efficient work, revival of cultural relationships with Armenia and upheaval of the culture of Artsakh. Soon he was dismissed from the party too, and this patriotic and intelligent person was made to leave his native Karabakh and live in Yerevan.

Working at the regional committee first then at the regional union of consumers, Levon Aghamian dared to express his opinion on one problem or another. This did not please Baku emissary B. Kevorkov, of course, L. Aghamian was charged on false accusations. While searching his apartment the bedclothes were torn, the furniture was damaged. Finally, on Kevorkov's order the verdict was passed and the innocent man was sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment and confiscation of property. However, the Superior Court dismissed the false charge. Although, according to the Soviet laws, he government paid Aghamian's salary for 18 months he had to be absent from work, and not those who were to blame for this incident.

Another typical example is the trick played on Vahan Gabrielian, the first secretary of the district committee of Martakert. The patriotic young man was dismissed from work because he could not pay the bribe of 100 thousand rubles the protégé of Kevorkov, the chairman of the executive committee of Nagorno Karabakh A. Aslanov demanded for his "re-election as first secretary of the regional committee", as it was accepted in Azerbaijan.

Our Boris Kevorkov conducted a surprisingly overt policy of ethnic discrimination. According to Levon Mkrtychian, he received only one or two out of the 25-30 Armenians who applied for one problem or another and referred the others to lower officials, whereas his attitude towards the Azerbaijanis was quite different: he gladly received everyone, listened to them attentively and met their requests.

According to B. Kevorkov, fulfilling the demands of Azerbaijanis, granting them privileges and giving them priority in every question meant internationalism. Therefore, Armenians had to wait for 25-30

years to receive an apartment in Stepanakert, whereas the Azerbaijanis only 1 or 2.

Kevorkov learned these lessons of internationalism in Baku and practiced his knowledge in Nagorno Karabakh the way he had perceived it. This is very typical; Armenian Karabakh could be controlled and demoralized from the inside and what is more, through Armenians. Therefore, Baku and its protégés were particularly careful about all kinds of sneaks and secret agents of KGB. Therefore the number of snitchers in Nagorno Karabakh grew under Kevorkov.

Another official sent to Karabakh from Baku, the powerful supporter of Kevorkov A. Aslanov could not distinguish the cow from the bull, and during 13 years of office he visited only one of the five districts of Karabakh, Hadrut, but his behavior proved that it was not necessary to work and be honest to get government awards. Formerly in charge of qualification at the Party School in Baku, he started practicing his abundant "theoretical knowledge" in restaurants, at picturesque places of Artsakh, in the storehouses of trade organizations (together with Kevorkov) to make the lists according to which the rare products would be distributed.

At the same time he accurately carried out the special tasks of Kevorkov, did the duty of collecting the special tax from district committees, executive committees, shops, farms, enterprises, judicial bodies, the size of which was 25-100 thousand rubles, as maintained by Baku,

As for the head of the regional department of the Azerbaijani KGB N. Dubrov and the second secretary of the regional committee V. Bogoslavski, they referred to everything that was Armenian as nationalism and everything connected with Karabakh as extremism. Therefore, they had to support Kevorkov in anything to please Azerbaijanis and Aliyev personally.

We cannot pass by the first secretary of the district of Shushi Aslanov. This "romantic" prosaic sent from Baku for a special purpose was released from duties of economic plans from the very beginning, and focused his attention on destroying the traces of history in a part of Nagorno Karabakh by destroying the Armenian monuments, disturbing the graves of the dead, perpetuating the memory of reactionary khans of Shushi and their supporters. By the way, he had "theoretically grounded" his plans of vandalism beforehand in a number of articles published in

the Ulduz Youth Newspaper, which was edited by himself. The author of the article attracted the attention of superior bodies, receiving overall assistance, and personally controlled the implementation of the plans worked out by himself under the guise of the secretary of the regional committee. In ten years powerful bulldozers appeared in Shushi again. Day and night they ruined the old Armenian cemeteries, churches, stone inscriptions, grave monuments with high reliefs before tens of thousands of people. Dozens of khachkars were broken and buried in concrete.

At the same time they started reconstruction of mosques, changing the arches of old buildings into lancets, built a new grand mausoleum, founded a park with statues of outstanding Azerbaijanis.

Hundreds of honest, hard-working and patriotic people became victims of constant provocations undermining Karabakh. Let us remember some of them: Stepanakert secretary of the party A. Gasparian, the head of the regional department of agriculture V. Lazarian, the head of the regional department of culture Sh. Abrahamian, instructors of the regional committee S. Grigorian, A. Arakelian, the secretary of the Soviet Karabakh L. Gasparian, the secretary of the district committee of Martakert S. Nanagyulian, the first secretary of the district committee of Hadrut V. Grigorian, the director of Stepanakert winery Y. Jhangirian, the chair of the regional committee of radio G. Soghomonian and A. Danielian, the director of the nurse training college E. Ghahramanian and many others.

Similar examples are many. I presented a small part to the reader. Such cases may seem trivial if viewed separately but together they make up genocide, the monstrous policy on "Karabakh without Armenians". This policy originated in 1920, and changing its methods from time to time, continued until the powerful Karabakh movement and the victory in the war.

As nobody was protected in the Armenian region, there was practically no possibility to act in the legal, political and moral sphere, people almost never went to courts of law because they had been convinced for a thousand times that the law was not honored in Azerbaijan, and only oral instructions dictated from above worked. It did not matter what was set down in the Soviet Constitution, the Soviet laws, for the questions were settled through phone calls, instructions. So what was the meaning of inquiring whether the code was efficient or it had drawbacks? Who needed this when the public prosecutor of Nagorno

Karabakh Kh. Samvelov declared with pride: "I recognize one code only. My code is B. Kevorkov. If he says "it is black", it is black. I arrest whom he tells me to arrest and release whom he tells me to release." In this way they justified criminals, put innocent people to prison and even killed to destroy evidence to crime.

Therefore, as the head of the department of investigation of the USSR Ministry of Home Affairs Lieutenant-Colonel Victor Krivopuskov said, "Crimes committed by Azerbaijanis in Nagorno Karabakh were not revealed as a rule, and many of them were not even recorded" (V. Krivopuskov, "Revolting Karabakh", Rostov, 2003, p. 17-18). Azerbaijan is a republic of lie and falsification, with the typical moral of the regime of khanate, the same arbitrariness and ugliness. The policy "Karabakh without Armenians" adopted by Baku worked in Nagorno Karabakh instead of the law and the Soviet judicial system.

Whereas, the Azerbaijani authorities tried their best to mislead public opinion and present crimes committed against the Armenians as benevolent acts. Lie and falsification, distortion of facts and historical truth have always been the main occupation of Azerbaijani statesmen, diplomats and intelligentsia. Therefore, the Shakespearean saying "I'll be a Turk if I lie" was widely spread among the Armenians of Artsakh. As Hugo said, an embodiment of vice.

The danger of repression and displacement of the Armenian population from the region will exist unless the problem of Karabakh is solved politically. Do not believe that a leader will appear in Azerbaijan who will at least pretend willing to improve the state of the Armenians. In the early 1920s Armenian Marxists were deceived, the had consequences of which are scrutinized in this book.



## CHAPTER 4

### AZERBAIJAN A COUNTRY OF TERRORISM

As long ago as in the 1920-1930s the Karabakh forests and adjacent Azerbaijani regions were swarming with the first terrorist groups, trained in Azerbaijan under the command of the famous terrorist M. Bagirov, who was the leader the Communist Party of Azerbaijan for many years. Assisted by the Russian-Soviet troops, in Artsakh and "Red Kurdistan" they hunted for Armenian and Kurd enemies for years on (1920-1938), in other words, for everyone who hated to live under the yoke of Azerbaijan and rose up against arbitrariness and illegality.

Since the early 1960s the Azerbaijani strongmen acted freely in the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh and the adjacent regions. Their activity was connected with the specific role of Heidar Aliyev in the Azerbaijani KGB. By the way, in the beginning these gangs acted separately but in the years when Aliyev was the deputy chair of the KGB they "appeared in law". Gradually, these organized gangs gained control over school directors, members of the regional committee, heads of the regional police departments and district attorneys, while the top officials of the KGB, the police, the government and the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party backed them.

Every time the Nagorno-Karabakh police arrested one of these Azerbaijanis, there were phone calls from Baku, from one of the abovementioned agencies, threatening that the Armenians would have problems unless they released their people.

The head of the Police of Martakert A. Avagian was simply told, "It's not your business what the Azerbaijanis are doing in Karabakh and how much harm they have done to the region." And the district attorney of Hadrut was "made to realize" that after all the thieves are also to live on something. By the way, in 1984, for instance, 11 thousand head of cattle were stolen from Nagorno Karabakh, which is 2 thousand tons of meat or 21 percent of the meat produced in the region annually (see the unpublished memoirs of the first secretary of the regional committee B. Kevorkov).

By the way, the mausoleum of the poet Vagif in Shushi became a hangout for "specialists", invited from Islamic countries to Baku every year, trained and skilled in extremism and terrorism, and held secret

meetings with the commanders of the Azerbaijani terrorist groups. Receiving instructions and backing, their actions became sterner. The personnel of the KGB of Nagorno Karabakh sometimes stealthily notified that the delegation of the Grey Wolves from Turkey usually did not take part in the readings of Vagif's poems. Instead they visited Kirovabad, Aghdam with Azerbaijanis to meet with the local Azerbaijani terrorists and criminals. Once Knara Musayelian, head of the special department of the regional committee, widow of a KGB colonel, addressed a long letter to Moscow on this problem (the original of this letter is in the personal archive of the author of this book).

These criminal gangs had their own rules of the "game" organized and approved by top officials. The stolen livestock from the Armenian region was divided between these criminal gangs, each of them backed by one official or another. These gangs were instructed to carry out terrorist actions, kill Armenians, destroy the property of the Armenian farmers, cause fires, car accidents, etc.

The situation changed immediately after the burst of the Karabakh movement on February 20, 1988. The Azerbaijani leaders introduced new elements into the plans of these gangs; these criminals were included in the troops of OMON. To coordinate the atrocities, a great number of experienced specialists trained abroad were sent to Karabakh from Baku which had managed to establish close links with the Turkish Grey Wolves, the Arab Hamas and the Afghani Mujahedins. Armed with modern weapons and explosives, they stepped up large-scale attacks on Armenian villages and farms. They killed or captured Armenian shepherds, and took away the cattle to the Azerbaijani villages. On the roads they attacked cars and buses of Armenians and shot the passengers. At the same time, they chopped and set to fire orchards and wheat fields of Karabakhis, trying to bring them to their knees by letting them starve.

Then they adopted more sophisticated and brutal forms of violence against the outstanding local Armenian leaders and the intelligentsia, demanding incredibly big ransoms from their relatives. If they did not receive the sum, they broke the testicles of men, injected diesel fuel in the brain, kidneys, hammered nails in the eyes and ears, cut the breasts of women, made the Armenian prisoners eat their own feces, etc, killing completely innocent people. Nvard Soghomonian wrote in detail about these atrocities in her documentary books "1991" and "Koltso" (Stepanakert, 1994, 1996).

I am not telling about the tragedy of people who survived in Azerbaijani prisons, concentration camps. It is beyond me because the bloody slaughters with those horrible methods are impossible for human reason to understand...

This chapter tells about petrifying killings of Karabakh Armenians at peacetime, which are only a link in the chain of the planned terrorist actions directed against the Armenian population of Karabakh.

In fact, it was the effect of the poison of Pan-Turkism when in Shushi Beglarov, the brother of the Azerbaijani deputy chair of the Nagorno-Karabakh regional committee, stopped two Armenian farmers in the street and said, "I fancy killing an Armenian today. You say who I shall kill like a dog." While they could realize what was going on, he stabbed the farmer from Kanach Tala in the stomach in broad daylight. Or wasn't it the consequence of the anti-Armenian calls frequently published in the official newspaper of the Azerbaijani Communist Party that in the district center of Imishli, Azerbaijan a group of Azerbaijanis tied three Armenian builders to an iron bed and killed them by connecting electric power to it?

This time the murder of the Armenians was whitewashed again. But fearing the severe condemnation of the terrorists and their supporters by the Armenians of Karabakh, Baku instructed the regional committee and the town committee of Stepanakert not to allow holding a funeral for these innocent victims. This terrible incident showed once again that the Azerbaijani authorities did not guarantee the security of the Armenians outside the borders of Nagorno Karabakh, especially on farms. Thus, the Azerbaijani authorities not only violated the laws providing for the security of foreign citizens but also reaffirmed that the authorities actually encouraged similar crimes.

It was with the connivance of the Azerbaijani authorities that the Azerbaijani deputy chair of the village soviet, school director Arshad Mammedov (whose father also participated in anti-Armenian operations, killed a lot of Armenians, Russians, burnt gardens and wheat fields in the 1920s) organized terrorist groups and killed and plundered without getting any punishment. For years on the gangs of Arshad slew innocent Armenians not even sparing children. They killed the night-time Armenian tractor operator while reaping the wheat, organized car accidents, cut every part of the body of an Armenian woman, hammered nails in the head of an Armenian child, cut his penis and thrust it into his

mouth, cut his arms and dispersed his intestines. Then they took the body of the child and threw somewhere near the Armenian settlements. When the Armenians lynched this butcher by his own methods, the Azerbaijani government organized his funeral. In a short period of time a mausoleum was built on the grave of this bandit, and his relatives were granted privileges. The death of Arshad was a shock for his supporters, therefore in 1968 the Azerbaijani authorities organized a comedy trial of 20 Armenian avengers and sentenced them to capital punishment or imprisonment. Yet, several other Armenians were killed in Baku without any trial and sentence, during the so-called interrogation (The verdict of the panel of judges of the Superior Court of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, July 24-31, 1968, N 79).

This ferocity and verdicts aroused the indignation of the public of Nagorno Karabakh, was criticized by different organizations, and hundreds of protests were addressed to Moscow.

In broad daylight 6 Azerbaijanis kidnapped fifteen-year-old Svetlana, raped, tortured then killed her and threw the body at the monument to 22 thousand Karabakh Armenians killed during the Great Patriotic War. And at the station of Yevlakh a group of Azerbaijanis killed two out of the three demobilized Armenian soldiers and the third was saved by miracle. They did not spare the hero either. In his bedroom they killed Suren Adamian, the Hero of Socialist Labor, deputy of the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and Azerbaijan, member of the leadership of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet, head of the collective farm of the village of Chartar. According to the scheme of the Azerbaijani leadership and the KGB, he was killed because he had decided to write a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the atrocities of Azerbaijanis in Karabakh.

When on February 20, 1988 the regional soviet (the legislative body) of Nagorno Karabakh made the decision on seceding from Azerbaijan and uniting with the Republic of Armenia, the Muslim gangs stationed in Uzbekistan instigated skirmishes with Meskheta Turks. They made them immigrate to Azerbaijan more exactly Nagorno Karabakh to change the demographic balance in favor of the Azerbaijanis.

On February 27, 1988, near the Azerbaijani city of Aghdam, the Azeri terrorists attacked the lorry GAZ-53 of the village of Mets Taghlar, Hadrut, transporting cattle to Stepanakert, crushed the windscreen with stones, made the car stop, climbed on the bonnet, stabbed the driver

Rafik Altunian with a knife and severely beat the veterinarian Andranik Melkumian, took away the cattle and burnt the car... The skeleton of the car has been preserved so far as an example of barbarism and dishonesty of the "national heroes" of Heidar Aliyev (the information was extracted from the memoirs of Kh. Baghdassarian, Stepanakert, 2003, p. 30).

On May 15, 1991 the Azerbaijani terrorists raided the village of Karing (Arpagyaduk), Hadrut, and forced the villagers out of their homes threatening by guns. They let some of them go and shot five Armenians "out of love for Armenians", as they said. A woman named Haykanoush asked the killer, "Mahmed, aren't you ashamed? How are you going to shoot me if I put up you and your parents for so many times in my house?" "Khala (i.e. aunt), it was the time for eating, now it is the time for killing, for uprooting Armenians from Karabakh," said Mammedov impudently and shot ten bullets at this proud woman in her 50s.

Yet an even more horrible crime was committed in the Azerbaijani town of Fizuli adjacent to the Armenian region of Hadrut, which makes the horrible picture of massacres of Armenians in Sumgait, Baku and other settlements complete. On June 22, 1988 the inhabitants of Fizuli were invited to the central street of the town to take part in the party in honor of the "heroes" who had slaughtered the Armenians in Sumgait. At the same time the Azeri-Turks rounded up Armenians living in the town, took off their clothes, tortured them and under the music of Armenian musicians made them walk along the streets to Lenin Avenue where the mob was having good time. They announced they were tasting the food stolen from Armenians and called them to hit with bones the naked Armenians passing in front of them, so as the other gaur, (i.e. Armenians) knew who they deal with and hurry up to get away from "aziz vatan Garabakh" ("dear homeland Karabakh"), otherwise they would do the same with all of them. The drunken crowd was in rapture, laughed and tortured the Armenians, among whom there were children and even a pregnant woman.

According to a scenario, they were supposed to take these Armenians out of Fizuli and hang them on crosses on the road to the Armenian village of Togh. Fortunately, certain circumstances hindered the monstrous plan. Nevertheless, they killed an Armenian boy. At that time Fizuli had 856 Armenian inhabitants (126 families). Four days before these events on June 18, 1988 an anti-Armenian letter was published in the Ayaz Newspaper in Fizuli under the headline "We Shall Win". The

letter was addressed to the head of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachov. The letter contained the names and posts of 12 Armenians living in Fizuli. The Turkish handwriting was familiar, unfortunately, many people did not discern the danger.

In 1953 the Azeri-Turks stationed in the village of Togh, Hadrut often committed murders, obviously pursuing terrorist aims. In broad daylight they attacked the bus of the village of Tumi driving across their neighborhood. Three Armenian passengers were killed. Just in order to uproot the Armenians from Togh. They killed with an axe the four members of the family of Misak Danielian. These monstrous killings even horrified the Azerbaijanis living in Togh, who hurried to leave the village fearing revenge.

Near the Armenian village of Shekher, Hadrut the Azeris attacked the coach Stepanaker-Toghadzor and shot over 20 Armenians, including 11 women and 4 children.

The enumeration of these horrible facts can be continued but the general picture is clear: the killings of Armenians were terrorist actions with a political context, and represented a link in the anti-Armenian policy of "cleansing Karabakh from Armenians like Nakhidjevan". The instigators of these bloody crimes against the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh, whom we called terrorists with disgust, were heroes in Azerbaijan who exterminate Armenians. Who and how backed the murderers, on whose instructions and for what purposes did they act? Major S. Abrahamian, Police, once gave the answer to these questions, for which he was immediately sent to the other world. Heidar Aliyev, a high official of the Azerbaijani KGB, had personally set up and supported these gangs. Therefore, the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party concealed and forgave his past, although the Moscow-based newspapers had once published a long article about him.

Let us remember another supporter of violence, the minister of internal affairs of Azerbaijan Asadov who declared that with 100 thousand fanatics he would attack Karabakh and make a slaughterhouse out of it. The consequence of this was the genocide of the Armenians in Sumgait, then the massacres in Baku and the events in Karabakh.

A great number of Armenian settlements, such as Maragha, Karing, Akel, Banazur, Tsor, Berdadzor, Getashen, Martunashen, and the



entire region of Shahumian were ruined during armed terrorist attacks and the population was slaughtered.

The bloodshed of innocent people, killings, plunder and car accidents were intended to prevent the liberation struggle of the Armenians. Every time I remember these monstrous events, brutal killings of innocent people (I went to the funerals of many of them), I have a feeling of chill. And the ferocious killing of many peaceful citizens of Artsakh was only part of the militaristic policy of the Azerbaijani leaders "Karabakh without Armenians", a policy which, as I have already mentioned, was launched in the 1920s.

These are the tragic consequences of the brutal policy implemented by Azerbaijan against the Armenian population of Artsakh and especially the intelligentsia. At the same time, the Azerbaijani leaders did their best to prevent the righteous protests, claims, indignation of the Karabakh Armenians. Through slander and falsification Baku always succeeded in concealing from Moscow their constant pressure on the Armenian population of the region.

With regard to this, the anti-Armenian policy of the Azerbaijani leaders, copied from the above-mentioned anti-Armenian project of Asad Karayev, was pursued in accordance with a common code, without any deviations, at least from Narimanov to Aliyev. At the same time, the guileful leaders of Azerbaijan spared no efforts to involve dishonest Armenians, Russians, and Jews in their anti-Armenian policy, who would give everything for money and position. These attempts of Baku to have others take out chestnuts from fire dealt a serious blow to Karabakh. We are to speak out that those who organized and committed the crimes against the Karabakh Armenians have not been punished yet, and were not condemned by the international community. The consequences of connivance of the Azerbaijani authorities continue in new manifestations. The assassination of the Armenian officer in Budapest is rare by its brutality. If an axe appears in the hands of the Azerbaijani within such an organization as NATO, is there a guarantee that similar cases will not reoccur in the future? Baku (1918), Shushi (1920), NKR (1923-1988), Sumgait (1988), as well as the Armenian Genocide in 1915 are not mere chronology but successive meta-stages of tribal instincts encouraged by getting away without a punishment.

Which one of the innumerable killings and violence against Armenians should I tell? Will the nerves of the reader stand?

The Armenians of Karabakh could not do anything to avoid the slaughters instigated by Azeris in Shushi, Togh, Maragha, Haybalishen, Berdadzor, Getashen, Gardmank, Nakhidjevan, Zhdanov. They could not because bloodthirsty Turks exceeding them many times in number attacked them. Therefore, the principle of incompatibility of the Armenians and Azeri-Turks should underlie the settlement of the problem of Artsakh-Karabakh. The historic chronology testifies that the nature of a Turk has not changed throughout the history. In 1822 they slaughtered 50 thousand Greeks, in 1826 25 thousand janissaries, later 14 thousand Bulgarians. The list of barbarisms is endless. Turkey and Azerbaijan are members of the Council of Europe. May this circumstance change them? The Europeans do not know, do not realize what will happen if this savage becomes a full-right European.

Thus, Azerbaijan has considerable experience in preparing Islamic terrorists to slaughter and capture Christians. In fact, Azerbaijan is a classic example of the policy of brutal force and violence against foreigners. Moreover, there are facts that most Afghani Mojahedins of Ben Laden and Chechen terrorists got their primary "education" and were "baptized" in Azerbaijan, and practiced their knowledge in Nagorno Karabakh. By the way, Jean-Louis Bruguiere, a famous expert on antiterrorism (New York), considered Azerbaijan one of the hotbeds of international terrorism. The evidence to this is a number of arrested terrorists, who admitted having connections with Azerbaijan and hiding there for some time. Therefore, it would not be a surprise that the blast in the U.S. embassy in Kenya was controlled from Baku.

After all, I would like to believe that the Russians, Armenians and Jews, who went through the horror of terrorism, will understand the state of the Karabakh Armenians, who lived for 70 years side by side with the constant danger of terrorism.

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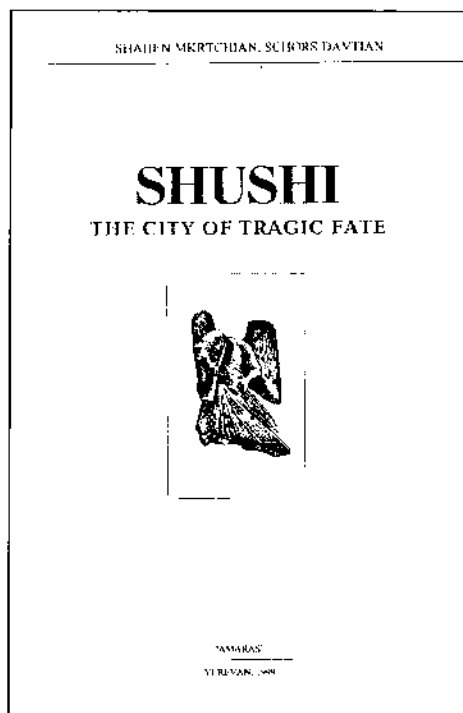
This is the example of Nagorno Karabakh, what happened under the slogan of Leninism about "friendship of nations" and "internationalism". This is how Moscow had solved the ethnic problem of Karabakh. With the connivance of Moscow Azerbaijan devoured part of the Armenian nation and announced proudly that they did this "as friends", keeping to

the principles of "internationalism". In fact, the howling anti-Armenian attitude was a state policy in Azerbaijan.

The goal was to exterminate the human resource in the small Armenian region and appoint their corrupt protégés in Nagorno Karabakh brought up with the ideology of Azerbaijani fundamental nationalism.

Over those 70 years the Azerbaijani behavior was aggressive, revengeful, cunning in all types of state, public and national relations, supported by the authorities. The abovementioned killings were not merely cruel offences. They had a political context. And this means that these killings were committed against the nation rather than separate people

Human reason would not be able to see everything. And to see and wink an eye on this is political buffoonery. What happened in Nagorno Karabakh was actually a try-out of old and new methods of genocide of modern times.



## CHAPTER 5

### ECONOMIC MANIPULATIONS AND STATISTICAL SURPRISES

An acquaintance of mine from Tashkent, an economist occupying a high position in the government of Uzbekistan, sent me an envelope through a reliable person. The envelope contained a copy of the book "The Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh", published in Baku in Russian in 50 thousand copies. My Uzbek acquaintance wrote he had found the book in his mailbox. However, the addressee thought that the book would be of more importance to me because he did not believe that with such a high level of development and quality of life reported in the mentioned selection the Armenians of Karabakh would rise and claim secession from Azerbaijan. "The statistics in the selection need verification, and nobody will do that better than you." By the way, I had received another copy of the same book from an Armenian soldier defending the outskirts of Aghdam.

The selection contains 28 long and short anti-Armenian articles, which had been published in Baku, mainly in the Bakinski Rabochi, Vishka, in the Moscow-based Pravda and other official newspapers of the Communist Party. The authors are academicians, associate members of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, doctors, professors, writers, journalists, administrative and party officials. That is to say, we deal with professional slanderers, decorated in titles and positions.

If Armenian historians and critics reacted now and then to historical, philological articles and books published in Azerbaijan and revealed distortions, falsifications and twaddle in them, the same cannot be said about social, economic and demographic publications which did not get due attention of the Armenian specialists, whereas in such cases silence is not the best behavior.

In fact, if the Azerbaijani historians as usual try their hardest to prove that "Nagorno Karabakh is an ancient Azerbaijani territory", and "the Armenians living there are newcomers", the political scientists and philosophers of Baku are determined to present the powerful Artsakh movement as "a skirmish provoked by a group of extremists and Mafiosi, political adventurism of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation". Besides, if the Azeri economists and sociologists tried



**FIREWORKS OF INDICES FORMED BY AN INCORRECT,  
IMPERMISSIBLE METHOD AND "THE RED CALICO DRESS OF  
KARABAKH"**

to dress the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh in "a scarlet red dress" through false three-digit, four-digit numbers, literary critics, writers and journalists, singing mournfully "Garabagh is ours", called for war "to uproot Armenians from the most beautiful place in Azerbaijan, from dear Garabagh, and to keep it Azerbaijani forever."

This is the main leitmotif, the main purpose, the false message of this book. At the same time, the Azerbaijani authors pathetically try to create a mirage to look just on the one hand, and justify their intentions to take revenge on the Armenians of Karabakh seeking for self-determination.

The falsifiers of Baku offered an unimaginable pile of miscellaneous falsified numbers, statistical balloons and conjuring tricks with percentage points in order to attract readers. Of course, a reader, who gets puzzled from such political chatter, political conjuring tricks, would hardly make head or tail of it and orient in these scientifically "grounded" but, in fact, falsified facts and arguments. That is to say, the reader will become convinced that "internationalism won an absolute victory" in Azerbaijan, whereas in Armenian Karabakh "nationalism" and why not "disobedience" was raging.

Actually, in this particular case and generally, the public was offered "fireworks of propaganda", "economic manipulations", "statistical surprises" for years on. The pageant moods of ideology of economic growth in the region replacing real, practical, professional economic analysis was rendered into a playing card for political propaganda in the hands of Azerbaijan, and a cause for righteous protest.

To save space, we will only consider materials on social and economic matters found in the abovementioned book. We will try to reveal "once and for all" the howling falsifications put forward by official Baku, the irresponsible and quite magic "red indices" circulated by the Azerbaijani authorities and their pageboys occupying offices in the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh in the 1970-1980s. These falsifications pursued definite political aims. It is felt that in the neighboring country everyone was occupied with distortion and whitewash. For years on all this was presented solemnly as official information and was circulated in the local and Union mass media, jubilee annals. They even had the article "The Highly Developed Industry of NKAR" placed in the Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia (vol. 4, p. 578). Anyway, this will be discussed at another time. In this chapter statistical data are cited from the initial sources, referred to in this book.

G. Martirosian was right when he wrote that manipulation of facts was deeply rooted in the activities of the leadership of Azerbaijan, so deeply that they also finally got confused in them. Some cited certain numbers but soon there appeared others, which contradicted to what had been said previously. In jubilee annals (published in Baku) devoted to the 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh every fact is intended to convince unaware readers that in all the spheres of life in Soviet Nagorno Karabakh the Azerbaijanis played an important role, and the role of the Armenians, who are a minority in the region, was insignificant. The Azerbaijanis provided excellent conditions for development and well-being of Armenians (again presenting the desirable for the reality with a propagandist air), "it was only in Soviet Azerbaijan that the Armenians gained national dignity, had an incredibly high quality of life and spiritual culture" (Problems of Peace and Socialism 6, 1977, p. 12). In fact, here is a paradox. On the one hand, the real ancient history of Nagorno Karabakh was ignored or distorted, on the other hand, the modern history of the region within Azerbaijan was exaggerated, presented in bright colors.

The dramatic situation in the region, the tragedy of its native population was concealed by fine eloquence, false three-digit numbers and facts, strange tricks veiled in a way that even the most experienced and unbiased specialists get confused. To support my words, I will give several examples. Among 2600 workers of the Stepanakert silk factory there were only 37 Azerbaijanis, but when the factory and its leading workers were mentioned, an equal number of Armenian and Azerbaijani workers was mentioned, although the Azerbaijani workers comprised only 1.4 percent of the factory personnel. Or in agriculture the Azerbaijani farms founded in the region after World War II produced 0.7 per cent of the gross agricultural output, again an equal number of Armenians and Azerbaijanis were presented in reports and newspapers. Moreover, Armenians were listed after Azerbaijanis.

It should be noted that the real social and economic picture in NKAR was abstractly pictured with invented numbers, pageant tone, trite slogans, emphasis on "fatherly care" of the Azerbaijani rulers in a way

that absolute whitewash aroused no suspicion. Surprisingly, the miserable workshops employing 30-100 workers and producing goods of 100-300 thousand rubles were presented as modern large industrial enterprises; tens of farms without land and roads, on the verge of collapse, were presented as the victory of collective farming. The village clubs and libraries with only 10-20 cubic meters of space, moldy walls, ceilings swollen from rains and contents dating from the 1930s were presented as modern cultural centers, etc. In brief, when speaking or writing about the economic, social and cultural development of the region they tried to create the false impression that there were no problems, restrictions and difficulties in NKAR. There was only "profusion, spiritual satisfaction, opportunities for development" in which only people with vivid imagination would be able to believe.

In fact, well-done work deserves praise and failure must be criticized. Whereas, in the context of industrial development of the Soviet Union and any of its regions separately, what was done in NKAR was so insignificant that the leadership of the autonomous region and their protectors also announced about what had been foreseen, planned but not carried out. Sometimes they just resorted to eyewash. Reports, speeches, articles, books were flooded with "facts" unfairly denying the past of Artsakh, desirable indices presented by senseless numbers. In order to hide that there was no economic development and mislead people comparison was often made with the year of 1923, actually the zero point. And it was announced in the victorious tone of "the red calico dress of Karabakh" that "the industry of NKAR has grown 912 times" (Komsomolskaya Pravda, November 2, 1983, N252).

The question occurs why economic indices were always compared with the year 1923, an unfavorable for Nagorno Karabakh, and not the pre-revolution favorable year of 1913? For it was assumed to compare economic development in Transcaucasia, including Soviet Azerbaijan with the year 1913.

In 1969 I was asked by the regional committee of the Communist Party to write a guidebook of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh. I compared the rate of growth of production in NKAR with 1913. The growth in 1969 was insignificant, 3.8 times, almost 15-20 times lower than in the USSR, Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia. After translating my work into Azerbaijani, Azerbaijan Publishers sent it to the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party. The

editors and publishers abridged the guidebook, including this "3.8 times". They demanded that I compare the industrial growth to the year 1923, of course. I refused. They "made it clear" that "the gross industrial output of the region in 1969 increased 215 times against 1923 and only 4.5 times against 1940." Although the state of industry in the region allowed concluding that these numbers were not the reality. Of course, 215 times looks like a good rate but inside it is empty because it was the result of comparison with the one-digit 1.4 of 1923. But when comparison was made to the three-digit 100 of 1913, a small number (3.8) was obtained, which was considered inappropriate to publish, and it was strictly prohibited to use this index anywhere because it did not correspond to the official falsification. Generally, Baku did not tolerate the people of Karabakh speaking on their behalf, comparing the "achievements" of NKAR to the pre-revolution years. Comparing the economic growth in Karabakh with the early 1920s was permitted, for those were the years of "birth" of the autonomous region, when the industrial enterprises did not work and tens of Armenian villages and the Armenian part of Shushi were still in smoke, when the orchards chopped and farms robbed by the Musavatist gangs had not been restored yet, when the Azerbaijani districts adjacent to the Armenian provinces were swarming with bandit groups, when Baku made new plots against the problem of Armenian Karabakh. Therefore when the economic rates of Nagorno Karabakh were compared to 1.4 percent of the year 1923, the "outstanding achievements" of the region within Soviet Azerbaijan, which would arouse envy in the developed countries of the world, at once became clear.

When comparison is made to the year 1913, or at least 1895, the poverty of Nagorno Karabakh becomes apparent. In this reference the region was a blank spot on the economic map of the USSR. In terms of culture and social security it was dark as the night. For this reason it was expedient to compare economic indices with the pre-revolution year of 1913. For this reason they resorted to whitewash, cited meaningless figures and facts, which were frequently announced in the regional, republic and Union press, misleading people interested in the state of economy in Karabakh. Remember the TV show with famous economists invited from Moscow which was broadcast all over Azerbaijan in 1988.

In the 1970-80s they wrote about the industrial growth of Nagorno Karabakh as if it were the most developed region of the USSR. However,

everyone who has traveled in Karabakh immediately felt that this "generosity" merely served for propaganda. It was even written, "One may say that communism was built in Nagorno Karabakh long ago." Therefore, incredible numbers were published. If it was stated in the mentioned guidebook of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh (Baku 1970, p. 11) that the industry of Karabakh increased 215 times compared with 1923, three years later this index went up to 369 times (Achievements of Nagorno Karabakh in the Ninth Five Years, Stepanakert, 1976, p. 21). However, two years later the first secretary of the Nagorno-Karabakh regional committee of the Communist Party B. Kevorkov set a new record, stating that the region's industry grew 565 times (In a United Family, Baku, 1978, p. 73). But this was not satisfactory either. In two years the Bakinski Rabochi (May 4, 1980) wrote that the industry of Nagorno Karabakh grew 800 times. This new "record high" was soon beaten. The brochure Soviet Nagorno Karabakh published in Baku in 1983 (p. 83) informs that production grew 912 times. According to these "reliable sources", within 10 years production in Nagorno Karabakh grew 697 times. However, four years later, the Communist, the official newspaper of the Communist Party, published in 1987 the article of the deputy chair of the executive committee of the regional soviet of people's deputies, the chair of the planning commission V. Tonian. "It is enough to cite such an eloquent fact: compared with the year of its foundation, the volume of production in the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh increased 103.1 times," states the article entitled "In a United Family" published in the Communist (September 29, 1987, N 226/19260). Now try to make head or tail of it. The mentioned 103.1 times is not convincing either because Heidar Aliyev stated in his speech during the 25<sup>th</sup> regional conference of the Communist Party, "Compared with the year 1923, the volume of production increased 215 times" (Soviet Karabakh, January 27, 1971). Shall we believe or laugh at this...? Where did they take this geometric progression, if in that period no new industrial enterprises worth mentioning were built, none of the old factories were reconstructed or expanded? The number of factory workers increased insignificantly, and investments did not grow. In other words, there was no miracle. Simply these people fond of noise and parades used these invented numbers against real facts and the real situation in Nagorno Karabakh in an effort to impede the urgent resolution of the problem of Nagorno Karabakh,

responsibility for the peaceful genocide in the region, and were overwhelmed by manilov-fashion generosity.

In reality, however, the industry of NKAR had increased 11 times by 1983 compared with 1913. It is known that in 1923 (because of the above mentioned destruction) only 1.4 percent of the region's GDP of 1913 was produced. Consequently, it is funny to compare one thing to another that does not exist. And if 11 times take away the rates of a number of collective farms, which were intensively changed into Soviet farms (sovkhoz), and their agricultural production was automatically added to industry, the picture will become clear and the numbers will be more modest. Industrial production, i.e. production of factories had increased 3 times by 1983 against 1913. And the number of workers (excluding collective farm workers employed in the fields and cattle farms of sovkhozes) increased about twice. We emphasize this because the agricultural production of 220 villages of Nagorno Karabakh was not included in industry either in 1913 or in 1923.

In 1923 only two of the pre-revolution enterprises were operating in Nagorno Karabakh. Compared with the production of 9.8 million rubles produced by the Stepanakert silk factory in 1913, silk produced in 1923 totaled 320 thousand rubles. Only 93 workers against the pre-revolution 3750 worked in the region. Hence, in 1923 the number of workers was low 40 times, and production 30 times against the year 1913.

In 1970 there were 36 factories with 5431 employees in NKAR. The GDP totaled 96 654 thousand rubles. Every enterprise had an average of 151 workers, and production per enterprise totaled 2675 thousand rubles. (See the list of enterprises, the number of workers, the amount of production and the size of salaries provided by the NKR Statistics Service.)

Is this much or little? To compare we will mention that only in Kirovakan (Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia), which produced as much goods in 1923 as NKAR, had 28 industrial enterprises with 35 thousand workers and production totaled 1.2 billion rubles. But in the books and articles about Kirovakan it is not mentioned that the industry of the city in 1983 had grown 4000 times against 1923. (Communist, February 24, 1984, N 84).

Thus, the industry in NKAR developed very slowly, causing economic migration to go up. Besides, the industrial development was not manifold, i.e. in most factories mainly women worked. 51 per cent of



workers in factories of the region were women, whereas in the Soviet Union, including Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia the majority of workers were men and female workers comprised 37-40 per cent. To show how poor Nagorno Karabakh was we will turn to undeniable facts. Compared to the industrial development of the Soviet Union, Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia, the industrial development of NKAR fell behind 20.7, 18.3 and 26.6 times respectively. These numbers were never mentioned in Stepanakert or Baku. Why should they mention them if it was easier to conceal and whitewash than to build factories and create jobs for the people of Karabakh. Especially under L. Brezhnev, when falsification, flattery, and eloquent speeches were encouraged. And it is also undeniable that the rulers of Azerbaijan and Karabakh then (in the 1970-1980s) were cool guys.

These were the facts circulated and kept in secret at the same time. Thus, the score is 912:11.6, eyewash won. And behind the numbers 912 and 11.6 there are two lives, two classes, as different as the numbers. On the one hand, the falsifiers of Baku, decorated with and protected behind the curtain of the number 912, committed crimes but remained unpunished. On the other hand, modest as the two-digit number 11 but proud and freedom-loving people of Karabakh who sought for justice and work everywhere but their native land. These numbers at the same time show how the history of Karabakh was distorted. These numbers, part of them trumpeted, part of them kept under lock, are the evidence to the sufferings of the native people of NKAR, political adventures of forcing them to leave their native land. These numbers reflect the economic hardship, sadism, social abuse, cruel repression, a rough anti-Armenian policy in the Armenian region and its disastrous consequences.

Yes, closing eyes at the reality was as absurd as falsifying the reality, ignoring the past and real facts. This is not all.

### **INVENTED FACTORIES AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE POLICY OF DESTRUCTION**

Now let us see how they "manipulated" the factories that were planned but were not built.

After World War II (1941-1945) Azerbaijan came into the habit of "forgetting" about Nagorno Karabakh in five-year, seven-year and current plans, i.e. not making any investments in building, increasing

annual plans of agricultural production and, on the contrary, cutting down funds for machines, spare parts, fodder, building materials, and consumer goods. This gave rise to righteous protests. The rulers of the Armenian region, whose rights had been taken away, had to kneel before Azerbaijani rulers under pressure from below. In such cases, according to a special plot, the latter displayed "generosity". Somehow, somewhere, they "found" something and "donated" to the region with a fireworks of propaganda. By such a small, insignificant "aid" Baku stifled the settlement of urgent problems of the Armenian region, kept the situation under control, and won the "positive attitude" of the Armenians. Below are cited several of the numerous examples of Baku's plots against NKAR. Here is strange information from the Vishka, the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party.

Starting with the 1960s building of one factory or another in Stepanakert was trumpeted during party conferences, in newspapers and books, with amazing unanimity, first cautiously, then solemnly after the appearance of Heidar Aliyev on the political stage of Azerbaijan. Then they asserted that "it is another vivid example of the fatherly care of the Azerbaijani leaders for Nagorno Karabakh," whereas the reality was the contrary. On the one hand, the operating factories in Stepanakert and elsewhere in the region were hastily closed down, and on the other hand, information about incredibly modern factories was propagated. The profitable silk factories in villages were closed down, leaving thousands of workers jobless. The excuse was that these factories operating since the 19<sup>th</sup> century did not comply with the level of the powerful Soviet industry. Then they destroyed several dozens of small factories of tiles, ceramics, carpentry and vodka distillation. They hastily closed down the processing factory of Stepanakert built in 8 years and donated all the equipment to the Soviet Socialist Autonomous Republic of Nakhidjevan. The same was with the carpet weaving and brick factories of Stepanakert. The first was transformed into a dormitory and the second was given to the cattle thieves from the district of Lachin to use as a stable.

To calm the anger of the Karabakh Armenians, the Azerbaijani rulers put forward the slogan "Destroy to build". It was decided to equip the empty building of the food factory for production of micro engines. The mass media kept drumming the necessity of the factory, the fact that it

would provide employment to 1500 workers (Forty Years of NKAR, Baku, 1963, p. 30). However, two years later it became known that instead of micro engines lathe tools would be produced and the factory would have 300 instead 1500 workers. It was even pointed out that the Engineering Institute of Road Building in Rostov had worked out the layout of the future factory. Years passed but the factory was not opened. It turned out that it was built in the Azerbaijani city of Aghdam by Armenian builders, on the funds provided for NKAR. In the June 7, 1973 edition of the Vishka the article devoted to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh ran, "By the end of the five-year plan a factory of trade equipment will be built in the center of the region Stepanakert." But two five-year plans passed and the factory was not built.

In the June 18, 1981 edition of the same newspaper it was written, "Currently a new factory of car repair is being built in Stepanakert." Moreover, it turned out that "in January 1982 Heidar Aliyev personally walked around its departments." Heidar Aliyev, the honorable guest, announced to the Party activists in Stepanakert that he had visited "the building site of the large factory of agricultural machinery". In June of the same year in the 141<sup>st</sup> edition the Vishka again wrote about the construction of "the car repair factory".

Another year passed. In 1983 in Moscow B. Kevorkov echoed to his "boss" in the journal Agitator, "A large factory of agricultural machinery is being built in Stepanakert." But in reality none of these factories was built in Stepanakert. The factory of car repair was built in Baku, the factory of agricultural machinery in Gandzak, the factory of mini engines in Lenkoran, etc., all of them on the investments provided for Nagorno Karabakh and by Armenian builders.

And everyone who tried to reveal the false facts provided by the Vishka became victims of blackmail at once. The newspaper hurried to stick labels to Armenians in the article Isn't it Foreign Influence?

As for culture, nothing significant was done in this sphere either. For over 15 years it was planned to build a cultural center admitting 800 people, but the construction was postponed from one five-year plan to another. The same was with the construction of the building for regional archives (which were kept in the basement of an administrative building where the documents decayed from humidity) although the project and estimated costs had long been ready. The same was with the center of

pioneers and the sports complex. Baku gave plenty of promises but time passed and no work was done.

Sports and physical training were, in fact, dead in the region. Most schools did not have sports equipment, there were no sports schools for children, sports grounds, swimming pools, in other words, basic conditions for physical training of children in rural areas.

Meanwhile, Heidar Aliyev ordered to build the marble mausoleum of Molla Vagif in Shushi. The mausoleum built on the NKAR budget became the hangout of Gray Wolves. Home-museums of a number of Azerbaijanis were built in Shushi although neither Huzair Hajibekov, nor Byulbyul and Vagif were from Shushi. This did not hinder turkishizing of Shushi and make it "the birthplace" of renowned Azerbaijanis.

It is unfair, if not irritating, that the poorer the Armenians of Artsakh became, the more colorfully their life was presented. The more backward the social and economic life was in the Armenian region, the more speeches were made about prosperity and well-being. All this noise was decorated with "eloquent" but false slogans about friendship of nations and internationalism. Simply the inhumane attitude towards the Armenians of Artsakh was introduced as immeasurable "magnanimity" of the Azerbaijani rulers towards Nagorno Karabakh. Thousands of examples can be given to illustrate how Baku worked out and adopted plans to impose on Nagorno Karabakh and squeeze, humiliate and terrorize it.

If we add to what was already said how Armenian settlements and factories were destroyed, how orchards were cut and the profitable branch of the region's economy of historical importance eliminated, how the Armenian historical architectural monuments were used for keeping cattle, the picture of the anti-Armenian policy of discrimination implemented by Azerbaijan will become complete. The Azeris, and not only them, never wrote or at least mentioned about this, whereas, in the 1950s the decay of the Nagorno-Karabakh industry started.

It was not accidental that during the regional conference of the Communist Party in 1955 two deputies warned that almost all the industrial enterprises in Nagorno Karabakh had been closed down. Only one or two ateliers and the only silk factory of Stepanakert had been left (these distressing facts are from the stenography of the conference).

Apparently, the anti-Armenian policy in Nagorno Karabakh was based on two principles: a) ruining the factories in Nagorno Karabakh

making thousands of jobless workers leave their home country, b) carefully concealing crimes committed against the Armenians of Artsakh, giving promises to the people of Karabakh with an air of a benefactor, internationalist with a bleeding heart.

The consequences of destruction and "construction" logic were more than sad. In a short period of time 54 small factories in 44 settlements of Artsakh were closed down, and as a result about 2600 workers were compelled to join thousands of economic migrants from Karabakh in Baku, Sumgait and Mingeçaur. 47 Armenian villages were erased from the map of the Armenian region of Artsakh. Unfortunately, nothing was built instead although the Party and the government gave plenty of false promises. Labeled as "enterprises that are inappropriate for the powerful socialist country", the factories of lime, tiles, timber, matches, vodka distillation, linseed oil, cheese were closed down. By a single order the six water power plants of Nagorno Karabakh were destroyed and robbed.

After the forced unification of Nagorno Karabakh with Azerbaijan roads had not been repaired. And after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation (1936) the roads were completely neglected. In other words, all through the period when Nagorno Karabakh was part of Azerbaijan, no roads with hard covering were built in the territory of the Armenian autonomy. The old roads were not repaired either. This particularly refers to the road connecting Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia.

It is common knowledge that roads and transport have an important strategic, political, economic and psychological role, therefore roads are often referred to as the economic arteries of a country. But in Nagorno Karabakh normal blood circulation was blocked in the entire region in accordance with plans. The aim was again to displace the local population from their native land.

### ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF MISUSE OF POWER

The Armenian society knows the reservoir of Sarsang to have strategic importance for the economy of Artsakh. This is true but partly. From the practical, economic, political, diplomatic and propagandist aspects it is important to know certain details of the history of its construction, which will reveal separate shocking episodes of the anti-Armenian policy implemented by the Azerbaijani authorities against Karabakh. By the way, our long search for information produced positive

results, and the materials at hand provide necessary ground for discussing this problem.

NKR is mainly an agrarian country, and agriculture provides the lion's share of its GDP. We would not be mistaken to state that the fate of the economy of the newly founded state is greatly reliant on nature.

Long-lasting observations showed that the soil here lavishly rewards people once in four years. The rest of the time there are droughts. Unfortunately, the labor of the farmer is lost in vain. Meanwhile, over one hundred rivers flow across the territory of the region. Yes, the Injan, Tartar, Khachenaget, Karkar, Khonashen, Varanda, Ishkhanaget, Jegporaget, Zinganakap, and other rivers flow in deep gorges, whereas the Armenian villages situated on mountain sides, where crops crave for water...

Whereas canals were built all over the former Soviet Union, including Azerbaijan. For example, during the Soviet rule irrigated farming land increased four times. Actually, 80 per cent of farming land of the republic was irrigated. Meanwhile, in Karabakh annexed by Azerbaijan, or as they called it, "gozal Garabagh, the indivisible part of Azerbaijan" irrigated land became less by 21.2 percent after the construction of the reservoir of Sarsang. Namely, there was 22 thousand hectares of irrigated land in 1923, and 16.8 thousand hectares in 1978, whereas Karabakh had most water resources in Transcaucasia. Besides, experts state that in the Armenian region there are favorable conditions for changing the direction of the rivers and storing certain amounts of water.

According to official scientific data (in the 1920-1930s) water resources in the rivers of Nagorno-Karabakh totaled 1.2 billion cu m. Actually, according to Professor S. Musaelian, there is 244 thousand cu m water per square km in NKR, 81 thousand in Azerbaijan and 215 thousand in Armenia. Or by the amount of water per one person NKR is ahead of Azerbaijan six times, Armenia three times, and Georgia 2.5 times. In fact, this is great wealth, which flows to the territory of the Turk-Azeris becoming a source of profusion for them.

The undeniable facts provide a reason for reflecting. On the one hand, the building of irrigation canals was banned in Karabakh, and on the other hand, the plans of production of agricultural products were increased. They demanded without giving anything in return. For decades the Armenian villages did not receive building materials, fodder, machines and so on.



In the early 1960s a group of practical young people in NKAR tried to improve the situation in their native region. Among them was Sergey Aslanian, candidate of sciences in agriculture. His scientific theses, especially the one concerning anti-hail stations attracted the attention of specialists from Moscow, Moldova, and even Chile, dealing with the problems of agriculture in mountainous countries. Using his connections, he worked out a large-scale project of construction of a water supply system and presented it to the bureau of the regional committee. He sent it to the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Ministry of Agriculture to include it in the 8<sup>th</sup> five-year plan. The Central Committee demanded the opinion of the Azerbaijani Communist Party. The latter ignored the necessity of the project and focused its attention on its possible consequences. And the consequence would be fast development of the economy of Karabakh. The Armenians would at last start living a decent life, and would not leave their settlements. The program was inconsistent with the policy "Karabakh without Armenians", therefore Baku achieved the dismissal of S. Aslanian from the post of director of the department of agriculture of the Nagorno-Karabakh regional committee and moved to Yerevan. Nevertheless, a point from the program presented by "Dashnak nationalists", the construction of the water reservoir of Sarsang on the river Tartar, was approved by the Azeris, because only 12 percent of the waters of the Tartar would be used in Nagorno Karabakh. The rest would flow to the Azerbaijani regions adjacent to Martakert.

However, Baku thought that even 12 percent was too much. Here is what the chairman of Soviet Azerbaijan's Council of Ministers Alikhanov said in a government consultation, "We accept the idea of Tartar Water Construction but it should be taken into consideration that we will supply only 6 percent of the water of the reservoir to Nagorno Karabakh. Now you have to ground the proposal of the government." They reconsidered the project, made essential changes to the project and budget. As later the engineer of the project Henrik Israelian said, he had suggested building a dam in the place where the rivers Tartar and Trghgh join. About as much water would gather in the huge gorges as in Sarsang. And what is more important, the water would flow by gravity to Maghavuz, Mets Shen, Mokhratagh, Nerkin Horatagh and other villages of the Armenian district of Martakert and would irrigate about 12 thousand hectares of land. In addition, the village of Khalvatashen would be revived, for the new system would need workers. However, he was

reprimanded and made to choose the place near the ancient bridge of Sarsang for the dam. "As a result, about 1500 hectares of irrigated land belonging to the land-lacking villages of the district of Haterk-Drmbon, over 15 Armenian historical and architectural monuments, dozens of industrial buildings remained under water," remembers the engineer. Moreover, powerful pumping stations are required to pump the water from the reservoir high in the mountains to villages situated near the reservoir, as well as the settlements adjacent to Martakert. Moreover, for seventy years, each year from May to October Azerbaijani guards watched the rivers in Artsakh day and night not to allow Armenians to use the water of rivers running across their own country.

This is not all. If the Small Bay were built near the settlement of Gietin Gomer, water would flow to Martakert via one of the canals, and to Talish via another canal, and 7 thousand hectares of land would be irrigated. But the Azerbaijani leaders were not sleeping. After the almighty interference of Alikhanov the unit was built in a low-lying area, in the place of the power plant, factories of matches, rubber, and woodwork and Mataghis, the industrial community of the local workers. First, another settlement remained under the water forever, and what is more intolerable, the canals were built in the Azerbaijani 7-8 km lower-lying territory, and could not supply the district of Martakert. Thus, the water reservoir built in the territory of Nagorno Karabakh, on its investments and by Armenian workers not only did not favor the development of agriculture of the region but also became a disaster for a number of collective farms in the district of Martakert. They lost thousands of hectares of land, dozens of monuments, numerous industrial buildings and houses left under water, and what is more ironic, they were could not use the water of the Tartar river as they did formerly, and as a result 5.2 thousand hectares of land could not be irrigated any more. Once in 1966, A. Movsisian from Mataghis living in Moscow, a senior official of the USSR Ministry of Agriculture, J. Abramov from Mets Shen, member of the Communist Party since 1919, and others (11 people) predicted the danger and wrote to the government, asking to prevent damage to the region. Moscow again ignored the people of Karabakh and handed the "case" to the Azerbaijani authorities. The latter were pleased with and encouraged by the trust of Moscow. Rolling up their sleeves they first forbade the local farms to build small canals and artesian wells on their rare means. They did not provide

machines, building materials, the engineering institutes of Baku did not accept orders from Nagorno Karabakh. Unemployment made builders leave Karabakh. And this is exactly what Baku had wanted.

Anyway, what is the role of the reservoir and the power plant? How can they serve the young republic at best? Will Sarsang, more exactly the river Tartar be an essential factor in economic and political relationships between NKR and Azerbaijan in the future? And finally is Sarsang the whole of the potential of the Tartar river or does it have more capacities which would greatly promote the economy of NKR?

Some information on Sarsang. The building of the reservoir started in 1965. It lasted for 12 years and ended in 1977. The reservoir is 12-14 m long, 1.5-2 m wide, the height of the dam is 125 m and the volume is 0.5 billion cu m. It is one of the largest reservoirs in Transcaucasia, which irrigates over 150 thousand hectares of farming land.

The water power plant of Sarsang opened on December 24, 1976. Its two turbines supplied by a 386 m long tunnel starting from the reservoir produce 50 thousand kWh of electricity. This electricity was mainly supplied to the Azerbaijani cities of Mir Bashir and Aghdam and partly the Armenian region of Martakert until the Artsakh movement.

In an effort to escape the Defense Army of Karabakh, the Azeris put out of order the water power plant as well. For the newly established republic at war it was of vital importance to open the water power plant of Sarsang and supply electricity to the capital and the regions. With the help of Armenian Energy Grid Building, Armenian Energy Regulation and Armenian Energy the water power plant was reconstructed, 250 transmission towers and 200 km of 110 V and 40 V transmission lines were restored, the grid was repaired and the rural population got electricity supply.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that during the construction of both the reservoir and the water power plant about 80 million rubles were "saved" but in fact robbed. According to documents and eyewitnesses, on this means one of the metro stations of Baku, different public and cultural buildings and places of entertainment were built in the cities of Mir Bashir, Aghdam, Kelbajar.

It is interesting to know where this immense sum appeared. One of the sidewalls of the power plant almost leans against the steep side, and the stones falling from it reach the plant. The area around the emergency sluice gate was not built up, and the water floods the yard of the plant.

The reservoir cannot accumulate the foreseen 0.5 billion cu m of water because the upper part of the dam was not built. Filtration is not sufficient. The monuments and the layer of fertile land were not removed. In some parts the sides of the reservoir were not walled. That is to say, a great number of machines, and the building materials were not used efficiently. Hence, 80 million rubles were saved.

By the way, by initial estimates the project cost 70 million rubles, 5 times more than the annual budget of Nagorno Karabakh. The budget was later revised, recalculated and through bribes and for invented emergencies the budget was tripled mounting to 210 million rubles. Moreover, by a single strike of a pen this sum was included in the NKAR poor budget and then as evidence to the "fatherly care of the Azerbaijani leaders" it was thrown into the mouth of the propaganda machine. At the same time the authorities of the region did not attend to construction and investments. How could the people of Karabakh control the funds provided for Sarsang if its construction and maintenance was assumed by Mir Bashir located in 20-25 km (outside the border of Nagorno Karabakh) instead of the town Martakert as the project provided for, and all the financial transactions were carried out in Mir Bashir through a bank of Baku? And if we add that both the manager of the construction and the building company were situated far from the autonomy and managed the wealth of Karabakh the way they liked, the picture will become more or less clear.

#### GOVERNMENT PLAN OF RECRUITMENT OF ARMENIANS

It is well known that the Tatar-Azerbaijanis did not have their own building and architecture until the 1960s, and their houses were built by the Armenian masters, who held a monopoly in building in Azerbaijan. Yet, in the late 1930s the chair of the regional executive committee of Nagorno Karabakh Karkarian stated with pity, "Every year Azerbaijan cuts funds for building, and the jobless builders leave the Armenian region in large numbers." Over 52 thousand Armenian builders from Artsakh were said to work in Soviet Azerbaijan (NKR archives, fund 2, schedule 15, file 101, page 75).

This is the reason why Muslim mosques with characteristic features of Armenian architecture appeared. Today such constructions are found not only in the neighboring Azerbaijani regions but also throughout

Azerbaijan, where a number of mosques and houses of resettled Tatars have been preserved.

Moreover, their mosques remind Armenian single-nave churches, only with a different appearance and without an apse. These were built by the same Armenian building technique. This imitation of details of Armenian architecture by nomadic cattle-breeders was felt up to the Soviet times and even later (M. Sargisian, *The History of Building of Shushi* Yerevan, 1996, p. 26-27; A.S. Vartanessov, *Essay on Houses and Builders from Nagorno Karabakh*, Researches of the Azerbaijani Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, volume 25, Series on History, 1936, p. 117-118).

By the way, since 1920 every year thousands of Armenian young men were consistently recruited in Artsakh-Karabakh and in the Armenian settlements in Azerbaijan and sent to Baku and other Azerbaijani towns to work in factories and building companies, as well as the on the land near the river Arax, and to found new settlements. Later, especially in the 1940-1960s not only young men but also girls were recruited from the villages of Artsakh.

Orders came from above. Baku threatened its local agents that the recruitment of Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh was an important decision of the government and was to be implemented immediately. They were to build up Baku, Sumgait, Mingechaur, Kirovabad. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians fell victims to this terrible resettlement, which resulted in many abandoned villages in Artsakh. People went to build towns later to be displaced from there. Whereas, if there were not for the Armenian builders, Baku would consist of colorless and tasteless districts and quarters. Labor was moved from Artsakh-Karabakh in an organized way, and Azerbaijani shepherd resettling in their place filled in the gap.

In brief, the plot of Baku pursued three aims: forcing out Armenians from Artsakh, settling Artsakh with Azerbaijanis and building up Azerbaijani cities. The results of this policy were more than tangible. If during the 40 post-war years the number of Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh dropped by 18 percent, the number of Azerbaijanis increased 3.5 times. Here is another example: if in 1912 Armenians comprised 61.5 percent of the population of 42 400 in Shushi, according to the results of a census taken in 1989 not a single Armenian lived there. This is the result of the anti-Armenian policy of Azerbaijan, the logic and

strategy of internationalist Azeris to "reconcile Muslims and Armenians". This is the doctrine of "granting vast sovereignty to Nagorno Karabakh within Azerbaijan".

Only in the valley of the rivers Kura and Arax the Armenians of Karabakh founded 13 settlements in 1928-1938. When these sovkhoses prospered, they were united with the region of Zhdanov within Azerbaijan. Thus they deprived Nagorno Karabakh from the border with Iran, and in a Turkish manner they misappropriated the immense economic and cultural potential created by the Armenians. Then they gradually started displacing Armenians and changing the leaders of these ethnic Armenian regions. Then they resettled a great number of nomadic Turk-Azeris in these fertile fields and houses belonging to Armenians. In other words, they became "native" inhabitants of the region of Zhdanov. By the end of the 1950s the region was almost entirely inhabited with Azeris.

One of the farms called Noragyugh, had a secondary school with 700 pupils. But after a series of terrorist "acts" a 90-year-old woman with her three daughters had stayed in the village by 1988. Since two of her daughters were disabled, they could not run away. The Turkish rabble, making fun of them, "loaded" them on the van and "dumped" them on the border of Armenia.

"The tragedy of the region of Zhdanov reveals the mechanism of formation of the holy "native" land of yesterday's Turkmen, Turks, Tatars, again Turks, today's seven million Azerbaijanis" (A. Hakobjanian, *The Origin of Liberation War in Artsakh*, Yerevan, 2001, p. 31-35). Therefore, Heidar Aliyev boasted insolently at the Azerbaijani parliament (February 7, 1991) that during the years of his ruling azerbaijanization of the Armenian region was implemented more successfully (Soviet Karabakh, February 13, 1991).

#### **THE COMPONENTS OF THE POLICY OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION**

The situation was much more troubling with regard to the supply of food and consumer goods to the people of Nagorno Karabakh. Armenians had to leave for Yerevan, Aghdam or already azerbaijanized Shushi to do shopping, although we were reassured that the plan of supply of food to the Armenian settlements was implemented by 120-150 percent "thanks to the fatherly care of the Azerbaijani rulers". In

other words, part of funds "were taken away" from Azerbaijanis and provided to Armenians. However, it became clear that this index was false, for in Stepanakert, an industrial, scientific, cultural and educational center, 6.5 kg of butter per capita was sold during the year 1971, against 13.7 kg in almost entirely azerbaijanized Shushi, 16.1 kg of sugar was sold in Stepanakert and 32 kg in Shushi, 20 kg of meat in Stepanakert and 28 kg in Shushi, 184 deciliters of vodka in Stepanakert and 382 deciliters in Shushi, 44 kg of dairy products in Stepanakert and 151 kg in Shushi.

Moreover, according to official statistics, in other Armenian parts of Nagorno Karabakh the picture is shocking. Compared with the Union, Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia 7-10 times less food was sold in Nagorno Karabakh in 1971. In the same year Nagorno Karabakh produced 12 thousand tons of meat but Baku supplied only 600 tons of meat to Nagorno Karabakh, that is only 5 percent of meat produced. The sales of meat in the region of Martakert totaled 6 tons against 3 thousand tons produced for the government. Meanwhile, the Armenian region had 46 thousand inhabitants. In the same year 38 kg of meat, 307 kg of dairy products, 38.8 kg of sugar and 35 kg of grocery per capita was sold in the USSR (The Agitator, N12, 1978, p. 62). Meanwhile, the average salary in Nagorno Karabakh totaled 97 rubles against 211 rubles in the Union.

Owing to my job I have often witnessed how the regional committee of the Communist Party and the regional executive committee were unable to solve the question of salary of a technician or the construction of a village library of an estimated cost of 5 thousand rubles.

"It is impossible to save the town of Martakert from water famine" (The Soviet Karabakh, September 22, 1971), whereas the sovkhoz of the same town annually produced 20-25 thousand tons of grapes, 1200-1500 tons of grain, 1300 tons of milk, 200-250 tons of meat, 2000 tons of vegetables, 20-25 tons of wool, 10 tons of silk chrysalis, 1600 thousand eggs. But the farm did not have the right to spend 200-300 thousand rubles from its own income to build a water pipeline. Why? Because Baku did not want them to, but at the same time warned that water bills had to be paid by all means. This was a law, and the Armenians honor the law.

The problem of drinking water was grave in the regional center Stepanakert. Daily supply of water per capita was two liters. In fact,

there was a source of water in the town called "three taps". "At any time of the year, day or night, no matter how early you arrive there, there are already buckets put side by side forming three queues. Covering long distances, wasting a lot of time, the inhabitants of the city with a population of 50 thousand could hardly take a bucket of water home" (Soviet Karabakh Newspaper, February 7, 1971). When people protested, they were immediately accused of "local nationalism" and... The factories of the city often came to a halt because of the lack of water. The sewage of the city saw no water for months and the flats "with all the modern conveniences", smelt terribly. Thus, the region with an industry that had developed 912 times could not afford to build an 8 km water pipeline within 17 years.

Another paradox is that there were no institutes of research, universities and colleges, publishing houses, TV studios in the Armenian region. The region did not have a regional forest cadastre, although 40 percent of its territory was covered with forests.

The availability rate of hospitals, beds and doctors was 22-26 percent, pharmacies and medicine 16 percent, communal services 13.5 percent. Only 3 percent of attended nursery schools in Nagorno Karabakh. People had to wait for 20-25 years to receive an apartment in Stepanakert.

At the same time in Nagorno Karabakh the plan of subscription for newspapers and magazines per capita exceeded the average rate in the Soviet Union 6 times and the average rate in Azerbaijan 22 times. The annual plan of cinema attendance in the Armenian region was 25 people, whereas in Azerbaijan only 4. In Nagorno Karabakh public utilities were 17 rubles per capita, while in Azerbaijani regions only 3.7. Communication between the capital, regional centers, villages by coaches was hardly 9 percent.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to insist that the claims of the people of Karabakh were caused by the severe social and economic policy. It would be more proper to state that the severe social and economic policy, which, according to A. Volsky, made Nagorno Karabakh one of the neglected parts of the Soviet Union, was one of the manifestations of ethnic discrimination policies. And the prime aim of discrimination was to violate the right of the native Armenians for self-determination. It was not a secret that in the Armenian region problems were never solved in favor of the interests of the Armenian population, especially in the spheres of culture, education, and government. Wasn't it a political



adventure when in 1941-1945 35 percent of the Armenian population of the region (which is 4-5 times more than in the neighboring Azerbaijani regions) were enlisted?

Wasn't it a crime against the Armenians when on June 14, 1949 thousands of innocent Armenians from Artsakh were exiled to Altai? Wasn't it adventurousness when in December of 1950 the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party ordered to take away the wool of bedding to implement the additional plan of 200 tons of wool on the occasion of Stalin's birthday? Wasn't it genocide when hard conditions were established, making the native Armenian population, 9 out of 10, to leave their homes (Shahen Mkrtichian, *Artsakh*, Yerevan, 1991, p. 71-73)?

On top of all, the propagandist raving of the Azerbaijani scientist Elikhan Mehtiev that "from the economic and cultural aspects NKAR was in a much better state and quality of life was higher than in the other regions of Azerbaijan and Armenia".

Another Azerbaijani scientist, now Academician Mahmet Izmailov wrote, "Nagorno Karabakh is a developed industrial and agricultural region and by its level of development it is ahead of the other regions of Azerbaijan" (The Bakinski Rabochi, January 15, 1991). If Izmailov considers himself a serious scientist, he must have read the article by the chairman of the special governmental commission on NKAR, head of department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union Communist Party Arkady Volsky, "Traveling across the country I never met such indifference towards human beings as in Nagorno Karabakh" (published in newspaper number 1 in the USSR the Pravda, January 15, 1989). And in the third edition of the Moscow magazine Politicheskoye Obrazovanie (Political Education) in 1989 the political scientist V. Dorofeev wrote, "The government and cooperative enterprises of Nagorno Karabakh only received 69 times less capital investments on average in 1981-1985 than in Azerbaijan." And, in fact, if in 6 years the state budget of Soviet Azerbaijan increased 106.5 times, the state budget of Nagorno Karabakh increased only 3.6 times.

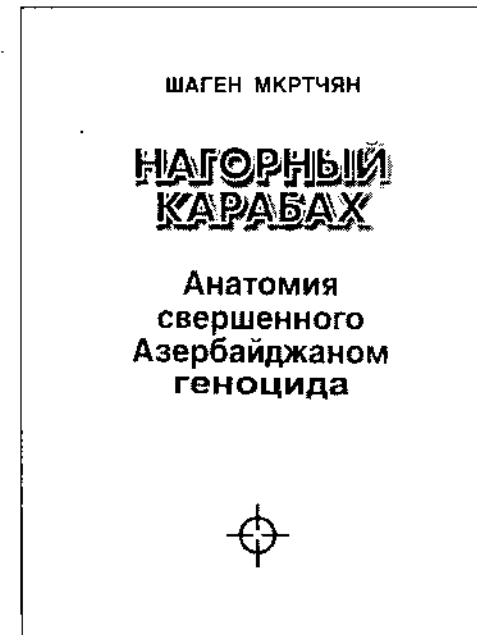
Dozens of similar facts can be enumerated, evidence can be brought, but I think there is no need, for the picture is more than clear.

I do not think they know in Baku that liars have short legs. Otherwise, Heidar Aliyev, the president of Azerbaijan, would not advise his venal balloon-blowers, "Try to make your lies, falsifications look plausible to

make them difficult to reveal and they have certain resistance." Whereas, distortion, false information and facts should not exist at all. Anyway. The abovementioned facts allow concluding that throughout the millenniums of the history of Artsakh-Karabakh there was no other period when the Armenians were treated as shamelessly and disrespectfully as under the Azerbaijani rule.

In brief, the sadist policy against the Armenians of Karabakh had one overt goal - to hinder the social and economic development of the Armenian region, violate the dignity and interests of the native Armenian population, establish unbearable conditions, expedite the displacement of the Armenians from the region.

*P.S. After listening to my speech on this subject at the Armenian center in Moscow, Academician K. Khachaturov, USSR Academy of Sciences, head in hands, regretted that he did not have at hand the mentioned shocking facts during the TV show in Baku.*



## CHAPTER 6

### FLOCK IS COMING, NOMADS ARE FOLLOWING

*Development of sheep breeding was aimed at settling a great number of Turk-Azeris in the region.*

For decades official Baku did not disturb itself with the interests of the Armenian population and even the economy of the region. On the contrary, Baku's aim was to impair their interests. Otherwise, Baku would not have destroyed dozens of enterprises in Karabakh, part of the Soviet Union constitutionally, would not have ruined beekeeping and goat breeding, mulberry gardens, crafts, vegetable farming, which are the most profitable economic activities in the region, and imposed developing a branch of agriculture for which natural and economic conditions were not favorable. But neither this circumstance, nor the erosion of land caused by an excessive number of sheep in pastures worried the destroyers of nature of the region lacking land.

The pastures the region (28 471 hectares) and fodder supply stored by farms were hardly sufficient to keep about 100 thousand sheep. Even in the 1930s when the country's livestock totaled 104 606 (including 50 716 cows and 39 433 sheep), the directors of farms, agronomists, cattle farmers, even the party and state constantly complained of the lack of pastures and supply of fodder. But after the Transcaucasian Federation was dissolved, the Azerbaijani rulers, neglecting the righteous protests of the Karabakh Armenians, increased the plans for the cattle livestock 4.5 times and the number of sheep 8 times in the region, whereas the supply of fodder was the same as in the early 1930s.

At the same time, in some regions of Azerbaijan the livestock of sheep was cut down, and in other regions sheep breeding was completely eliminated, although it was an important and profitable branch of agriculture in Azerbaijan. Here are facts to prove what was said. In the period between 1934 and 1975 the livestock of sheep in Azerbaijan increased twice, though the total area of pastures in the republic was 2 056 233 hectares. In the Autonomous Republic of Nakhidjevan with 102 971 hectares of pastures the number of sheep (158 556) dropped by 20.2 thousand, whereas for the 28 471 hectares of Nagorno Karabakh (including only 1300 hectares of winter pastures) 270 thousand or 8

times more sheep was planned. Thus, against 2 sheep per hectare in Azerbaijan and 1 sheep per hectare in Nakhidjevan 8 sheep per hectare was planned for Nagorno Karabakh. Discrimination was also part of planning of yield and extra state plan per animal.

Thus, under the April 17, 1969 decision N17 of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party and the government of Soviet Azerbaijan it was planned to shear 2.2 kg of wool per sheep in NKAR, while in the Autonomous Republic of Nakhidjevan only 1.5 kg, including additional 116.6 tons and 38 tons of wool respectively (the copy of this document is in the author's personal archive).

In the same period the total area of irrigated land increased 2.5 times in Azerbaijan, 1.8 times in Nakhidjevan, whereas in Nagorno Karabakh was cut down by 21 percent. Only 0.7 percent or 221 hectares of area under feed crops in the region was irrigated. And if we add that Nagorno Karabakh did not have a single factory of mixed fodder, a warehouse to store and a processing unit to process an annual 100 thousand tons of grain produced in the region, we will observe that the situation was more complicated than one could have supposed.

Moreover, in order to increase economic pressure on Karabakh Baku increased the livestock plan 10 times, which made sustainable use of resources impossible. In this way Baku tried to load ten tons onto a 2-ton car. As words of praise for the Azerbaijani rulers we will admit that they somehow "had the cargo loaded onto the car" abusing state power and putting forward political accusations. However, the car was not able to move and carry such weight. The tyres burst, the engine failed and the car broke down. To support my words I will cite a passage from the letter written by the author to the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on behalf of the people of Karabakh (February 23, 1980).

"We, the cattle-breeders, mechanics, gardeners of the villages Arpagyaduk (Karing), Petrosashen, Khtsaber, Hin Taghlar, Dolanlar, Aghajakend (Khandzadzor), Tsamdzor, Banazur, Mul kudara (Hayrenater), Tsor and other villages of the region of Hadrut of the Autonomous Republic of Nagorno Karabakh address you with the request to think about our future.

As a result of indifference, carelessness and ethnic discrimination policy of the government agencies of Soviet Azerbaijan our formerly

flourishing villages were ruined, the state and collective farms have reached the verge of collapse.

Although gross agricultural output per capita in our Armenian region exceeded that of the neighboring Azerbaijani districts 10 times, we received 100-1000 times less materials, subsidies, investments than the Azerbaijanis.

Over the past 41 post-Soviet years they failed to solve the problem of social infrastructures and irrigation, no modern cattle farms and factories were opened in the Armenian settlements. The state of mountain farms and villages were even worse. Having no roads and possibility to use agricultural machinery, with little labor, primitive methods were used and as a result the cost of production was high and the profit did not cover production costs. Consequently, farmers were paid little for their hard work, 10-15 times less than the average salary of farmers in the Soviet Union and the republic. People had to migrate from their native villages, schools were closed down, and settlements were abandoned. For its part, this resulted in bad use of pastures, thousands of hectares of fertile land remain uncultivated, and orchards become savage.

Most settlements in the region did not have buses running to the district or the regional center. Over the past 30 years not a single cultural or public building was founded, not a single kilometer of road was repaired, no new ways of communications were introduced, pastures and cattle farms were not supplied with electricity. Medical and cultural services were too poor, let alone sport – there were no gyms or sports grounds in the settlements of the region. Retail trade was not permanent. One could not find food, clothes and other goods in the shops. As for public food places, after the war no step was taken in this direction. The farms were not supplied with necessary building materials. We had to buy building materials illegally from the neighboring Azerbaijani districts ten times expensive.

We had no possibility to listen to programs, to watch performances in our mother tongue. We were not allowed to come in touch with outstanding artistes of our nation. Moreover, very often we were offered literature, radio and TV programs, which openly distorted our history, profaned cultural monuments, hurting our national dignity in a rude Turkish manner. To state it clearly, a cruel policy was implemented against our nation, so we were made to leave the land of our ancestors.”

And this was what Azeris aspired to and planned incessantly. (Shahen Mkrtchian, *I Saw Another War in Artsakh*, Yerevan, 1996, p. 123-125)

This political chaos pursuing far-reaching goals became a disaster for the farms of the region. “On many farms there was not enough fodder, and they had to cut the trees and fed the cattle with buds” (*Soviet Karabakh Newspaper*, March 21, 1972, N67). Try to develop cattle breeding on buds. The consequences of cattle breeding actually ruined formerly prospering farms, together with mountainsides near many Armenian settlements were exposed to erosion, thousands of hectares of pastures, gardens and forests were destroyed under the hoofs of the cattle.

This was the aim of increasing the plan of livestock 8 times. However, one would be mistaken to think that this was the only aim of Baku. In addition to this, the Azerbaijani rulers successfully fulfilled their inherited dream to resettle Karabakh with Azerbaijanis in the place of the displaced Armenians. By the way, this plan full of dangerous consequences for the existence of the autonomy of Nagorno Karabakh was not implemented by orders or by force but through economic, social and political levers. What does this mean? This means that almost all the farms of the autonomous region made by the government to develop sheep breeding despite lacking pastures, invented an unacceptable method – “distance” sheep breeding. On their scarce funds farms bought pastures outside the region, hired a great number of shepherds, built sheep-cots, transported great amounts of fodder, food, fuel, at distances of 300-400 km. Similarly, they could have compelled NKAR to rent territories in tundra and breed deer.

Unfortunately, after such waste of effort and money the farms of the region carried out the current as well as five-year plans with losses. According to the data of the regional agricultural department, in 1966 losses totaled 1524 thousand rubles, whereas the profit was only 2240 thousand rubles. All the indices show the damage of sheep breeding for the region. The experience of centuries and estimations showed that NKAR could keep 20-30 thousand sheep, whereas Baku compelled to multiply this number 10 times.

It should be noted that the level of sheep breeding in the region was very poor. Sheep were kept in a primitive manner, in sheep-cots at wintertime and in the mountains in summer. Sheep were bred in a

nomadic way, which had never existed in this region over the past 4 thousand years.

The other important fact that cannot be ignored is that the development of sheep breeding in Karabakh was planned without consideration of the declining number of population of the region. As a result of overlooking this fact especially small farms appeared in a poor state. The directors of farms had to invite shepherds and milkmaids from the Azerbaijani regions near the winter pastures and proposed, "You may keep as much cattle of your own as you wish only take care of our sheep, too." Calculations show that out of 500-700 sheep on collective farms 200-300 belonged to Azerbaijanis, which ate most of the fodder provided for the collective flock. Such privileges were granted for the simple reason that Baku appreciated the work and political maturity of local leaders by the number of sheep (not the amount of products), without taking into account that farms had no income from sheep breeding.

Here I again have to tell about a shocking incident that the Armenians of Artsakh had ever witnessed throughout their history of four thousand years. 200 tons of wool was taken out of bedding torn to pieces with knives at homes of Artsakh people by the order of the Azerbaijani authorities. The world would hardly recall similar barbaric events. It did not repeat in other regions and republics of the Soviet Union, including Azerbaijan. What happened in Karabakh was a manifestation of the anti-Armenian policy.

From November 1949 till April 1950 (it was a winter with much snow and blizzards, which is not typical of Karabakh) there were difficulties with the state plan of cattle imposed by the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party. Mountain paths to farms were covered with a thick layer of snow, roads between villages were blocked, delaying transportation of fodder. There was so much snow that the cattle of hundreds of farms was not taken out of cots for days. Receiving no aid, the region had to struggle with the natural disaster alone. Despite the great efforts of the people of Artsakh, a great number of sheep were lost. Some farms lost 2/3 of their livestock. In total, 58 percent of livestock of collective farms in Nagorno Karabakh was lost. Of course, having lost half of livestock, the region was unable to implement the heavy plans. Simple logic, human reason prompts that the government would reconsider the plan. But this was not the case.

Economic difficulties in Nagorno Karabakh were again used to deal another heavy blow to the people of the region.

In order to implement this plan, in May 1950 the secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party Kafarzadeh arrived in Stepanakert. Without enquiring about the situation he took the decision of the Central Committee out of his briefcase according to which "it was planned to breed 85 thousand lambs from 51 thousand head of sheep in NKAR." When the local specialists tried to explain to him that in NKAR it was theoretically impossible to get 1.5 or 2 lambs from each sheep, he furiously attacked the members of the bureau of the regional committee of the Party and said in an imperative tone, "I do not know, go and make your wives have lambs." There are no documents if the women of Karabakh gave birth to lambs for the Azerbaijani, it is only known that on December 22 of the same year Kafarzadeh returned to Karabakh, this time demanding the outcome of wool production plan.

"Do whatever you want but you must implement the plan of wool. This is the order of Bagirov. I won't leave until you gather 200 tons of wool."

"Where are we going to find so much wool?" interrupted Avanesov, the chair of the regional committee of the Party. "Sheep cannot be shorn in the middle of December. During the year we collected all the wool produced both in private and collective farms. What shall we do, where shall we take 200 tons of wool? We have no other way out but to attack people's bedding, the dowries of girls."

"Good for you, and you say there is no way out, the secretary of the Central Committee said calmly, Comrade Avanesov has realized perfectly the policy of the Communist Party and the importance of fulfilling the state task. We will take this into consideration."

Wool collecting commissions were set up (involving regional, district governments, specialists, party activists, judicial officials). According to an archive document, the notes of the first secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party Abramov, 280 commissions with 850 members were set up.

On New Year's Eve in 1951 protests resumed, sorrowful voices were heard, tears were shed. In 5 days about 40 thousand blankets and mattresses were torn confiscating 5-7 kg of wool from each family. In the notes of the first secretary of the regional committee it is written in



red ink. "the task of Comrade Bagirov, the plan of 200 tons of wool is fulfilled on December 27, on the eve of Comrade Stalin's birthday."

Of course, for many families it was not a problem to give away a pair of quilts but in many families orphan children and elderly parents of people killed in war went to sleep under a carpet, a straw pillow under the head.

In Mataghis a widow named Gohar, who had lost his two sons during the war, with five small grandchildren, sat on their three pairs of quilts and mattresses and did not want to give them away to the commission. These people, however, who were "competent" in fulfilling the tasks of the regional and central committees "adequately", tore the mattress that Granny Gohar tried to keep, and took away the wool. At home M. Mkrtchian had only three pairs of quilts and mattresses in which his five orphan children slept, the oldest aged 14, the youngest 7. They did not spare them and took away the wool. In Mets Shen, when the only mattress of S. Hakobian was taken from him, he took his two orphan grandchildren and went to the Iranian border. He was immediately accused of treason and ... was exiled to Siberia, and the children were sent to the orphanage of Shushi. In Mavas, Martuni Manishak could not bear the idea of the dowry of her daughter killed during the war to be taken away, and plunged herself into the burning tonir (a deep cylindrical hole in the ground at the bottom of which wood is burnt, used for baking bread) not to take part in the impudent game organized by the Central Committee. The young teacher from Yeghtsahogh, who got married two months before, gave away with tears the bed of his wife, with traces of virginity blood still on it.

The collected wool was sent to Stavropol. A year later the representative of NKAR, the chief specialist of the regional department of agriculture M. Hayrapetian was invited to a Union conference held in Stavropol.

"When we were taken to the wool processing factory, he remembered, we were shown the wool sent from Azerbaijan (i.e. Karabakh) which, as it later turned out, was discarded and piled outdoors. In short, 200 thousand tons of wool washed with the tears of 145 thousand inhabitants of the region was bad quality and could not be used. On the contrary, the ways and methods of acquirement of this wool fully complied with the requirements of the anti-Armenian policy conducted in NKAR. As a result of this policy more Armenians

emigrated in 1951 than in the previous years. The very slogan of "fulfilling the task of attack on beds" was aimed at exile of the Armenian population of the region, which was considered a political and state affair of "great importance".

Anyway, under these circumstances, rendering sheep breeding profitable and raising collective farming yield was nonsensical. If the livestock were not cut by 1/3, it would be difficult to eliminate social and economic obstacles hindering the development of the farms in the region. By the way, half of the livestock in the region was kept not for producing but quite the opposite, for the sake of not producing anything, raising the prices of products, and, what is more important, implementing the expansionist policy of resettling Azerbaijanis in Karabakh in the place of the migrating Armenians. Just like in the saying "The sheep ate the people".

The question occurs why Baku needed to impose plans just for the sake of plans if the resettlement of the Azeris in Artsakh did not pursue definite political aims? Especially that in 1965 the March plenary sitting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union changed the order of the village planning, allowing farms to make independent decisions. Why did Baku ignore the real capacities and requirements of the region and ironically overlook the opinion of directors of farms, specialists in agriculture?

It would be wrong to state that people did not think about this and did not come up with proposals. In the light of the decisions of the mentioned plenary meeting, in the 1960s the regional committee applied solicited relevant agencies of Azerbaijan to consolidate small unprofitable farms, putting the stress of cattle breeding on meat and milk production, founding large specialized sheep breeding farms, solving the problem of fodder and irrigation. However, these urgent problems were again overlooked. Baku "looked for" dissent, nationalism, threats of taking away the bread of the Azerbaijanis in these proposals for the development of agricultural production. In this context a number of people were prosecuted, dismissed, and the Armenian farmers became estranged, untrustworthy "objects".

And in order to prevent more "prejudicial" proposals, having the approval of the leadership, mathematics, chemistry teachers, people far from agriculture were named first secretaries of the region, directors of collective farms. According to Baku, these newly appointed directors of

collective farms, "efficient in political affairs" (but, in fact, craving for remaining in their offices as long as possible), used slide-rules to solve social and economic matters. In order to please their bosses, to show off their "internationalism", "organizational abilities", they did not spare effort to repress their fellow countrymen, the Armenians, and invited more and more Azerbaijanis granting them privileges.

During meetings, in warrants, the Soviet usurers threatened their subordinates to implement the plan of livestock imposed by the leadership. This was more than just a plan of livestock. It was a plan of ruining villages, destroying gardens, persecuting people, enriching privileged shepherds invited from abroad. These officials were happy with their welfare so they cling to the reality, otherwise they would not occupy any posts and give orders in every direction. That is why they were highly grateful to the Azerbaijani leaders for this "fatherly care for Karabakh" (to be understood "for them"). That is why instead of excellent specialists on agriculture Galstian and Lalazarian dismissed for their proposals, school teachers H. Ohanjanian in Stepanakert and V. Grigorian in Hadrut became members of the regional committee of the Party. H. Ohanjanian was a demented, characterless person who had no principles. The activities of these two first secretaries were highly praised by governmental awards. "Their experience in ruining villages" was mentioned for a number of times to serve as a model for others.

Finally, it should be mentioned that in the chaos of far-reaching political aims trade developed rather quickly. A great many directors got on well with privileged Azerbaijani shepherds with obscure past and present, "invited" to work in Karabakh. For years on they had only one principle of work, "... the plan of livestock for the boss, part of products for us." This "style of work" together with other vices was brought to Karabakh from the east through the "invited" and the assigned.

It is appropriate to mention that the plans imposed by the leadership always had two extremes. On the one hand, the plan for the region was 3-4 times overloaded than for the Azerbaijani regions. On the other hand, the supply of equipment and fodder to the region was unfairly less. For decades the Azerbaijani rulers did nothing to produce more crops, improve irrigation, increase effectiveness of pastures, prevent the erosion of land, build modern cattle farms. In other words, it was useless to speak about government investments. Actually, no tangible investments

were made in the Armenian region. Most farms hardly got a car in 5-10 years, and no pipes, timber, cement, tin and other necessary materials were supplied for years.

Moreover, the problems of social and economic development of the region were completely ignored. Only 0.6 percent of children under school age living in rural settlements went to nursery schools and there were hardly two physicians for 10 thousand rural inhabitants. Whereas in Azerbaijan these rates were 33 percent and 27 respectively. In short, anti-Armenian moods motivated ethnic discrimination and a consumer's attitude.

In fact, everything was done deliberately, and these artificial hindrances were the links of the same chain, the expression of the policy of Azerbaijani rulers on the prevention of social and economic development of Karabakh using every means to have "Karabakh without Armenians". This is more than just a fact. The following two controversial facts prove that artificial boosting of livestock was not conditioned by economic factors, the necessity to promote cattle breeding in the republic or by the national affection of Azerbaijanis for sheep. As a result of development of cattle breeding without an adequate approach "resulted in the elimination of sheep breeding in our district, said the first secretary of Gyokcha district committee R. Safaraliev during the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, as a result our farms suffer losses of 250-300 thousand rubles". Because of constant growth of livestock "every year we come across serious difficulties in organizing wintering of the collective livestock, especially sheep," said the first secretary of the Hadrut district committee during the 20<sup>th</sup> regional conference of the Communist Party of Nagorno Karabakh. "However, the regional committee of the Party and the Ministry of Agriculture of the republic do not settle the question of winter pastures of our collective farms," he said.

There is no need for comment. In the vast valley of the rivers Kura and Arax the Azerbaijani farms complained of decline in sheep breeding, whereas in Armenian Karabakh in the Minor Caucasus covered with forests people were troubled by the large number of sheep, causing environmental damage and losses. They even had no place to keep the sheep. The question occurs why not to develop sheep breeding in those parts of the country, which had necessary conditions, labor and where

this branch would be profitable and was especially appreciated among the local population, the Azerbaijanis.

In this connection, the scientists who arrived in Stepanakert on September 20, 1967 headed by the director of the Institute of Geology of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences Professor S. Rustamov, pointed to the people of Karabakh with special pride saying that by their forecasts the future economic priority in NKAR would be sheep breeding. Professor Rustamov praised the delicious lamb produced in Karabakh. He also emphasized that the Armenians know what an important place mutton has in the diet of Azerbaijanis.

However, these respectable scientists, keeping mum, did not mention how the people of Karabakh were going to develop sheep breeding if the region has. I repeat, 28 thousand hectares of pastures and only 2000 hectares of winter pastures. In NKAR sheep livestock per hectare exceeded the average rate in the republic ten times. When Barsen S., an agronomist from Karabakh, announced these numbers to the hall, Rustamov rudely told him to keep silent and then announced insolently, "The Armenians of Karabakh have to keep their sheep abroad". What he meant was "Rent pastures in the valley of Kura and Arax and the Minor Caucasus, invite shepherds from Azerbaijan and fulfill the tasks of the Azerbaijani Central Committee of the Communist Party."

The author of this book, the director of the museum of history and local lore had to interfere. I had no idea why we were made to develop sheep breeding, a branch, which is harmful and unprofitable in NKAR, until that day. Now I have to thank respectable Prof. Rustamov, for he explained clearly why we should breed sheep. We may conclude from what the respectable professor said that the development of sheep breeding pursued not only economic but also far-reaching political and especially demographic goals. First, our profits from gardening were to be spent not on production or social security but on renting pastures abroad and paying salaries to Azerbaijani shepherds. Second, by inviting shepherds, dairymaids from Azerbaijan we would change the demographic balance in our region by resettling a great number of foreigners in the small Armenian region. This is the meaning and the goal of the policy, why not the philosophy of the development of sheep breeding.

Later the question was put forward that the natural resources found in the region should be used effectively, tourism and resorts should be

developed into profitable branches. Undoubtedly, for this purpose a great number of people would be invited to work in service. The economy of NKAR would cheer up, roads would be built, settlements would be supplied with water, and the quality of life of the people of Karabakh would improve. Whereas, we were made to develop a sphere which was historical, economic and, why not, a political adventure, environmental disaster.

Did the Baku-based leadership fail to realize this? Of course, they did realize but they had other purposes for which sheep had an important role. They knew perfectly what blows they could deal to Nagorno Karabakh with sheep. They were not asleep and knew from the past experience that sheep flocks had destroyed countries, killed nations. They knew in facts and figures that after increasing the number of sheep in the post-war years the number of shepherds and milkmaids "invited" and granted privileges grew significantly. How could they resettle Azerbaijanis in all the Armenian villages of the region, increasing their number in the demographic pattern of the region 4 times (21 percent) without these sheep?

These points had been calculated scrupulously to resettle their people in Karabakh instead of the Armenians forced to leave the region. Moreover, these calculations involved making Armenians invite Azerbaijanis and hand them the keys of their houses themselves. To save space I will cite only one example from among dozens, the example of the village of Togh. In 1941-1945 all the men of the village aged 16-60 counting 967 were enlisted. Over half were killed in the war. At the same time the livestock of sheep increased 5 times. The heads of the village had to rent winter pastures in the Azerbaijani region of Imishli, 200-300 kilometers from the Karabakh border, and hire a great number of nomadic Turkish shepherds (as Togh did not have a single hectare of pasture and, in fact, the people of the village had never bred sheep) and started developing the harmful branch of agriculture, which turned into a disaster for Togh.

Togh is one of the largest and oldest settlements of the NKR region of Hadrut. It is mentioned in writings dating from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the times of struggle against Arab invaders. Both cultural monuments and writings testify that Togh was a fortress, and the village had about 10 thousand Armenian inhabitants. In its height of development, especially under Melik Yegan of Dizak and his brave son Melik Yessayi, in the residence

of the meliks Togh the mess was conducted in 4 churches and a monastery, which have been preserved to our days.

In the Armenian history Togh is also marked for its rich chronology of strategic and liberation struggle. In the fortress of Ktish in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Melik Yessayi and his soldiers 28 times beat the attacks of 200 soldiers led by Arab Commander Bugha within a year. 9 centuries later one of the outstanding meliks of Karabakh Melik Yessayi reigned in this village for 33 years and defeated the enemies for many times. In the early 1920s Tevan, brother-in-arms of Garegin Nzhdeh, defeated Turk-Azeris who had intruded into the provinces of Dizak and Varanda attacking them from Togh and prevented the oncoming destruction of the entire South Artsakh. Finally, in this village the Armenian Catholicos Abraham Kretatsi stayed for a week, after taking part in the ceremony of coronation of Shah Nadir with Melik Yegan in the spring of 1736.

Hence, the historical, cultural and strategic importance of Togh is extremely big. Having Togh means having entire South Karabakh. Therefore, the defense of this important settlement was constantly in the center of attention of the leaders of Artsakh. And it is not incidental that the hordes first attacked Togh when they raided Artsakh.

Under the Soviet rule the problem of resettling Armenians and inhabiting Togh with Azerbaijanis was always in the center of attention of Azerbaijani rulers; from Mirjafar Baghirov till Elchibey, all of them considered it their duty to exchange ideas with the local Turkish community, turkishizing the village and expediting their monstrous plans.

The result did not wait long. The glorious historical settlement was weakened, bent under the anti-Armenian policy of Azerbaijan, and the Armenians were being displaced. As we have already mentioned, on Baku's initiative Togh was resettled with nomadic Turks. It is interesting to know who, how and from where these Turk-Azeris were resettled in Togh. Turks had never been there, particularly in Toghadzor. The so-called Turks of Togh, all in all 11 families, were Armenians converted to Islam by force. Most of them were shepherds from the village of Talibkhanlu, district of Imishli, who were made to resettle in Togh. The resettlement policy was initiated by the first secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party M. Bagirov and implemented under the surveillance of the KGB.

For the sake of truth we should note that the carrot and stick approach was applied to the nomads from Talibkhanlu. In the beginning they did not want to live in Togh because the two-storey buildings with open balconies, factories, cobblestone streets of the village were strange to them, and they were even afraid of climbing upstairs and could not fearlessly enter the rooms with board ceilings. They thought the ceilings would collapse on their heads. That's why by the habit of their ancestors they put up tents in the yards of houses or verandas and lived in tents for a long time. When they first came, their number was 43 but very soon they multiplied and formed 150 families. They could not do anything except keeping sheep. The nomads were even surprised at the ardor of Armenians, who made so much effort to grow orchards, whereas, they chopped the fruit trees in the yards and orchards with special pleasure. To make Armenians migrate from their native village under economic pressure, they started to destroy the additional sources of income of the people of Togh. They closed down the profitable silk factory operating on the local raw material, the factory of tiles, and other factories, employing 250 Armenian workers. Under the control of judicial bodies they ruined the main sources of income and occupation of the Armenians, gardening and beekeeping. Mulberry and other orchards were destroyed.

Thus, the profitable orchards were turned into pastures for the sheep of Turks. Before the resettlement of nomads Togh had about 200 hectares of mulberry orchards, 150 hectares of vineyard and 120 hectares of other orchards, whereas now a few trees remained. The new settlers worked on the sheep breeding collective farm with love and great pleasure. Having the permission and support of bosses, Turkish shepherds could keep as many sheep as they could and would like to in the collective flock (taking away the fodder of the collective flock for their own livestock) and made a lot of money. The emissaries of different ranks often arrived in Togh, rounded up Turk kachus (young women) in the Armenian village, and uttered prophecies. "Have as many children as you can. Thus we will be able to invade not only Togh, Karabakh and Armenia, but also the entire Transcaucasia."

In a few years Turks were a majority in the village, 811 out of 1412 inhabitants were Turks. "Good for you... tell me what can I do to speed up the growth of the Turkish population in the village?" They said that a



great number of Azerbaijanis were jobless. They need additional sources of income to live on.

The first secretary of the Central Committee Bagirov gave instructions to the ministers who had come with him, and soon over 50 Turks were provided with "jobs abroad". That is to say, these people loitering about the village center all day long were provided with permanent monthly salaries. And if one traced the salaries back, one would step out of the border of NKAR and come to Fizuli, Horadiz, Baku, offices, enterprises the directors of which would bring dozens of excuses to justify why they gave salaries by salary lists to those idlers.

However, Baku was not satisfied with all this. They adopted another monstrous plot to speed up the process of displacement of Armenians from Togh. For the "peaceful" invasion of Togh the Azerbaijani authorities started intensive building in Togh to resettle Meskheti Turks and Azerbaijanis from different parts of the republic in the village. Moreover, privileges were granted to Azerbaijani resettlers, including 10 thousand rubles, furniture, admittance to Baku universities and colleges without entrance exams. To provide political assistance to the builders, the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party set up a new district committee in Togh instead of the disbanded district committee of Hadrut. Niyaz Jahangirov, member of Grey Wolves, the director of the secondary school, was appointed first secretary. The first victims of Niyaz were several buildings of the palace of Melik Yegan, the former three-storey school building and a number of grave monuments. This escalated tensions between the local Armenian and Azerbaijani communities. In short, Turks were looking for an opportunity "to displace Armenians from Togh and give their homes to the Turkish refugees." Moreover, Armenians had the right to take with them only 16 kg of baggage, and the rest of their property and their houses were left to Azeri-Turks.

We may enumerate endlessly the manifestations of the cruel ethnic policy raging in Azerbaijan, manifestations of cruel chauvinism.

Here is a cunning oriental policy, which would arouse envy among the cruelest invaders of the ancient world, the present supporters of assimilation policy.

## CHAPTER 7

### VANDALISM

#### **Brief review of misappropriation and destruction of the Armenian-Christian cultural heritage in Azerbaijan and other intrigues**

Artsakh (Karabakh) is one of the few ancient and viable provinces of Armenia that managed to preserve its integrity and, with certain intervals, also political independence. At the same time, it was the powerful stronghold of national liberation struggle, an island of hopes, a symbol of rebirth. Here, in wooded highlands difficult of access, for more than fifteen hundred years the Armenian people resisted invasions of nomadic tribes from the East, preserving their holy places, culture, national image, and local identity.

Artsakh is rich in records of the past and various historical, architectural monuments dating back to different epochs. The vivid evidence to this is over 20,000 historical architectural, Armenian Christian monuments situated in a small area. A considerable part of these monuments were built in early, middle and late medieval period and played an exceptional role in the historical fate of the Karabakh Armenians. This is, indeed, not only colossal wealth, but also an inexhaustible source of pride. This tremendous heritage, these stone witnesses of our old history and stone books reflect the material and spiritual life of generations. The fire of nation preservation blazed up inextinguishably in these remarkable churches, even with darkness and nightmare around. These were the first to spread literacy in the country, and promote copying manuscripts. These masterpieces, representing a separate school of Armenian architecture, have greatly enriched Armenian national culture. It is not without reason that Armenian, Italian, French, German, English, Russian, Jewish specialists unanimously believe that the rich culture of Artsakh-Karabakh is impossible to imagine outside the all-Armenian culture, as it is one of the significant habitats of Armenian culture. Nourished by its centuries-old traditions Artsakh culture contributes not only to the treasury of Armenian but also world culture.

The disastrous situation in all the spheres of life of Karabakh Armenians during the decades of the despotic rule of Azerbaijan is testified to by the fact that in the Armenian area the policy implemented by Turk-Azeris, an original chain of organized crimes, pursued one goal - to curb the social and economic development of the region as far as possible, to infringe upon the interests of the Armenian population by any possible means in order to create unbearable conditions for them to stay and thereby force them to abandon their native country. The number of Armenians, who constituted 94.4% of the population in 1923, when Nagorno Karabakh was annexed by Soviet Azerbaijan, according to the data of the census taken in 1979, decreased by 18.7 per cent. 47 Armenian villages disappeared from the map of the Armenian region over the period. 54 industrial enterprises operating in 44 settlements were closed and plundered; thousands of hectares of profitable orchards were chopped up, vast areas of farming land were subjected to erosion.

The situation is even worse in the sphere of Armenian national culture of the region. None of the existing 600 churches and monasteries functioned here. The Turk-Azeris suffering from the ideology of Pan-Turkism would not live with the thought that an Armenian Christian culture could exist within a Muslim republic. Therefore, in every possible way, they tried to oust all Armenians from Artsakh, destroy, and misappropriate their culture. The doors of monasteries and churches were closed before the Armenian parishioners in the early 1930s, the clergymen were driven to Siberia, valuable church books, icons were burned and the property was plundered. And then, from the positions of Bolshevik-advocated atheism, they started to destroy and reshape churches and monasteries, turning them into sheep-pens and cattle-sheds, to break khachkars (cross-stones), epitaphic masterpieces and use them as cheap building materials in new constructions. In fact, a perfect massacre of culture was perpetrated. The whole history was plundered, destroyed. In short, outrageous vandalism was committed, and not only monasteries, churches, khachkars, settlements, cemeteries fell victim to it, but also the Armenian population of the sovereign province.

And so, the Turk-Azeris who penetrated the Transcaucasus and settled in historical Armenian territories, in co-operation with Communists of Russia and pro-Turkish leaders of the Soviet Union, inflicted immeasurable suffering on the local Armenian population. In

fact, a complex program of persecuting, exterminating and displacing Armenians was executed in Karabakh, and not only in Karabakh, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Only the powerful liberation struggle thwarted their monstrous plans of ousting Armenians from the Armenian land. At the same time, the powerful struggle saved the monuments preserved in the NKR territory by miracle from being totally destroyed. However, the fate of over 5,000 Armenian monuments located in historical Gardmank, Northern Artsakh, is still uncertain.

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The lines cited below and borrowed from pages 75-76 of the book "Nagorno Karabakh" published in Baku in 1963 obviously testify to the aggressive plans to destroy the Armenian monuments and the aggressive atmosphere that existed in Azerbaijan. In fact, there were appeals on the state level to destroy Christian churches, monasteries, majestic architectural monuments, because, as it is written in the mentioned book, "the existence of their diversity shows how much religiously shackled the population of Karabakh was" and it was liberated with great difficulty owing to the Great Socialist October Revolution."

And this is still nothing. In the book, monumental structures, masterpieces of architecture, large cloistral complexes, lacy khachkars, churches which are centers of nation preservation, clerkship (copying out manuscripts), education are deprived of the opportunity of being called monuments. "In Nagorno Karabakh, - we read in this book, - the enumeration of many monasteries, churches and khachkars among historical monuments seems to have no value, either from the political or cultural viewpoint, because their negative role and essence in the social life of the people and especially in our socialist order is obvious." It is beyond dispute that the goal of destroying the traces of Christian Armenian culture was pursued. If it is not so, then why don't they list Muslim mosques, aivans among monasteries, churches, shrines? But the mosques did not popularize the ideas of Marxism- Leninism either, did they? And what about breaking religious shackles? This testifies to the hostile feeling towards Armenian monuments in Azerbaijan. This is just like it was in Afghanistan where Taliban destroyed non-Muslim monuments. And wasn't it the reason that in conditions of everybody's

keeping silent, within a week, the Armenian district of Shushi that had been nearly wholly preserved, was razed to the ground? Although there was a decision about its basic restoration. However, instead of restoration, they destroyed it, along with 7,000 constructions of the Armenian city, including the St. Virgin Aguletsots and St. Virgin Meghretsots churches, Kusanats Monastery, Greco-Russian Church, razed to the ground the Armenian cemeteries with bulldozers.

All this took place with the permissiveness of Azerbaijani authorities, obviously instigated by Baku's architect-town-planners. Thus, an article by an architect K. Sayidov was published in the February 2, 1966 (No. 9) issue of the Baku-based newspaper *Stroitel* in which he called for the perpetration of new vandalism in Shushi, destruction of Armenian cemeteries, monuments preserved by miracle. Because, as he himself wrote: "The dead (Armenians - Sh. M.) ate the alive (Azeris- Sh. M.)". However, in reality, in the city where no Armenians were left, the newly-settled Azeris ate and digested the cemeteries of dead Armenians.

Why did they destroy churches, ravage cemeteries? If we take into account the fact that tens of thousands of monuments preserved at Armenian cemeteries on which there were epitaphs written in Armenian and dating back to the 18th century, the standpoint of Azeri barbarians becomes clear. Isn't it that the existence of six Armenian cemeteries (18-20<sup>th</sup> centuries) is too strong an argument to dispute in the context of the historical self-esteem of Azeri falsifiers? Isn't that they keep trumpeting that "Shushi is a 18th-century Azeri city" and that allegedly there "on the hospitable land of Azerbaijan the first Armenian settler appeared after 1828", that allegedly there is no gravestone in the NKAR that would bear an inscription having an earlier date? It is ridiculous and not only. Only in the territory of the NKR there are about 2000 old cemeteries with hundreds of thousands of monuments and gravestones bearing Armenian inscriptions, cross-stones with epitaphs dating back to the 7-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is incredible that our neighbors should not be aware of all this, as there are numerous publications about gravestones and epitaphs in different languages. Naturally, a question arises: how can Shushi be declared an Azerbaijani city when out of eight cemeteries there seven are Christian and only one is Azeri, and burials there started only after March 23, 1920, i.e. only after the Armenians Genocide? So that no such question should arise anymore, Turk-Azeris, after cleaning

the Armenian ruins of the city, started to destroy five churches, seven cemeteries, and other types of Armenian monuments preserved by miracle, the monuments that did not fit the spirit of Muslim architecture... The bright and appalling pictures of all this are presented in the "Shushi - A City of Tragic Fate" well-illustrated book published in Russian and English (Yerevan, 1997, 1999).

During the 70 years of Soviet rule and the seven destructive years imposed on the Artsakh Armenians, Turk-Azeris destroyed thousands of monuments of culture, masterpieces of Christian-Armenian civilization, destroyed and ravaged invaluable treasures of Armenian culture in Artsakh, Utik, Nakhidjevan, Gardmank. Today, it is difficult to estimate the losses that Armenian culture sustained due to persecution and artificial obstacles created by Baku. And how many are the losses that were often inflicted on the Armenian area by means of persecuting the intelligentsia. The entire Armenian cultural heritage has been almost kept under lock. When applying to Baku regarding issues of culture of Nagorno Karabakh and nearby areas in Baku they always proceeded from the principle that came to stay for 30 years: "Whatever is situated in the territory of Soviet Azerbaijan belongs to the Azeris." In fact, by means of deliberate masking, falsification, in a systematized manner the history of Artsakh-Karabakh was falsified, the national belonging of monuments was decided in an arbitrary manner. In short, before the eyes of a generation, in broad daylight, the history of the Artsakh Armenians and their rich national culture was stolen from them.

The Artsakh Armenians were deprived of the possibility of publishing any guide-books for travelers, other literature, research works on history, culture or even publications about their country's everyday life, they were not allowed to open museums, do excavations, restore monuments, celebrate national holidays. The teaching of the history of the Armenian people and geography were banned in schools. The cultural values of the past were in a neglected state. In other words, the hands of the Karabakh Armenians were tied fast and their tongue was squeezed between the teeth.

In Baku, they often published pseudo-scientific treatises, ridiculous, scientifically ungrounded concepts, and they were making efforts to present all this as the history of Artsakh-Karabakh. And when someone of Armenians dared to contradict them, he was immediately labeled with

"isms" alien to the frame of mind of the time and was ousted from his native land by means of persecutions.

Participating in the destruction of Armenian monuments were also Azeri archaeologists, geologists, cattle-breeders, and why not architects. Thus, explosives were used in the caves of Tstsakhach in Mets Taghlar and Vorvan in Azokh, Amaras's crypt of St. Grigoris, in Khtravank, Kaghakategh. Pits were dug under the foundations of ancient monuments of Dadivank, tires were burned under the walls of Shushi's Surb Amenaprkich (Holy Saviour) Church, deliberately enabling the destruction of the monuments. Hundreds of churches, monasteries were used as sheep-pens, lodgings, warehouses. The valuable objects found during excavations of Armenian monuments were transported to Baku, in many cases they were turned into objects of trade.

Meanwhile, according to the existing order, archaeological materials found in the territory of the sovereign region must be handed to the region's state museum of history and local lore. Whereas, during the years of Azeri rule, tens of thousands of Armenian Artsakh-type old carpets, saddle-bags, jewelry, decorations of articles of silver and of ethnographic nature were transported in large quantities from Nagorno Karabakh and

nearby Armenian provinces to Baku.

At the same time, those cultural values were often exported from the Armenian land in large quantities. For example, the minister of culture of Azerbaijan SSR, under the dictates of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, issued a direct order (December 30, 1969) and with a repeat letter (January 12, 1970) urgently demanding the management of Nagorno Karabakh's state museum of history and local lore to send to Baku valuable Armenian archaeological, ethnographic exhibits registered in the Main Register of the Armenian museum.

By the way, thousands of values of Armenian culture were preserved and exhibited in all museums of Azerbaijan. To the visitors they were presented without their national belonging being mentioned; they were simply said to be "a carpet with an old Azeri inscription" or "khachdash with an Albanian inscription". And that was all information given about the exhibit. The time when the record was created, its location and, which is most important, the contents of the epitaphic inscription were not indicated. Meanwhile, on the high relief, the exhibited carpet,

monumental masterpieces and metal vessels one could clearly read Armenian inscriptions. In the 1980s, the Azeri "restorers" erased Armenian inscriptions and the cross on the Armenian khachkar (12<sup>th</sup> century) in the Vachagan Barepasht Church, and bringing it to the museum of local lore in Aghdam, exhibited it as "an ancient Azeri monument". We can write lengthily about similar facts, but probably there is no need, for the general picture is clear.

Moreover, on the one hand they encouraged the profaning of the Armenian monuments and presenting them as Azeri by means of scraping, falsifying, re-shaping, on the other hand they banned demonstration of ancient Armenian exhibits in the museum of local lore and history of the sovereign region. The question of the museum director was discussed on the party level, and he was strictly reprimanded only for daring to display numerous Armenian exhibits discovered in Nagorno Karabakh.

Azerbaijani leaders were angered by the fact that during an all-Union show of museums (in 1967) the NKR museum was recognized as one of the best museums of the country. They simply stated that they want to "uproot" Armenians from the Armenian land called Karabakh, but here in the museum exhibited were a silver coin bearing an image of Tigran the Great (1<sup>st</sup> century BC), the picture of the inventor of the Armenian alphabet Mesrop Mashtots (5<sup>th</sup> century), Melik Yegan's decree, appeals glorifying the bravery of Russian generals from Karabakh. The work of the museum was based on the concept that Karabakh is an inseparable part of Armenia. It was underlined that two or three thousand years ago Karabakh was Armenian and it must struggle to continue to be Armenian." For that reason, in Baku (November 1967), the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijani SSR branded the display of the NKAR museum as "that not corresponding to the Marxist ideology" and accused the museum director of exhibiting "ideologically damaging materials" (see details in Shahen Mkrtichian's "I Saw a Different War in Artsakh", Yerevan, 1996, p. 134-151). The museum was ravaged. The permanent exposition was destroyed and the most valuable exhibits were taken out and simply scattered in the open air.

A question arises: "Why Arabian, Persian and Turkish coins can be displayed at the Armenian museum, and the unique coin bearing the image of Tigran the Great discovered in the settlement Tigranakert in



Nagorno Karabakh cannot?" Why can the materials regarding the foreign khan who penetrated Artsakh in the second half of the 18th century be displayed and those about the great prince Melik Yegan, who was born in Artsakh, cannot.

Here is a science, the Azeri concept of studying and demonstrating museum values. It remains for us to remind the Azeri falsifiers that history does not tolerate subjection, faking or fact remodelling, since justice will triumph sooner or later and falsehood will be thrown to the dust-heap.

The criminal attitude towards the preservation of Armenian monuments also attracted criminal elements, who, for the purpose of treasure-seeking, destroyed numerous invaluable masterpieces, defiled and looted grave-yards, using various technical devices to this effect. Similar vandalism was committed against such famous architectural monuments as Gandzasar, Khutavank, Khatravank, Gtchavank, Hakobavank, Yeritsmankants Monastery, Koshik desert, Yeghisheh Arakyal Monastery, and so on, so forth.

Before the late 1970s Baku carefully concealed Armenian monuments or ignored their existence altogether. In tourist maps, guide-books, booklets and other kinds of works, published in Baku, Moscow and also abroad, the pages assigned to Nagorno Karabakh contained photos of such Muslim monuments that had nothing to do with NKAR. And when they had to mention an Armenian monument, they called it by a distorted name, emphasizing its Albanian-Azeri origin, although there was no such a monument on the list of his historical cultural monuments under state protection in the territory of Soviet Azerbaijan. But they were hastily concocted, sealed during the powerful liberation movement, in April 1988. And that anti-scientific, anti-Armenian list modeled with outrageous distortions and falsifications contains no Armenian early, middle or late medieval monument.

A question arises: why did the Azeri authorities and scientists keep Armenian monuments behind seven seals? Even in the 1960s the KGB of Soviet Azerbaijan, with a top secret circular, made all the heads of village councils of the NKAR provinces "declare all Armenian monuments in the territory of their settlements to be closed zones and ban studies and photographing there." Therefore, "they (heads of village soviets - Sh. M.) should not let Armenians, Russians visit the

monuments, photograph, measure and study them without Baku's special permission." At the same time, the Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan SSR gave an instruction to the chairmen of collective farms of the NKAR that the region's monuments "could be used as sheep-pens, warehouses, etc." (see Avetaranots village soviet, 1966)

It becomes clear from the circular of the Azeri KGB and the list of monuments under state preservation approved by the decision of the Azerbaijani SSR government of April 2, 1968 (N 140) that the very existence of the Armenian historical-cultural monuments in Azerbaijan, wherever they are, embarrassed our neighbors, for what is the Azeri land if almost all monuments are Armenian. During the rule of khans in Shushi and during the 175 subsequent years they, the comers who penetrated Artsakh, "the Caucasian Tatars", managed to build only three small Persian mosques, and even that was done in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the help of hired Armenian masters, and this is against over 20,000 Armenian monuments. What remains of the other areas of Eastern Armenia called Azerbaijan today: of Mohammedan monuments of Baku, Shamakha, Shakir, Gandzak, Partev and other places; they have nothing in common with Turk-Azeris. They are the monuments of Persians or the native Mohammedans appropriated on the ground of similar faith. The next step to be taken was Armenian khachkars, which, however, stuck in the throats of the falsifiers. This is the truth that cannot be denied. These are facts, true historical facts. One should be guided only by them, and not by today's political orders, misappropriation of the spiritual and cultural values of neighbors or by vandalism against them.

Otherwise, what can justify the crimes that Turk-Azeris committed in their capital Baku by destroying the magnificent Armenian-Christian churches, the large Armenian cemetery with thousands of masterpieces of gravestones, inscriptions, high reliefs?

The big St. Thaddeus and Bartholomew Church rich in volumetric-spatial means of expression built in Baku, was destroyed in 1911 and its surface-tooled stones were used in the construction of the local conservatory building. The same fate awaited Baku's oldest Armenian church - St. Virgin Church, which was built in 1799. Defiled and looted were the St. Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral built in the city center in 1863-69, the Holy Resurrection Chapel located in the Armenian

cemetery and built in 1894 was razed to the ground. This was done in the capital of the region. Now let's see what was done in provinces. The tomb of Aghvertsu Khoja Movses is located in the Kubatlu region (16<sup>th</sup> century). Turk-Azeri specialists scraped off Armenian inscriptions from the well-preserved lintel and veil of the tomb, subjecting them to "reforms", as a result of which the monument was artificially oldened by four centuries, and Khoja Movses became Mohammed al Khojayi. One should ask the following question: from where Mohammad "arakyal" appeared in these parts, and in the 12<sup>th</sup> century if it is known that the first foreign pastor appeared here in the 18<sup>th</sup> century only. This is how the Azeris "restored", or rather appropriated the Armenian monument and tried to change its national belonging. And this is not the only case. In the second largest city of the Azerbaijani republic - Kirovabad, under the guise of restoration, a number of monuments of Armenian architecture "dressed" in Muslim clothes, and those monuments that the falsifiers could not cope with were destroyed only because they did not fit their far-going goals. Here is, how the Azeris "restored", or, to be more precise, misappropriated the Armenian monuments. And in what ways did they try to change their national belonging?

If it was possible to seize the historical territories, historical cultural heritage of others without being slapped, why wasn't it possible to do the same against the state, military and cultural figures belonging to other nationalities? In this sphere the imagination of Turk-Azeris is boundless. What is an "ancient civilized Azerbaijani people" if it has no outstanding historical figures."

If they proofread and edit monuments in a shameful manner, then why don't they act likewise in the case with historical original sources. It is appropriate to note that the Azeri falsifiers of history, in re-translating the original sources of the past, deliberately overlooked evidence regarding Armenia, the Armenians and, in particular, Artsakh-Karabakh.

So, under the pretext of "restoration", the vaulted bays of the three-arch hail of one of the Armenian churches of Gandzak were changed into lancet arches, walls in some places were laid with multicolor bricks and the monument was presented as a new-type masterpiece of the Azerbaijani architecture. From a 12<sup>th</sup> century Armenian khachkar, which was situated in the Vachagan Barepasht Church, in the 1980s, Azeri "specialists" erased the inscription and removed the cross, and bringing

it to the museum of history and local lore of Aghdam, demonstrated as the most ancient Azeri monument. Again, under the guise of "restoration", the mentioned church was re-shaped, distorted and adjusted to the appearance of an "Albanian monument" and its inscriptions in Armenian letters were, naturally, scraped off. A fortress of the late Middle Ages situated in the same place "was adjusted" to modern preferences of the Azeris, which, however, by its appearance does not correspond to the former church. The inn in the area where there used to be the town of Tigranakert, about which there are records both in the Russian military archives and in the works by European travelers, was remodeled into a mosque.

In the 1970s, plates were fixed to almost all buildings in the "Turkish quarter" of Shushi telling that they are architectural monuments of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. By doing so they ignored the reality that on those buildings there were preserved builders' inscriptions testifying to the fact that they were built in the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

At the same time, one can notice an opposite approach, when the matter concerns Christian Armenian monuments. Plates with 20<sup>th</sup> century indications are pasted to them, including in cases when, in fact, they have 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century inscriptions. So, they are trying to create an illusion in the minds of ignorant people that the city is Azeri, and today's Azerbaijan is the ancient motherland of the Azerbaijanis. That's why the Turk-Azeris cannot tolerate, reconcile with the bitter reality that in the ancient Armenian settlements populated with Azeris there are sources with Armenian inscriptions, built in the Armenian architectural style, cemeteries with tomb-stones, residential houses with arched decorations, churches, khachkars. Some of them were made lancet in a most incompetent manner, others - were simply destroyed and torn into pieces.

History, philology and art criticism in Azerbaijan have always been distinguished by immoral, pseudo-scientific, anti-Armenian publications, imposturous propaganda. Azerbaijan's "scientific" men, like negligent butchers, constantly chopped up the history of the Transcaucasus, overtly ignored the historical material evidence, set forth false concepts and then with foolish raptures based on them "created" their own people's oldened, colored, made-up history. Those false scientists with ease shoved themselves into their neighbors' history of culture and removed old classics from one "territory" to another and thus they considered

them to be the Azerbaijani nation's sacred places, forgetting that neither in the epochs of Babek (8<sup>th</sup> century), Nizami (12<sup>th</sup> century), Nasimi (13<sup>th</sup> century) nor Fizuli (14<sup>th</sup> century) the Azerbaijani nation was formed yet, it did not simply exist then. Or, how can the late medieval monuments located in the territory of the modern-day Azerbaijani republic be ascribed to it? How can one, with just one blow, turn the Armenian representatives of the Armenian culture of Artsakh Davtak Kertogh, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Movses Daskhurantsi (7-9<sup>th</sup> centuries) and others into Azeris.

Here we have to deal not with morbid armenophobia, dishonesty or overt falsification, but with historical facts - distortions encouraged by authorities, barefaced policy of "fitting" them at will. Of course, this was the way Dostoyevsky's devils acted when, for establishing their buffoonery theories, they would resort to anything. This way the Azeri apologies of scientists turned nomadic Turks into a "settled" people. Caucasian Albanians into "Azerbaijanis", figures of Persian, Kurdish, Armenian cultures into classics of Azerbaijani art", Armenian khachkars into "khachdashes", monasteries, churches "into Albanian temples", Artsakh Armenians into "aliens" and so on.

Generally, our neighbors' judgments are out of place and time. They use the false arguments that they set forth themselves and concoct empty stories. What is the importance of facts if there is neither scientific conscience, nor scientific approach and sense of shame. Everything is done in a Turkish manner, i.e. to plunder and defile the sacred objects and places of other peoples.

This time the assignment is to "prove" that the territory of the Azerbaijani republic has belonged to Azeris since ancient times. The order is again executed in a Turkish manner, i.e. "a special theory of Turks allegedly being a settled people since ancient times is developed; furthermore, the ancient population of the East Transcaucasus is said to be Turkish. Archaeological values are considered to be relics of old Turkish national culture. Meanwhile, as Y. Bromley wrote ("October and the Development of International Relations in the USSR". Moscow, 1987, p. 56) there are many sources in literature about Azeri nomads, including local sources. They "forget" that even during the census of the population in 1959 there was a special provision regarding them, i.e. to indicate the percentage of the settled and nomadic population.

That's why no monument belonging to the late settlers, i.e. Azeris, was recorded in the Kurdish-Azeri settlements of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh and nearby areas. If there were such, they would have been mentioned in the books published in Baku, would have been included in the lists of monuments approved by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. There are no such monuments because, as a result of the atrocities and crimes committed by the alien khans who came to stay in Shushi in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Armenian population was ousted from their fathers' homes, and the Turkish-speaking tribes, their main occupation being cattle breeding, that settled down in abandoned old Armenian settlements, lived in huts, for they did not know how to put a stone on stone, nor did they have fixed places for cemeteries, because during different seasons of the year they stayed in different places pasturing their cattle. The areas populated with Armenians were used as winter pastures, and monasteries, churches were used as enclosures for cattle. Besides, the nomads had no definite national identity. For that reason in scientific literature they are mentioned simply as Muslims who were called Caucasian Tatars during the first 15 years of the Soviet Bolshevik rule, then Azeris, and from the mid-90s Turk-Azeris.

During the Karabakh-Azerbaijani war, by liberating the territories adjacent to the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, which were artificially divided into conventional administrative regions (Lachin, Kelbajar, Aghdam, Fizuli, Jebayil, Kubatlu and Zangelan) during the Soviet times, favorable conditions were created for the studies and registration of monuments in these historical provinces of Artsakh. These territories, which are organic parts of Artsakh's cultural habitat, are one of the major cultural centers that occupy an important place in the history of the Armenian people.

Recently the historian Samvel Karapetian's work "Armenian Cultural Monuments the Regions Annexed by Soviet Azerbaijan" (Yerevan, 1999-2001) was published in Armenian, Russian and English. This work thoroughly studies about 1,700 Armenian monuments in the indicated regions. Articles about monuments in the liberated territories were also published by Shahen Mkrtychian, Hakob Simonian, Alexan Hakobian. It's particularly worth mentioning Alexan Hakobian's scientific publication (A. Hakobian, "Newly Discovered Lapidary Inscriptions of

Hakari Hills", "Monthly Magazine", Vienna, 1998, N 1-12, pages 270-324). Very expressive, color and black-and-white rare photographs are included in the publications. Most of them were published for the first time, making a shocking impression - hundreds of broken, smashed pieces of Armenian epitaphic inscriptions, sculpture-decorated fragments, defiled grave monuments, which were broken with the encouragement of the Turk-Azeri authorities and put in the walls of public and residential buildings. At one time, the example of that vandalism was set by M. J. Bagirov. It was by his order that Armenian medieval churches in the vicinity of the health resort Istisu were destroyed, and with their stones a governmental summer-cottage and a bath-house were built for the first person of Azerbaijan to have intercourse with his lovers only after they "take a milk bath".

These are brazen arguments of vandalism and barbarism, a testimony to the destruction of Christian Armenian culture. It is strange and appalling that the massacre of Armenian culture, the genocide of Armenians in Shushi, in the valley of the River Hagar, Kelbajar (Karvachar), in the steppes near the River Arax, and why not also in Sumgait, Baku, Gandzak, Gardmank, Nakhidjevan, are insolently presented as "a heroic exploit performed by the Azerbaijani people". And the Armenians are branded as instigators of the genocide against Turk-Azeris. They even think of converting the Armenian Cathedral preserved by miracle in Baku into a genocide museum where they are likely to exhibit falsified "works", anti-Armenian "masterpieces". True, as the Moscow-based Noyev Kovcheg newspaper wrote (October 2001), "the cynicism of the Azeri-Turks knows no borders."

Till the mid-1960s the monuments located in the territory of the autonomous region had been under seven seals and were considered to be "banned zones". Therefore, no one attended to them, they were not even registered. Anyone could treat them as they wanted. However, on March 1 and December 27 of 1966, the local official newspaper "Soviet Karabakh" published a series of articles that woke up the Karabakh Armenians from their lethargic sleep and care about the fate of the monuments that were being destroyed. Alarming complaint letters appeared in the pages of the newspaper, critical speeches were made at meetings. People were discontent with the lack of proper care and attention towards the monuments, since the Soviet decisions regarding

their restoration and preservation were not implemented in Karabakh. That's why local and regional party and executive bodies were forced to discuss the extremely tragic state of the area's monuments, especially that almost all major monuments of NKAR were left out of the official list of monuments under state protection approved by the Government of Azerbaijani SSR in 1968. The mentioned government list included only 64 out of more than 1500 Christian Armenian monuments registered in the NKAR and even these 64 bore distorted names. While the earlier tricks connected with the misappropriation of museum values, denial of the existence of monuments were silently swallowed in Armenian areas following the notorious Leninist principle of "Superiors' Decisions are Compulsory for Inferiors", then in this case Karabakh Armenians raised their voice of protest and for the first time in the history of the Soviet regime proved that the so-called Bolshevik- adopted "democratic centralism" principle is nothing more than a screen for falsification, a trap for exterminating national minorities. Feeling all this, Nagorno Karabakh's Party Regional Committee and Regional Executive Committee found the political courage to make a joint decision (June 29, 1970) and with a special letter (July 23, 1970) apply to the Government of Soviet Azerbaijan and ask that major monuments of the NKAR should be included in the republican lists of monuments under state protection. However, official Baku stated that "the monuments in NKAR have no right to be called monuments, since in the past they were centers of popularizing harmful religious ideas." Consequently, "there is no need to spend means on their restoration" and to raise the issue of preservation (see Sh. Mkrtichian, "I Saw a Different War in Artsakh", Yerevan, 1996, p. 154). Some time later, the regional authorities again paid attention to the issue of monuments. It was decided: a) to restore "the encyclopedia of Armenian architecture" - the Monastery of Gandzasar - on the local budget. However, following a formal reply of the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijani SSR the fulfillment of that decision was failed too (see NKR archives, fund 3, list 35, work 33, point 289, N 271); b) To publish the book "The Historical Architectural Monuments of Nagorno Karabakh". This point of the decision failed too. Through its local party protege, the first secretary B. Kevorkov of the NK Regional Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, Baku announced that the publication of the guide-book "would only beget national vainglory and hamper the



international education of workers" (see the report of the regional committee plenary meeting that took place on March 21, 1975, "Soviet Karabakh", March 23, 1975, N 69). Does Baku really think that people, national minorities get internationalized only when they are totally detached from their national history, national memories, their national roots and blood?

Baku went much farther than just pasting political labels. They were "seeking" and finding those who ardently raised the issue of Nagorno Karabakh monuments. Very soon the director of the regional state museum of local lore and history Shahen Mkrtychian, the head of the regional department of culture Jean Andrian, the head of the ideological department of the party's NK regional committee Mher Khachatryan, the first deputy chairman of the regional executive committee Yervand Bagdasarian were dismissed from work. Some time later, they also fired the first secretary of the party's NK regional committee Gurgen Melkumian and regional executive committee chairman Mushegh Ohanjanian. After that, for about 15-16 years there was no one who would dare to "speak" about monuments in the NKAR.

During that period the ways to NK historical architectural monuments began at the office of the Azerbaijani Communist Party's NK Regional Committee First Secretary B. Kevorkov. But besides "hating" Armenian cult monuments under Baku's dictates, he also disallowed people to visit the sights for taking pictures and conducting studies. However, there was no ban for the azerbaijanized city of Shushi. In that city only Armenian monuments were prohibited for visitors. By the way, it was by Kevorkov's order that on August 20, 1987, the author of these lines was turned out of the Hadrut region to where he had gone to photograph monuments. The Azerbaijani authorities, to whom it seemed that the issue of the Armenian monuments of Nagorno Karabakh had been once and for ever deadlocked, without the knowledge of the NKAR party and state bodies, hastily "invented" 200 names of "Albanian castles, cathedrals", "Azeri residential buildings" and "located" in the territory of Nagorno Karabakh and then included them in the official lists of monuments under state preservation confirmed by the government of Soviet Azerbaijan, although there were no such in Nagorno Karabakh and could not be.

Furthermore, the "monuments" were declared to be several centuries older than they actually were. They probably wanted to accentuate the tendency towards increasing their historical value. That falsification was competently exposed still in 1988 by specialists of competent organizations of Artsakh (see "Soviet Karabakh", July 8, 1988 And so, another bubble burst in Baku. It is natural that it should not have been able to bear the counter-arguments set forth in the article and burst at once. By the way, on one occasion Heidar Baba, president of Azerbaijan H. Aliiev, invited the hired bubble blowers and said to them: "You know that the legs of a liar are short. Try to make the lies and falsifications you concoct seem true, so that their exposure will be a difficult task and that they will have certain resistance." Meanwhile, one should not edit and proofread the truth, the bitter reality must be acknowledged.

Here, it is appropriate to remind our readers that the "forgetful" Azeri "monumentologists", who still in 1960 led a four-year joint scientific expedition of the academies of science of Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia around Artsakh, saw and photographed the monuments, copied out their lapidary inscriptions. A comprehensive report was presented to the heads of the two republics' academies by five Armenian and five Azeri scientists who participated in the expeditions.

Since in Artsakh, i.e. Nagorno Karabakh, inscriptions engraved on the walls of monuments, khachkars, tombstones and high relieves, as it is said in the report, "are exclusively Armenian", the Armenian party was entitled to publish them (see Archives of Armenian Lithography, edition 5, Artsakh, compiled by S. Barkhudarian, Yerevan, 1972).

Neither in that lengthy edition and nor in the mentioned report a single word is said about the "Albanian" belonging of any of the monuments. No such monument was found on the list of monuments under republic jurisdiction subject to state protection approved under decision N 140 of the Council of Ministers of Soviet Azerbaijan on April 2, 1968 either. There is no monument of "Albanian" or "Azerbaijani" belonging also in the lists of registration of monuments received from almost all regions of Nagorno Karabakh in 1966.

If, nevertheless, suppose that the starting-point for artificially turning "residential houses" into Azeri monuments was the administrative map or the national identity of residents of these houses, it will become more or less understandable. It is, however, quite obscure on what basis the

"Albanian castles" were invented in Baku. No new expeditions investigated Nagorno Karabakh, no original sources telling about at least one "Albanian" monument was ever discovered. Simply, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Soviet Azerbaijan gave an instruction to immediately concoct, put down officially and offer to those who took interest in the monuments of Nagorno Karabakh. It was already at that time (after the outburst of the powerful Karabakh movement, February 20, 1988) that many began to show interest in the monuments of the Armenian territory and to distinguish the false from the genuine. Shahen Mkrtichian's voluminous works about the monuments of Nagorno Karabakh were published in Yerevan, in Armenian and Russian, and were spread elsewhere. It is also the fact that the International Union of Architects, the International Organization of Churches and UNESCO decided to send their experts to Nagorno Karabakh to examine the state of monuments and their national belonging.

However, when those in Baku finally understood that secret notes of KGB were no longer effective in concealing the existence of thousands-year-old Armenian monuments, they resorted to an even fouler "experiment". They concocted some lists of nameless "Albanian castles and temples" allegedly preserved in the Armenian land. They attached the lists to the circular (September 8, 1987, N 158) of the Council for Religious Affairs of Soviet Azerbaijan's government and sent it to the heads of the executive committees of all the NKAR districts. It was demanded on behalf of the government that the Armenian leaders of Armenian provinces should copy out the false lists handed down from Baku to their official forms and return them ratified with signatures and sealed. However, with their unsophisticated lies and ostrich position, on the one hand they tried to "legalize" the misappropriation and albanization of Armenian medieval monuments and, on the other hand, tried to mislead the Armenian public. The participation of the mentioned Council for Religious Affairs in this case dispelled doubts that the circular might have been an occasional one, and created a necessary illusion of appropriateness. Meanwhile, one could not think of a meaner falsification than that when the Council for Religious Affairs, which had nothing to do with monuments, exceeding its official powers got engaged in whitewash with utter impudence. Meanwhile, it is the

republic's Ministry of Culture and the Republic Voluntary Society for the Preservation of Monuments that are supposed to attend to monuments. The blameworthy methods of obtaining facts, and simply falsified data about monuments of Nagorno Karabakh bypassing the NKAR authorities pursued the goal of disguising the ongoing intrigues on the governmental level.

Moreover, one could not imagine a greater absurdity when the government of Soviet Azerbaijan, by its decision N 45 of April 27, 1988 approved an utter lie, falsification, "several Albanian castles" which, in fact, do not and had never existed. They were the product of morbid imagination and were "legalized" by the government suffering from armenophobia, the government that did not respect itself.

So, along with the change of political circumstances, Baku changed its tactics (of concealing, disguising, destroying) used towards the Armenian culture of Karabakh - it was no longer able to deny the fact of the existence of monuments. However, they (according to the lists made by the Council for Religious Affairs) "were not Armenian, but Albanian-Azeri". Consequently, there is no need to draw Armenian specialists into studies and restoration of the monuments on the Armenian land. This is the very essence of the "Albanian temples" bluff. The goal of the smart Azeri leaders was to foil the enforcement of the decisions and proposals made on the Union level regarding the preservation and restoration of Christian Armenian monuments.

The secretary of the Azerbaijani Writers' Union Abdullayev once criticized this opinion. He wrote: "Stirring up an improper dispute, we the Azerbaijanis, are passionately arguing that there are only Albanian monuments in the territory of NKAR and no Armenian ones whatsoever" (*Bakinski Rabochi*, 1988, N 236). But the Azerbaijani authorities, using unimaginable political tricks, prevented the expert commission organized by the International Union of Architects and UNESCO from entering Nagorno Karabakh. And why did they do so? Because impartial experts might have objectively assessed the sad situation with the preservation of Armenian monuments and might have clarified their ethnic belonging. And it was not appropriate for the Turk-Azeris, because the truth would then be disclosed and the bag of lies would burst.

The suggestions of the Head Department for Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments attached to the Council of Ministers of Soviet Armenia to establish a scientific-industrial section, an architectural workshop working out restoration monuments that proceeds from the decision about NKAR made by the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers (March 24, 1988) were also flatly denied by corresponding departments in Azerbaijan.

Taking advantage of the shortcomings of the Soviet rule, the authorities of Soviet Azerbaijan nervously invoked Azerbaijan's administrative-territorial principle, forgetting that the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh is also a certain administrative-territorial unit provided for by the USSR Constitution. The Turk-Azeris have always been guided by that very principle. That is, Karabakh is situated in our territory, we'll do with it what we want. The convincing evidence of that is the defiance of the well-known decisions of the Soviet bodies. Even after Moscow made the above-mentioned decision about NKAR, in June 1989 the Turk-Azeris burned marvelous Ghazanchetsots Church in Shushi; on December 25 they ravaged the Armenian church in Baku. They burned religious books, stole icons, church property. Thereafter, they shelled St. Mary Church of the village Arakel, Amaras Monastery, churches of Norashen, Banadzor, Tsori, the chapel situated near Parin Pizh Church in Berdadzor and went unpunished. Meanwhile, the Armenians did not touch the mosques with their minarets remaining in Shushi and Aghdam. Even though they passed through the crucible of war, they still stand in their original form and appear to the community as monuments. The Armenians did not keep ammunition there, like Azeris who kept thousands of "Grad" shells in the huge Armenian Surb Amenaprkich Ghazanchetsots Church in Shushi.

As for the 4.5 million rubles mentioned in bulky notes which the Azeris kept sending to Moscow, Yerevan and international organizations, it was another eyewash of Azeri-Turks, a mere illusion to mislead ignorant people. Because the 4.5 million rubles spent on the construction of concrete mansions of "Persian khans and their viziers" in Shushi and Aghdam, on the expense of the NKAR budget, in the 1980s were at one stroke rewritten as a "huge sum" spent for the purpose of studying and restoring historical architectural monuments of Nagorno Karabakh. So, another terrible lie was modeled and presented as a

powerful argument to testify that they, the Azeri-Turks, with selfless dedication, ache for the restoration and preservation of monuments in Artsakh. Consequently, there is no need to worry, since they, without sparing anything, do everything. Presenting this outrageous lie, Baku was convinced that no one would check it and people would believe the eyewash modeled on the state level and that they, as always, would prove winners in the propaganda struggle, at least for a certain period of time.

Over the past years the Azerbaijani propaganda machine has been expressing "its deep concern" over the fate of the monuments belonging to the Azerbaijani people that are being "misappropriated and destroyed by the Armenians" in the so-called "occupied" but, in fact, historical territories of Artsakh liberated from a long-standing captivity. This is nothing more than another incitation and political provocation. False "arguments" put forth by the Azeris were presented to UNESCO, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, ministries of culture of many countries of the world, editorial offices of prestigious newspapers and other international organizations. In short, on the state level the Azeris trumpet about the "500 monuments of the Azeri cultural heritage misappropriated and destroyed" by the Armenians. First, this figure, as the head of the Department for Preservation and Study of Monuments of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh S. Sargissian wrote, obviously does not correspond to the fact, because years ago, by the above-mentioned decisions of the government of Soviet Azerbaijan, so many monuments were left out of the lists of monuments registered by the state. Besides, the monuments in the earlier mentioned territories were officially presented by the Azeri-Turks as "Albanian castles". Those in Baku no longer speak about it, they seem to have forgotten about it. Because now they are already presented as Azerbaijani historical monuments. Probably, state and political figures of Azeri-Turks were guided by the principle "the greater the lie is, the more credible it sounds". And then, they certainly pursued their wish to discredit the Armenian and Nagorno Karabakh republics. As for the "misappropriation" of cultural values, Armenians have never felt the need for that. Misappropriation, theft, plunder are the main components of Turkish domestic life, their occupation, which is testified to by many European authors (including K. Marx).

A few years ago, the Azeri-Turks also kicked up a row about the so-called destruction of the Azeri monuments in Shushi by Armenians. At one time 35 photographs with corresponding exposing documents enclosed were sent to UNESCO.

At the downfall of the Soviet Union, the Karabakh Armenians were in the grip of despotic Azerbaijan; they were deprived of their right to live duly, as other peoples live and therefore they tried to regain their historical rights. Just like Azerbaijan could not accept the Soviet heritage any longer and seceded the USSR, Nagorno Karabakh did not wish to live in the conditions that were arbitrarily foisted on it by Stalin decades ago.

In every possible way Azerbaijan is trying to re-establish its order and authority over the people of Artsakh, who have now for 15 years refused to obey the hateful authorities that they do not trust. This documentary collection is a vivid evidence of the mistrust towards Azerbaijan. The traces of atrocities committed by Turk-Azeris are still fresh in people's minds. Unfortunately, thousands of monuments have already been irreparably destroyed, hundreds of settlements have been ravaged, tens of thousands of gravestones, khachkars were broken into pieces, because, as Victor Hugo said, "Turks have passed through this once prosperous Armenian land."

In these and other circumstances, indeed, why should Karabakh again be returned to Azerbaijan that had exploited it without scruple and had turned it into ruins? Nagorno Karabakh de facto decided its fate a long time ago and it is unfair, if not a crime, to return it to the oppressor state alien to it. The independence of the Armenian population of Karabakh and the proclamation of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh are the logical results of the powerful liberation struggle. From this point of view it can be certainly stated that the proclamation of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh was the symbol of the resolution of the Armenian cause in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is high time to restore within its former borders the integrity of historical Artsakh dismembered in the result of the deal made between Lenin and Ataturk. That is, with the regions separated, torn, stolen from Artsakh for the Soviet Azeri-Turks in the 1920s the considerable part of which has already been liberated.

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Let us sum up. The Azerbaijani authorities continuously drove the Armenian region to a deadlock, trying to disrupt the natural links of the Armenian population with the Republic of Armenia, erecting walls in the sphere of culture and language. The Armenians left Karabakh because in the tense atmosphere of demoralization, ethnic discrimination and severe repression they had lost their belief in the future, they were deeply frustrated from the thing for the sake of which they would make any sacrifice in near past.

If there were not for the powerful Karabakh movement, the struggle for liberation, the situation of the Armenians of Karabakh would be drastic. However, the brave people of Karabakh could not bear willfulness and repression for decades on. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the people of Karabakh under these circumstances exceeded themselves, got united, broke to pieces the shackles of the Azerbaijani rule, won the war imposed on them, gained independence and created a state. Thus they put an end to the repression, torturing and fear of losing Artsakh once and for all.

Actually, with their triumph in the war, achievements in all the spheres of life, as well as the statehood based on the principles of democracy won the approval of the international community. The thing that remains is that those who have assumed the task of settling the problem of Artsakh in a peaceful and fair manner realize this.

Everyone in Azerbaijan may find enough valuable information in this book to understand what really happened in Nagorno Karabakh. And that the Armenians of Artsakh struggled to put an end to the atrocities of Azerbaijan. Thus, we may say that the bases of the liberation struggle were laid in Baku.

We would advise the falsifiers of Baku to read the interview of General Amos Gilboa, Israel expert on the Near East published in the Baku-based newspaper Zerkalo (November 7, 2002) where he also touched upon the problem of Karabakh. He said that it is equally important that the Azerbaijanis understand the importance and analyze, at least for themselves, the reasons why they lost not only the adjacent territories of Karabakh, but also Karabakh itself.



The Azerbaijanis live with the illusion that with the support of the West and particularly Turkey they can and will punish the Armenians of "disobedient" Karabakh. It is high time that the Turk-Azeri intelligentsia, the statesmen and politicians, as well as the pseudo-scientists wake up, come out of their shell, look around themselves, think, and the realistic perception of the actuality may arouse conscience and awakening of reason. There is no need to carry on with political shortsightedness and ideological retardation, infringing new sufferings on their nation.

SHAHEN MKRTCHYAN

# VANDALISM

Second Revised Edition

**A collection of evidential and documentary materials  
about the destruction and misappropriation of the  
heritage of Armenian-Christian culture in Azerbaijan**

Yerevan 2005

## CHAPTER 8

### DOCUMENTS

**1) *The address of Shahen Mkrtchian, the director of the NK Regional Museum of History and Local Lore to the Bureau of the NK Regional Committee of the Communist Party on May 14, 1968***

Dear members of the Bureau of the Regional Committee,

I am not concerned about protection of the regional museum that has been set on the path of development, or its founder and director (although I will not hide that these problems exist). I am concerned by the ideological and political excitement around the museum. Unfortunately, the aim is wicked, it is not assisting the museum or helping to tackle drawbacks but it is the obsession of destroying, ruining rather, which does not leave alone hotheads. Since for Nagorno Karabakh the museum is an academy, a treasurer, memory, patriotism, a temple of pride at the same time. Thousands of unique exhibits kept there are certainly the undeniable eloquent testimony to our history, eternal values of art created by the genius of our nation, which have a scientific, historical and cultural, as well as an educational value. I should also note, as the reporter mentioned, that only in the past year over 50 thousand people visited our museum. For our country this is a big number. Actually, one out of three people in the region visited the museum. At the same time, this is large audience, handled with reason.

Since the museum is considered an important part of NKAR, it suffers the same problems as the region. The noose around the neck of the autonomy, and consequently the museum became tighter after the events of July 1967 when the high officials threatening us all the time were succeeded by numerous and various "commissions", checking, instructing, teaching lessons of "moral", "internationalism" and labeling our ideology with strange isms, and replacing one by the other, slandering us. The evidence to this was the medley that hastily took a state, party, official shape and was extended to Moscow and Stepanakert in the form of a decree of the Azerbaijani Central Committee. You know better than I do what centralism means nowadays, especially in

Azerbaijan. It has one direction – upward. This is the whole paradox... the blunt weapon used for decades to persecute our specialists, hinder social and economic development of the region, stifle our national culture. Instead of seizing and punishing offenders they granted more freedom to their ruinous hands. In fact, they consciously mixed the cause with the result, the innocent and the guilty, or as the people of Karabakh say, the dry and the wet. In brief, in absolute clarity they stirred up the water to fish more easily. The “goldfish”, our museum, also became part of the trophy.

I have to be frank and state my once again ideological and political beliefs, since all the accusations against me are closely related to them. I am a more than orthodox member of the Party, a sworn atheist, a passionate preacher of internationalism and brotherhood, a Soviet citizen enthusiastic to spread the light of Communism, more than everyone present here. However, it turns out that both you and me are confused, deceived. The reality of shocking crimes against our dream unfortunately contradicts to the official information that is offered to us. And besides, it turns out that too much devotion, limitless belief, implementation of overloaded plans have somehow made us less alert, undermined the immunity of our nation.

The undeniable truth is that after the Transcaucasian Federation stopped existing the policy of estrangement and resettlement of people from their native country was consistently pursued against the region and its native population. These monstrous plans are not concealed even in the official circles and the most nationalist layers of the intelligentsia. Our fair protests against this monstrous genocidal policy everywhere crashed into the rock of conscience. In such conditions certain forces guilefully conceal their plots, distort the meaning, purpose and reason of our protests and persecute our specialists. This is the reason why the campaign against NKAR, expanding day by day, is also targeted at the museum, libraries, even village reading-rooms. They take away from the museum the silver coin with the head of Tigran Mets, rip off the pictures of the Armenian writers from the walls of libraries, the Armenian posters from the walls of the village reading-rooms, the portrait of the Catholicos of All Armenians Vazgen I from Gandzasar, saying that they are “infected with yerevanism, the ideology of the Dashnaktsutun” (Armenian Revolutionary Federation). This cannot be tolerated any

more. The consequences of the imminent disaster can be seen with the naked eye. A vivid example of this is the present Bureau. What happened, why the museum so highly praised by visitors and especially by special professional commissions, and recognized in Moscow as one of the best museums in the Soviet Union suddenly appeared on the blacklist, became the target of attacks of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party and a topic of discussion of the regional committee? Let alone the inhumane torture and persecution against me by the KGB people, who have been granted invisible but powerful rights. Why was the exhibition of the museum, “impregnated with the spirit of loyalty to the Party”, labeled as “incompliant with the methodology of Marxism”? And after this serious ideological-political accusation made by the Central Committee, the bureau of the regional committee has to make a serious choice and pass its implacable verdict.

The groundless self-confidence, enthusiastic ignorance and provincial wretchedness of our opponents are greatly determined by this. As if a reward has been promised for destroying the museum and pecking at its young director and they are trying to outdo one another by such mean accusations to win the prize.

What happened after all? What is the cause for all this? In fact, there happened what the duty of the museum was. The essential heroic episodes of the history of the region were presented in an exhibition. In fact, an important role is foreseen for the museum. It greatly contributes to the extremely important task of imparting the political and spiritual life of the region with new force, and bolstering up nation's morale. The only center of science and enlightenment of the region completely deprived of the possibility to publish books, broadcasting scientific educational programs, the museum partly restored the lost memory, tied the broken threads and found the lost link with the past.

These are the main tasks fulfilled by the museum, which not only did not please but also surprised and irritated all those forces that had raved of “uprooting” Armenians in Artsakh-Karabakh for many years. In this connection I want to let the bureau know about the ideas expressed by Akhundov, the first deputy director of the department of propaganda of the Azerbaijani Central Committee of the Communist Party. I am

repeating his exact words, "Yoldash<sup>1</sup> Mgrdichian, we want to extinguish the root of Armenians in this Azeri land, whereas you display the silver coin of Tigran Mets (I<sup>st</sup> c. BC), the stone inscription of Prince Gagik of Dizak (10<sup>th</sup> c.), the decree of Melik Yegan (17<sup>th</sup> c.), the appeals of Russian generals glorifying the heroic deeds of your Karabakh Armenians (19<sup>th</sup> c.) in the museum. Thus you highlighted for your compatriots that three, two, one thousand, five, two hundred years ago Karabakh was Armenian and from now on we must struggle to keep it Armenian. We will not forgive you this." It sounds as one could not be more straightforward. I wonder why this striking chauvinism. Pan-Turkism is identified with the methodology of Marxism-Leninism. Is there any relation between them? If yes, then my staying in the Party of Lenin is pointless.

The speeches we heard a while ago are the specific cases of the general tendency of the nationalist approach adopted by official Baku against the museum and not only, but more vulgar, more offensive, more disgusting, seasoned with violent political blackmail. In a foul politicized atmosphere our faultfinders poured on my head all kind of abuse they could in an ethereal hovering, with an air of having their feet in the clouds. For a moment tremor passed through my body, I hardly held myself back. But only for a moment. I have seen and dealt with numerous professional slanderers but I cannot hide that these are different, terrible scandalmongers suffering from mental disorders. Poor Karabakh, how can you stand them?

Only it is not clear why they did not try to systemize their "powerful" accusations, make them earthly. At least they should have localized such terrible slanders and brought arguments. Otherwise, what is the hypothesis of "overseas assistance" when they could have invented something more reasonable? For example, the museum is close to the bank. Every night the director of the museum penetrates into the bank through the tunnel that he has dug himself, takes a pack of 25 rubles and spends this money for his patriotic or nationalist, as the faultfinders characterize them, activities. This would be more logical, more probable. Otherwise the world has not yet seen such a foolish capitalist or a company that would sponsor some provincial museum to organize

<sup>1</sup> "Yoldash" means comrade in Turkish.

exhibitions in Communist, Bolshevik spirit and get parchments on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

Meanwhile, if we go into detail, we will find out what sacrifices it took the young enthusiasts of the small staff of the museum to work. Often one person carried out the work of several people without being paid additionally. Often we spent part of our small salaries to buy exhibits for the museum. Often we had our relatives, friends, specialists do something for the museum free of charge. In reference to the museum the financial aspect is of no importance, what matters is the spirit, devotion, professionalism, strong moral scientific principles and organizational abilities, essential to the museum. For over five years I have had no vacation. I work 15-17 hours a day. I do work for 4-5 people.

But don't our collective farmers, workers, specialists, work similarly hard? Otherwise, we could not have raised productivity of work 130 times within a year in 1967, producing more agricultural production, although the region receives much less financial and technical assistance, investments, and the salaries in the region are the lowest in the Soviet Union. Wasn't Stepanakert built and the economic potential of the region developed in the same way, as a result of patriotic devotion? This is heroism, the evidence to devotion of people, anxious for the fate of their motherland.

Now I want to touch upon only one of the empty talks put forward by Haik Gasparian. After all, how long are we going to repeat in a parrot-fashion our Azeri "friends" and refer to our monasteries and churches as "harmful religious centers, worthless antiquity"? Whereas, these have long ago stopped being considered as such. After the famous decree of Lenin monuments in the country are preserved, restored and propagated, and are part of modern life, serving for esthetic and patriotic education and organization of rest of workmen. Do not forget that besides being religious centers the monuments of our region had a priceless role in struggle for defense and survival. In darkness and nightmare the eternal fire of national preservation has constantly burnt in monasteries and churches.

The monasteries and churches of our highlands have spread enlightenment and education in the region and sheltered scholars and

manuscripts. At the same time these monuments are stone witnesses, stone books of our history dating back to centuries, since the onset of the history, and reflect the life of generations, the history of centuries. These magnificent monuments are memorials of history and architecture, which have left an ineradicable trace on the face of our mountainous region and greatly enriched our national culture.

Unfortunately, our historian critics (one of them Chr. Petrossian is a school director and the other H. Gasparian is the chair of the radio programs commission) have no idea about all this otherwise they would not attempt at considering monasteries and churches as manifestations of nationalism and foolishly cling to falsifications of some scientists and the empty idea imposed on us that "monuments are harmful religious centers of the past". Plus the expression of Lenin that "religion is hashish", which has nothing to do with the problem at all. These are their forceful arguments. This is their approach. One should ask them whether the mosques used to be centers for spreading the ideas of Marxism or headquarters of the revolution.

Dear members of the Bureau,

I am especially worried whether Chr. Petrossian and H. Gasparian realize their behaviour, the absurdity of their "forceful arguments", the consequences of their doubtful brain exercise. What do we have now? Yesterday they accused B. Ulubabian, S. Shakarian, B. Janian, S. Aslanian, I. Khachaturian, L. Gasparian of "Armenian nationalism" with the same populism, today they are accusing Shahen Mkrtichian, tomorrow, perhaps, it will be the turn of Jean Andrian, the other day...

That's enough! Whose plots are you staging and why? Can't you see you have become scarecrows in the big immoral game against Karabakh? Are you so obsessed with your role that you cannot notice, cannot see what is taking place around you? And what is taking place is terror, violence, killings of innocent people, all-round robbing of private and state property, displacement of population of dozens of Armenian villages, destruction of industrial capacities, profitable orchards, monuments, persecution of national culture and language, distortion of the history. And all this is taking place under the veil of internationalism and Leninist friendship of peoples. This is the situation. This must seriously worry us. This should be prevented now, for tomorrow it will be late.

Let us remember once again and make others understand that even when Karabakh was annexed by Azerbaijan for some political aims, it was not subjected, yielded fully, for autonomy was established there. Autonomy was established because it was an Armenian land, Armenians have always lived there and not because Karabakh is mountainous or it is an indivisible part of Azerbaijan.

Finally, I would like to draw the Bureau's attention to another important problem – the nasty habit of shaping false patriots through false, invented political accusations. Unfortunately, certain high-ranking official comrades foster this process for certain ambitious plans.

For God's sake, do not make an idol of me with your false and empty "serious political accusations", moreover, a nationalist and a dissident. Some people want to render me such so that they can appear faultless or go up the social scale, as well as harm Karabakh, and say, "look what a dangerous root we have found in Karabakh and are pulling it out." But I repeat I am not such. I'm an ordinary mortal, who knows his job very well and carries out his duties perfectly, whereas the Central Committee and its "controllers" here have accused me of such political and ideological sins that an unaware person would think Shahen Mkrtichian is a notorious rebel and relying on his powerful connections he has stood up against the Marxist methodology. What nonsense!

One may criticize, and state one's own principles (if there are any). But this is possible to do in a dignified way and with arguments and not with the fairy tales they have heard from their granny, with the foul methods of agents of the 1930s, sticking political labels left and right, playing on the cords of relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

*P.S. The speech was taken down in shorthand and prepared for publication by Knara Musayelian, the head of the special department of the regional committee of the Party then.*

*2) The official message and reference on the tragic condition of historical-architectural monuments of Shahen Mkrtichian, the director of the NKAR state museum of history and local lore, to the first secretary of the NK regional committee G. Melkumian (April 24, 1972)*



To First Secretary of Regional  
Committee of Communist Party  
of Nagorno Karabakh,  
Comrade **G. A. Melkumian**

Dear Gurgen Alaverdovich,

I would like to inform the regional committee that since I was appointed director of the Regional Museum of History and Local Lore in 1965 I have told and written to government agencies, namely the regional committee, the regional soviet, the USSR Ministry of Culture, about the deliberate destruction of historical and architectural monuments. Besides, in the March 1, December 27, 1966 and February 2, 1967 issues of the Soviet Karabakh I published alarming articles and raised the question of preservation and propaganda of monuments in the region. Although the question has been discussed, and decisions have been made, actually, the government's attention is not visible with regard to the problem of preservation of monuments.

Being well aware of the bad condition of monuments, I state that it is impossible to tolerate this any more. The generations will not forgive our criminal indifference, our ostrich policy. Once again I beg you to rely on the material attached to the letter and put the question to discussion in the joint meeting of the bureau of the Regional Committee and the Executive Committee of the Regional Soviet.

**Shahen Mkrtichian**, Director of the  
Regional Museum of History and Local  
Lore of Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous  
Region

### *3) The state of historical architectural monuments in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region /Historical Artsakh/*

There are over one thousand cultural monuments created by the Armenians living in Nagorno Karabakh and the adjacent regions, i.e. in the provinces of Artsakh-Khachen and Utik of ancient and medieval Armenia (in 1923, Stalin allowed Soviet Azerbaijan to annex this territory). This is immense cultural heritage – settlements, monasteries, hundreds of churches,

khachkars (cross stones), castles, remains of public and industrial buildings, bridges. These monuments tell a lot about the national liberation movement of the Armenian people.

There are approximately over 1,600 monuments in the Autonomous Region of Nagorno Karabakh, including 520 in the region of Martakert, 410 in Hadrut, 327 in Martuni, 251 in Stepanakert (now Askeran), 103 in Shushi (including the city).

Most of these historical architectural monuments were created in the Middle Ages and have special importance for Armenians. There are such pearls of Armenian architecture as Amaras Monastery (4<sup>th</sup> century), Dadivank (5-13<sup>th</sup> centuries), Hakobavank (8-13<sup>th</sup> centuries), Apostle Yeghisheh Monastery and Orek Monastery (5<sup>th</sup> century), Okhte Drni Monastery (Seven Gates), Vachagan Church (6-7<sup>th</sup> centuries), Khatravank, Gtchavank Monastery and Gandzasar (13<sup>th</sup> century), Mayraberd (18<sup>th</sup> century), the palaces of the meliks of Gyulistan, Khachen and Dizak (16-17<sup>th</sup> centuries), Ghazanchetsots Church in Shushi (19<sup>th</sup> centuries), etc.

Besides Armenian manuscripts dating from different centuries over 5000 Armenian inscriptions testify to their Armenian ethnic and cultural origin.

The design of these historical architectural monuments represents the Artsakh school of Armenian architecture, which is inseparable from the national architecture of Central Armenia of the same historical period.

Different writings in different languages dating from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 18<sup>th</sup> century AD testify to the ethnic population of Karabakh (i.e. Artsakh-Khachen) is homogenous. Hence, the conjecture of Azerbaijani researchers about the Albanian origin of the Karabakh Armenians and cultural monuments created by them is professional falsification of history.

By the way, the neglect towards monuments is a proof that the inventors of this hypothesis realize very well that these monuments are ethnically and culturally Armenian.

In 1970 the chair of the Armenian Society for Preservation of Historical Monuments, People's Painter of the USSR, Hero of Socialist Labor Martiros Sarian wrote a special letter to the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan H. A. Aliyev (a copy of the letter is attached to this material) asking him to make effective efforts to preserve and encourage conservation of Armenian monuments in NKAR, Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Nakhidjevan and adjacent areas. In conclusion M. Sarian offered on behalf of the Armenian Society for Preservation of Historical Monuments to provide specialists and funds for measurement of monuments. Unfortunately, M. Sarian's request was not met.

The majority of historical architectural monuments of Karabakh were not included in the list of monuments under conservation approved by the

Government of Soviet Azerbaijan. Besides, the Armenian monuments of NKAR, as well as the monuments situated in other regions of the republic, were defined by the special commission of the Academy of Sciences of Soviet Azerbaijan as "dangerous religious centers of the past".

The lack of control on behalf of the political party and government agencies, the helplessness of the local organizations resulted in the destruction of many historical architectural monuments of Nagorno Karabakh, arousing the righteous dignity of the Armenians - the descendants of the creators of these monuments.

In the 1950s, the stones of the dome and facade of Ghazanchetsots Church in the center of the town of Shushi were disassembled. The stones were used for building. The present-day vandals turned the reliefs on the walls of the church and gravestones with rich decorations into targets for shooting.

The destruction of Armenian monuments of antiquity was sometimes ordered by Azeri town-planners. Thus, an article by the architect K. Sayidov entitled "Problems of the Resort Town of Shushi" was published in the February 2, 1966 (N 9) issue of the Baku-based newspaper *Stroitel*. In the article the author states that cemeteries allegedly devoured the city and argued: "The dead ate the alive." A mass destruction of ancient Armenian cemeteries in Shushi followed, while the local population used gravestones as building material.

The same fate awaited the three-nave basilica of Aguletsots, Kanach Zham Church (it was reconstructed and turned into a mineral water drinking gallery). Meghretsots Church was destroyed by reorganizing it into an open-air cinema.

Over 200 Armenian 19<sup>th</sup> century residential and public buildings in Shushi suffered the same fate.

Citizens from many cities and towns of the Soviet Union getting treatment in the resort center of Shushi, as well as tourists lodged protests with the local administration, wrote letters, asked the municipality to make efforts to stop the destruction, restore these Armenian monuments, which are eternal historical values. At the same time, they pointed to the good state of Azerbaijani monuments. It is notable that only one of the Armenian medieval cemeteries, the cemetery of Shushi, was included in the list of monuments under conservation!

In fact, how can we talk about conservation when only 64 out of over 1,600 historical and cultural monuments of NKAR were included in the list of "Monuments Protected by the Government" on a resolution of the Council of Ministers of Soviet Azerbaijan adopted on April 2, 1968? Even such large monasteries and churches of early Middle Ages as Amaras,

Yeghisheh Chknavor, Yeritsmankants, Surb Lusavorich and others were not included in the mentioned list.

We have already mentioned that reconstruction was done by people who were not professional and qualified, like the repair of the porch of one of the masterpieces of medieval Armenian architecture Gandzasar Church, 13<sup>th</sup> c (A. L. Jacobson, a well-known Soviet historian of architecture, considers the monument to be "an encyclopedia of the Armenian architecture").

The design of Vankasar Church was distorted during reconstruction as well. Forms and colors are distorted. The reconstruction of a 19<sup>th</sup> century house in the center of Shushi is an outrageous fact of distortion, or rather falsification. Re-doing the style and making changes, they have turned the Armenian facade of the house into an Azeri one.

It could not have been otherwise. There were no qualified and competent specialists in the center of the autonomous regional. Workers incompetent in Armenian architecture drew up the projects of reconstruction of the above-mentioned monuments in Baku. Furthermore, as evidence shows, these workers pursued obviously anti-scientific goals.

Ignoring monuments of the Armenian culture dating from ancient times to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, refusing to publish information about them in scientific journals and literature, maps and guides pursue one goal - creating a false opinion that allegedly there were no Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, these rarities are not included in the list of monuments protected by the government. It is enough to look through the guide for travelers "Tourism in Soviet Azerbaijan" published in Moscow in 1970 (in 26 thousand copies) to get an idea about the tenacious policy of ignoring Armenian monuments of NKAR. Only 14 monuments of the region are presented here, including only one Armenian sight - the fortress of Jraberd.

Seeking to present the culture of the region as Islamic, the authors of the guide contrived "resettlement" of Muslim monuments of the neighboring regions of Aghdam and Fizuli, which have nothing in common with Karabakh, instead of including more than a thousand Armenian monuments. It is painful to realize that Moscow-based publishers did not know anything about at least several monuments of Nagorno Karabakh of Union importance, such as, for example, Gandzasar Monastery, so as to include them in the guidebook. By the way, it was in Gandzasar that in 1703 the Armenians of Karabakh wrote a letter to Peter the Great, asking him to liberate Armenia from the Persian yoke and unite with Russia.

One can cite more examples of censoring facts and information about both historical and modern monuments in travel guides (in Shushi there are monuments to the natives of Shushi, such as Nelson Stepanian, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, a bust to the People's Commissar of the Ferrous

Metallurgy Industry of the USSR, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers Ivan Tevosian, who were included in guides and other books about Shushi).

The demolition of Armenian monuments of the region has become more systematic over the past 30 years. With the connivance of the local government hundreds of churches, monasteries, ancient cemeteries, settlements have been razed to the ground. Hundreds of khachkars (cross stones) and gravestones with medieval inscriptions were broken, lost or used as building materials. Over 13 historical archeological monuments were demolished with bulldozers, razed to the ground and turned into farming land. Explosives were used in the caves of Tsatskhach in the villages of Mets Taghlar and Azokh, the settlements of Amaras and Kaghankatuyk, the burial vault of Grigoris (the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, 4<sup>th</sup> century) in Amaras was rummaged and turned upside down. Under the guise of geological studies a pit was dug under the ancient buildings of Dadivank Monastery. The khachkars of the portal with inscriptions disappeared. The valuable archeological Armenian objects discovered during the excavations in Fizuli disappeared. The Armenian workers who took part in excavations in 1968 said a cache was discovered in the cave of Azokh with manuscripts and a church plate - the riches of the monasteries of Amaras and Gtich. However, 20 years have passed and nothing is known about these treasures.

In the valley of the Khachen river the settlements of Darpasner, Havaptuk Vank and Vachar, churches of the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries were blown up, almost all khachkars (over 70), as well as a number of gravestones from the 9-14<sup>th</sup> centuries were destroyed. Besides, some Azeri "researchers" set out in an open plunder. Secretly from the local government they took tombstones from the cemetery of the Armenian royal family of Hamam Areveltsi near Tigranakert away to Baku soon presenting them as "Albanian" (i.e. Azerbaijani) sculpture. It was by the same methods that not only Armenian khachkars and gravestones but also handicrafts were transported from the valley of Khachen to Baku.

The monuments of Haterk (Martakert region) are in a lamentable state. There are houses here completely built with pieces of medieval monuments - broken khachkars, gravestones and trimmed stones with fragments of inscriptions. Khachkars, tombstones, churches, fortress walls (5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> centuries), settlements of Kaghankatuyk, Aknaberd, Amaras, Khlen Berd, Astghablur and Tsos were destroyed. A number of monuments, including two bridges (12-13<sup>th</sup> centuries), three chapels (13-17<sup>th</sup> centuries), dozens of khachkars, burial vaults, houses were demolished without any study, measurement or even photographing. Their fragments were used in building other buildings or remained under the waters of the Sarsang reservoir.

With the connivance of the local government, criminals searching for hidden treasures destroyed monuments, defiled and looted graves often using different equipment - bulldozers, tractors, cranes, etc. Treasure fever left its traces in Amaras (4<sup>th</sup> century), Gtich (5-8<sup>th</sup> centuries), Khatravank (13<sup>th</sup> century), Yeghisheh Arakyal (13<sup>th</sup> century), Okhte Yekhtsi (12<sup>th</sup> century), Mesisavank (10<sup>th</sup> century). Dozens of churches and monasteries were used storehouses, stables and sheds.

The state of Armenian monuments in NKAR, Autonomous Republic of Soviet Nakhidjevan, as well as some other regions of Soviet Azerbaijan is impossible to describe on a few pages (it is presented in more detail in the materials of the author).

This evidence shows that Lenin's precepts concerning the cultural heritage of the past were ignored here, the law of the USSR Supreme Soviet on conservation and use of monuments of history and culture adopted in 1971 was not violated.

We believe that the ideological roots of vandalism against the Christian antiquities in Soviet Azerbaijan go back to Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism materialized by the republic's leadership and their theorists through the abovementioned scientists. Their pseudoscientific and anti-Armenian works were like a wedge tapped between the two peoples. They have been arousing anger in the Armenian people both in the Motherland and across Diaspora communities. Thereby, these servants of the Azerbaijani science made their "tangible contribution" to the events that took place in Nagorno Karabakh, Shushi, Baku, Kirovabad. Hurting national dignity and destroying the cultural heritage of the Karabakh Armenians hardly favor the interests of the Azerbaijani people and serve the goal of promoting internationalism.

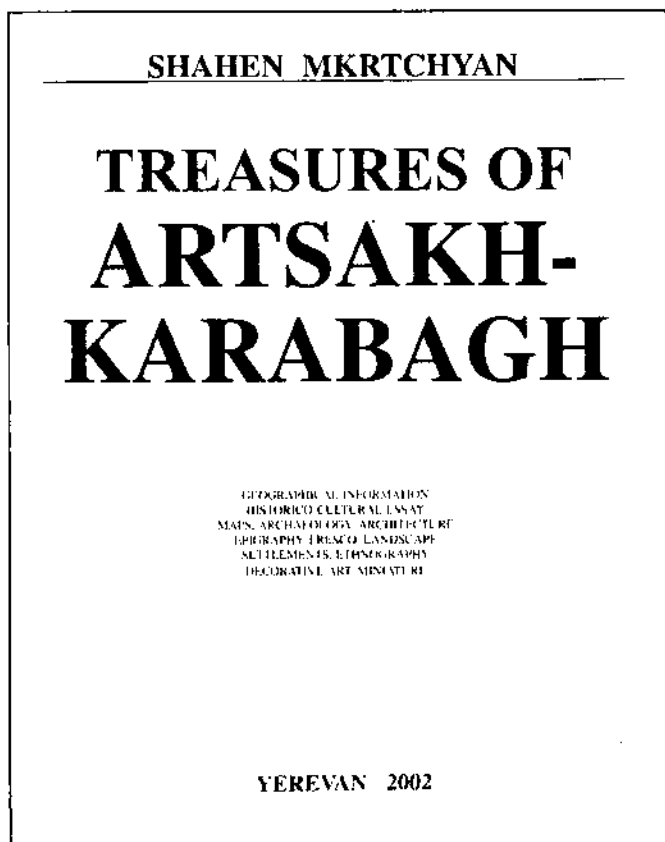
Proceeding from what was stated above, we ask you to set up a competent commission under the auspices of the Scientific Methodological Council for Conservation of Monuments under the USSR Ministry of Culture and the leadership of the USSR Fund of Culture (including representatives from Soviet Armenia) so as to crosscheck the facts cited in this material (which are far from being complete and comprehensive) on the spot regarding Armenian monuments in Soviet Azerbaijan, including NKAR, and make sufficient efforts to make sure that they are treated carefully and attentively.

Although there is a Voluntary Society of Assistance for Conservation of Monuments set up in 1962 in Soviet Azerbaijan, there is no such society in Nagorno Karabakh, in fact. In autumn of 1971, upon the initiative of local comrades, a branch of the Voluntary Society for the Conservation of Monuments was set up in NKAR. Five months have passed, but the Society

has not determined the functions, duties and rights of the regional bodies for the conservation of monuments.

This is how things stand. Proceeding from Resolution 3839 of the USSR Council of Ministers adopted on October 14, 1948 it is necessary to make an inventory of and introduce scientific passport for the monuments of the region and include them in the list of monuments protected by the state, reconstruct such unique ancient monuments as Ghazanchetsots Church, Gandzasar, Khutavank, Gtich, Amaras through relevant agencies, publish a guidebook and a booklet about historical and architectural monuments of the region.

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SHAHEN MKRTICHIAN

WHY NAGORNO KARABAKH  
AND AZERBAIJAN CANNOT COEXIST

ՇԱՀԵՆ ՄԿՐՏՉՅԱՆ

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