

ԱՐՓԵՆԻԿ ԴԱՉԱՐՈՍԵԱՆ

Պատմական գիտ. թեկնածու, ՄԱՄ, ԳՀԾ

«ՅԱՃԵԼԻ» ԸՆԹԵՐՅԱՆՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՅԱՍԱՐ ԱՌԱՋԱՐԿՈՒՈՂ ԳՐՔԵՐ ՄԵՐ ՅԱՐԵԻԱՆՆԵՐԻՆ՝¹

Նիւթն ստեղծուել է որպէս համառօտ ակնարկ-հաղորդում՝ թուրք-ադր-բեջանական պատմամշակութային կեղծիքների եւ իւրացումների մասին: Այն համապարփակ լինելու նպատակ չի հետապնդում, այլ ընդամենը թարմացնում է յաւակնոտ ելոյթների սիրահարների յիշողութիւնը ցանկանալով մեղմել նրանց ախորժակը:

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BOOKS RECOMMENDED TO OUR NEIGHBORS FOR “PLEASANT” READING

This note was prepared as a concise report on Turkish–Azerbaijani historical and cultural forgeries and appropriations. It does not claim to be comprehensive; rather, it recalls only a few of the most conspicuous facts, both to refresh the memory of aficionados of grandiose rhetoric and to curb their appetite.

Through the persistent efforts of the Turkish–Azerbaijani tandem, reality is falsified daily—every hour, every minute, every passing second. Fabrication has grown to such proportions that responding to every instance has become not only impossible, but also pointless. Any impartial and rational individual who genuinely seeks the truth

¹* Ստացուել է՝ 16.12.2025, գրախօսուել է՝ 6.01.2026: Էլ. հասցե՝ targmanich1@mail.ru: Խմբագիր՝ Գևորգ Սարեան:

can uncover it within minutes—without articles, without the internet, without the aid of artificial intelligence—simply by applying sound reason.

Let us therefore limit ourselves to a few brief observations on Turkish–Azerbaijani pretensions.

One of the most widespread—and for them, most essential—falsifications is the denial of the Armenian Genocide. This genocide is documented by eyewitness testimony; by the writings of foreign statesmen, politicians, and clergy; by official records and correspondence; and by countless other sources. The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute houses thousands of materials attesting to and proving the fact of the genocide, while the Lemkin Institute has issued numerous authoritative statements on the subject. In addition, a vast body of scholarship on the Armenian Catastrophe illuminates nearly every stage of its planning, preparation, and execution.

Yet, as already noted, one need not examine every historical document, archival record, eyewitness account, or photographic and audiovisual archive to grasp the fraudulent, hollow, and irrational nature of Armenian Genocide denial. It suffices to pose a few simple questions. For example: why is it that in the core regions of the Armenian Highlands—inhabited by Armenians for millennia and bearing their name from the beginning—no Armenians live today?

What became of the millions of Armenians who, at the beginning of the twentieth century, lived in their ancestral homeland—the Armenian Highlands? Why did they suddenly abandon their centuries-old homes and villages and vanish from the face of the earth? One might, of course, observe that the human body is composed largely of water and therefore imagine that the Armenians of the Highlands simply evaporated—dissolving into thin air—while Talat, Cemal, Enver, the various pashas, the Turkish regular army, the gendarmerie, and the state apparatus that attacked an unarmed civilian population bore absolutely no responsibility for this “evaporation.” Presumably, this is regarded as a “successful” explanation by those who deny the Armenian Genocide.

The difficulty, however, is that any answer offered by a denier inevitably gives rise to new—and far more serious—questions. Even if some explanation is contrived to account for the disappearance of Armenians from their own homeland, the very mountains that bear their name, that explanation immediately generates further “inconvenient” questions. One may imagine that Armenians voluntarily abandoned their ancestral cradle—but then another question arises: what became of the property, possessions, and wealth of those millions of Armenians when the Armenian popula-

tion “disappeared” under circumstances that remain so conveniently “unknown” to the Turkish state and its satellites?² And what became of the Armenian churches and

² For the sake of fairness, it should be noted that the ‘circumstances of the Armenians’ disappearance’ seem to be unknown mainly to the Turks and their satellites. Many countries have officially recognized that the Armenians’ sudden ‘vanishing’ in 1915 is defined by the legal term genocide. The list of those states follows:

- Argentina – 1993 (First to pass a law condemning it)
 - Armenia – 1965 (Declaration by the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR)
 - Austria – 2015 (Resolution of the National Council)
 - Belgium – 1998 (Senate Resolution), 2015 (Full recognition by law)
 - Bolivia – 2014 (Resolution of the Plurinational Legislative Assembly)
 - Brazil – 2015 (Resolution by the Federal Senate)
 - Canada – 1996 (House of Commons Motion), 2004 (Government recognition)
 - Chile – 2007 (Senate Resolution)
 - Cyprus – 1975 (First European state to recognize after the Council of Europe)
 - Czech Republic – 2017 (Resolution of the Chamber of Deputies)
 - France – 1998 (Parliamentary Resolution), 2001 (Law recognizing the Armenian Genocide)
 - Germany – 2005 (Bundestag Resolution), 2016 (Resolution using the term “genocide”)
 - Greece – 1996 (Resolution of the Hellenic Parliament)
 - Italy – 2000 (Resolution of the Chamber of Deputies)
 - Latvia – 2021 (Resolution of the Saeima)
 - Lebanon – 1997 (First Arab state to recognize)
 - Lithuania – 2005 (Resolution of the Seimas)
 - Luxembourg – 2015 (Resolution of the Chamber of Deputies)
 - Mexico – 2011 (Resolution of the Senate)
 - Netherlands – 2004 (Parliamentary Motion), 2018 (Formal recognition by the government)
 - Paraguay – 2015 (Senate Resolution)
 - Poland – 2005 (Resolution of the Sejm)
 - Portugal – 2019 (Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic)
 - Russia – 1995 (State Duma Resolution)
 - Slovakia – 2004 (Resolution of the National Council)
 - Slovenia – 2011 (Resolution of the National Assembly)
 - Sweden – 2010 (Resolution of the Riksdag)
 - Switzerland – 2003 (Resolution of the National Council)
 - Syria – 2014 (Official government statement)
 - United States – 2019 (Congressional Resolution and Presidential Statement)
 - Uruguay – 1965 (First country in the world to recognize)
 - Vatican City – 2001 (Statement by Pope John Paul II), 2015 (Statement by Pope Francis)
- Note:

Recognition has often been a multi-stage process for many countries, progressing from parliamentary resolutions to full legislative acts.

Uruguay was the first state to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide (1965) officially.

monasteries, the schools and sanctuaries? Has stone itself, too, acquired the wondrous ability to vanish into thin air?

To grasp the phenomenon clearly, one need only imagine a kind, educated, and civilized individual—a writer, a doctor, a teacher, or a musician. A representative of an upright and noble family, living in his ancestral mansion. That mansion stands on a street built by his grandfather, in a city founded by his great-grandfather. Yet while this man is leading a righteous and creative life, a band of nomadic murderers suddenly descends upon him, massacres his family, seizes the property and possessions of the slain, and even appropriates their bank accounts. Is such a thing possible?

If one lives in a lawful country, the answer is no. Even in a semi-civilized country, one might still cling to the hope of at least partial justice. And yet, while in everyday life such a scenario may seem impossible, in world history—and in the eyes of the so-called “Great Powers”—it has, in fact, been treated as a perfectly “ordinary” occurrence.

The only difference is that what has just been described did not happen to a single family, but—far worse—to a great lineage: to an entire people. In 1915, Armenians were exterminated in their own homeland, in their ancestral homes; their property was seized and appropriated, down to the very sums they held in their bank accounts³. And what, then, is the difference? If one murders a single family, it is a criminal act, and one will very likely be punished. But if one exterminates an entire people, one is not only left unpunished—one is entirely free to live in comfort on the property of the

The United States formally recognized the genocide in 2019 after decades of political consideration.

This list is dynamic. The status of recognition can evolve, and other political entities may pass recognition in the future.

³ See eg **S. Karamanian**, *Economic-Legal Perspectives on the Armenian Genocide*, *International Criminal Law Review*, Online Publication Date: 13 Mar 2014: «The Armenian Genocide of 1915, while causing substantial loss of life, also had enormous economic consequences. Important new scholarship has established that depriving Armenians of their homes, businesses, and personal effects was a means of ensuring their removal from Turkey. The findings establish that Armenian property was then misappropriated to benefit Turkey. The economic harm continues today, largely unmitigated. Mere economic loss due to State action, alone, is difficult to fit within the accepted definition of genocide. Yet, the mass killings and deportations surrounding the property losses make the economic harm legally relevant. Furthermore, the economic dimension is significant, aside from the genocide. Claims for reparation, which arise out of contract and property law, are the most viable legal option for many of the heirs of the Armenians. Pursuing claims, however, is costly and time-consuming. Ideally, the significance of the claims and the difficulties of a piece-meal approach to resolving them could lead to an international claims settlement process for the benefit of the affected Armenians».

murdered, to prosper and enrich oneself, and thus to continue the criminal enterprise by carrying out genocide against others as well: the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Yazidis, the Kurds, and the Armenians of Artsakh.

Are there any objections to this? If not, we may consider ourselves satisfied with the questions we have raised. If there are, however, we shall be compelled to pose ever more numerous questions to those who have chosen falsehood as their shield. This is a simple principle: every lie inevitably generates new and increasingly uncomfortable questions for the liar, confronting them sooner or later with the danger of complete exposure. Today, public discussion focuses almost exclusively on the immediate perpetrator of the Armenian Genocide—the one who, in reality, served merely as the “instrument of murder” in the hands of the true criminals. Meanwhile, the identity and degree of guilt of those who supplied that instrument with weapons free of charge, who financed it, planned and directed its actions, concealed the crime, justified the genocides, and denied them, remain scarcely examined. Yet whether we speak of individuals, clandestine organizations, or states, an increasing number of voices are now explicitly naming and accusing those who fashioned the Turks and Azerbaijanis into their instrument. One may hope that this “instrument” will one day come to understand that, rather than committing ever new crimes to deny and obscure the genocide, it would find itself in a far more advantageous position by acknowledging the fact of the genocide, offering restitution, confessing its guilt and its accomplices, exposing those who transformed it into an instrument of murder, and finally attempting to adopt the conduct and norms of a civilized society.

We have spoken of the appropriation and seizure of the property of the murdered. At first, appropriation appeared easy. From the walls of churches, monasteries, schools, printing houses, and hospital buildings, the perpetrators of genocide scraped away and destroyed millennia-old Armenian khachkars and inscriptions. But once the Armenians had been annihilated, there were no longer any doctors, teachers, or printers. The magnificent buildings themselves were reduced to warehouses or barns⁴. There

⁴ Regarding the severe shortage of qualified and educated specialists resulting from the genocide of the Armenians, see: Bedross Der Matossian, *The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of ‘Armenian Capital’ at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, “European Journal of Turkish Studies”, 37, 2023, Originally published in 2011: «From [missionary] Leslie A. Davis to the American Consul of Harpout to Honorable Henry Morgenthau, American Ambassador, Istanbul, June 30, 1915. Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/269. (Sarafian, 2006, 459)»: «The effect industrially and commercially of the expulsion of the Armenians from this region is going to be throw its back in the Middle Ages. It is

is perhaps nothing to reproach them for—after all, for them the most important and most coveted thing in life, and in the world, may indeed have been the barn. They themselves, together with their closest brethren, possessed no proper personal name of their own, but were instead distinguished by the characteristics of their sheep, as Karakoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu—that is, the Black Sheep and the White Sheep⁵. After erasing the Armenian presence from buildings and structures, they proceeded to shatter and annihilate Armenian monuments and fountains in cities, villages, and settlements everywhere—above all, the khachkars—driven by a particular and obsessive hatred toward the cross⁶. They then proceeded to destroy even those Armenian monuments that bore no cross and carried no explicit spiritual symbolism whatsoever—for example, tombstones inscribed with nothing more than the names of the deceased. The Koyunluans waged a veritable “war” even against such stones, a war against those who lay beneath them, denying the dead rest even in their graves. Graves were torn apart and mutilated in the hope of finding gold or silver, or simply to gratify barbaric impulses. Stones that had lain motionless for centuries were ripped from their places, crushed, or used to pave roads—all in an effort to erase the Armenian trace.

Yet no matter how much they erased and destroyed, the Armenian presence endured. On every mountain, every road, every path, at every step, it was the Armenian trace—the Armenian spirit and breath—that persisted. The owners were killed with ease, and their material possessions appropriated just as easily; but the spiritual heritage proved far more difficult to seize. Still, the attempts did not cease.

officially stated that ninety per cent of the trade and of the businesses carried out on through the banks is that of Armenians. Business of all kind will now be destroyed beyond the possibility of its being restored. In some trades there will be no mechanics or workmen at all».

⁵ See <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/aq-qoyunlu-confederation/>.

⁶ The systematic destruction and appropriation of Armenian cultural heritage by Azerbaijani authorities has been extensively documented by authoritative international sources. Satellite investigations conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS, 2010) proved that the medieval Armenian cemetery of Julfa (Jugha), once containing nearly 10,000 khachkars, was completely demolished between 1998 and 2006. The deliberate nature of this destruction was confirmed by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (Document 10707, 2005). Scholarly analysis by Simon Maghakyan and Sarah Pickman in the *Journal of Genocide Research* (2019) classified these actions as part of a broader policy of cultural genocide targeting Armenian monuments throughout Nakhchivan and Artsakh. The same events are corroborated by major historical studies, including Thomas de Waal’s *Black Garden* (2013) and George A. Bournoutian’s *A Concise History of the Armenian People* (2006), which detail both the physical destruction of monuments and the systematic reattribution of Armenian ecclesiastical sites as “Caucasian Albanian” heritage for political purposes.

Having already succeeded in turning Constantinople into Istanbul, and the miracle-built Church of Hagia Sophia into the Aya Sofya mosque, the same principle was now applied elsewhere: by altering a few letters or adding a word, the Armenian legacy itself was to be appropriated. If a city founded by Constantine could be declared their own creation, then by the same logic the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Armenian Highlands was also to be proclaimed the work of their ancestors.

One can only marvel at this reasoning. Would it not have been even simpler to declare outright that the Armenian Highlands themselves were created by their forefathers—or that they themselves are the true Armenians? Though such claims may appear exaggerated, their actual conduct differs from them only in degree.

They make no distinction between a great lie and a small one—between a lie that is anti-scientific, illogical, improbable, or so crude that no actor could convincingly feign belief in it. All such considerations are secondary. What matters is not how often the lie is repeated, but that it is repeated constantly, massively, and loudly—believers will inevitably be found. And even if none exist, those who do not believe at all can be gathered and so pressured or enticed that they begin to profess complete faith in the lie.

It was precisely by this logic that, instead of acknowledging the annihilation of countless khachkars, it seemed far easier to insist that the khachkar itself was a native Koyunlu phenomenon. This attempt, however, quickly collapsed: from its very first sound to its final syllable, the word *khachkar* unmistakably betrays its Armenian origin, making appropriation impossible.

After this failure, a new claim was advanced: that the term *khachkar* was erroneous and should instead be written as *khachdash*. Yet this, too, proved futile, for the root *khach* continued to testify unequivocally to the Armenian nature of the phenomenon. Forced further into contradiction, yet another term was invented to “prove” the Koyunlu origin of the khachkar. Logic, however, once again turned against them. Whether expressed by the Armenian *khach* or the English *cross*, the image itself remained unacceptable—utterly absent from Koyunlu “art.”

To overcome this difficulty, the Koyunluans began to insist that the cross had never been alien to them at all. Before becoming Koyunlu—and, to put it mildly, before developing a pronounced inclination toward barbarity—they were said to have been Christian and civilized Aghvans, “Caucasian Albanians.” Thus, khachkars, churches, art, and music were all declared once native to them, until they allegedly strayed and transformed into fervent enemies of culture itself.

One author, seeking to deny the Armenian nature of the khachkar, has even claimed: “It should be noted that the term *khachkar* does not appear in Armenian medieval literature before the twelfth century, and that the term itself has Old Turkic or Persian roots.”⁷ We shall pay no attention whatsoever to the question of how a compound formed from two native Armenian words could possess Turkic or Persian roots. Nor shall we concern ourselves with analyzing a notion born of anti-Armenian impulses but which, in reality, turns out to be favorable to Armenians. We shall simply indicate why it is favorable.

By obsessively seeking “Old Turkic or Persian” roots, the author—consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, willingly or unwillingly—effectively asserts that anything not mentioned in Armenian medieval literature before the twelfth century simply did not exist. For this implicit confidence placed in Armenian medieval literature, we may indeed be grateful. At the same time, however, we are obliged to observe that not only before the twelfth century, but even before the twentieth—and not only in Armenian, but in any written language whatsoever—there neither did exist, nor could have existed, the terms *Azerbaijan* (as a state) or *Azerbaijani people* in the sense in which they are used today, to denote the artificial political entity known as the Republic of Azerbaijan⁸. The same must be said of the so-called “people” themselves, who at various times were designated as the Tatars of the Caucasus or the Turks of the Caucasus, while they themselves—as already noted—identified as the White Sheep. As for the Armenian nature of the khachkar, there is no need for lengthy scholarly treatises, elaborate arguments, or extended chains of proof. The matter is simple.

At present, only two of the earliest known khachkars have come down to us. Inscribed upon them, in Mesropian Armenian script, are the dates of their creation: 866 and 869⁹. Logic therefore suggests that, instead of digging for phantom Proto-Turkic or Persian “roots,” it would be far more productive to discover a khachkar—preferably inscribed in authentic Aghvanian and, in the best of all possible worlds, in modern Azerbaijani—bearing the date “865.” Such a find alone would instantly “prove” that both the monument itself and the Old Armenian word *khachkar* are Turkic in origin.

Naturally, even then perfect bliss would remain unattainable. For should such an

⁷ See “Problems of Arts and Culture”, N 4 (66), p. 58.

⁸ Cp. “Historically speaking, the territory in the Caucasus that lies to the north of the Aras river, was never called Azerbaijan until the year 1918” <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/azerbaijan-index/>, cp. https://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/Geography/arran_or_azerbaijan.htm.

⁹ See <https://horizonweekly.ca/en/the-oldest-armenian-cross-stone-khachkar-is-in-artsakh/>,

“Aghvanian” inscription ever be miraculously unearthed, it would—much to the discoverer’s disappointment—inevitably be written in the Aghvanian alphabet created by Mesrop Mashtots, once again dissolving every hope of a triumphant cultural conquest.

With regard to the attempts to deny the Armenian nature of the khachkar and to “prove” its Azerbaijani-Aghvanian essence, it must be said that these efforts are doomed to failure for a few simple yet fatal reasons. Why, for example, did Azerbaijan—at the level of state policy—set about destroying what it allegedly claimed as its own “ancestral” cultural treasure: the ten thousand khachkars of Jugha? And what does the pulverization of those ten thousand khachkars actually demonstrate—their “Azerbaijani origin,” or rather the deep-seated Koyunlu hatred toward Armenian culture and, in particular, toward the cross?¹⁰.

The reality is that the less the Koyunluists speak or write in their attempts to falsify or deny the truth, the better it is for them—for the fewer the opportunities to expose their crimes and fabrications. The moment they speak, the moment they declare the khachkar to be Azerbaijani, they must be prepared to hear that the annihilation of khachkars is classified in international legal instruments as a crime¹¹. And the more they attempt to deny the Armenian Genocide, the more they will be confronted with their crimes against Greeks, Assyrians, Yazidis, and Kurds—crimes against humanity, including acts of forced assimilation, cultural suppression, and the political persecution of minorities.

George N. Shirinian (ed.), *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, 1913–1923*, New York–Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2017;

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Erik Sjöberg, *The Making of the Greek Genocide*, New York–Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2017;

¹⁰ See <https://www.aaas.org/resources/high-resolution-satellite-imagery-and-destruction-cultural-artifacts-nakhchivan-azerbaijan>.

¹¹ See <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-protection-cultural-property-event-armed-conflict-regulations-execution-convention>; cp. *Roger O’Keefe*, *The Meaning of ‘Cultural Property’ under the 1954 Hague Convention*.

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Armenian Genocide, historical forgery, cultural appropriation, Armenian Highlands, Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem, genocide denial, Armenian cultural heritage, khachkars, Jughha (Julfa) cemetery, cultural genocide, Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, Lemkin Institute, Caucasian Albania, Aghvank, Azerbaijan Republic, historical falsification, misappropriation of property, human rights violations, ethnic cleansing.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Данный материал подготовлен как краткий обзор-сообщение, посвящённый турецко-азербайджанским историко-культурным фальсификациям и присвоениям. Он не претендует на исчерпывающую полноту, а лишь ставит целью напомнить любителям громких и амбициозных заявлений о проверенных фактах – в надежде несколько умерить их пыл.

¹² Drawing on the work of **Firuz Kazemzadeh**—the son of an Iranian diplomat and later a professor at Yale University—two particularly significant passages merit attention: “In the first days of April the pressure of the Turkish troops intensified. The Georgians in the area of Batum were slowly retreating while the Armenians, ill supported by some Russians who had not yet deserted from this front, were losing the district of Kars. Wherever the Turkish army advanced, Armenian massacres followed” p. 97; “This volume includes many documents dealing with the Armenian massacres, some of which are photostatically reproduced”, p. 334.