

# **Armenia and Armenians in the History Textbooks of Azerbaijan (Part II)**

written by Shalala Mammadova Şəlalə Məmmədova

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, all the newly independent republics began working on new presentations of their national history. In Azerbaijan, the new perspective on national history was built on the concept of ancient statehood traditions and the Turkification of ethnic origins. Although the introduction of a national concept into history and the preparation of national history textbooks began in 1992, it was only in the mid-1990s that it became possible to change the textbooks on Azerbaijani history. A portion of Soviet textbooks on world history still remained in circulation at that time. In the new textbooks, the interpretation of certain issues was already carried out through the prism of the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict, which was the most pressing problem of newly independent Azerbaijan. As in the Soviet period, professional historians were involved in writing the textbooks in the first years of independence. They each commented on the periods in which they specialized.

In this article, I will address the image of Armenia and Armenians in the textbooks that were in circulation in the 1990s. I will also attempt to determine how close the narratives presented in the textbooks were to scholarly research. This analysis will allow readers to compare the textbooks written at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries and to assess to what extent the historical narratives in both periods corresponded to the results of academic research.

**Armenia and Armenians in the 1990s Azerbaijani History Curriculum**

The history textbook published in 1994 for sixth-grade students writes that Manna, presented as an ancient “Azerbaijani state,” became a subject of dispute between the two great states of Western Asia, Assyria, and Urartu. The textbook introduces Urartu as a state created around Lake Van in the east of present-day Türkiye. In the 8th century BCE, Urartu took advantage of Assyria’s weakness and occupied part of Manna’s territory. Later Assyria regained its strength and managed to free Manna from Urartu’s influence. Unlike the textbooks of the twenty-first century, the textbook written at the end of the twentieth century does not present Manna as an independent and powerful state. Instead, it emphasizes that it came under the influence of Assyria and notes where the state of Urartu was located.<sup>1</sup>

In the textbook written in the 1990s, the territory and borders of the “ancient Azerbaijani state of Albania” are also described differently. Albania was a state bordered by the Caucasus Mountains in the north, Atropatene in the south, and Armenia in the southwest.<sup>2</sup> The textbook states that Albania’s close neighbors were Iberia, Armenia, and Atropatene. The territory of the Albanian state included “most of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan, the southern districts of Dagestan, and the Alazan (Qanıx) Valley of Georgia.” Thus, in the textbook of the 1990s, Albania is not presented as isolated from its neighbors. Among modern states, Georgia and part of Dagestan were included within Albania’s territory, but Albania did not cover the lands of modern Armenia.

The seventh-grade history textbook of Azerbaijan begins with a discussion of the political situation in Albania and Atropatene in antiquity. During this period, as in all the lands of the South Caucasus, Albania and Atropatene were part of the Parthian state.<sup>3</sup> As in “Iberia and Armenia,” Albania was ruled by the Arsacid dynasty. This pointed to the fact that since ancient times Albania shared the same history and experiences with its neighboring states. In other words, there

existed a common history. This tendency is also evident during the Sasanian period. Like "Armenia and Iberia," Albania was a territory governed under the same rules as part of the Sasanian Empire.

The textbook writes that after the Sasanians came to power, the South Caucasus fell under their dominion. This led to fragmentation among political forces and local rulers in all three states, Iberia, Albania, and "Armenia." Some nobles supported the Sasanians and Zoroastrianism. Others supported Rome and Christianity. At that time, the ruler of Paytakaran, Sanatruk (also called Sanasen or Sanaturk), tried to preserve Albania's independence. He fought to prevent it from falling under Armenia's and Christianity's influence. In this struggle, he received support from the Sasanians.<sup>4</sup> The textbook states that Paytakaran, the land of the Mar people, together with the Ararat valley, belonged to Atropatene.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the textbook touches on Albania's relationship with Armenia and the Sasanians in the fourth century CE. It also interprets the policy of the independent province of Paytakaran. Specialists localize the city of Paytakaran as the ruins of *Örənqala*, located 15 kilometers northwest of present-day Beyleqan, or Tezekend, located 7–8 kilometers southeast of it. In antiquity, the province of Paytakaran was part of Media Atropatene. During the reign of Artashes I, who later became king of Armenia, the province was annexed to Armenia. After the division of Armenia between Rome and the Sasanians in 387, Paytakaran became part of Albania. Although researchers acknowledge that the province was part of Armenia for a long time, they do not believe that its population was Armenian.

The textbook writes that in 337 Sanatruk gathered an army of thirty thousand Albanians and began a war against Armenia. He captured the capital, Valarshapat, and was able to hold the country for one year.<sup>6</sup> The Armenian ruler Khosrov did not resist and fled. The textbook writes that Sanatruk also

“protected the Turkic ethnoses of Albania from falling under the influence of Christianity.” It states that “one source calls Sanatruk the ruler of countless Huns.” Although the textbook does not specify the source, we can assume this information comes from Movses Khorenatsi or other Armenian sources of the fifth century. This means that when writing about Azerbaijan’s antiquity and early Middle Ages, the authors turned to Armenian sources since no local written sources existed.

Sanatruk, whose name appears differently in various historical records, was the ruler of Maskut. Researchers identify Maskut with the Massagetae or Meshetians. Medieval authors place Maskut in the southeast of present-day Azerbaijan and along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea in Dagestan. Sources also write that Sanatruk fought against Christianity and that his army was multinational. The Huns and the Alans formed the core of his forces, but subjugated peoples also fought in this army.

According to the textbook, in 338 with the help of Roman (that is, Byzantine) and Iberian troops, the Armenian commander Vache Mamikonyan pushed Sanatruk’s forces back as far as Paytakaran. The textbook notes, in a remark about the origin of the Mamikonyans, that the Mamikonyans were a Turkic family that had come from Central Asia. That same year, the Armenian ruler Tiran (338–345) signed an alliance treaty with Shapur II. This treaty was directed against the Huns who had settled in Albania. The textbook writes that “according to sources, northern peoples settled in Albania for four years” and that during this period “they pressed Armenia.” Thus, the textbook notes that Albania was long under the influence of the northern peoples, meaning the Huns, and that the Huns launched continuous raids from Albanian territory into Armenia and even managed to control Armenia for one year. To stop these raids and to drive the Huns out of Armenia, the Sasanians made use of the military units of local rulers. In the struggle against the Huns, Armenia was forced into alliance with the Sasanian

ruler. At the same time, Armenia relied on the protection of the Roman Empire in order to free itself from Sasanian domination. Christianity also brought Armenia and Rome closer. Wars between Rome and the Sasanians were fought in a way against the background of the struggle between Christianity and Zoroastrianism.

The textbook contrasts Sanatruk and Vache Mamikonyan. It does not mention the ethnic identity of the first, but it writes that the second was of Turkic origin. The origin of the Mamikonyans is debated. Medieval Armenian sources such as Movses Khorenatsi and Faustus of Byzantium write that the Mamikonyans were descended from the Chinese (the source says *Chenk*) Mamgon clan. Most likely, Azerbaijani historians connect the Mamikonyans with the Uighurs or Turks from China on the basis of information in Armenian sources. Yet some modern researchers interpret the term recorded as *Chenk* in Armenian sources not as China but as the Kartvelian Tzans or Laz in the South Caucasus.<sup>7</sup> Another group of scholars consider the Mamikonyans to be representatives of a tribe living around the Syr Darya.<sup>8</sup>

In the fourth century, several important battles took place between the Sasanians and the Romans. The textbook focuses especially on two of them. The first is the Battle of Amida in 359. In this battle, Albania fought on the side of the Sasanians while the Armenians fought on the side of Rome. The battle ended with the victory of the Sasanians. As a result, the Sasanians regained the lands they had lost in earlier battles. Among these lands, the textbook mentions Arsakh and the land of the Mar people. It states that Arsakh was Upper Karabakh, and the land of the Mar people was present-day Nakhchivan.<sup>9</sup>

The second battle took place in 371 on the plain of Dzirav. Here too the Armenians fought on the side of the Romans while the Albanians fought with the Sasanians. This time the battle

ended with the defeat of the Sasanians. Since Albania was on the losing side, it lost many provinces, including Uti, Sakasena, Kolt (a province on the western border of Albania), and the Girdiman valley.<sup>10</sup> The textbook writes that these lands could only be regained in 387 after the treaty between the Sasanians and the Romans which resulted in the “division of Armenia.” In explaining the frequent changes of territory under different political control in the early Middle Ages, the authors of the textbook attribute them to “Armenia’s territorial claims” and write that “Armenia’s territorial claims against its neighbors” were first voiced by Faustus of Byzantium<sup>11</sup> in the fifth century and later by Anania Shirakatsi – the author of *Armenian Geography* book – in the seventh century.<sup>12</sup> However, the textbook also notes that during that period Armenia was forced to maneuver between two great empires, the Sasanians and the Romans. It drew closer to Rome in order to preserve its partial independence, and the wars took place not at Armenia’s initiative but because the two empires sought to conquer more territory.

The textbook attributes Albania’s fighting on the Sasanian side and its alliance with them to two factors. First, the Albanians were related by marriage to the Sasanian rulers. Second, most Albanian nobles supported Zoroastrianism rather than Christianity. The support of some Albanian nobles for Zoroastrianism is interpreted as an attempt to prevent increasing Armenian influence. The textbook writes that Vache II, who ruled Albania in 440–463, was the nephew of Yazdegerd and sided with the Sasanians. “The ruler of Syunik,” Vasak, like the ruler of Albania, was also a supporter of the Zoroastrian religion of the Sasanians.<sup>13</sup> This information shows that there were nobles among the Armenians who were loyal to Zoroastrianism. They were enemies of the nobles who supported Christianity. In other words, there was a confrontation among the Armenian nobility based on religion that turned into political rivalry.

The confrontation between Zoroastrianism and Christianity in the fourth and fifth centuries led to many uprisings, rebellions, and internal wars. After the partition of Armenia, Christians in the territories under Sasanian rule began to face severe persecution. The textbook cites as an example of resistance against religious discrimination the rebellion led by Vardan Mamikonyan. It writes that the pro-Christian Albanian nobles united around Mamikonyan and fought against the Sasanians. In 451 a decisive battle took place at Avarayr plain between the Sasanians and the rebels. Mamikonyan and his supporters were defeated, and the Albanian nobles who had fought alongside the Armenians were forced to flee into the mountains. Thus, the textbook provides information about the joint struggle and alliance of Armenians and Albanians. At the same time, it adds that the Armenians used Christianity to bring the Albanians under their influence. Albanian leaning toward the Sasanians and opposition to Christianity is presented as resistance to Armenian influence.<sup>14</sup>

The textbook notes that Albania was under the influence of the Turkic Khaganate for more than a century. It writes that in the early seventh century internal conflicts began among the Turkic ethnoses settled in the provinces around Lake Göyçə.<sup>15</sup> In 630 a battle took place between the forces of Jebu Khagan, ruler of the Göktürks, and the Sasanian military units composed of Turks. Jebu Khagan won this battle, and “Lake Göyçə and the surrounding provinces” came under his rule.<sup>16</sup>

After the weakening of the Arab Caliphate, the textbook touches on the political activity of the Shaddadids when discussing events in Arran (the name of Albania in Arab sources) and Shirvan. It writes that the Shaddadids first lived around *Dəbil* (Dvin). When the Salarid state weakened, they took advantage of it, captured Ganja in 971, and soon “consolidated themselves in Azerbaijani lands.” They also “took the eastern part of Armenia.”<sup>17</sup> The Armenian ruler was

forced to pay tribute to the Shaddadid ruler. In the eleventh century the Seljuks began their conquest of the Caucasus and new military alliances emerged in the region. The Armenians allied with Byzantium<sup>18</sup> to regain Ani and Dvin from the Seljuks, while the Seljuks united with the Shaddadids.<sup>19</sup> In the battle of 1048 the Seljuks won. Battles between the Seljuks and the combined Byzantine-Armenian-Georgian forces are also discussed in the part of the textbook devoted to the epic *Book of Dede Qorqud*. The textbook writes that “in the sixth century the Oghuz who lived around Lake Göyçə” and the Aqqoyunlu and Qaraqoyunlu who lived “in southern Azerbaijan” were political rivals of the Armenians, Georgians, and Byzantine feudal lords, and that this rivalry ended with the victory of the Turks.<sup>20</sup>

The eighth-grade Azerbaijani history textbook begins with the history of the small states in Arran. The most powerful of these states was the Shirvanshahs. The textbook notes the importance of Muslim-Byzantine-Armenian-Georgian relations in the history of the Shirvanshahs. It writes that the Armenian and Georgian rulers and the Byzantine Empire tried to cleanse the Caucasus of the Turkic-Muslim element.<sup>21</sup> In this way, the authors of the textbook present the military wars of the Middle Ages, which were in reality waged mainly for land, wealth, and influence, as ethnic and religious conflicts.

When describing the borders of the Eldiguzid state, the textbook emphasizes that “the Armenian lands including the city of Dəbil (Dvin)” were part of the Eldiguzid state and thereby acknowledges that Dvin was on Armenian territory.<sup>22</sup> When discussing the cities of Azerbaijan during the classical feudal period, the name of *Īrəvan* (modern Yerevan) does not appear. In the section on the Ilkhanid state, the textbook writes that the borders of the Azerbaijani province within the Ilkhanid state extended “from the Caspian Sea – Gilan province to Zanjan, Savujbulagh, the south of Ushniyya city and

Ruyindiz fortress, to Urmia, Salmas, Khoy, and Maku cities, to the west of Nakhchivan province, from Dvin city, Lake Göyçə, Debed River,<sup>23</sup> the western and northern parts of Shaki province, and to the north of Derbend city.”<sup>24</sup> These were not the borders of an Azerbaijani state but of the Azerbaijani province within the Ilkhanid state, and these borders had been drawn on the basis of the administrative-territorial division of the Ilkhanid state.

When describing the borders of the Qaraqoyunlu state, the textbook takes into account its most powerful period and describes these borders as follows: “The Azerbaijani lands south of the Kura, Armenia, Kurdistan, part of Georgia, Western Iran, Iraq.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, the textbook once again presents information that Azerbaijani, Armenian, and Georgian lands were part of the same state and shared the same historical experience. At the same time, the textbook also discusses the political rivalry and continuous wars between different Turkic-Muslim states. Although it does not mention the fate of the non-Turkic and non-Muslim peoples living under the rule of these states, it is possible to assume that their situation was difficult and that they suffered from frequent changes of power. For example, the textbook writes that Qaraqoyunlu ruler Jahanshah was hostile toward Uzun Hasan and that frequent military clashes took place between them. As a result of these clashes, Jahanshah lost most of Kurdistan and Armenia in the 1450s.<sup>26</sup> After Uzun Hasan conquered Armenia and the eastern part of Georgia that had been subject to the Qaraqoyunlu, in 1468 he also captured southern Azerbaijan and Karabakh.<sup>27</sup> The textbook does not deny that the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu states did not have stable political borders. It notes that at its most powerful the Aqqoyunlu state encompassed “the Azerbaijani provinces south of the Kura, Armenia, Diyarbakır, Eastern Georgia, Ajam Iraq, Gilan, Mazandaran, and apart from Khorasan, other provinces of Iran.”<sup>28</sup>

The textbook writes that the continuous wars among the Turkic-Muslim states continued in the Safavid period. It adds that when Shah Abbas came to power, his reforms were a response to the demands of these wars. The textbook gives information about Shah Abbas's military reforms, including the creation of the rank of ghulam and the organization of special guard units from ghulams. It emphasizes that the soldiers in these guard units were mainly of Armenian, Georgian, and Circassian origin. Their number reached fifteen thousand.<sup>29</sup> The eighth-grade Azerbaijani history textbook concludes with the 1590 peace treaty between the Safavids and the Ottomans.

The ninth-grade Azerbaijani history textbook begins with the Treaty of Qasr-e Shirin of 1639. It does not include information about the wars between the Safavids and Ottomans in the early seventeenth century, the destruction of the territories of Nakhchivan and Ordubad, or the forced relocation of the population of Julfa to the central parts of Iran near Isfahan. However, on page 25 of the textbook there is information about "Julfa, once a flourishing city."<sup>30</sup> It states that this city suffered a tragedy in the wars of the seventeenth century and that by the 1670s only thirty houses remained in Julfa, which had once been a large city. In this way, the textbook presents the "scorched earth tactics" of Shah Abbas, which in twenty-first century textbooks are described as his "successful military strategy," as a tragedy. This tactic resulted in the forced relocation of the population during which lives and livelihoods were lost.

In discussing Azerbaijani cities in the second half of the seventeenth century, the textbook mentions Tabriz, Shamakhi, Baku, Ardabil, Derbend, Maragha, Ahar, and Ordubad. Irevan does not appear among the Azerbaijani cities of the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>31</sup> In the section on Nadir's "liberation of Azerbaijani lands" and his rise to power, the textbook writes that the tribal leaders who opposed him were punished. As a result, the five melikdoms of Karabakh

(Varanda, Chilaburd, Gulistan, Dizak, Khachen) were subordinated to the beylerbey of Ganja.<sup>32</sup>

When discussing the Khanates period and the domestic and foreign policy of the khanates, the textbook states that the population of the Karabakh Khanate was made up of seven Turkic tribes, while the melikdoms within the khanate were separatist forces. They tried to unite with the small Armenian population of the Irevan Khanate to realize their plans of creating a Christian state in the South Caucasus.<sup>33</sup> In connection with this, they appealed several times to Catherine II. Thus, the textbook acknowledges that both the melikdoms of Karabakh and part of the population of Irevan were Armenian. From the information about the melikdoms that existed in the territory of the Karabakh Khanate, we learn that their populations had come from other places and were named after the districts in which they settled. The explanations in this section were entirely transferred into the textbooks published in the twenty-first century. The textbook first writes that the population of these melikdoms had found refuge in Karabakh. Later, however, it becomes clear that these relocations had taken place on the orders of Nadir Shah. Another interesting point regarding the melikdoms is the textbook's accusation that they were incapable of creating a state. It writes that "the Albanians who migrated from different places and came to the territory of Karabakh could not create any state structure" and that "after the eighteenth century they had no history."<sup>34</sup> The textbook concludes that since the melikdoms obstructed centralization, the struggle against them was equivalent to the struggle for the independence of the Karabakh Khanate. The ninth-grade Azerbaijani history textbook ends with the Treaty of Turkmenchay, which finalized "the division of Azerbaijan between Russia and Iran." It writes that Article 15 of the Treaty of Turkmenchay allowed the population of the Azerbaijani province to move freely, that is, to adopt Russian subjecthood.

The tenth-grade Azerbaijani history textbook begins with a paragraph titled "The Mass Migration of Armenians to Northern Azerbaijan." By citing the Russian state official and journalist Nikolay Shavrov, it explains the scale of this "mass" migration: "Of the 1,300,000 Armenians currently living in the South Caucasus [referring to the early twentieth century], 1,000,000 are not native and have been resettled here by us."<sup>35</sup> In this way, the textbook acknowledges that there were large Armenian communities in both the Ottoman Empire and Iran. However, in its discussion of events before the nineteenth century it does not provide information about Armenians living in these regions. From this information it also becomes clear that the Armenians resettled from Iran came specifically from the Iranian province called Azerbaijan. I should remind that the ninth-grade textbook, when discussing the Karabakh meliks, stated that their population consisted of Christian Albanians and that some had come from Maku. The tenth-grade textbook, however, does not mention Christian Albanians among those resettled. This indicates that it was Armenians, not Christian Albanians, who lived in the Iranian province of Azerbaijan.

The statistical documents of the Russian Empire allow us to estimate the number of Armenians resettled to the territory of present-day Azerbaijan. According to the Caucasus calendar of 1845, which included the Derbend military district, the population of the South Caucasus was 1,373,000. Of this number, 650,000 were Tatar-Turks (the language of the source is preserved), 490,000 were Georgians and Imeretians, and 200,000 were Armenians.<sup>36</sup> If we accept the claim of Azerbaijani historiography that before the Treaty of Turkmenchay there were no Armenians in Azerbaijan and if we accept Nikolay Shavrov's figures, then we can say that the resettled Armenians made up 14,5 percent of the region's population.

In discussing the massacres on ethnic grounds in the early twentieth century in the Baku and Yerevan governorates, the

textbook presents them as the result of a deliberate policy by the tsarist regime. It writes that “the policy of national massacres in Azerbaijan” was organized at the state level. The reason, it says, was that the Russian governor disliked Azerbaijanis while the Armenians supported the Russians. During the war with the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians were also on the Russian side. For these reasons the governor ordered his troops to fire on Azerbaijanis.<sup>37</sup> Of course, this explanation contradicts the anti-Armenian policy of Russian emperors from the mid-nineteenth century, which involved a discriminatory stance against the Armenian church and cultural-charitable organizations. When analyzing events during the First World War, the textbook does not clarify the policy of the Ottoman Empire toward national minorities, especially Armenians. However, it does note that “the Armenians living in Türkiye” intended to create a Greater Armenia and to annex part of the South Caucasus to it.<sup>38</sup>

The eleventh-grade Azerbaijani history textbook is devoted to analysis of political processes in the twentieth century. It calls the Muslim genocide of 1918 a confrontation between Musavat and the Bolshevik–Dashnak alliance and interprets this tragedy as the result of political struggle. The textbook writes that Musavat’s demand for autonomy and its growing popularity among the Muslim population greatly alarmed the Bolsheviks. The March 1918 genocide was aimed at destroying Musavat’s social base.<sup>39</sup> It states that until the massacres began the Dashnaks and the Armenian National Council had declared their neutrality in the Musavat–Baku Soviet confrontation, but later they sided with the Bolsheviks. The clashes resulted in the merciless killing of Muslims, especially women, the plundering of their property, and the looting of their jewelry. The textbook reports that more than twelve thousand Muslims were massacred in three days.<sup>40</sup> It also claims that the main goal of the Armenians in carrying out these massacres was to “occupy the whole of Azerbaijan” after

gaining victory in the Baku governorate, but that the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic thwarted these plans. The textbook does not specify what territories it means by "the whole of Azerbaijan," since at that time no state called Azerbaijan existed and therefore no known borders existed either. The authors themselves write that the March events took place before the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic (ADR) was declared, which leaves unclear what territories the Armenians were supposedly planning to occupy. The textbook also draws attention to the fact that the majority of the Baku Commune's army consisted of Armenians: of its eighteen thousand soldiers, thirteen thousand were Armenian, and all of its officers were Armenian.<sup>41</sup> However, it does not note that Azerbaijani Bolsheviks also fought in the military units of the Baku Commune.

When discussing the first military operations of the Azerbaijani national army, the textbook cites the "breaking of the resistance of Armenian bandit detachments that had invaded Zangezur" and the "Battle of Askeran." It explains the fall of the ADR government as the result of the Dashnak Armenian government acting together with Bolshevik Russia. It writes that on the eve of the Soviet invasion of Azerbaijan, Armenian representatives who had gone to Moscow offered their assistance to the Bolsheviks in overthrowing the Azerbaijani government. In March 1920, Armenians in the mountainous part of Karabakh rose up against the Azerbaijani government, and the districts of Gazakh and Nakhchivan were attacked by Armenian government troops. The main goal of this aggression was to draw regular Azerbaijani army units out of Baku, leaving it defenseless. As a result, "to suppress the rebellion that began with the attack of Dashnak bandit detachments on the Shusha garrison, Azerbaijani government troops had to be withdrawn from Baku and from the border with Dagestan and sent to Karabakh," leaving the northern borders undefended. The textbook writes that although the ADR government tried to establish peaceful and friendly relations

with all its neighbors, this was not possible with Bolshevik Russia and Dashnak Armenia. It also states that in the struggle against the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, Armenians supported the Bolsheviks. During the Ganja uprising, while Azerbaijanis managed to clear the Muslim part of the city of Bolsheviks, they could not do so in the part inhabited by Armenians. The main reason for this, it says, was that Armenians fought against Azerbaijanis together with the "11th Red Army." The textbook adds that even after Azerbaijan was Sovietized, Armenian attacks on Azerbaijani lands continued.<sup>42</sup>

Although the textbook repeatedly claims that the Armenian Dashnak government (the Republic of Armenia) supported the Bolsheviks, this is not confirmed by sources. Neither the Dashnak government nor the Armenian population supported the Bolsheviks. On the contrary, the Republic of Armenia had a secret agreement with the White Guards, according to which in case of an attack on Azerbaijan and Georgia, Armenia was to help Denikin's Volunteer Army rather than the Bolsheviks.<sup>43</sup> When the Bolsheviks occupied Zangezur in 1920, the Armenian population rose in rebellion and tried to involve the Azerbaijani population in this uprising as well. In this connection, the rebel Armenians appealed to their "Muslim brothers," calling on them to expel their common enemy, the Bolsheviks, from their common homeland, Zangezur.<sup>44</sup> It seems likely that the textbook authors based their claim that Armenians supported the Bolsheviks on the large number of Armenians among the Bolsheviks in the South Caucasus.

The textbook emphasizes that "Armenia's territorial claims against neighboring states" ended in tragedy and notes that these claims destroyed Armenian statehood. It writes that Armenia's armed forces, which attempted to occupy Turkish lands, were quickly crushed by the army led by Kazım Karabekir Pasha. Armenia lost most of the territory it controlled, and according to the Treaty of Alexandropol signed in December 1920, the territory of Armenia was set at ten thousand square

kilometers.<sup>45</sup>

In the section devoted to the problems of the Soviet period, when analyzing the characteristics of the totalitarian system and mass repressions, the textbook advances the following claim: "The fact that the punitive bodies were filled with non-nationals, especially Armenians, and that they treated convicted Azerbaijanis with particular cruelty, aggravated the tragedy of the people." Sources do not support this claim. In the early years of Soviet Azerbaijan and later, the majority of those who worked in positions of authority, particularly in the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and in the courts, were Azerbaijanis.<sup>46</sup> Unlike the textbooks of the twenty-first century, the textbooks of the 1990s provide no information about the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia after the Second World War. However, the textbook claims that "during the period of Imam Mustafayev, Moscow, worried about the revival of the national spirit, focused attention on the Karabakh issue and raised the demand to transfer Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia."<sup>47</sup> As a result, it cites the closure of the Azerbaijani section of the Yerevan Pedagogical Institute in 1955 and the relocation of the Azerbaijani Pedagogical College to Khanlar district. It also writes that "in 1965 the recognition of the fabricated Armenian genocide gave a strong impetus to the pressure on Azerbaijanis living in their ancestral lands in Armenia. Azerbaijanis were expelled from leadership positions."<sup>48</sup> With this, the textbook once again repeats the idea that Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation was state-originated and controlled from Moscow. I should note that the closure of the Azerbaijani section at the Yerevan Pedagogical Institute was due to a shortage of applicants, since Azerbaijanis preferred to study in Azerbaijani institutions. In the Soviet system, which tried to maintain ethnic balance, it was not easy to dismiss someone from a post on the basis of ethnicity. High positions were filled by central appointment, which made it impossible for

local party bodies to remove an appointee.

When describing the ethnic clashes of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the textbook refers to the events in Sumgait. It explains the attacks on Armenians in Sumgait as the result of "Armenians planning to stage a terrible tragedy that would cause a sensation." It links the choice of Sumgait for this purpose to the fact that "in the past two years those expelled from Armenia had found refuge in this city." It states that "after the Sumgait events, a new stage of the bloody anti-Azerbaijani movement began in Armenia." I should note that in the textbooks written in the 1990s, although distorted, there is information about the violence against the Armenian population both in Sumgait in February 1988 and in Baku in January 1990.<sup>49</sup> However, in the textbooks written in the early twenty-first century this information no longer appears.

### **Armenia and Armenians in World History Textbooks**

The sixth-grade Ancient World History textbook used in the 1990s was a Soviet textbook translated from Russian. This textbook discussed the states of ancient Mesopotamia and referred to the history and wars of conquest of Assyria but gave no information about Urartu. The seventh-grade Medieval History textbook was also Soviet in origin. In its section on Byzantine history, there is no information about Armenians. The first mention of Armenia appears in connection with Babak's revolt. When discussing uprisings against the Arab Caliphate, the textbook states that "the revolt that began under the leadership of Babak in Azerbaijan spread to Armenia and Iran."<sup>50</sup> Armenians are noted for a second time in the section on the Ottoman Empire. It writes that the peoples under Ottoman rule lived in harsh oppression and that "the Armenians and Georgians in Transcaucasia fought for their independence."<sup>51</sup>

The first national textbooks dedicated to world history were

written in the late 1990s. One of them was the eighth-grade Medieval History textbook. The first information in that textbook about Armenia and Armenians appeared in connection with the formation of the Qaraqoyunlu state. The textbook states that in the last years of Qara Yusif's rule, the Qaraqoyunlu state encompassed not only Azerbaijan but also the territories of neighbouring countries. By the 1460s, the Qaraqoyunlu state covered "the southern lands of Azerbaijan as well as both parts of Iraq, Fars, Kirman, and Armenia." However, the textbook did not include modern Armenia among the areas where the Qaraqoyunlu first settled.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, when delineating the territorial boundaries of the Aqqoyunlu state, its domain also encompasses the territory of Armenia.<sup>53</sup>

In the fourth chapter, titled "The Peoples of the Caucasus," the textbook discussed Caucasian cities and mentioned Ani and Dvin, but did not present them as Armenian cities. On the contrary, it wrote that "Arab sources note that Dvin and its surroundings were Azerbaijani lands." To support this claim, the textbook added: "Even Armenian historians confirmed this fact." It then cited the Armenian historian A. Mushegyan: "From the second half of the twelfth century to the beginning of the thirteenth century, Dvin was directly under the rule of the Eldiguzids."<sup>54</sup> As is clear, the Armenian historian did not say that Dvin was an Azerbaijani city. He only confirmed the fact that the city was under Eldiguzid rule. However, the textbook's authors interpreted this as the historian recognizing Dvin as Azerbaijani land. Another important point is that in the Azerbaijani history textbook, Dvin's being "Armenian land" was accepted.<sup>55</sup>

The textbook lists the states of the Caucasus in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries as those in Georgia, the North Caucasus, and Azerbaijan, and completely denied the existence of Armenians in the region. However, it describes the Seljuks' battles against Armenians and Georgians in the twelfth

century, including their entry into the “Şirək region” and the struggle for Ani. Şirək most likely refers to Shirak, a province in the northwest of modern Armenia. After the weakening of the Arab Caliphate, Shirak became part of the Armenian Bagratid kingdom, and Ani became its capital. At that time, the kingdom was ruled by the Pahlavuni family, descended from the ancient Kamsarakan clan.<sup>56</sup> Shirak declined after two invasions in the eleventh century, first by the Byzantine army in 1045 and then by the Seljuk army in 1064. On the eve of the Mongol invasions, Shirak came under Georgian influence. The textbook writes that in 1203 the Armenian and Georgian forces “committed atrocities” when they captured Dvin.<sup>57</sup>

When describing the Mongol invasions of the Caucasus, the textbook discusses the conquest of Georgia but gives no information about events in the territory of modern Armenia.<sup>58</sup> In covering the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it notes only Georgia and the North Caucasus peoples, again omitting Armenians. In discussing the Ottoman–Safavid wars for the Caucasus in the sixteenth century, it notes Georgian resistance and uprisings but again denies the Armenians. Thus, in the first national medieval world history textbook, the authors try to erase Armenia and Armenians from the historical stage.

The ninth-grade Modern History textbook, which covers the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries, includes the history of the Caucasus in three chapters presented in connection with the history of the Turkic world. While analyzing the internal situation of the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the seventeenth century, the textbook writes that the Turks lived mainly in Asia Minor and partly in Istanbul and its surroundings, while the rest of the empire was inhabited by other ethnic groups who were native to the region. It notes that the Turks could not assimilate with them.<sup>59</sup> The textbook explains this by the imperial policy of

the Ottomans: after conquering peoples by military means, the Ottomans applied harsh methods against them. This led to discontent, uprisings, and rebellions, and strengthened separatism.<sup>60</sup> The textbook uses the national-liberation movement of the Slavic peoples as an example of separatism but gave no information about Armenian uprisings. When analyzing the internal situation of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, it notes the peoples' suffering under heavy taxes, corruption, and the arbitrariness of officials. It indirectly pointed to the difficulties experienced by national minorities under Ottoman rule. The section devoted to the peoples of the Caucasus contains only information about the history of Georgia. As in the earlier textbooks, Armenians are omitted.

However, the textbook includes a paragraph titled "Russian-Armenian Relations." It noted that in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Armenians had no state of their own. Some lived under Iranian and some under Ottoman rule, and there were Armenian communities in Europe. It writes that the Armenian church was very wealthy and lived under the protection of rulers.<sup>61</sup> During uprisings they did not support the common people but sided with the shah of Iran or the Ottoman sultan. Yet, the Armenian nobility was ready to cooperate with all social groups in matters of state-building. In this way, the textbook shows that Armenians had lost their state in the late feudal period, that the political interests of Armenian nobles and Armenian commoners did not always coincide, and that the nobility used the people to pursue power.

Thus, in this textbook we see for the first time a different approach to the Armenian issue. It discusses the complex relations between the Armenian people and their political elite, noting that the goals of the elite did not always correspond to those of the people. The textbook writes that the goal of the Armenian elite was to create a Greater Armenia, which would include all of Western Asia and six

provinces of Türkiye. Although it notes that Armenians created communities near Isfahan in the seventeenth century, it does not note that this was the result of Shah Abbas's forced resettlement policy. It writes that the Armenian community controlled the trade center of Julfa and the silk trade with Russia.<sup>62</sup> Wealthy Armenian merchants, it says, "presented themselves as representatives of a suffering people" and "sought aid from Western states to carry out their vile deeds." The textbook also writes that in 1678 the Armenian elite held a secret meeting in Echmiadzin to pursue the goal of statehood and sent a delegation to Europe. Again, in 1699 in the Zangezur village of Angekhakot, the Armenian catholicos together with the meliks held a secret meeting and decided to appeal to the European states and Russia.<sup>63</sup> With this, the textbook indirectly acknowledges that Armenians were present in Zangezur before the Russian conquest. It then describes further steps taken by Armenian merchants in the direction of statehood. For example, the textbook states that in 1769 Movses Safaryan, an Armenian resident of Astrakhan, submitted a plan for the creation of an Armenian state to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "In 1783, Argutyun submitted an eighteen-article project on the creation of an Armenian state to the Russian government."<sup>64</sup> But the rise to power of Agha Mohammad Shah Qajar in Iran thwarted the plans of the Russians and Armenians.

The second part of the Modern History textbook, intended for tenth grade, covers the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. Although this book has a chapter titled "The Peoples of the Caucasus," it contains no information about Armenians.

The Contemporary History textbook, intended for eleventh grade, covers the events of the twentieth century. In its section "The Turkic World and the Peoples of the Caucasus," it refers to the relations of Dashnak Armenia with Türkiye, the Transcaucasian Commissariat created after the February

Revolution, and the activities of the Transcaucasian Seim. The issues related to Armenia and Armenians in this period are presented in the same way as in the textbooks written in the twenty-first century.

## Notes and References

1. Azərbaycan tarixi. 6-cı sinif. (Öyrətmən, 1994), 43.
2. I should note that when describing antiquity and the Middle Ages, the textbook sometimes uses the term *ərməniyə* and often the modern term *Ermənistan*. However, the borders of *ərməniyə* and modern *Ermənistan* do not coincide. In English, the term Armenia is used to describe both ancient Armenia and modern Republic of Armenia.
3. Azərbaycan tarixi. 7-ci sinif. Öyrətmən, 1994, 10.
4. Ibid., 13.
5. Ibid., 15.
6. Ibid., 14.
7. Toumanoff C. "The Mamikonids and Liparitids" *Armeniaca*, Venice, 1969, 125, 125-137.
8. Bedrosian R. "China and the Chinese according to 5-13th Century Classical Armenian Source", *Armenian Review* Vol. 34 No.1-133 (1981), 17, 17-24.
9. Azərbaycan tarixi. 7-ci sinif, 15.
10. Ibid., 16.
11. The origin of Faustus of Byzantium (or Buzandatsi) is debated. It is assumed that he was of Greek origin and that "Buzandatsi" derives from the word "Byzantine."
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 17.
14. Ibid., 24.
15. In the period under discussion, the term Göyçə did not exist. The authors of the textbook use the Turkic toponym Göyçə instead of Sevan.
16. Ibid., 27.
17. Ibid., 78.

18. After the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, the Eastern Roman Empire began to be called the Byzantine Empire.
19. Ibid., 101.
20. Ibid., 106.
21. Azərbaycan tarixi, 8-ci sinif, (Təhsil, 1999), 5.
22. Ibid., 11.
23. The Debed is the right tributary of the Khrami River, flowing from the Lori province in the north of present-day Armenia.
24. Ibid., 63-65.
25. Ibid., 105.
26. Ibid., 109-110.
27. Ibid., 112.
28. Ibid., 114.
29. Ibid., 174-75.
30. In early medieval sources this city is referred to as Cula/Cuqa, in classical feudal sources as Julfa, and today as the city of Julfa in the Julfa district of Nakhchivan.
31. Azərbaycan tarixi, 9-cu sinif Bakı: Təhsil, 2001, 22.
32. Ibid., 64.
33. Ibid., 118, 124-5.
34. Ibid., 136.
35. Azərbaycan tarixi, 10-cu sinif. Bakı: Maarif, 1996, 10-11.
36. Кавказский календарь на 1846 г. Тифлис: Канцелярия Кавказского наместника, 1845 г., 136–7.
37. Ibid., 160.
38. Ibid., 175.
39. Azərbaycan tarixi, 11-ci sinif. Bakı: Öyrətən, 1995, 5-7.
40. Ibid., 10.
41. Ibid., 20.
42. Ibid., 125.
43. Həsənli C. Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyətinin Xarici Siyasəti (1918- 1920), (Garısm MMC, 2009), 245.

44. Azərbaycan Respublikası Mərkəzi Dövlət Arxivi, f.27siy.4s, iş 20, v.22 siy.4s, iş 20, v.22
45. Azərbaycan tarixi, 11-ci sinif, 127.
46. Мамедова Ш. Интерпретация тоталитаризма. Сталинизм в Азербайджане. Адиль-оглу, 2004, 126
47. Azərbaycan tarixi, 11-ci sinif, 248-9
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., 329.
50. Orta əsrlər tarixi, 7-ci sinif. Bakı: Maarif, 1998, 75.
51. Ibid., 179.
52. Orta əsrlər tarixi, 8-ci sinif. Bakı: Maarif, 1998, 56.
53. Ibid., 59.
54. Ibid., 64.
55. See footnote 22.
56. Toumanoff C. Kamsarakan. Encyclopedia Iranica. Vol. XV, Fasc. 5, pp. 453-455.
57. Ibid., 69.
58. Ibid., 71.
59. Yeni tarix 9 (1640-1830), 9-cu sinif. See: Nərgiz, 1999, 111
60. Ibid., 112.
61. Ibid., 159.
62. Ibid., 164.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid, 166.

***Link to the first part:***

[Armenia and Armenians in the History Textbooks of Azerbaijan \(Part 1\)](#)