

# Armenian-Muslim Massacres of 1905-1906 Through the Eyes of Contemporaries

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Over the years, the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict has become the most important problem of modern Azerbaijani historiography. Azerbaijani historians trace the roots of the conflict back 20,000 years. The Azerbaijani state sees almost all the problems facing the country through the prism of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Speeches and discussions of the events of March 1918 are published through various media platforms in the national press every year in March. However, if we turn to historical sources, we can see that the relations between Armenians and Turkic Muslims (in historical sources, Azerbaijanis were generally referred to as Muslims, Tatars, or Tatars of Transcaucasia until the beginning of the XX century) are not what Azerbaijani historiography presents them to be. Historical sources testify to the peaceful coexistence of these two peoples. But the social crises that occurred at the beginning of the last century in the Russian Empire led to the formation of a negative image of the relationship of the two peoples. Many know that the cause of the 1918 conflict was not ethnic intolerance on the part of either but rather the result of contradictory processes rooted in a number of problems, it is not easy to talk about it in contemporary Azerbaijani society. My goal in this article is to clarify how contemporaries of that time assessed the conflict of 1905-1906 that triggered a serious turning point in the destinies of the two neighboring nations. This data will make it possible to analyze the tension between Azerbaijanis and Armenians at the beginning of the last century and to understand the origins of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, which is still relevant today. This data will also help to conduct a comparative analysis of two points of view of both contemporaries and

modern native historiography on the events that took place a hundred years ago.

## **A Brief Overview of the Past**

Azerbaijani historiography claims that Armenians were resettled in the Caucasus in the 19th century as a result of the Turkmenchay Treaty between Russia and Iran. This couldn't be further from the truth. The fact that Armenians and Azerbaijanis have lived in the same states and empires for many centuries and had the same social, political and cultural environment has led to the formation of common traits these people share in many areas (cuisine, music, literature patterns, dance, etc.). But the common history is also the cause of major differences between the two peoples.

Armenians, who wrote their first Armenian-language histories in the 5th CE, understand themselves as an "ancient and continuous nation." Armenia<sup>[1]</sup> was divided between the Sassanid and Byzantine empires in the 4th century around the time that Armenians adopted Christianity. The territory was under constant pressure from rival empires and under threat of conquest by Arabs, Mongols, and Turkish-speaking groups (such as, Qaraqoyunlu, Aqqoyunlu and Safavids) who entered the arena after the fall of the Sassanid Empire. Armenians formed large Christian minority groups in both the Ottoman and the Safavid empires where they faced considerable obstacles in the conduct of their social and religious life. Their experience under foreign rule, the frequent migrations and the persecutions, served as mobilizing factors, which strongly shaped Armenian ethnic identity. The same cannot be said of Muslim Turks. Azerbaijanis who lived under Muslim-Turkic states did not know socio-political discrimination similar to that faced by Armenians until the early 19th century when they came under the rule of the Christian Russian empire. It was for this reason that the ethnic identity of Azerbaijanis first became a unifying force during the start of confrontations with Christian Armenians in 1905.

At the beginning of the 19th century, when the Russian Empire began to eclipse the Ottoman and Persian empires, Armenians' situation seriously changed in the region. Armenians—who were previously a minority in the Caucasus, whose personal and property rights were severely restricted, and who were dependent on Turkish-Muslim rule—gained many privileges under the rule of Christian Russia. They began to play the role of intermediaries between the Russian authorities and the conquered Muslim peoples in the Caucasus. Having gained the trust of the authorities, Armenians not only received public commissions, but were even accepted to the Russian Empire's civil service.<sup>[2]</sup> Armenians, hoped to gain Russian protection and assistance in their goal of liberating “the majority of the Armenian people, who still lived under Ottoman rule.”<sup>[3]</sup> With the Russian invasion, the Turkish -Muslim population faced religious and ethnic discrimination for the first time.

Azerbaijani historiography criticizes the Russian Empire for its supposedly consistent pro-Armenian stance, yet this is a controversial issue. The attitude of the Russian Empire towards Armenians and Georgians, which justified the occupation of the entire Caucasus by the protection of the Christian population, changed around the end of the 19th century with the strengthening of Slavophil nationalist ideas within the empire. Tsar Alexander III, abandoned his father's legislative, economic, administrative and educational reform policies, which were prepared and directed by the Minister of Internal Affairs Loris-Melikoff, an Armenian by origin. The new Tsar declared Russification and Russian Orthodox Christianization as the pillars of his strategy to modernize the Russian Empire. Russification, as British historian Hugh Seton-Watson rightly noted, first targeted “the most devoted subjects” (Russians, who constituted the most politically loyal part of the population) of the Russian Empire and caused protest among non-Russians, including the Armenians. <sup>[4]</sup> As a result of this Russification, Armenian schools were closed and the study of the history and geography of Armenia was

abandoned by the end of the 19th century.

Tsar Nicholas II, who succeeded Alexander III in 1894, continued his father's Russification policies. In June 1903, he ordered the confiscation of the properties of the Apostolic Armenian Church, which played a crucial role in Armenian national identity. Additionally, Armenian charitable foundations, theaters, newspapers, and magazines were closed down. Clergy and leaders of the Armenian community considered the attacks on the Armenian Church to be a direct threat to the existence of the Armenian nation. The anti-Armenian policy of the Russian authorities was supported by members of the Russian and local intelligentsia and Armenophobe scholars.

Armenians mobilized against this policy, and Catholicos Mkrtich Khrimian, the head of the Apostolic Armenian Church, turned to the socialist-oriented Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), basically known as Dashnaktsutyun in Azerbaijani historiography. The ARF was created towards the end of the 19th century in Tiflis. The short-term goal of this party was to obtain Armenian autonomy within the Ottoman Empire in order to ensure the protection of the Armenian Church and defend against the armed assaults of Ottoman armed contingents against Armenians. The long-term goal of the ARF was to create a free, independent, and united Armenia, incorporating all territories populated by Armenians. Until 1903, the main area of operation of the ARF was in Ottoman Turkey. However, Russia's increasing anti-Armenian policy pushed the Dashnaktsutyun to become more active in the Russian South Caucasus as well, especially in those areas where Armenians had established themselves with great success as bankers, lawyers, entrepreneurs, merchants, and leading cultural figures.

Oil engineer and entrepreneur Konstantin Khatsov wrote that with the adoption of the law of 1903, the Dashnaktsutyun party, which had not yet interfered in the affairs of Russian Armenians, directed its activities to the Caucasus, and

declared war against individual representatives of the Russian government who threatened the Armenian people.[\[5\]](#) Out of eight revolutionary committees of the ARF, three were located in the territory of modern-day Azerbaijan: Baku, Yelizavetpol (now Ganja), and Shusha; and the terrorist tactics of this organization were soon felt in these parts, primarily in the city of Baku.

### **The Bloody Upheavals of 1905–1906**

By the beginning of the 20th century, the city of Baku, at that time the capital of the Baku governorate, had developed from a backward, tiny town on the Asiatic periphery of the Russian Empire into a quickly industrializing city of Transcaucasia with a population of some 140.000.

This was due primarily to the development of the oil industry, which dramatically increased the population and transformed the socio-ethnic structure of the city. According to the 1903 Baku census, Turkish-speaking Azerbaijanis ("*Transcaucasian Tatars*" in the official language of the time) comprised 21,4 percent of the city's population, while 35,5 percent of Baku's inhabitants were ethnic Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians) and 19,4 percent Armenians. There was also a substantial Jewish minority living in the city—some 9.700 people, or 6,9%), according to the 1903 census.[\[6\]](#) It was a multiethnic city but not a "melting pot" as each ethnic group lived in its own district, separated from each other. Each community had its own social life.

The city prospered thanks to oil production, which around 1900 achieved production levels similar to those in the United States. However, the wealth enriched foreigners. Oil millionaires such as Alexander and Konstantin Khatisovs, Pavel Gukasov, Mkrtich Kalantarov, Ambarsum Melikov, Alexander Mantashev, Lazar Mailov, Moses Mirzoyants operated their businesses in Baku. About half of Baku merchants of the 1st and 2nd guilds were Armenians at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century.[\[7\]](#) Non-Muslims had their own press organs, theaters, charitable foundations, and lived a rich social life. Muslims were deprived of many of these. The City Statute issued in 1870 by Tsar Alexander II granted Baku a large degree of autonomy in matters of local governance and specified that “the non-Christian members of the City Duma [the parliament] should not exceed one third of the total number of councilors”.[\[8\]](#) Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century down to the end of the Russian Empire, no Muslim, no matter his ethnic background, rose to occupy positions in the central administration system in the South Caucasus.

In 1905, Baku experienced bloody ethnic clashes between Armenians and Turkish-speaking Muslims (hereafter Azerbaijanis). This conflict was not so much over territory but over political and economic supremacy in the city. Between 6 February and 9 February 1905, “four bloody days of madness and horror raged in the city,” as the local newspaper *Bakinskii izvestiia* described the tragic events.[\[9\]](#) Ethnic violence was largely felt in Baku but not confined to it. Violent clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis also took place in Nakhchivan (May 1905), Shusha (August 1905), and Elizavetpol (November 1905). “The massacre [in Baku] stopped after the Orthodox, Armenian and Muslim clergy twice toured the city and oilfields accompanied by dignitaries from different nationalities” Minister of Finance of the Russian Empire Vladimir Kokovtsev wrote in his report to Emperor Nicholas II in February 1905. [\[10\]](#) The media reported that the four-day Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre in Baku claimed the lives of 269 people. [\[11\]](#) However, the 1905 confrontation did not end with Baku’s February events.

In August 1905, horse-tram drivers launched a strike in Baku. The majority of the horse-tram drivers in Baku were Armenians. The government replaced the striking Armenian drivers with soldiers to avoid disturbing public order. In protest, Armenian strikers opened fire on a soldier driving a horse-

tram and killed him. Several soldiers and Azerbaijani passengers were killed in a firefight between the military detachment that had come to protect the soldiers and Armenian armed units. This led to a new massacre in the city. But the August events were not limited to Armenian-Azerbaijani ethnic violence and the destruction of their property; the conflict spread to oilfields, most of which belonged to Armenian oil magnates. Widespread fires started in oil-field areas in Balakhany, Surakhany, Ramana, Zabrat and Bibi-Heybet.

Figures announced at the 21st Extraordinary Congress of Baku Oilmen, held in February 1906, confirm that the Baku oil industry suffered serious damage. As a result of fires that raged in Baku's oilfields, more than half of the operating oil wells were destroyed and about three quarters of the industrial property was lost. [\[12\]](#)

A year later, in February–March 1906, an Armenian–Azerbaijani congress was convened in Tiflis to analyze the reasons for the extreme ethnic violence. Delegates to the congress developed programs that clarified why the two peoples had seemingly become enemies. The Russian administration, represented by the Caucasian vicegerent (*namestnik*) Count Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov, mentioned cultural and religious differences as a main cause of the ethnic confrontation. He also admitted that local authorities, police, and army units were too inefficient and limited to prevent armed clashes. [\[13\]](#) A member of the Armenian delegation, Georgii Khatisov, blamed imperial authorities' fomentation of ethnic hatred towards Azerbaijanis for the violence. Muslims incriminated Armenian paramilitary organizations, particularly the Dashnaksyutun. But the targets that all three parties pointed to as culprits and causes raised serious questions. The Russian administration could not explain why, despite cultural and religious differences, Azerbaijanis' anger was not directed against Russians but at Armenians, who were not actually considered invaders and rulers of the Caucasus. Armenians could not answer the questions as to why they needed armed committees

formed of members from the Dashnaksyutun party, and for what purpose they were involved in the ethnic violence. In turn, Azerbaijanis refused to recognize their own crimes and instead indicted and convicted Armenians of all wrongdoings.

When Israfil Hajiyev, delegate to the Armenian– Azerbaijani congress, blamed the Dahsnaktsutyun for terror against Muslims, Konstantin Khatsov, a member of the Dahsnaktsutyun, retorted that the party was fighting for Armenian liberation in Ottoman Turkey and, as democratic people, the Muslim delegation should understand the Armenian struggle for democratic values. “I completely agree with mister Khatsov and the Dashnaktsutyun position”, Qarabeg Qarabegov answered, “I welcome all attempts of the Armenian party in their struggle for the democracy and freedom of the Armenian nation in the territory of Ottoman Turkey. However, you Armenians are engaging in terror operations in the Caucasus. We don’t mind if you are going to improve the living conditions of your compatriots in Turkey, but concerning one million Armenians, who are pursuing narrow nationalist political aims in the Caucasus, we have completely different views.”[\[14\]](#) The Azerbaijani delegate at this point avoided openly asking the question of whether the ultimate goal of the Armenians was to create a state in the Caucasus. However, rumors had been circulating in the South Caucasus for some time that the Armenians, taking advantage of Russia’s difficult situation in the revolutionary period of 1905-6, wanted to rebel against Russia and the Ottomans, establish a state and subjugate the surrounding nations, and that the Azerbaijanis, with the help of Turkey, wanted to wrest a part of Transcaucasia from Russia, incorporate it into the Ottoman Empire and create a powerful Muslim empire.[\[15\]](#) The Armenians called the rumors of a “Greater Armenia” absurd and considered them a power play. In connection with these rumors, Khatsov wrote in the Baku newspaper that “officers spread senseless, meaningless fairy tales about “Greater Armenia”. These stories were later published on the pages of newspapers such as Novoe Vremya and



Moskovskie Vedomosti, and from there they spread around the world and formed the basis for the creation of the narrative of 'Armenian separatism.'" [\[16\]](#)

## **Revolution, People, and Power**

The attitude of contemporaries of that time to the tragic events of 1905-1906 was ambiguous. Two intellectuals who witnessed the events of 1906, Mammad Said Ordubadi from Azerbaijan and Ivan Alibegov from Armenia, published books based on information sent from different regions where the massacres took place. Ordubadi's *Bloody Years* is familiar to Azerbaijani audience. Armenians, on the other hand, were able to get information about these tragic events from *Bloody Days of Elizavetpol* by Alibegov. [\[17\]](#) Both authors claim that the other side was the first to attack, and since the attacks were unpredictable, people could not defend themselves. Analyzing this tragedy through the eyes of Azerbaijanis, Ordubadi points to four reasons for the violence: 1. Activities of the Dashnaktsutyun; 2. The inaction of the authorities; 3. The lack of education of Muslims and their ignorance about modern affairs and, finally, 4. Armenians' desire for autonomy. [\[18\]](#) According to Alibegov, there were 3 reasons for the tragedy: 1. Political power; 2. Authoritative Muslim intellectuals; 3. Ordinary Muslims who follow the disinformation of influential Muslims. [\[19\]](#) When Alibegov spoke about influential Muslims, he meant landowners and local political figures such as Adygozalbek Adygozalov, Huseynaga Javanshiri, Ibrahim bey Huseynbeyov, Hasanali bey Asgarkhanov, Sadykh bey Melik-Aslanov, Alasgar bey Khasmammadov and Alakbar bey Rafibeyov. [\[20\]](#) He specifically noted, "ordinary Azerbaijanis are not to blame for what happened; the richer segment of the population and representatives of the authorities incited them to criminal actions." [\[21\]](#) In support of his claims, Alibegov recounted the arbitrariness and lawlessness committed by prominent authoritative Muslims in the Shusha and Javanshir provinces, adding that the aghas (nobles) feared that the Muslim population would fall under the influence of the

rebellious Armenians. As evidence, a quote is given from a speech made by Alakbar Khasmammadov during the peace talks in Elizavetpol. according to Alibegov, during the peace talks Khasmammadov, facing the representatives of the Tsarist authorities, stated that without the Muslims, the Tsarist authorities would not have been able to divert the Armenians from the revolutionary movement.[\[22\]](#) There are Muslims in Baku, as Ordubadi noted, who saved Armenians from death.[\[23\]](#) Alibegov, in turn, testifies that Muslims in Elizavetpol saved fellow Armenians from death, while authorities just watched.[\[24\]](#)

A detailed insight into (picture of) the tragic events of 1905-1906 was voiced at the congress convened in 1906 in Tiflis. According to the Armenian representatives, the Armenian side unequivocally believed that this tragedy was organized by the authorities and that imperial forces were punishing the Armenians for their political activity. At the beginning of the 20th century, Armenians were the most politically active and organized national group in the Caucasus. It seemed logical that the tsarist authorities wanted to punish Armenians for joining socialist parties, initiating strikes, and assassinating officials. It was for this reason the governor of Baku, Mikhail Nakashidze whom the ARF blamed for inciting clashes was given a death sentence by Armenians and the assassination was carried out by Drastamat (Dro) Kanayan, a member of the Dashnaktsuyun on 11 May 1905.

Armenians also criticized the authorities in the Caucasus for not fully performing their duties, for lawlessness, and for the police being involved in political issues instead of protecting people's lives and property. Konstantin Khatsov claimed that arbitrariness, the unprofessional activities of the authorities, and disrespect for law forced Armenians to seek help from the Dashnaktsutyun party. "With all my heart, I want the authorities to perform their functions correctly, and in such a case, Armenians will not feel the need for the Dashnaktsutyun to protect themselves and their property, as

Khatisov said," Ziyadkhanov noted, addressing Khatisov, who had complained about the activities of the authorities. [\[25\]](#)

Armenians also targeted Muslim beys and aghas, claiming that Muslim nobles kept ordinary Muslims in fear and, allied with the Tsarist government, made these people attack Armenians. Speaking at the congress, Arakelyan, referring to the events in Nakhchivan, noted that the clashes) were led by beys and aghas, adding that "just as the Muslims blame the Dashnaks for everything that happened, we blame the Muslim beys and aghas for what happened." [\[26\]](#) Speaking against this position of Armenians, Ahmed bey Agayev stated that the Muslim privileged class is not the enemy of Azerbaijanis. [\[27\]](#) When the issue of compensation was discussed at the final sessions of the congress, Agayev objected to imposing compensation on the Muslim privileged class and stated that "the beys and aghas are the sole support of the Muslims; by destroying them, Armenians want to wipe out Mohammedanism." [\[28\]](#) We can assume that the involvement of influential Muslims in massacres was due to the fact that Armenians received preferential treatment under Tsarist rule, not that they sought to help the Tsar against revolutionary Armenians. Muslim authorities saw Armenians high status in the Russian Empire as an injustice.

Statements by Azerbaijani representatives and the program they prepared to make a peace between two nations show how they analyzed the tragedy of 1905-1906 and what conclusions they made. Azerbaijanis, like the Tsarist authorities, noted the possibility that differences between the two groups might give rise to hatred. However, that hatred was not due to ethnic or religious intolerance. Azerbaijanis admitted that the biggest difference between them and Armenians was in the area of cultural development. To this end, they pointed to the need for the Tsarist authorities and local Muslim communities to establish and fund a common primary education network. In their speeches Hajiyev, Agayev, Vakilov and Guliyev noted that Azerbaijanis lagged behind Armenians in education, and therefore the government needed to create schools, seminaries

and even academies where the Muslim population could receive a proper education like Armenians.[\[29\]](#) To support this idea, Baron Rausch von Traubenberg talked about the possibility of creating mobile schools on the Swedish model in sparsely populated Muslim areas.[\[30\]](#)

According to the Azerbaijani delegation, the second and most important difference in their community's welfare that might give rise to ethnic violence was related to their civil rights. The Azerbaijani representatives protested against the small number of Muslim representatives in city councils, the failure to establish their own organizations in the educational and cultural spheres, and argued that, while Muslims did not pretend to the privileges and rights enjoyed by Russians in the Caucasus, they could not accept the religious restrictions they faced in the legal system.[\[31\]](#) Armenian representatives accepted this claim, yet pointed out that as Armenians, they had no power to grant rights and privileges, and thus it made no sense for Muslims to punish them. "Muslims should solve these issues not with Armenians, but with the authorities. Speaking about the issue of limiting the rights of Muslims in the City Statute, Topchubashov also pointed to the discriminatory policy of the authorities as the main cause of the Armenian-Muslim conflict." [\[32\]](#) Tseperson, a representative of the Tsarist government, said that the discriminatory situation was relevant only for Baku city and emphasized that despite the presence of a large Armenian community in the city of Elizavetpol, all members of the City Duma were Muslims.[\[33\]](#)

One of the differences between the two peoples voiced by the Azerbaijani and Armenian representatives was related to the social life of Muslims. It is clear from the discussions that most Muslims living in rural areas were nomadic herders, and when the animals were sent out to graze, Muslims in some places had to pass through Armenian villages. This had led to serious clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis and even deaths. In his speech, Guliyev noted that during the seasonal

migration of pastoralists there were bloodier clashes in the regions, and the death toll was by no means less than the number of people killed during the massacres in Baku. [34] Of course, both sides' use of firearms and organized targeting of one another during the 1905-1906 massacres overshadowed localized clashes while migrating. The Armenian representatives believed that in order for Azerbaijanis to gradually shift to a settled way of life, Muslim intellectuals should educate them and develop joint plans with the government in this area. Ahmed bey Agayev in his speech recognized that the majority of Muslims were nomads and Azerbaijanis had remained at the 2nd level of social development—nomadic pastoralism—and not been able to move to the third—sedentarism. Nevertheless, the Azerbaijani representatives thought that the complete destruction of nomadic cattle breeding was not a plausible and rational approach.

Those who represented the Tsarist authorities at the congress directly linked the bloody clashes to the policies pursued by the Tsar or to the struggle against the revolution. The authorities, as already mentioned, tried to present these clashes as a confrontation between civilizations, a Muslim-Christian conflict. The fact that the authorities did not intervene in the bloody events for some time, that armed clashes ended as suddenly as they started and that the communities did not leave their homes en masse after massacres, suggested that these processes were controlled by external forces, i.e., the Ottomans. However, there are several issues that raise doubts about the organization and management of ethnic clashes by the authorities. First of all, the authorities had a number of reasons for not intervening in the massacre in time. The authorities did not have the capacity to maintain sufficient armed forces and police in rural areas. There had already been revolutionary tensions in the territory of the Russian Empire for several years. It was impossible to keep the entire territory under the control of

the police and army. Secondly, the concentration of firearms in the hands of the local population signaled the inability of the authorities to effectively control the borders. Those involved in arms smuggling took advantage of this. For a long time, there were no restrictions on the production, import and sale of firearms in the Russian Empire. However, as dissatisfaction with the imperial power grew and riots intensified, the legal framework around firearms was tightened. In addition, due to the Eastern policy of the Russian Empire, in 1892, the import of military ammunition and gunpowder to Transcaucasia was prohibited both by land through Iran and Turkey and through the ports on the Caspian coast. [35] In the summer of 1900, the emperor signed into law the proposal of the State Council "On banning the production and import of firearms used in the army." Despite the ban, there were enough firearms in the hands of Azerbaijanis and Armenians. Most likely, some of the ammunition was not smuggled from foreign countries, but was obtained from local military units, indicating bribery in the army. Thirdly, armed riots in Baku, rich in oil fields, were extremely dangerous, and both the emperor and the industrialists were interested in preventing this danger.

The blow to the oil industry during the Russo-Japanese War meant a reduction in oil money received by the state treasury. Lack of stability and maintenance of public order in the empire, chaos and turmoil at the same time struck hard the image of the authorities. The empire needed financial support to cover its growing expenses. There was no one willing to lend money to a state that could not ensure its internal stability, and the finance minister openly recognized this. The government was incapable of either exercising its own powers or being strong enough to control the exercise of power.

The views expressed by the Muslim elite and Armenian industrialists who participated in the Tiflis congress on the damage and loss of life show that there were fewer casualties

among Muslims than among Armenians. If we pay attention directly to the events in Baku, it becomes clear that the material damage to Armenian industrialists and merchants also far outweighed that done to Muslim businesses. [36] There were at least two reasons for this: Muslims and their businesses were well protected because there were majority in the city, while Armenian industrialists were more economically active, so they had the most exposure and the most to lose.

## **Conclusion**

More than a hundred years separate us from the massacres of 1905–1906. The local attitude to the tragic events has changed since that time. The memory of modern Azerbaijani society about 1905-1906 years is formed by the country's historiography. The 5th volume of *The History of Azerbaijan*, prepared by the A. Bakikhanov ANAS Institute of History in 2008 does not explicitly make reference to the Armenian-Muslim massacre of 1905. It notes in passing that the tragic events were one of the causes of the bankruptcy collapse of the oil industry, and speaks of them as the outcome of class conflict. [37] And another *The History of Azerbaijan*, a textbook for 11th graders, published in 2023, treats the events through the prism of the Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation in the 21st century:

In early 1905, the Tsarist government elaborated a special plan to carry out a national massacre in Baku. The implementation of this plan was entrusted to Governor Nakashidze... The Dashnaks, armed by government officials, were held responsible for the massacre of hundreds of Azerbaijanis. There were reports of looting in Baku. The governor took no action to prevent the massacre. [38]

Without regard to the evidence presented by contemporaries of these events, the authors of the textbook, naturally ignore the fact that Nakashidze, whom they portray as an ally of the Armenians, was killed by Dashnaks because he was unable to

protect Armenians. They also do not explain the reason for the massacres.

The bloody upheavals of 1905-1906 were the consequence of complex reasons related to the social status and political ambitions of Armenians and Azerbaijanis that underwent transitions under Russian rule. Given the losses in Baku's oil industry, we cannot say that the authorities instigated and took advantage of the conflict to divide and conquer the labor movement. However, it is undeniable that this conflict struck at local population mainly Armenians political activity. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and major powers' aspiration to oust Russia from the global oil market were serious factors that influenced the ethnic conflict in Baku. The bloody upheavals of 1905-1906, as a whole, were an event that laid the foundation for future conflicts between these two peoples of the South Caucasus. Although this tragedy started not because of lands, but because of socio-political influence, it gradually deepened to encompass contested histories and irredentism.

#### **Notes and references:**

[\[1\]](#) The name is appeared as Armina and Armaniya in the Bīsitūn inscription of Darius I.

[\[2\]](#) Главнейшие выводы из отчета с произведенной с 1905 года сенатором Кузьминским ревизии города Баку. Каспий, 26 января 1906 г.

[\[3\]](#) Hugh Seton-Watson, Nations and States. An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism (London: Methuen, 1977), 61.

[\[4\]](#) Yenə orada, s.186.

[\[5\]](#) Хатисов К. Ревизия сенатора Кузьминского и армянские комитеты. Баку, 19 февраля 1906 г.



- [6] Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Arxivi (ARDA), f. 894, siy. 10, iş 99, v. 90.
- [7] Бакинский Торгово-Промышленный сборник. Баку: Типография Я. Г. Гюльбасарова, 1901, с.111.
- [8][8] Высочайше утвержденное 16 июня 1870 года Городовое Положение с объяснениями. Санкт-Петербург, 1870.
- [9] Иван Алибегов. Мысли, вызванные кровавыми событиями последних дней в городе Баку. Бакинские известия, 12 февраля 1905.
- [10] Всеподданнейший доклад министра финансов В.Н.Коковцева Николаю II, 14 февраля 1905 Г.
- [11] Главнейшие выводы из отчета с произведенной в 1905 году сенатором Кузьминским ревизии города Баку. Каспий, 26 января 1906 г.
- [12] Труды 21-го экстренного съезда нефтепромышленников в городе Баку. С 17 по 21 февраля Баку: Б.и., 1906.
- [13] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 24 февраля 1906 г.
- [14] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Каспий, 28 февраля 1906 г.
- [15] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 28 февраля 1906 г.; 3 марта 1906 г.
- [16] Хатисов К. Ревизия сенатора Кузьминского и армянские комитеты. Баку, 19 февраля 1906 г.
- [17] Алибегов И. Елисаветпольские кровавые дни пред судом общества. Заврававшийся "публицист" и его общественные сподвижники: публицистика. Тифлис, Типография К. П. Козловского, 1906.
- [18] Ordubadi M.S. Qanlı illər. 1905-1906-cı illərdə Qafqazda baş verən erməni-müsəlman davasının tarixi. Bakı, Qafqaz, 2007, s.11-14.

[19] Алибегов, s.6-8, 11-12.

[20] Əlibəyovun adlarını qeyd etdiyi azərbaycanlılar 1905-ci ildə Gəncədə Qeyrət partiyasını yaratmışdılar. 1917-ci il fevral inqilabından sonra onlar siyasi səhnəyə Türk Federalist partiyası kimi qayıtdılar.

[21] Yenə orada, s.38.

[22] Yenə orada, s.48

[23] Ordubadi, s.18-20.

[24] Yenə orada, s.16, 21, 24.

[25] Yenə orada.

[26] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 7 марта 1906 г.

[27] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 1 марта 1906 г.

[28] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 8 марта 1906 г.

[29] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 2 марта 1906 г.;  
Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 3 марта 1906 г.;

[30] Yenə orada

[31] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Каспий, 28 февраля 1906 г.

[32] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 2 марта 1906 г.

[33] Yenə orada.

[34] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 3 марта 1906 г.

[35] Свод законов Российской империи. Все 16 томов со всеми относящимися к ним продолжениями в одной книге. Под ред. Ф. Волкова, Ю. Д. Филиппова. СПб., 1900. Т. VI. (Издание 1892 г.). Свод учреждений и уставов таможенных. с. 98–99.

[36] Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 7 марта 1906 г.;  
Армяно-мусульманский съезд. Баку, 8 марта 1906 г.

[\[37\]](#) Azərbaycan tarixi. 5-ci cild, Bakı: Elm, 2008, s.24, 80, 99.

[\[38\]](#) Azərbaycan tarixi fənni üzrə dərslik. 11-ci sinif. Bakı, Şərq-Qərb ASC, 2023, s.51.