

## Falsification Advanced on a State Level

The Azerbaijani president's chief of staff, Ramiz Mehtiyev's  
"Goris 2010, A Season of the Theatre of the Absurd" political juggling act

*Following President Serge Sargsyan's speech on October 16, 2010 in the city of Goris in front of representatives of Diasporan Armenian media, a "report" was placed on Azerbaijan's electronic media sites (Trend.az, Day.az, etc.) on October 29 in the name of academician Ramiz Mehtiyev, the Azerbaijani president's chief of staff, which evolved into a separate extensive booklet entitled, "Goris 2010, A Season of the Theatre of the Absurd,"<sup>1</sup> which was in fact an "official response" to the Armenian president's proposed historical arguments. It begins with political accusations and ends with a rather extensive historiographical statement, which undoubtedly is a condensed version of previous Azerbaijani falsifications surrounding Armenia and the history of the Armenian people.*

### 1. Symptoms of memory loss

It is indicative that although until recently, successive leaders of the Republic of Armenia have avoided the temptation of responding to official Baku's questionings of historical issues, while father and son Alievs, in their public statements have on many occasions demanded from their own historians to create works "to prove" that not only Mountainous Karabakh but also the present lands of the Republic of Armenia have been Azerbaijani territory. A party to all of this, a philosopher by training, Ramzi Mehtiyev<sup>2</sup> in the very first sentences of his publication, "Goris 2010, a Season of the Theatre of the Absurd," has turned reality upside down.

He insists that "by inviting journalists from the Diaspora, Serge Sargsyan took advantage of ongoing regional processes and instead of making an objective and unbiased appeal for analysis, **he gave a unique 'presidential' order to distort historical facts beyond recognition; to revise history by his own promulgated method; to ignore original scholarly sources and in their place to rely on legends and fabrications proposed by him. In a healthy academic atmosphere the state's leader usually does not interfere in the process of scientific research, but rather creates conditions for the study of issues of vital importance, which are professional, comprehensive, unbiased and it is totally not secondary to critically analyze the entire collection of available original sources and the subsequent publication of**

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<sup>1</sup> The article was accepted for publishing in 12.12.2010: See Рамиз Мехтиев, Горис – 2010: сезон театра абсурда, <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010.

<sup>2</sup> Although R. Mehtiyev's signature figures below this publication, but, most likely it was created by a group and was imported into internet with the latter's signature. Not being a historian, not speaking Armenian, the Azerbaijani president's chief of staff could hardly examine those Armenian sources and literature which are mentioned in his work "Goris 2010, A Season of the Theatre of the Absurd". But as the article is published in the name of academician R. Mehtiyev, we have also addressed our answer to him.

**those sources for wide discussion, without isolating a part of their overall mass and ignoring the others.<sup>3</sup>**

A question arises - to whom is this extensive "academic sermon" addressed to, when as we have already noted, the Armenian leader's speech in Goris publicly reflected on historiographical issues **for the first time**. Thereby, when the appeal of someone who has an academic calling insists that the president of the Republic of Armenia ordered the "revision of history," he forgets that the first condition of a scientist's impartiality is to publicize such an "order," something which we are obligated to do on his behalf. Here is the "October 16<sup>th</sup> order," directed to the representatives of Diasporan media outlets: **"Not to embellish or blacken, simply to actively present the truth. This is the issue which we have to resolve together."<sup>4</sup>**

Moreover, when for many years an individual who has led the Azerbaijan's presidential staff displays obvious symptoms of memory loss, we are forced to repeat, that in contrast to the president of the Republic of Armenia, his consecutive two leaders, father and son Alievs, already for a decade have come out publicly not by studying impartially the history of the region, but by writing works where the territories of the Republic of Armenia are "proven" to be "Azerbaijani lands" (Haydar Aliev, 1999), proclaiming that Mountainous Karabakh is "ancient Azerbaijani territory," (Ilham Aliev, Barda, September 13,2004), and publicly appealing to their country's historians.

Therefore, which subsequent leaders of our two states have for years on end "interfered in the process of scientific research" and have given direct instructions to their own country's historians? If it is the Republic of Armenia, then R. Mehtiyev must point out a similar example prior to October 16, 2010, and if it is Azerbaijan, then after reading our answer he is obligated to **refute** and or **recall** his two immediate leaders' many other "historiographical orders," and their accompanying analytical mockery.

On our part, we express hope that by **refuting** the words of his leaders, R. Mehtiyev will not be dismissed from his job, and in the case of **recalling** them, which is more likely taking into consideration the nature of the public speeches of consecutive Azerbaijani leaders, the **memory** of the Azerbaijani president's chief of staff will be restored.

In the case of overcoming memory loss, R. Mehtiyev will probably back down from the temptation to also question the Armenian president's legitimacy because in contrast to the Republic of Armenia, the presidential authority of Azerbaijan is transferred from father to son, therefore R. Mehtiyev, as the hereditary **monarch's** chief of staff, we believe, does not have the moral right to utter the concept of "legitimacy."

To restore his own memory and to not present the ridiculous accusations against the Armenian side regarding the events of Khojalu, we recommend that R. Mehtiyev read, at least once, the 2003 work in Russian published by Haik Demoyan.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c 2.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.Lragir.am> 18.10.2010.

<sup>5</sup> See H. Demoyan, Khojali case. special folder, Yerevan, 2003.

Evidence of R. Mehtiyev's memory loss becomes obvious when we become acquainted with the accusations leveled against the president of the Republic of Armenia's "arbitrary explanation" with regard to the issue of peoples' right to self-determination in international law. A question arises; if the mediating countries insist that the Karabakh conflict must be resolved with the interconnected concepts of peoples' right to self-determination, territorial integrity and the non-use of force and in the words of the Secretary of State of America's warning during the last OSCE summit in Astana, that it is not possible to isolate any one of these and that it is foreseen in the Madrid Principles that the population of Karabakh have the legal right to the free expression of will, then where does "arbitrary explanation" come into play? As a scientist I believe that "arbitrary explanation" recognized on behalf of the international community, is disregarded by Azerbaijan of the people of the Mountainous Republic of Karabakh's right to the free expression of will.

It is obvious that during every century, powerful states attempt to eternalize the created political condition behind the veil of international law; however the right to self-determination, at least in the last centuries, has turned into an inalienable part of social life. If this was not so, then the creation of Bangladesh and its secession from Pakistan should have been considered a contradiction in international law. But that wasn't the case at all. Moreover, the collapse of the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia or the independence of Kosovo should have been viewed as illegal acts. But no, the international community calmly accepted those changes and ratified them. And in place of all of this, why does the author who relies on the protection enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act not accept the illegality of Azerbaijan's independence. Is it not true that in 1975, Azerbaijan was not a subject of international law and the Helsinki act recognized the USSR's borders?

The president of the Republic of Armenia appealed to Armenian journalists from the Diaspora to present the true and objective history regarding Artsakh and to present it to the international community. Yes, one should not embellish and that, at once, is the right counsel. That refers not only to Armenian writers, but to other non-Armenian academicians because scientists examine phenomena in the connection of cause and effect. Thereby, when R. Mehtiyev starts talking about ravaged and burnt down Shushi whose fate was sealed by "Armenian murderers," he forgets, that prior to the Soviet era, Shushi presented as the fourth city in the Transcaucasus with an overriding Armenian majority population. And who slaughtered the large part of the Armenian population of Shushi and set fire to Armenian neighborhoods in March 1920? The Armenians or the Azerbaijanis? Meanwhile, in May 1992, there was no peaceful Azerbaijan population when the Armenians liberated Shushi. Therefore, it is not difficult to conclude who the murderers are.

Moreover, it is clear, that with the decision of the Caucasus Bureau of July 5, 1921, Mountainous Karabakh was to receive wide autonomy with Shushi as the center. A question arises – why was this not realized? The answer is simple: Azerbaijani authorities understood that in the case of Shushi becoming the center of Karabakh, the Armenianization would quickly be restored; thereby with the long-range objective of disallowing this Stepanakert was proclaimed the center of the region. Or when the Artsakh events began, how did the "humane" Azerbaijanis treat the minority Armenian population of the city of Shushi? The Armenians were simply driven out of Shushi, where the positioned Azerbaijani forces had kept their arsenal in the Armenian

Church, understanding very well that that was the most secure place for their arsenal, because Armenians would not shell their religious site.

Memory loss is a witness to that reality, when R. Mehtiyev even forgets to present to the reader the borders of Mountainous Karabakh which received autonomy by the July 5, 1921 Caucasus Bureau decision because those included not only the territory of the Autonomous Oblast of Nagorno Karabakh (NKAO) but from Gulistan all the way to the lands of the district of Zangezur. For this purpose, it is possible to become acquainted with the published maps until July 5, 1921, whereby Mountainous Karabakh had a direct border with Armenian SSR. We are not even talking about those lands which were inhabited by Armenians and stretched from Gulistan all the way to the present-day province of Tavush in the Republic of Armenia. At that time, more than 94 percent of the population of NKAO was Armenian; meanwhile during the years of Soviet rule, every attempt was made to change the ethnic landscape of the region. With the light hands of the Azerbaijani authorities, the Azerbaijani population rose to 25 percent. This was unconcealed **colonization**, for which a parallel was drawn for the Armenians of Nakhichevan - obstacles were placed by Azerbaijani authorities for Armenians to return to Nakhichevan. This was how the Azerbaijani authorities respected their assumed responsibilities. If it occurs to R. Mehtiyev that the Armenians have forgotten how the Armenians of the Autonomous Region of Nakhichevan were driven out and the Azerbaijani policy of colonization NKAO, then he is sorely mistaken.

It is in this context that R. Mehtiyev, who dreams of seeing the present Republic of Armenia colonized by Azerbaijanis, insists that Armenia (Republic of Armenia, B.H.) is isolated and does not have access to the sea, and whose population is continually decreasing, because the Armenians... are newcomers to the region. And who writes about this? A man whose forefathers came from Altai. R. Mehtiyev suggests reading Murat Adji's *Наша родина-степь, а колыбель-Алтай* (Medieval History of the Tŕkic People and the Great Steppe, Moscow 2007), which leaves no doubt that the author is not an Armenian. And the motto that has been chosen for the book contains the following words, "Our homeland is a steppe, and its cradle, Altai." Meanwhile, the reality is that the original homeland of the Indo-European peoples is found in the Armenian highlands and the surrounding territories and the Armenians, until the 21<sup>st</sup> century, are the only people who have not left their ancestral homeland.

Therefore, if being newcomers to the region is the reason for emigration, then it is necessary to turn R. Mehtiyev's attention to the 3 million-strong Azerbaijani community that has formed in the Russian Federation in the last several decades whose "homeland is the steppe, and its cradle, Altai."

R. Mehtiyev proclaims that Armenians are newcomers, and that their homeland's eastern part is Western Azerbaijan, meanwhile half of the territory of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan is historical Armenian lands. And as to what refers to the left bank of the Kur River, then since at least the 1st century BC, that has been transformed into the territory of the Caucasian-Lezginian peoples, who didn't after all transform into a united ethnos, but who today live in in present-day northern Azerbaijan and Dagestan which is federal subject of the Russian Federation and have all the rights to claim that their historic homelands have been occupied by the Turk-Azerbaijani newcomers.

Therefore, the idea that the Armenians are an indigenous or a native people and that the Turk-Azerbaijanis are newcomers angers R. Mehtiyev. But even in conditions of this starting point, the Armenian side comes out from the position of peoples'right to self-determination, in other words, its reliance is not on **historic** norms but on the norms enshrined in **international law**. If the Armenian side had been led by Mehtiyev-like ultra-nationalistic categories, then it should have proposed the issue of returning the newcomer Azerbaijanis to Altai. And if the entire world had been guided by a similar mindset, then the British Empire of the USSR should not have collapsed and in the same way, Azerbaijan should not have had the right to be an independent state. But, Azerbaijan's state borders are not legitimate even in the context of the collapse of the USSR because it has proclaimed itself as the lawful heir of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic created by the Turkish army, which did not comprise Karabakh and Nakhichevan.

All of this proves that all the obvious symptoms of memory loss expressed by the chief of staff of the president of Azerbaijan or all those people, who wrote and presented the defamatory "Goris 2010, A Season of the Theatre of the Absurd," suffer from the sickness of wanting to attribute their own flaws onto others, something which is an obvious admission of a defective historical-political value system.

## **2. The beginning of a historiographical invasion**

Deeming that he has resolved all the issues connected with international law, R. Mehtiyev moves on to historical issues by announcing that the factual base of the Armenian side in issues of international law and history is and remains weak because it is not based on scientific conclusions; and in a legal sense, it has freely interpreted the provisions of international law. The only person who has the right to challenge the "honor" of the pioneer in the field of falsifying history, Turkey, is the Azerbaijani president's chief of staff who is trying to attribute that "honor" to Armenia.

**Therefore, let us try to present in turn the points of view proposed in the name R. Mehtiyev and try to elucidate the entire truth based on various sources.**

Right from the start, and moving in for the attack, R. Mehtiyev accuses the Armenian side of falsification and as a "fact" puts forward the following baseless allegation that the Armenians' pretension that they were the first to accept Christianity as a state religion, in fact, does not correspond to history. And in order not to put himself in a ludicrous position, he "modestly refrains" from "Azerbaijani pretensions" about the question of who was the first to accept Christianity, that Azerbaijani historiography has never alleged that the Caucasian Albanians were the first to accept Christianity, and R. Mehtiyev tries to deprive Armenia of that honor also.

In his words, it was obvious to science long ago, that at the end of the second millenium A.D, in other words more than one century earlier than Armenia, that the Aramean Eddessian kingdom had accepted Christianity as a state religion. Subsequently, studies in foreign languages are brought forward who apparently attest to the "fact," that Eddessia's King Abkar Par Manu (Abkar V or Manu VIII) in 165 accepted Christianity as a state religion. It is a totally other issue, that the author doesn't think about or point out adequate historical

original sources, and is satisfied with citing the works of Samuel Cheetham, Herbert Lockyer, Adolph Van Harnack and Irfan Shahid.<sup>16</sup>

Without completely getting immersed in the details, because the essence of the issue does not change from them, we are ready to discuss the author's proposed date of 165 AD, although the sources of Labubna's or Leububna's (Լաբուբնայի կամ Ղեբուբնայի) history which are used as a foundation leave much to question. And who was this mentioned King Abkar? He was merely a subject of Rome and a subordinate “king” **within the empire**. They argue right away that the kingdom of Great Haik was also known to have vassal-like ties with the Roman Empire. This is at once true, however the Great Haik kingdom, if we discount the short-lived occupation of Emperor Troyanos from 114-117, until 387 was a separate kingdom and did not become part of the Roman Empire. And not only was King Abkar not a separate sovereign of a country, but rather only a puppet “king” of a small territory. Moreover, apart from the fact that he accepted Christianity, he made absolutely no attempt to uproot the other religions. It is superfluous to say that he would not have attempted a similar step, because that would have instigated the wrath of the protector of paganism, the Roman empire. In this way, can this fact be considered an attempt at accepting Christianity? If no, the essence of the issue does not change. Christianity within the Eddessian Kingdom simply became the first among equal religions, but not the state religion.

And what took place within the Kingdom of Great Haik? The Armenian King Trdat (Tiridat) III and Grigor Lusavoritch (Gregory the Illuminator) proclaimed Christianity as a state religion and forbade and in every sense of the word, tried to uproot paganism. Meanwhile, if we are guided by R. Mehtiyev's mindset, then Christianity had already become the state religion of Rome by the 313 Milan Edict. But the reality is altogether something else because with that famous edict, Christianity became only one other equivalent religion in the Roman Empire. And it is altogether not accidental that Christianity became the state religion in the Roman Empire only decades later, during the governing years of Theodosius the First.

Whether this fact was pleasing to R. Mehtiyev or not, the Kingdom of Great Haik was the first country where Christianity was proclaimed at the state religion at the beginning of the 4th century. Certainly, it is possible that Armenia might not have been the first country to accept Christianity as a state religion and that would not have been a misfortune. Armenian historians do not attempt to artificially antiquate historical events like our neighboring Georgians, who, when Armenia was celebrating the 1700th anniversary of the proclamation of Christianity as a state religion, immediately organized a conference and tried to show that Christianity had come to Georgia 2000 years ago. Armenian history is so old and rich that Armenian historians, in contrast to R. Mehtiyev, do not have the need to occupy themselves with falsification. Mr. R. Mehtiyev, regardless of how much swearing you choose to shower your western neighbor with, it is one in the same, historical fact remains a fact.

Then, R. Mehtiyev accuses the president of the Republic of Armenia of distorting the writings of Strabo and that apparently Strabo had not indicated that the Armenians were indigenous to the South Caucasus, whose

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c. 7-8.

territories were the “usurped lands” of other countries and peoples.<sup>7</sup> It is incomprehensible - is R. Mehtiyev that naive or does he believe that others are so naive? Let's rely on that passage of Strabo's exact testimony which R. Mehtiyev quotes: “According to report, Armenia, though a small country in earlier times, was enlarged by Artaxias and Zariadris, who formerly were generals of Antiochus the Great, but later, after his defeat, reigned as kings , and jointly enlarged their kingdoms by cutting off for themselves paarts of the surrounding nations,- History says that Armenia, previously small, then expanded thanks to Artashes and Zareh, who previously were generals of Antiochus the Great and after his fall, became kings; Artashes expanded to the provinces of Tsopk, Akisenei, Odomantis and the other to Artashat. Both of their kingdoms grew by seizing various provinces from surrounding nations (know – nationality – B. H.) – I mean by cutting off Caspiane and p[haunitis and Basoropeda from the country of the Medes; and the country along the side of Mt. Payradres and Chorzene and Gogarene, which last is on the far side of the Cyrus River, from that of the Iberians; and Carenitis and Xerxene, which border on the Chalybians and the Mosynoeci; and Acilisene and the country round the Antitautus from that of the Cataonians; and Taronitis from that of Syrians; and therefore they all speak the same language, as we are told”<sup>8</sup>

Yes, Artashes and Zareh seized lands from neighboring countries and nations. But does R. Mehtiyev really believe that as soon as they conquered these lands, the “conquered” immediately began speaking Armenian through, an unknown to science, speedometer? The reality is that during the last period of the Ervanduni's enthronement, taking advantage of the weakening of the Armenian kingdom, neighboring countries invaded its territories at the peripheries and Artashes I and Zareh were simply returning Armenian territories from neighboring conquerers. In other words, the two Armenian kingdoms were uniting lost, but ethnically Armenian territories. It was only in this case that it was possible to unite the language of the populations of the united Armenian territories.

However the issue also has another side. Perhaps the author thinks that Artashes was seizing lands from so-called Caucasian Albania or Aghvank. We don't advise becoming overly enthusiastic because when Armenian kingdoms were expanding through the unification of Armenian and Armenian-populated territories – from the Medes (Mars H. B.), Iberians (Georgians), Chalybs, Mosinyuks and Assyrians, there is not even a subtle reference in original sources that the eastern sides of Armenia, which Azerbaijani historians consider a part of Albania (Aghvank), were united with the Kingdom of Great Armenia. Simply, Armenian historians have poured salt into the wounds of this falsification. Uti is recalled as the winter residence of the Armenian kings during the reign of King Eruand the Last (end of the 3rd millenium B.C.) and it is natural that it was part of Artashes I's Kingdom of Great Armenia.<sup>9</sup>

The question of how long Armenia had been an independent state interests R. Mehtiyev greatly. Like a tongue twister, he repeats the Turkish version of history that has been falsified that apparently until 1918 Armenia had been independent for only a short time and was in fact totally dependent on other countries. The

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<sup>7</sup> See [http://www. Trend. az](http://www.Trend.az) , 29.10.2010.

<sup>8</sup> The Geography of Strabo, with an english translation by Horace Leonard Jones, in eight volumes, London, 1969, XI, 14.5.

<sup>9</sup> See History of Movses Khorenatsi, Tpghis, 1913, book II, ch. 44-45

next conclusion follows – during a short-lived independence Armenian kings tried to expand their rule to neighboring countries and that with the exception of the era of Tigran the Great, there are no facts to support that Armenia had reigned over contemporary Azerbaijani territory. And it was only during the time of Tigran the Great that Armenia had temporarily ruled over the lands north of the River Arax. At the same time, admitting that Strabo had mentioned Armenia from Orkhiden to Artsakh, R. Mehtiyev immediately notes that apparently the Greek geographer had not stated that Armenians had even lived there.<sup>10</sup>

We have to deal with such a simplistic falsifier whose lying legs, as the people say, are short. Let's start from that circumstance, that Orkhiden-Artsakh does not belong to that list of territories that Artashes and Zareh united under their kingdoms. And if the population of those countries which they unified, in Strabo's words were also Armenian-speaking, then it is needless to even talk about the fact about Orkhiden-Artsakh, which had previously been part of the Kingdom of Great Haik, being Armenian. What is amazing is that the reality doesn't even occur to the writer that in a specific passage from his work Strabo doesn't mention the Armenians of Orkhiden-Artsakh, then there are no facts in general that the inhabitants of Orkhiden-Artsakh were representatives of other nation. Perhaps noting this reality, the writer announces that there are various other sources and testimonies that apparently confirm the presence of an Aghvan population there. And to substantiate his own fabrication, he brings Strabo's report, that the River Kur flows through Albania.<sup>11</sup> We will still discuss this piece of information however the fact that R. Mehtiyev completely and consciously ignores Strabo's other testimonies amazes us.

In this way, why does the writer “forget” to remember the fact that according to Strabo, Shakashen (Sacacene) and Arachsenen comprised part of Armenia.<sup>12</sup> And that means that Shakashen stretching north from Orchistene-Artsakh and to the east Otene-Utik were found in Armenia. Herein, we cite reports from Strabo's “Geography.”

**“A large part of Armenia is found from a part of the Hyrcanian Sea (Caspian Sea – H. B.) and the entire section between it and Pontos.”<sup>13</sup>**

**“Now the Moschian country, in which is situated the temple, is divided into three parts; one part is held by the Colchians, another by the Iberians (Georgians H. B. ) and another by the Armenians.”<sup>14</sup>**

**“In the middle is a plain intersected by rivers, the largest being the is Cyrus. This river has its beginning in Armenia, flows immediately into the plain abovementioned, receives both the Aragus, which flows from the Caucasus, and other streams, and empties through a narrow valley into Albania; and between the valley and Armenia it flows in great volume through plains that have exceedingly**

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<sup>10</sup> See [http://www. Trend. az](http://www.Trend.az) , 29.10.2010, c. 9.

<sup>11</sup> See Strabo, XI, IV, 2 the author wrote † XI, IV, 1 by mistake.

<sup>12</sup> E. p., II, I, 14:

<sup>13</sup> See the same , II, V, 31:

<sup>14</sup> See the same, XI, I, 18:

good p[asture, receives still more rivers, among which are the Alazonius, Sandobanes, Rhoetaces and Chanes, all navigatable, and empties into the Caspian Sea. It was formerly called Corus.”<sup>15</sup>

“The southern side is formed by Armenia, which stretches alongside it; and much of Armenia consists of plains, (Albania, B.H), though much of it is mountainous, like Camysene, where the Armenians border on both the Iberians and the Albanians”.<sup>16</sup>

“The Araxene Plain, through which the Araxes River flows to the extremities of Albania and then empties into the Caspian Sea. After these comes Sacasene, this too bordering on Albania and the Cyrus River; then comes Gogarene (Gugarq, B.H.)”<sup>17</sup>

“The size of the country is given by Theopanes: the breadth one hundred “schoeni”, and the length twice as much, putting the “schoenus” at forty stadia; but this estimate is too high; it is nearer the truth to put down as length what he gives as breadth, and as breadth the half, or a little more, of what he gives as breadth.”<sup>18</sup>

The enriching of the original sources of the promulgated facts presents no difficulty, and show without a doubt that R. Mehtiyev is simply falsifying. His basic argument is that the River Kur flows into Albania, as Strabo reports. But this issue also has its explanation, which we will present.

The issue is that the names, Albania and Aluan (Aghvank), have a purely Armenian origin and originate from the Armenian word “al” (“agh”), which means salt, but the Armenian letter “ա” does not exist in English and is expressed by [gh]. According to Movses Khorenatsi, Sisak, descended from Haik, inherits “the field of Aluan (Aghvan)”, and the mountainside from the same field, from Yeraskh all the way to the fortress of Hnarakert and – «Այս առիւն յանուն քաղցրութեան քարուց նորա անուանեցաւ Աղուանք. զի աղու ձայնէին զնա: Եւ ի սորա ծննդոց այս Առան անուանի եւ քաջ կարգեցաւ կողմնակալ բիրաւոր ի Պարթեւէն Վաղարշակայ»<sup>19</sup> (“And the country was called Aluank [Albania] after the gentleness of his mode of life; for they called him alu. Descended from him was this famous and valiant Aran whom the Parthian Valarshak made military governor.”)

Movses Kaghankadvatsi, who profited completely from the father of Armenian history - Movses Khorenatsi, connects the evolution of the name Aghvank with Arani and not with the sweet manners of Sisak.<sup>20</sup> It is clear that “aghu” evolved from “al” (“agh”) and the latter became an instrumental case's writing style. “Alu” (“Aghu”) means seasoned with salt, in other words, pleasant, sweet, and flavorful and as we can see, also fertile.<sup>21</sup> However, it isn't the case that the use of the word “al” (“agh”) meant “alu” (“aghu.”) Its predecessor, “alov,” which was borrowed by Georgians, gave birth to the word “gaaloveba,” which in Georgian means to sweeten, pleasant or to receive.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See the same, Strabo XI, III, 2-3:

<sup>16</sup> See the same, XI, IV, 1:

<sup>17</sup> See the same, XI, XIV, 4:

<sup>18</sup> See Strabo, XI, XIV, 11:

<sup>19</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, book B, ch. 8:

<sup>20</sup> See Movses Kaghankadvatsi, History of Aghvank, Y. 1983, page 8 (ch. 4)

<sup>21</sup> See Hr. Acharyan, Ethimological dictionary of Armeian language, vol. A, Yer. 1971, page 114-117.

<sup>22</sup> Hr. Acharyan, Ethimological dictionary of Armeian language, vol. A, Yer. 1971, page 116:

However, the “alov” style was preceded by the ancient “alob” style. Originally, the Armenians as the “country of fertile fields” called the right bank of the Kur River “Alobank,” as it is clearly seen from the writings of Movses Khorenatsi. Alobank was only a geographical concept and because the left bank of the Kur River was comprised of the continuation of that big and extensive field, in response to the question by the Romans who raided Aghvank, of which country was found on the left banks of the Kur River, the Armenians responded with Alobank, in other words, “the country of fertile fields.” The Romans changed Alobank into Alobania and because there were Albanians in far away Scotland and Gallia, and in Italy, Albanus mons / ἄλνῦ (Albanian mountains, B.H.), through their similarity, Alobania became Albania. This style was conserved in the Greek and Roman world, however in Armenian, it was subjected to changes by a specific Armenian pronunciation. Alobank thereafter was changed to Alovank and as a result of the change from “ov” to “ou,” to Aghvank. Much later, when “l” began to be pronounced “gh” Alvank became Aghvank in Armenian. By judging everything, the great geographer Strabo also found out about this, when he wrote that the River Kur flowed through Albania, in other words through the fields of Alban. This is the truth, although it would have been possible not to write about it, because insisting that the **Azerbaijanis are the descendents of the Alban-Alvans is equivalent to saying that the descendents of the Turks are the Greeks.**

Therefore, for the Azerbaijanis, whether Armenia had conquered Aghvank or not has absolutely no meaning. The reality is that Aghvank, not only during the reign of Tigran the Great, but in subsequent centuries and on many occasions had appeared within the Kingdom of Great Armenia in a subordinate condition. It is possible to bring many facts to substantiate this. Let us simply recall one: During the Kingdom of Great Armenia, in a document called “Gahnamak” or as known by researchers as “Zoranamak” it states, that the size of the Armenian army, along with the soldiers from other occupied lands, was comprised of 120,000 men. It is very important that those lands were considered occupied. It is understandable, that the Armenian kingdom could not conquer its two large neighboring countries; therefore this refers clearly to Iberia and Albania (Aghvank).<sup>23</sup>

One of the issues raised by R. Mehtiyev refers to the formation of the Azerbaijani people because, according to Armenian authors, the Azerbaijanis, as a nation appeared one whole century before us and what took place on that territory until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has no connection with the Azerbaijanis.

In all honesty, whether our eastern neighbors are called Turks or Azerbaijanis, in all practicality has no significance whatsoever. It is a certain fact that the Turk-Seljuk races appeared, for the first time, in the eastern and in parts of the western portions of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan only in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century. And as to how the process of the formation of the people proceeded is possible to register only by the events of the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A question may rise – why to begin from the 16<sup>th</sup> century? The answer to that question is the following: neither during the rule of the Kara-Koyunlus nor during the time of the Akkoyunlu reign, did the formation of a particular people take place. Azerbaijani historians contend that during the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Sefefids state was created by the Kzlbash races, which they consider to be

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<sup>23</sup> See N. Adonts, Armenia in the Age of Justinian, St. Petersburg, 1908, p. 252.

Azerbaijani. We do not wish to enter into an argument with our “resourceful” opponents, because the essence of the Kzlbash state, apart from the fact that Turkish races led the regime, was indisputably Persian, a fact that is above any doubt. The issue is that the founding principles of that state were not national but rather based upon the **Shia religion**. Even if we were to hypothetically accept that the state had been “Azerbaijani” it is one in the same; during the reign of the Kzlbash races, a unified people did not exist there. And that was conditioned by the absence of their own state. Thereby, could it possibly cross an Azerbaijani historian’s mind that for example, Shah Abbas was not the Persian Shah even though the fact that he had Turkish roots is above all doubt?

It is clear that even under conditions of having a state, the French people’s formation took several centuries. The same can be said for the Russian and German peoples. Thereby, at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, if we have to deal with races as opposed to a unified people, then several centuries is required for the formation of that people, which were called Turkish, and presently are called Azerbaijani. In the conditions of the Persian state, where the Shia religion was the basis of everything, the process of the formation of a people was not particularly quick. And it is not a coincidence that the Turkish speaking population of Iran has only lately expressed more or less, national feelings. Even if we accept that within the Persian regime there were the prerequisite for the ripening of the formation of the Azerbaijani people, then we have to conclude that that process was accelerated only during Russian rule. Whatever the case, **it is not possible to indicate the final formation of the Azerbaijani people earlier than the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**

### **3. The Working Regime of Falsifying Toponyms**

Only smiles can appear surrounding R. Mehtiyev’s mental exercises about the designation of the naming of Azerbaijan.<sup>24</sup> Let’s start from the issue of how Atrpatakan (Atropatene B. H.) and from there Atrbejan and Azarbaijan geographical concepts came to be.

The name “Atrpatakan” was given to the western portion of Marastan which was surrendered to Atrpat as a Satrapy, whose name was nothing less than “chief of fire” or “fire priest.” And if in the future, the kingdom of Atrpatakan was formed, then it was only a Median (Marastan) state. And the Medes (Mars) were simply Persian races and can in no way be considered the forefathers of the Azerbaijanis. Media (Marastan) was a Persian country during the Sasanyan reign, including also during Arab rule. Therefore, independent of that circumstance whether during Arab rule, which territories were included in Azarbaijan as an administrative unit, it was simply an administrative unit. If R. Mehtiyev is that objective, then why does he not note that the **Arabic Armenia administrative unit included not only Armenia but also Iberia (Virk) and Aluanq (Aghvank)**, which he always calls Caucasian Albania. Let it be clear to R. Mehtiyev that administrative units can be expanded or downsized. In the noted century, Azarbaijan was an administrative unit during the Arab Caliphate.

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<sup>24</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c. 10-11.

And if R. Mehtiyev is interested in the borders and administrative territory of the police of Armenia, then he can refer to A. Ter Ghevondyan's *Armenia and the Arabic Caliphate*, Yerevan 1977 (in Russian language).

R. Mehtiyev presents testimonials from a variety of writers to show that Azerbaijan had extended from the north and south of Eraskh. He relies in particular on a 1864 memorandum from Ambassador to Tabriz Keith Abbot, which reads, "The country which is obvious to the Persians as Azerbaijan, is divided between them (Persians) and the Russians. The latter rule (Azerbaijan) 5/8 of its territory, which comprises 80,000 sq. miles, or equal to the territory of Great Britain; in this way 50,000 sq. miles belongs to Russia and 30,000 sq miles to Persia. The Russian part borders to the north and northwest with the Caucasian mountains, which stretch all the way to the environs of Baku, the shores of the Caspian Sea. Imeretia, Mingrelia, Guria and the provinces of Akhaltskha (Akhaltsikhe) are part of its western part which currently belong to Russia. The east (border) is the Caspian Sea, the south (border) is the River Arax...over the Mughan steppe all the way to the Talish district and small Astura (Astara, B.H) river, which flows through that territory toward the Caspian Sea. The following areas fall into that province – Georgia or Gyurjistan, which is comprised by Kakhetia, Somkhit, Kazakh, Muslim Erivan (Yerevan), Nakhichevan, Karabakh, Gyanja, Shirvan, Shaki, Shamakhi, Baku, Kuba, regions of Salyan and a part of Talish."<sup>25</sup> In the opinion of the author, it is not possible to accuse the English ambassador of falsification and in servicing "Azerbaijani propaganda." The conclusion follows that apparently in the sixth decade of the 19th century, the population of Yerevan, Nakhichevan and Karabakh, even after the Armenians had migrated there, remained mainly Muslim, in other words Turkish.

Certainly, one does not accuse the British consul with "**servicing Azerbaijani propaganda,**" however it is possible to unconditionally accuse him of being **uninformed**, and R. Mehtiyev of being **ignorant**. In the ambassador's words, Imeretia, Mengrelia, Guria and Akhaltsikhe were part of Azerbaijan from the west. It is understandable that his words do not interest the cited author, but to see Yerevan, Nakhichevan and Karabakh within the Azerbaijani structure affects him greatly. However, it remains incomprehensible, as to how the British consul of Tabriz places the aforementioned provinces of Georgia in Azerbaijan, which never even belonged to Persia and even under the case of wishful thinking, couldn't be part of the administrative unit of Azerbaijan. The issue is that from 1762 the Eastern Georgian Kingdom was an independent country from Persia until its annexation to the Russian Empire and before that, even though it was dependent on Persia but had two kingdoms, Kartli and Kakheti. As we can see, the writings of the British consul regarding the mentioned territories is simple absurdity. And if there is one present absurdity, then how is R. Mehtiyev's ardent wish substantiated on his reliance on this?

Now let's move on to how Yerevan, Nakhichevan, Karabakh and Gantzak (Gyanja) are so-called "Muslim provinces." The ambassador of Tabriz was simply in a deep slumber. If in the first three decades of the 19th century, the Armenian population was slightly smaller than the Muslim population, about which we will later clarify in detail, then during the 1860s to talk about such a reality, is in the very least ridiculous because the

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<sup>25</sup> Keith E. Abbott, Extracts from a Memorandum on the Country of Azerbaijan, Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London, , Vol. 8, N 6 (1863-1864), pp. 275-279.

picture was something else. Therefore, instead of trumpeting the British ambassador's ignorance with rejoice, it is possible to simply refer to official Russian statistics, which relay a different picture. If R. Mehtiyev must be led by these chance reports, then it is possible to be **fully convinced about the lack of knowledge of modern Azerbaijani historiography.**

Certainly, as a result of the establishment of the Turkish nomadic element in Armenia, Turkish place names comprise a significant number.<sup>26</sup> This was conditioned by the temporary conquest of the newly arrived nomads. Let it be clear to R. Mehtiyev, that the Turkish element translated Armenian place names into Turkish, by adapting them to their language and created only ten percent of those names, according to a simplistic nomadic mentality. If a body of water appeared black in the eyes of a nomad, then the river or stream was immediately called Gharasu (Su meaning water); if a stone resembled a nose, then it was named Gharaburan (a stone resembling a nose); if a cliff reminded them of an ear of a wolf, then Ghurdghulak (wolf's ear) was born, etc. In Armenia a Muslim-inhabited village, Donguzlu is mentioned (Khozishen, "khoz" mens pig in Armenian - B.H.). A question arises, as to how the Muslims can call their village Donguzlu. In reality, the Muslim migrants, by taking ownership of an Armenian village, simply adapted the Armenian name of the village Donguys (Getakoghm, which means toward the river B.H.) to their language and sensibility.

In the Armenian region of Syunik, Stepannos Orbelyan, a famous Armenian historiograph notes the Qurakakhaghadz (the foal plays) mountain, which the newly settled Turkish races later simply translated and called Kulunoy-nagh, in other words, the foal plays.<sup>27</sup> The same can be said about Stepannos Orbelyan's mentioned Harsnavaz and the mountains of Harsnasar in Vayots Dzor, which by translating them, the Turkish races transformed into Gyalinkaya (Harsnasar, means rock of brides, B.H.). It is possible to continue this list without end.

As far as we know, R. Mehtiyev is only a Doctor in philosophy, therefore, it is even more surprising that he tries to showcase his knowledge in the field of linguistics. The fact that Armenian has a rich store of dialects has brought him to that absurd thought (something which he tries to ascribe to linguists) that Armenian does not present as a language of a one people. And he tries to substantiate this by the differences of skulls discovered in mausoleums and the skulls of contemporary Armenians. It is superfluous to say, that this is truly **foolishness**, because peoples and nations are not genetic phenomenon, but rather social. The writer doesn't know or considers it unnecessary to note that the shape and type of a skull can change, even in connection with changes in nutrition.

The idea that it is possible to boldly place the Armenians' connection with the Armens under suspicion is particularly staggering.<sup>28</sup> Let it be clear to R. Mehtiyev that the Armenians have one ethnic name – Hay, and neighboring peoples have called Armenians Armens or Armanin, in the name of Armenian King Aramani, who had acquired great reknown among neighboring peoples for his political acumen. In general, the writer who lacks

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<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c. 12.

<sup>27</sup> See- Stepannos Orbelyan, History of the Government of Sisakan, Tpghis, 1910, p. 361 (in Armenian language)

<sup>28</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c. 11.

fundamental knowledge would do well to occupy himself with the study of the skulls of modern Azerbaijanis so that he will be convinced that there is great diversity in terms of the study of skulls. And the craniological type of the Armenians is so characteristic, that German anthropologist von Lushan simply called it “Armenoid.”

According to R. Mehtiyev, the Armenians also Armenianized the name Artsakh and invented the Vararakn settlement, which was mentioned in the October 16 speech of the president of the Republic of Armenia in Goris. According to R. Mehtiyev, there is no mention of the Vararak settlement in original sources and that name is invented and artificially given to that area where the Khans of Kharabakh had established Khanqyandi. He goes on to deliberately spell Vararakn in small case to highlight that it is an unhelpful invention on the part of Armenian propoganda. He also stresses that “old Armenian” is designated to such imaginary places as Berdzor, Karavatchar, Kashatagh and even the city of Tigranakert, without having any serious scientific facts on hand. By completely absorbing himself in unadulterated falsification, he writes that the name Tigranakert was given because the Armenians liked that land and to justify their expansionist plans and their historical fabrications, they invented false testimonies and chronologies, upon which the Armenians relied with a look of intelligence.<sup>29</sup>

After becoming familiar with such allegations, one begins to involuntarily think that responding to such a level of absurdity is a waste of time. However we will try to shed light on R. Mehtiyev's illiteracy in the strictest way possible.

Why is it surprising that the name Artsakh is Armenian? The second part of the place name Artsakh simply means “forest,” something which we come across in Sanskrit, in Persian and in many other IndoEuropean languages.<sup>30</sup> The first part of the name, which in times past would have been pronounced «ար-aur» and would have been perceived in Van records and «O» by the Greeks, signified “cool winds.”<sup>31</sup> And because cuneiform would not have differentiated “O” from “OU” the name in Van cuneiform inscriptions was expressed as Urt. ehe. In other words, Artsakh meant “Windy Forest,” something which corresponds completely with its wooded nature. When Sardur II's troops arrived in Artsakh, but which did not invade, in answer to the question as to which country was on the other side of the mountain range, they probably answered “Windy Forest.” And that is truly understandable because for the inhabitants of the forestless basin of Lake Geghama (Sevan Lake – B. H.), what was characteristic of Artsakh was the fact that it had rich forests.

The existence of Tigranakert in Artsakh, which was recorded by Armenian historiographers Movses

Khorenatsi<sup>32</sup>, Sebeos<sup>33</sup> and others, and the ruins of which were described by S. Jalalyan, Makar Barkhudaryan and others, were fully confirmed thanks to the latest excavations.

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<sup>29</sup> See [http://www. Trend. az](http://www.Trend.az) , 29.10.2010, c. 11.

<sup>30</sup> See Hr. Acharyan, Ethimological dictionary of Armenian language, vol. 4, Yer. 1979, p. 446

<sup>31</sup> See the same, page 362:

<sup>32</sup> See Movses Khorenatsi, book A, ch. 30:

The writer has a dim notion regarding the concept of “Khanqyandi.” First of all, Khanqyandi, which although means Khanishen, which means village of Khans, was not created by the Khans of Karabakh but rather was built in 1847 by the Russians to serve as a military barracks. However, over time, the military barracks were moved from there and the only ones remaining were the families of those soldiers who were married, certain soldiers and the Cossacks. After this, close to 60 families settled in Khanqyandi from neighboring Shushi, Karkazhan, Khanatsakh, Gyulluja and Pahlul. And now about Vararakn, which angered R. Mehtiyev so. The issue is that the flat lands of the village of Khanqyandi belonged to the inhabitants of the Armenian village of Vararak, whose church, made of stone and cemetery are preserved on the left slope of the northern ravine of the flatland, near the spring of Vararakn. Previously, the inhabitants of the village of Vararakn move to Shushi and in the abandoned territory of the village, the Russians built their military barracks mentioned above.

R. Mehtiyev announces that Berdzor, Qaravajar, Kashatagh and many other Armenian toponyms are imaginary. If the author had bothered to become acquainted with the monument of the geographical mind of the 5th century, the “Ashkharatsuyts” (Armenian Geography) then he would be convinced that the name Berdzor, which means “canyon of prospect holes” existed even before that.<sup>34</sup>

However unpleasant it might be for R. Mehtiyev, we are forced to record that Qaravajar was found in the vicinity of the Tartar River and it was so because it had a stone market. It was a center of writing, and several manuscripts written in Qaravajar are preserved there. During the second half of the 18th century, Kurdish races who appeared there distorted its name, changing it to Kyalbajar.<sup>35</sup>

The name Kashatagh is very applicable in Armenian literature. But we will present only one mention of it in Armenian historiographer Stepanos Orbelyan's writing. When speaking about the provinces of Syunik, he writes, “The fifth, Aghahej province, which is now called Kashatagh and Khozhoraberd.”<sup>36</sup>

**We believe that R. Mehtiyev will agree with us, that the authors of the abovementioned works would hardly have written their writings under the influence of political issues of the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries.**

After all of this, the list of toponyms in Turkish outlined by the author can only cause puzzlement. And why is it surprising, that as a result of foreign domination Turkish place names cropped up in Armenia, whose numbers were multiplied during the beginning of the 17th century as a result of the forced exile of the Armenians, when those who bore those toponyms were forced to leave their homeland and nomadic Muslim races were giving new names here and there? It is understandable, that during the first three decades of the 19th century, those who were forced to go to Persia and a portion of the Persian-Armenians who returned to Eastern Armenia under Russian space, the situation did not practically change, because they had to deal with

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<sup>33</sup> See History of Sebeos, Yer. 1939, ch. 36.

<sup>34</sup> See «Ashkharatsuyts (Asharhac'oyc), with an introduction by Robert H. Hansen», New York, 1994, p. 33: A. Abrahamyan, The bibliography of Anania Shirakatsi, Yer. 1944, page 350.

<sup>35</sup> See Dictionary of toponyms of Armenia and local territories, vol. 5, Yer., 2001, p. 319: Armenian memorials of 15<sup>th</sup> century, composed by L. Khachikyan, vol. 2, Yer. 1955, p. 24.

<sup>36</sup> Stepanos Orbelyan “History of state Sisakan”, Tpkhis, 1910, page 12.

the new name places. In essence, it is possible not to reflect on the abovementioned and well known reason, however there is so much illiteracy found on that list, that not to mention them would simply be incorrect.

R. Mehtiyev mentions Basargechar<sup>37</sup> which has been renamed Vardenis, but he doesn't want to mention that prior to being named Basargechar by nomadic races, it was called Sotk.<sup>38</sup> This name has been mentioned many times and not only by historiographers and in the "Ashkharatsuyts" (Armenian Geography), but also in lithographic records. And perhaps the name Basargechar is a witness to the robber mentality characteristic of R. Mehtiyev's nomadic forefathers; they renamed places in line with how they thought. The author knowingly remains silent that Stepanavan, which was named Jalaloghlu, was originally called Lore or Lori. Today, Karakilisa is called Vanadzor, and prior to Karakilisa, it was called Tandzut. Perhaps R. Mehtiyev believes that Mt. Aragats, which in written citations in Armenian sources is mentioned from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, was called Alagyoz. For the author's information, Lake Sevan is known not only as Sevan, but also as Lake Gegham, Lake Gegharkuni, and Lichnitis (Likhnitis) from ancient times, and the lake Gyokcha, in other words, blue water was named by the invading Turkish-speaking nomadic races.

Mr. R. Mehtiyev, I am informing you, that Arpachay is a completely new name, while the name Akhuryan is mentioned from the era of cuneiform. But, no, all of this is ridicule, when we compare the author's thoughts that the name Etchmiadzin was supposedly originally called Uch-Muadzin. The name Etchmiadzin is recorded from the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and means "the only begotten has descended."<sup>39</sup> Could it be possible that the Mother Armenian Church, established in the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, could be called Uch-Muadzin, when the writers of Uch were still wandering in the vicinity Altay, and while the Arabs had not yet appeared in the political field that the Armenians had used their "Muadzin" word? Don't put yourself in a foolish condition, Mr.R. Mehtiyev by exposing you and your people's illiteracy.

#### 4. The continuation of Albanian intellectual training

Now, let's reflect on the actualization of Azerbaijani foolery regarding Aghvank.<sup>40</sup> Mr. R. Mehtiyev, it is totally not necessary for you to rely on B. Ishkhanyan, H. Oberli or R. Suny, who in general are uninformed about this issue. **Armenian researchers can also be mistaken.** I announce, with the utmost sense of responsibility, that the mentioned issues have been incorrectly assessed also by academician S. Yeremyan. And the most important, as we have already mentioned above, that Aghvank or Albania is a common geographical concept, equivalent to Gugark, Vaspurakan, Tsopk, etc. And it is not accidental, that often times this or that historiographer or in lithographic recordings the fact that any mention of a person being from **Aghvank concurrently means that he/she is by nationality Armenian.**

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<sup>37</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c.12.

<sup>38</sup> See Stepannos Orbelyan, see the same, pages 12, 173, 272, 514:

<sup>39</sup> See Dictionary of toponyms of Armenia and local territories, vol. 2, Yer., 1988, pages 349-353:

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010.

It appears that for R. Mehtiyev these Caucasian Albanians are very interesting, consequently he announces that until the Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes regarding Mountainous Karabakh, Armenian historians didn't particularly contest that Artsakh was part of Caucasian Albania and the fact of an Albanian population in that territory. And apparently, Armenian historians tried to deny the existence from antiquity and early Middle Ages of Caucasian Albania, but they involuntarily accepted that the River Kur flowed across the border of Armenia and Albania. And one must assume that if Armenian pretensions expanded all the way to Apsheron, then Caucasian Albania would have been forced to move to the other shore of the Caspian Sea. And with these "facts" it says, that the crazier of the Armenian historians do not cease talking about "Armenian Bakurakert."

By accusing the study of Armenian history of absurdity, he himself appears in absurdity. It is interesting – what Bakurakert is he profusely talking about, when that issue has not been discussed in Armenology; consequently it is not accidental that the author does not refer to any family names. There was an attempt to move Bagavan to the vicinity of the city of Baku; however that opinion was rejected a long time ago because the region of Atshi-Bagavan was situated in the area of the future settlement of Bajarvan.<sup>41</sup> And numerous sources confirm that the Kur River passed through the borders of the two states of Great Armenia and Albania. And now, let's present the information of Plinius Secundus and Claudius Ptolemaist. According to Plinius Secundus, "Great Armenia...in width expands from Araks on the left all the way to Kyros (present-day Kur, B.H.) river."<sup>42</sup> Claudius Ptolemaist's information is interesting. According to his first report, Albania to the north had a border with Sarmatia (Book V, Chapter 9,7), to the west Iberia, to the south, that portion of Great Haik that fell with its border with Iberia all the way to the Hyurkanian Sea (present-day Vrkan, H.B.) and to the Kyros River...<sup>43</sup> And in describing Great Armenia, the same author writes: "Great Armenia, to the north bordered a portion of Kolchis and through Iberia, Albanian Kyros river..."

From the east of that part of the Hyurkanian Sea (Vrkan – B.H.) where the estuary of the Kura River reaches the borders with coordinates 79° 45' 43° 20' (where the Araks river estuary with coordinates of 79°45' 43° 50' is found near the estuary of the Kura River) and from Marasdan (Media, B.H.) toward Mt. Kasios, whose two coordinates are 79° 42' 30' և 80° 30' 39° 40').<sup>44</sup> Perhaps thinking that in the 21st century there would be people who would cast doubt on his reports, he once again notes: "The coordinate of that part of Armenia that fell within the rivers of Euphrates, Kyros and Araks are near the Moschian mountains, from Catarzene to above the so-called Bokas, near the river Kyros (Kura, B.H.) from Tosarene (Gugark, B.H.) and Otene, near the river Araks, Coltene (Caspiane - B.H) and below these, Sodicene, near Mt. Paryadres, from Sirakene (Sisakan - B.H.) and Sakasene (Shakashen or Gardmanatsik - B.H.)"<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See S. Eremyan, "Armenia by Ashkharatsuyts", p. 42:

<sup>42</sup> Pliny, Natural History, London, 1950, VI, 9, 25:

<sup>43</sup> Claudii Ptolemaei Geographia, E codicibus recognovit, prolegomenis, annotatione indicibus tabulis instruxit carolus Muellerus voluminis Primi, Parisiis, 1901, գիրք V, 1:

<sup>44</sup> Claudius Ptolemaeus Geographia, book V, chapter 12, 1, 3:

<sup>45</sup> The same, book V, ch. 12, 8:

And because R. Mehtiyev trusts academician S. Yeremyan so much, we advise him to become acquainted with Yeremyan's article, "Great Armenia", where the work, "Armenia According to the Ashkharatsuyts (Armenian Geography)" is found and however "painful" it might be, refutes R. Mehtiyev's absurdities. We absolutely aimed to include information from original sources and we even avoided utilizing Armenian sources, particularly the "Ashkharatsuyts" (Armenian Geography) thereby it is simply absurd when putting aside original sources, R. Mehtiyev depends on this or that opinions of S.Y. Krimsky, N. Ya. Marr.

The author and many other researchers place the creation of the state of Albania at IV-III B.C., and as a substantiation they utilize the work "Anabasis (Campaign) of Alexander" by Arrianus Flavius in the II BC. It is good that R. Mehtiyev is familiar with this work, however it would be better if he became acquainted also with the work Kurtius Ruphus' "Historiarum Alexandri regis Macedonum libri quae supersunt" (Moscow, 1903). And then what? It becomes clear, that Kurtius Ruphus, whose work was written in the first century B.C. has absolutely no idea about the participation of the Albanians in the 331 B.C. Battle of Gaugamela. Here, the Massagets replace the Albanians, something which is very important. The reality is that Arrianus, stemming from this reality that the Massagets invaded Albania or in Armenian sources the Massagets, he replaced the Massagets with the Albanians. At any rate, from the reports of Strabo including also those of Movses Khorenatsi, it is difficult to conclude that R. Mehtiyev's (indigenous) Albanians were simply newly arrived races who had invaded the Trans Caucasus, undeniably from the Northern Caucasus and created their state at the end of the second century B.C. or at the beginning of the first century B.C.<sup>46</sup>

Resembling the distinct customs of the nomads of looting their neighbor's riches, R. Mehtiyev considers Movses Kaghankatvatsi an Alban historiographer and announces that he apparently confirmed Movses Khorenatsi's reported information. Meanwhile, even a quick examination shows that Kaghankatvatsi was simply completely following Khorenatsi's "Armenian History." The author is trying to show that Armenian King Vagharshak (the Partev king according to him - B.H.) is the same as the Partev King Vagharsh II (51/52-79/80) who appointed Arran as the vice-regent of Aghvank and because the latter's vice-regency was handed at the intersection of Kura and Yeraskh, and where the "historic" lands of Karabakh Orchistene (Artsakh), Tsavdek, Utik and a portion of Araks, were included, thereby Yeraskh River presented at the southern portion of the border of Aghvank (Araz, according to the author).<sup>47</sup>

A question arises – if the author is trying, through the Father of Armenian History (Movses Khorenatsi), to proclaim Caucasian Albania as a part of the land between the rivers of Kura and Yeraskh, then why does he forget that Khorenatsi makes no mention of the left bank of Kura and considers Arani as a representative of the Sisaks of Haik?<sup>48</sup> Isn't it true, that according to Movses Khorenatsi, the eastern sides of Armenia received the name Aghvank simply because of the fertility of the fields, and the names Aghvank and Albania were given by the Armenians with regard to the left bank of the River Kura stemming from the reality that the continuation of

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<sup>46</sup> See The Geography of Strabon, XI, IV, 5: Movses Khorenatsi, History of Armenia, book II, ch. VI.

<sup>47</sup> See [http://www. Trend. az](http://www.Trend.az) , 29.10.2010, c. 14-15.

<sup>48</sup> See Movses Khorenatsi, History of Armenia, book II, ch. VIII.

the fertile field were part of the northern portion of the plain, thereby the neighboring state was simply Albania or Aghvank, in other words, the country of fertile fields. R. Mehtiyev is ignorant of these facts, he can read the details in our articles.<sup>49</sup>

If a person is not familiar with Armenian history, then he can invent anything. What can be said about the Aghvan races when the name Tsavdek, as Movses Khorenatsi notes, was the name of the Kadmiatsik (Kadmians – B. H.) who was brought to the eastern regions of Armenia, handing over to them a portion of governance.<sup>50</sup> To speak about Utik is pointless, because it originates from the Armenian word for “valley.” During the process of copying the words of Movses Khorenatsi over the centuries, there have been distortions. In this way, in the phrase “Ի սորա զավակաց ասեն սերեալ զազգն Ուտիացոց և Գարդմանացոց և Ծաւղեացոց և Գուգարացոց իշխանութիւնսն.”<sup>51</sup> (“From his offspring, they say, descend the families of Uti and Gardman and Tsovdek and the principalities of Gargar”). Gargarians have been placed in the Aran generations as a result of a misunderstanding, something which clearly shows in Claudius Ptolemaius’ “Geography” where the eastern parts of Armenia are noted simply as Sakasene-Gardmanatsik, Sudukene-Tsavidyatsik, Otene-Utik.<sup>52</sup>

During the days of Strabo, the Gargharians lived in the Northern Caucasus and it was only in the first century BC that they entered the Eastern Trans Caucasus. And when the Massagets or Mazkuts invaded the Trans Caucasus, they were forced to withdraw to the territory of Shaki-Nukhi, which is recorded by Vardan Areveltsi’s “Geography,” – “Gargarians are Shaki.”<sup>53</sup> In general, it is not pleasant to attribute words to historiographers which are not found in their works. It is absurd to announce that Movses Khorenatsi confirms the Aghvan population in the Paytakaran world. Meanwhile, in R. Mehtiyev’s passage it states: Տրդատը... առաքէ (Գրիգորիսին - Բ. Հ.) բազում համարձակութեամբ, հանդերձ Սանատրուկ ոմամբ յիւրմէ ազգէն Արշակունեաց: Որոյ երթեալ լինէր օրինակ բարի, հայրենականօքն այլ կուսութեամբ գեր ի վերայ բան զհարսն, և պատժականաւ զոյգ ընդ թագաւորին: Իսկ ի հասանելի համբաւոյ վախճանին Տրդատայ, ի դաւելոյ նորին Սանատրկոյ և այլոց ոմանց հանապազասուտ արանց Աղուանից՝ սպանին գերանելին, ընթացրեալ ձիովք, բարբարոսքն ի վատնեան դաշտին, մերձ ի Կասբիականն կոչեցեալ ծով... Իսկ Սանատրկոյ թագ կապեալ ինքեան՝ ունի զբաղաբն Փայտակարան. զօրութեամբ օտար ազգաց խորհէր տիրել բոլորունս Յայոց»<sup>54</sup> (“Trdat... sent (Grigoris B. H.) him with great confidence, in the company of a certain Sanatruk of his own Arsacid family. When he arrived he was a model of integrity and behaved with the virtues of his father. But he was superior to them by reason of his virginity, and equal to the king in the severity. However, when the news of Trdat’s death arrived, the same Sanatruk and some other men among the ever-faithless Aluank’ plotted, and these barbarians murdered the blessed one by trampling him with their horses in

<sup>49</sup> See Babken Harutyunyan, around Artsakh, Armenian Eastern sides and Karabakh question, Historical-philological Revue, 1994, N 1-2, page 256-266, 1995, N 1, and administrative and political situation of Great Armenia’s North-Eastern regions in 387-451 “Banber Yerevani Hamalsarani”, 1976, N 25:

<sup>50</sup> See the same

<sup>51</sup> See the same

<sup>52</sup> See Claudius Ptolemaius Geographia, V, XII, 8.

<sup>53</sup> “Ashkharatsuyts of Vardan Vardapet”, Paris, 1960, page 10 (in Armenian language).

<sup>54</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, book III, ch. III.

the plain of Vathean near the Caspian Sea. ..Sanatruk, crowing himself, occupied the city of P'aytakaran and with the support of foreign nations planned to rule over all of Armenia".)

Khorenatsi states simply that Sanatruk was an Armenian Arshakuni and by being appointed governor of Paytakaran, after the death of Trdat attempts to overtake the Armenian throne through foreign nations. This so-called Aghvank was found north of Kura, where Pavstos Buzand identifies the Mazkuts' Kingdom. Sanatruk tried to rule over the kingdom, relying on the power of the Mazkuts or of the Aghvants Aghvan. Thereby, how can there be talk of an Aghvan population in this territory, when Strabo states that in these noted territories there lived a small number of Aghvans and Armenians.<sup>55</sup>

What refers to the announcement of Charles Ducette that Thomas Artsuni recalls three Aghvan princes;<sup>56</sup> they were princes from the territory of Armenia called Aghvan and were Armenian, therefore it is not necessary to even reflect on this. Arabic sources clearly record them as Armenian batricks.

Following all of this is another staggering announcement that apparently after the fall of the Albanian State, Karabakh being a geographical and political unit of Azerbaijan, became a part of the Azerbaijan Sajids' state; in the X century was part of the state of Salarids, in the XI-XII centuries it was part of the Shaddad state, and in the XII-XIII centuries it was part of the Ildegizid Azerbaijani states. As we already noted, R. Mehtiyev considers the Sefefid state also as Turkish, in which Karabakh was found. And finally, in the second half of the XVIII century, Karabakh is found in the Khanate of Karabakh, and in 1805 becomes part of the Russian Empire.<sup>57</sup>

What can you say? By simple leaps, it becomes a bouquet of falsifications. Let's start from the point that **the states of Sajids and Salarids were part of the Persian state. The Shaddadis were Kurds** and in this regard, it is ludicrous to talk about an Azerbaijani state. If the eastern part of Armenia or Karabakh had been part of the Ildegizid state, then that signifies that the latter had temporarily ruled the Armenian territory with force. However loud Azerbaijani historians may scream, Sefefid Persia was a Persian state. The author speaks about the Khanate of Karabakh, but why does he not recall how the Armenians of Artsakh-Karabakh in the 1820s revolted and tried to reinstate an Armenian state. Why does he not talk about that Nadir Shah created the union of Armenian melikdoms in Khamsa, which was a half-independent formation within Persian rule?

Certainly, there will be those who will try to interrupt me, noting that this entire discourse, in reality, is not singularly important because in as much as dogs can be the forefathers of cats, then the Albans-Aghvans can be the forefathers of the Azerbaijanis. And if the Aghvans had lived on the left banks of the Kura River, then that does not in any way make that territory, in historic terms, an Azerbaijani homeland.

A few words about the so-called Aghvans. Researchers place the Gargarians, Udins, Caspians and others in Strabo's mentioned 26 Aghvan tribes. The Caspians, without any doubt were a Persian tribe, and the Gargars and Udins, during Strabo's days, were not part of the mentioned tribes because they lived in the Northern Caucasus. It cannot be excluded, that in those far off times, the population of Aghvank was primarily

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<sup>55</sup> See Strabo, XI, VII, 1. Armenian History by Pavstos Byzand, Ven. 1832, book 3, ch. 5 "Albanian (country) i. e. till the borders of Mazkuts' kingdom"

<sup>56</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010.

<sup>57</sup> See the same place.

Iranan. The entry of Caucasian tribes on the left bank of the Kura took place during the appearance of the Alans in the Northern Caucasus, when a number of races of Caucasian languages, in particular the Gargarians and Udins, under pressure from the Alans invaded the Trans Caucasus and established settlements on the left bank of the Kura. Just as China has never been called the Russian **Kitay**, the created state on the left banks of the Kura River have never been called Albania or Aghvank. **Only the Armenians called them such, and only as a geographical term, as the country of fertile fields.** As we can see, the Aghvans were not indigenous, but rather newly arrived, as Movses Khorenatsi notes. It is entirely not a coincidence, that with the decline of this so-called Alban or Aghvan state, none of the races of the left bank of the Kura River transformed into a united ethnos and did not maintain the “Alban” or “Aghvan” name. Their mode of tribal life continued quite a long time, till their major part was melted with the new-comers as a consequence of Muslim religion forced to them.

This is the real truth, however let's just accept, hypothetically, that Azerbaijani historiography is correct when they proclaim the population of Eastern Armenia as Albanian. And who is to say that the Armenians didn't have the right to assimilate those races among them, and that only the Arabs and then in the future, the newly arrived Turkish races had that inalienable right? And how is it that the population of Artsakh-Karabakh, who were representatives of the “Albanian generations,” as Armenians undertook a life and death struggle against the Persian (5th century), Arabs (7-9 centuries) and later against the rule of Turkish races?

R. Mehtiyev finds that the Christian monuments of Azerbaijan have always been a subject of Armenian state falsification.<sup>58</sup> There is no need to respond to this absurdity because the name, “Church of Aghvan” came to be as a result of historical events when some dioceses of the Armenian Church, both spiritually and administratively, after the creation of the marzpanate of Ran or Arran in the 5th century, were forced to become part of a new structure. Apart from the name Aghvan, it was simply a part of the Armenian Church, and if any given catholicosite attempted to have any separatist aspirations, these were quickly put down by the Armenian Church. Moreover, finding itself under foreign power, the Armenian Church lived under very difficult time periods, and at one point there were six Armenian catholicosits. A result of this are the Catholicosates of Cilicia and Aghtamar, but this does not mean in any way that these were churches of foreign elements.

Relay the legend of the attempt by the Armenians to destroy Aghvan writings to your children, Mr. Mehtiyev. Another similar legend has been invented about the destruction of Azerbaijani monuments apparently by the Armenians.<sup>59</sup>

If R. Mehtiyev wants, then he can point out those who have callously destroyed Armenian cultural monuments. State leaders of Azerbaijan, can you tell us where the thousands of Armenian cross stones in Julfa in the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan have disappeared? Or why Armenian Churches and other cultural monuments disappeared from the territory of Nakhichevan?

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<sup>58</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, c. 17-18.

<sup>59</sup> See the same place.

Mr. R. Mehtiyev, once and for all admit that neither Movses Kaghakatvatsi is an Aghvan author nor Kirakos Gantsaketsi and the princes of the Eastern Armenian parts can be considered from the territory of Aghvan because they were Armenian by nationality. The Church of Gandzasar and the other Christian churches and chapels between the rivers Kura and Yeraskh were created by the Armenians and are samples of Armenian cultural heritage.

By the way, of the 72 apostles, Yeghishe<sup>60</sup> (Yelische) was neither Armenian, nor Aghvan. He had spread Christianity in the Eastern parts of Armenian, where the plain of Aghvan, with its mountainside, was simply a part of Armenia. Let us add also that the Armenians have not destroyed one monastery or church in the name of restoration, because they were from the beginning, in antiquity, Armenian. And it is very surprising that this question has always interested Muslim Azerbaijanis, who have always destroyed Christian monuments with pleasure; in Artsakh they had even covered an Armenian church with soil.

And now, we are getting close to the most astonishing falsification by R. Mehtiyev. According to him, it appears that until the mid-XV century no Armenians had practically lived in the Northern Caucasus, and it was only in 1441 when Shah Jahan moved the Catholicosate of Cilicia from Sis, to **Uch-Kilisa** or **Uch-Muadzín** Monastery which was part of the then Turkish-inhabited part of Irivan (Yerevan - B.H.), which in the past had been an Albanian monastery, and that Armenian preachers came to this territory and spread Christianity. And that until the first half of the XIX century, the Armenians had represented only a small number in the Trans Caucasus.<sup>61</sup>

How can you qualify all of this? In our opinion, this is hooliganism advanced on a state level. The most disgusting part is that R. Mehtiyev knows very well that he is shamelessly falsifying history, but that doesn't cause him anxiety at all.

There are various inaccuracies and falsifications in the author's lines. First of all, Shah Jahan was not the king of the Turkish-Azerbaijani state, but rather, certainly, of the Kara-Koyunlu's who were of Turkmen provenance. And it wasn't that the Catholicosate of Cilicia was moved from the city of Sis, but it ceased to exist. Let us not forget that at that time, Cilicia was found in the Mamluk state of Egypt and Shah Jahan had no authority over that territory. The issue was altogether something else. After the fall of the Armenian state Cilicia, the Armenian Catholicosate had western tendencies and the Armenian clergy wanted to move the Armenian Catholicosate to rich Armenian-populated Great Armenia. Shah Jahan supported the desire of the Armenians and the Armenian clergy in 1441, having the right arm of Gregory the Illuminator, they ordained Kirakos Virapetsi as the Catholicos of All Armenians, and the Armenian Catholicosate was once again established in Etchmiadzin, where it had been born in the beginning of the 4th century.

R. Mehtiyev could have not mentioned H. Papazyan's collection of documents, Персидские указы Матенадарана (Persian Decrees of Matenadaran), because no one is ready to place the reality that the village of Vagharshapat and the Monastery of Etchmiadzin were called Uch-Kilisa by the Muslims, under

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<sup>60</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, page 19-20:

<sup>61</sup> See the same place.

suspicion. There is nothing surprising about that because foreign oppressors would decide what to call this or that settlement or monastery. We need not go far: the Armenians called the center of High Armenia Karin, while the Turks called it Erzurum, the Armenians - Sebastia, while the Turks - Sivas, etc. It is another issue as to why the Muslim races called Etchmiadzin Uch-Kilisa. It is necessary to note, that in the beginning Uch-Kilisa was called the village of Vagharshapat, because monasteries St. Hripsime, St. Gayane and St. Shoghakat were located there and because Vagharshapat was not a large settlement and it was often referred to by the name of the Mother See, Etchmiadzin, and the name Uch-Kilisa was used to name the monastery by other nations. It is absurd to think that the Armenians transformed Uch-Muadzin to Etchmiadzin. For this reason, it is necessary for R. Mehtiyev to show any mention of Uch-Kilisa or even Uch-Muadzin in Near and Middle-East Asia until the appearance of Turkish races in the XI century, something which he will never be able to do.

R. Mehtiyev is not satisfied with such an ugly falsification and announces that the Armenians' migration to the Russian proprietorship (Southern Caucasus according to the author) of Eastern Armenia until the beginning of the XIX century was very small in numbers there. To prove his hypothesis, he notes that the Armenians had come from the Balkans and had lived in the area of Lake Van, and until their migration to the Southern Caucasus, local Turkish population outnumbered them. To prove that the Armenians were "newcomers," he relies on the works of Herodotus, whose incorrect perceptions have been revealed in history a long time ago. As always, and in this case also he utilizes academician M.G. Nersisyan's published editorial, *История армянского народа* ("History of the Armenian People", Yerevan, 1980), A. Pastrmajyan's, "Histoire de l'Armenie," (Paris, 1999), and I.I. Dyakonov's, *К предистории армянского языка* ("Prehistory of the Armenian language", РВН, No.4, 1983), which in his opinion, is accepted by a large number of researchers.<sup>62</sup>

Let it be clear to the author, that the information presented by Herodotus refers to the Phrygians who lost to the Armenian King Aramani, and who were forced to take upon themselves the name of the Armenian king and become his subjects. They were the colonists of the Phrygians. A little while later, neighboring peoples called the Armenians Armanis or Armens, in the name of the Armenian King Aramani, which has been preserved in Movses Khorenatsi's writing, somewhat distorted as Aram. In this way, it would be good if the Azerbaijani's think about themselves as the newcomers and not try to proclaim the native Armenians of the territory as newcomers. **It is more than ludicrous, when unverified information referring to the 2nd millenium BC is being compared to the emergence of the nomads of Altay who originated as a nation only in the 20th century.**

R. Mehtiyev was extremely angered by Serge Sargsyan's announcement that the population of Karabakh had been for centuries homogeneously Armenian and the Turk-Muslim races had penetrated and established settlements only in the second half of the XVIII century and their numbers at the beginning of the last century had formed only five percent of the overall population. According to the author, sources say something else; that apparently the Armenians migrated to Karabakh. Continuing his point of view, he announces that Turkish

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<sup>62</sup> See the same place, page 19-20:

documents confirm that the Armenians migrated to Karabakh only in the XVII-XIX centuries, and as a result of which, the ethnic makeup of the population changed.

With the objective to prove his position, he relies on the works by J. Burnutyan, Svante Cornell, A.S. Griboyedov, N.I. Shavrov, *Акты собранные кавказской археологической комиссией* ("Acts Collected by the Caucasian Archaeological Commission", VII, Tblisi, 1878, Document 829) and a painting depicting the migration of the Armenians by Russian painter V.I. Mashkov, 1828.<sup>63</sup> After completing this "study" he announces that President Serge Sargsyan's statement of "nomadic Muslims" should be attributed to the Armenians and he should not have used the word nomadic regarding the Muslims.

Without further delving in such nonsense, let us move to the simplification of the issue. First of all, let it not cross R. Mehtiyev's mind that we have to try and refute the fact of the migration of Armenians from Persia. Certainly not. However it is interesting that the author asked himself the question as to why Eastern Armenia, which is simply inundated with thousands of Armenian monuments and hundreds of churches, in the beginning of the 19th century had a greater Muslim population than an Armenian one. Certainly not, because in answering that question, he would have found himself in a difficult situation. The issue is that the Kizilbashi tribes, so-called "Azerbaijani races" had realized a scandalous genocide against the Armenians in 1604-1605. And, by a decree by Shah Abbas, the overwhelming majority of Armenians from the central regions of Armenia and Eastern Armenia were forced to move, in other words they were forcibly deported to the depths of Persia.<sup>64</sup>

Certainly, Shah Abbas was the king of Persia, even though and as much as Azerbaijani historians trumpet that the Kizilbashi state of the Sefefids was Azerbaijani. However, the genocide against the Armenians was realized by Turkish Kizilbashi races. In even conservative numbers, over 330,000 Armenians were forcibly deported, although many researches and we must say that they are not wrong, the real numbers of those forcibly deported was close to half a million. If we take even the minimum number and in a period of one century we consider the growth of those deported at only 100 percent, which is really less than the real growth, then we will see that this was a horrible blow to the Armenian people, because 330,000 at the end of the XVII century would have constituted 660,000; at the end of the XVIII century, 1,320,000; at the end of the XIX century, 2,640,000 and at the end of the XX century, 5,280,000. In other words, more than half the number of the present-day dispersed Armenians throughout the world. And if we accept that those forcibly deported were 500,000, which corresponds with the reality, then even in the case of low growth, at the end of the XVII century, their numbers would have reached 1,000,000; at the end of the XVIII century, 2 million; at the end of the XIX century, 4 million, and at the end of the XX century, 8 million. In other words, even in the case of low

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<sup>63</sup> See the same place, page 22-23:

<sup>64</sup> See, Arakel of Tabriz, *History, Echmiadzin*, 1896. G. Ezov, *intercourse Peter the Great to the Armenian people*, St. Petersburg, 1898. I.P. Petrushevsky, *Azerbaijan in XVI-XVII centuries.*, "Collection of articles on the history of Azerbaijan", Baku, 1949, p.277. *History of Armenian people*, vol. IV, Yerevan, 1972, pages 95-102.

birthrates, at the end of the XX century the numbers of those forcibly deported would have been equivalent to the population of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan.

But perhaps the Armenian element had the potential to naturally grow? Certainly not. Famine, cold and epidemics, in every sense of the word cut down the forcibly deported and only the miserable remains were able to secure their existence.

We will still reflect on the 1828-1830 migration and partly repatriation, however let us not forget, that the Armenians in an ethnic sense were subjected to great calamities after the XVII century also. The Armenian element had great losses during the reign of Shah Nadir, and it is difficult to measure those losses. However, as strange as it may be, the Armenians of Eastern Armenia suffered greatly even by Christian states. Eastern Georgian King Herakl (Irakli) II, during his 1779 campaign, forcibly deported the Armenians from the eight villages of Ararat – Haranis, Blur, Aletlu, Evjilar, Kyalakarkh, Shahriar, Ghurdughulu and Ashtarak and moved them to Gori, Havlabar and Sghnakh (Signakh).<sup>65</sup> Although Herakl (Irakli) II returned a small number of those he forcibly deported, however taking into consideration the populousness of the villages of Ararat, more than 2000 families were forcibly deported, therefore the number of those forcibly deported was more than 10,000.

The population of Eastern Armenia received a heavy blow during the Russian-Persian war of 1804-1813. In 1804, Russian General Tsitsyanov, who was Georgian by nationality, after the unsuccessful attack on Yerevan, took 2000 Armenians back with him to Tbilisi and settled them in Havlabar.<sup>66</sup> It is not difficult to see that the Armenian population suffered greatly at the hands of not only Muslim rulers but by Christian states.

And what was the ethnic picture in the Khanates of Yerevan and Nakhichevan before their annexation into the Russian Empire? It is clear that their numbers formed 169,155 people, of which 57,305 were Armenian or 33.8 percent; the Muslims were 84,089 or 49.7 percent; the Kurds were 26,911 or 16 percent and others were 850 or 0.5 percent.<sup>67</sup> If we even completely discount the losses of the Armenians at the beginning of the XVII century, then it becomes so that the demographic picture would have been completely different if at the end of the XVII century and the beginning of XIX the forced deportations had not taken place. Those that Herakl (Irakli) forcibly deported to Georgia in 1828 was more than 22,000 and those who were deported by Tsitsyanov came to about 3000. In other words, the Armenians in those two Khans would have been 82,305 people or 43 percent of the population and not 57,305, and the percentage of the Muslims would also have been around 43 percent. In other words, even after all these calamities, the Armenian population in practical terms, was equal to the Muslim population.

In the Azerbaijani study of history, much attention is given to the 1828 migration and partly-repatriation of Persian-Armenians to the Russian possession of Eastern Armenia. If in the XVII century Shah Abbas forcibly deported 330-500,000 Armenians, then, discounting even their potential growth until 1828, in 1828 40-45,000 Armenians repatriated, whose overwhelming portion were from that part of Eastern Armenia that was part of

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<sup>65</sup> See Memorial of national modern history "Krunck Hayots Ashkharhin", 1802, number 4, p. 280: G. Nokodze, Irakli the Great, Tbilisi, 1988, p. 104.

<sup>66</sup> See I. Chopin. Historic monument status of the Armenian region in the era of its accession to the Russian Empire. SPb.1852.

<sup>67</sup> See V. Parsamyan, History of Armenian people, vol. III, Yer. 1967, p. 116

Persia.<sup>68</sup> Even if we don't take into account that reality that from the real territory of Persia, even half of those who migrated, then the majority of those migrating did so from the Persian part of Eastern Armenia to the Russian possessions of Eastern Armenia.

## **5. It is necessary to forget about Karabakh (Artsakh)**

However, the main target for R. Mehtiyev continues to be Armenian Karabakh. R. Mehtiyev was greatly angered that President Serge Sargsyan considered the Muslim population as nomadic, and the Armenians as the roots, the real population. In the opinion of the author, apparently the Muslim population, according to many writers, was more than the Armenian until the repatriation of the Persian-Armenians. As to how the Muslim population outnumbered the Armenians, we will reflect on later. However, R. Mehtiyev is getting hot under the collar in vain, when it is clear that Muslim summer houses, which were temporary stations, were transformed into permanent settlements as a result of the single-minded policy of the Tsarist rulers. Or doesn't R. Mehtiyev know that continuously in connection with the Mountainous Karabakh issue and especially during the clashes of 1905-1906, the question of the nomadic nature of the Muslims were discussed that the **word "nomadic" is close to his people's hearts angers the author so.**

Having no desire to delve into the depths of history, let us note that at the beginning of the XVIII century the Armenians made up the overwhelming majority of Mountainous Karabakh. In a letter addressed to the religious leaders and meliks of Mountainous Karabakh, Catherine I in 1725 writes that within each of the six mahals (districts) there are 36-50 villages and in every village 600, 500, 400, 200, 100 and 50 households.<sup>69</sup> The nomadic element in the lowlands of Karabakh was, of course, increasing by stages and within those races, a union of 24 (Igirmi-dyort) Kurdish races stand apart, who were led by the Jevanshir race. It is superfluous to say that they were Kurdish and not Turkish races. A small number of Kurdish and not Turkish races with the permission of Armenian meliks had established within the Armenian meliks of Mountainous Karabakh, forming a permanent small minority. That situation was altered to some degree when Panah Khan was successful in establishing his rule upon the Armenian meliks. To fortify his rule, he transported a number of races from the Georgian Kingdom and from neighboring khans to Karabakh, among whom were the Karachorlu, Pusyan, Jinli, Demurji-Hasanli, Kengerlu, Kyotanli and other races. Only from Kazakh, Ahmet Agha alone transported 1500 families of his race.<sup>70</sup>

During the reign of Ibrahim Khan who succeeded Panah, the infiltration of Turkish-speaking ethnic groups into mountainous regions gained new momentum, and the departure of Armenians from the lowlands of Karabakh was increasing by stages; a portion of the Armenian population was being forced to become Muslim.

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<sup>68</sup> See the same place, page 77:

<sup>69</sup> See Armenian-Russian relations in the first half of the XVIII century., "Collection of Documents", Volume II, Part II, Yerevan, 1967, page 249.

<sup>70</sup> See Mirza-Yusuf Nersesov, Truthful history, Yer. 2000, pages 46-96. Armenian-Russian relations in the XVIII Century, 1760-1800 years., "Collection of Documents", i.e. IV, Yerevan, 1990, page 354. A.N. Zhukovskii, Fate of the nomadic culture, Moscow, 1990, page 54.

This reality was characterized well by German researcher A. Haksthausen. In his words, starting from the XVIII century, this beautiful country, Karabakh, bears the vestiges of a deep decline. Instead of the Armenians who have been taken away as slaves, lazy Tatars and Turks are brought here, who are gradually receiving advantages over the native Armenians.<sup>71</sup> It was this reality which forced the Armenians to apply with a request to the Russian Empire. The Armenians of Karabakh had significant losses during the invasion of Agha Mahmed-khan in 1795. Many women and girls were raped, a large number of men were slaughtered and cattle and belongings were taken and driven away. Those who were saved found shelter in the mountains and forests of the territory.<sup>72</sup>

Following the invasion of Agha Mahmed-khan in 1797, famine took hold, the people bore unspeakable hardship and a portion migrated to Georgia, the other portion to Shamakhi, Russia, the Ottoman Empire and even to the remote areas of Persia. Famine was followed by the plague to which a large number of Armenians succumbed, however a large part of the population stubbornly clung to their native soil.<sup>73</sup> We learn from the letter Catherine I sent to Melik Mejlum and Abov, that the citizens of the Armenian meliks were 12,000 Armenian families or about 70,000 people.<sup>74</sup> And when on October 7, 1797, Emperor Pavel gave Russian citizenship to the Meliks of Karabakh, along with their families, many Armenians of Karabakh moved toward Kazakh and other regions of the Georgian Kingdom, Shaki and Shirvan.<sup>75</sup> As a result of this emigration and Turkish repression, almost 11,000 families emigrated from Mountainous Karabakh. Despite all of this, in 1805 there were approximately 10,000 Armenian families in Karabakh and in 1808 following military operations, 7,500 Armenian families. The Armenians of Karabakh suffered a heavy blow in 1812, when 2200 people were taken as slaves, and another 2000 fled. Thereby, following the war, only 5000 families remained.<sup>76</sup> It is interesting that when Karabakh was annexed into the Russian Empire, many Karabakh Armenians tried to return to Karabakh, but the Tsarist regime forbade them in every way.

In 1823, Mogilevski and Colonel Ermolov II realized a census in the province of Karabakh through the means of a questionnaire and those who carried out the census, were not completely sure of the accurateness of the accounting, in other words, the data was not reliable at all. However, if we rely on those data, just as H. Sargsyan had concluded, the population of the territory of Mountainous Karabakh was 36,500 people, of which 84.6 percent were Armenian, 14.7 percent were Turkish-speaking Muslims and 2 percent were Kurds. Forty-six percent of the Muslim population were residents of the lowlands of Karabakh mainly, and they conducted a nomadic existence.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See A. Haksthausen, the Transcaucasian region, St. Petersburg, 1857, Part I, p. 208, 213.

<sup>72</sup> See Overview Elisavetpol governorship for 1908, Elisavetpol, 1909, p. 3.

<sup>73</sup> See Armenian-Russian relations in the XVIII Century, 1760-1800 years., "Collection of Documents", i. e. IV, p. 373-375, 378, 459-461.

<sup>74</sup> See the same, page 315:

<sup>75</sup> See the same page 465, 505-507, 527, 533-535.

<sup>76</sup> See Acts collected Caucasian Archeographic Commission, Tbilisi, 1873, t. V, Part II, sec. 579.

<sup>77</sup> See A desk description Karabakh province, composed in 1823 by order of the Superintendent in Georgia Ermolov, the actual state councilor Mogilev and Colonel Ermolov II, Tiflis, 1866.

In the case of discounting the nomads, we have in the territory of Mountainous Karabakh 54 percent of families. Therefore, in the mountainous portion, the Armenian population was more than 55 percent, the Turkish-speaking Tatars, 36.6 percent and the Kurds were just slightly more than 3.7 percent.

According to the pan-Russian census of 1897, 128,600 people lived in Mountainous Karabakh of which 82.7 percent or 106,400 were Armenians; 15.9 percent or 20,400 Tatars; 1.5 percent Russians and representatives of other nations stood at 300. The population of Shushi was composed of 55.8 percent Armenians.<sup>78</sup>

We do not have in mind to refute that those who migrated from Persia had also settled in Mountainous Karabakh.

Let's say that there is a monument dedicated to the 160th anniversary of the migration of Armenian residents in Maragha who were subjected in 1992 to Genocide, then what? If you really want Mr. R. Mehtiyev, we can note those settlements, where Turkish-speaking population were brought to Karabakh by the Azerbaijani authorities. They simply didn't have time to erect a monument testifying to their migration. This is the real picture, Mr. Mehtiyev and there is no need to even ignore the facts.

The Khanate of Karabakh was absolutely not Azerbaijani<sup>79</sup> but Persian, and although the Treaty of Kurak-Chay in 1805 was signed by Ibrahim Khan and the Russian authorities, from the point of international law, it hasn't the value of a farthing. The Khanate of Karabakh, betraying Persia, signed a treaty with the Russian Empire. The Russians themselves didn't attribute much significance to that treaty because the annexation of Karabakh into the empire was in a legal sense ratified by the 1813 Treaty of Gulistan. Through the Treaty of Kurak-Chay, Russian tsarism had simply undertaken a tactical step, understanding fully that that would not be recognized by any state, and in the first instance by Persia.

Moving on to the events of the 20th century, R. Mehtiyev becomes particularly happy because during the session of the Caucasus Bureau in 1921, Armenians (for example, A.M. Nazaretyan) votes for Karabakh to remain within the structure of Azerbaijan. And that the leaders of the Armenians of Karabakh (for example, Sero Manutsyan) welcomes that decision and that apparently this was accepted by the Armenian villages in complete solidarity.<sup>80</sup> Certainly, it is good that R. Mehtiyev remembers the July 5, 1921 decision of the Caucasus Bureau. But it would have served him well to recall also the July 4, 1921 session of the Caucasus Bureau, which decided to leave Mountainous Karabakh within the structure of Armenia. It is true, that A. Nazaretyan voted against that decision, however Al. Miasnikyan (Miasnikov) had voted in favor. In this way, not all the Armenians voted in favor of leaving Mountainous Karabakh within the structure of Azerbaijan. And then, let us not forget, that on July 4, Orjonokidze also voted to recognize Mountainous Karabakh within the

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<sup>78</sup> See Historical Archives of Russia, fund 1990, inventory 11, case 636.638 695 Elisavetpol province, the first general census of the Russian Empire in 1897, Elisavetpol Province, Book 63, St. Petersburg, 1904.

<sup>79</sup> See [http://www. Trend. az](http://www.Trend.az) , 29.10.2010, c. 23.

<sup>80</sup> See the same place, page 23-24:

structure of Armenia SSR, and the following day he immediately moved to the camp of the opposing view, as soon as the contrary solution was dictated from Moscow.

I admit, that a large number of Armenian Bolsheviks, including A.M. Nazaretyan, were people who had lost their sense of national identity, for whom any word from Moscow was law. However, I believe that the Azerbaijanis don't have any particular reason to boast. Today, Azerbaijani historians swear at Commune of Baku and his leader, an Armenian by nationality, Stepan Shahumyan, but they don't ask themselves that his commissar Mashadi Azizbekov was Azerbaijani. Or, was not Narimanov the grave digger for the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic? We must note that for the majority of Bolsheviks who clung to the ideology of international revolution, there was no nation and no homeland. It is with pain that I must confess, that in this case Armenian Bolsheviks were the pioneers. Let us not forget also, that the Central Committee of Communist Party Armenia's SSR, under the leadership of Al. Miasnikyan, rejected the July 5 decision of the Caucasus Bureau.

In one issue we agree with R. Mehtiyev – that NKAO (Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast) was an artificial formation,<sup>81</sup> because within all laws, it should have been part of Armenia's SSR. We also agree that the borders of the region were drawn arbitrarily by the government of Azerbaijan. It is incomprehensible as to why the district of Gulistan, which later was known as the district of Shahumyan and which was always a part of the Khamsa Melikdom's union, was left out of the region's borders. The western borders of the region were completely absurd, where Azerbaijani authorities did everything so that the region would not have a direct border with Armenia's SSR. The authorities of Azerbaijan did not want any Muslim-inhabited village to appear within the territory of the autonomous region, when dozens of Armenian villages from Gulistan all the way to the area of Shamshadin in Armenia's SSR, were left out of the autonomous region. The initial territory of the region was 4160.5 square kilometers and then became 4431.7 square kilometers. And that is considered a symbol of great "benevolence;" however nothing is said of how the authorities of Azerbaijan gradually increased the percentage of the Azerbaijani population and then how territories were being taken away from the region, from the north and the south and were given over to territories of neighboring rayons.

R. Mehtiyev talks about this or that lands that were joined to NKAO, forgetting that thanks to the support of the Trans Federation Azerbaijan was able to take possession of Armenia's SSR territories of the area of the lakes of Allah-Guyoler (historical Al...B.H.), bordering Sisian and other portions. The author is very enthused and announces that 150 thousand desyatin lands were "presented" to the Armenia's SSR – in the provinces of Zangezur, Jevanshiri and Kazakh in 1923, and in 1929 a section of the district of Zangezur, Nuovadi and several other villages.<sup>82</sup>

And how is it, that Zangezur is being proclaimed a "historic territory" of Azerbaijan, when even Soviet Russia had always recognized it as an inalienable part of Armenia's SSR, and in the case, when in territorial issues it was always pro-Azerbaijani? The government of the Republic of Armenia presented the issue of the

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<sup>81</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, 23-24.

<sup>82</sup> See the same place, page 26.

territory of Eastern Armenia and its borders, with a majority Armenian population, during the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and Azerbaijan SSR with the support of the authorities of Moscow was able to take possession of one third of that territory – this is the truth.

R. Mehtiyev, you would do well to repudiate that legend that during the massacre of Sumgait, Armenians had apparently participated in the slaughter.<sup>83</sup> There were many Udins in Azerbaijan (presently, are they there or not, I don't know - B.H.) who had Armenian family names. Perhaps Azerbaijani special services recruited one of them. Perhaps he was Armenian, a man judged three times by Azerbaijani authorities could be forced to do anything. I am deeply pained by the loss of the plane carrying Azerbaijani rescuers following the earthquake, for which nature was to blame, but I cannot forget how during those days they did not allow humanitarian assistance carrying echelons or how in Azerbaijan they were destroying assistance sent from all over the world.

Continuing with his manner of turning reality upside down, the Armenians' attempt at "bringing NKAO out of Azerbaijan"<sup>84</sup> R. Mehtiyev considers one-sided and in contradiction to the constitution of the USSR. And where is the USSR today, in whose constitution the union republics were legally able to come out of the structure of the USSR, just as the autonomous regions within its structure were able to come out of its structure, something which happened. And after that the authorities of Azerbaijan, by starting a war against Karabakh, lost the right to bring forth the constitutions of the USSR and other countries.

**Even though in the past two decades, Azerbaijani authorities have done everything to expand anti-Armenian propaganda in their country, but Armenian propaganda has not placed an anti-Azerbaijan issue on its agenda and will not do so.**

Moreover, the Republic of Mountainous Karabakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic) is developing as a state and becoming stronger. And let R. Mehtiyev not be concerned with the potential loss of our independence; neither the Armenian people nor the president of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. Mehtiyev do not feel the need for your advice. We are a peace loving people, however at any assault we will respond accordingly. Therefore it is not necessary to anger us.

Moreover, when any state, for example Azerbaijan, forgets the lessons of history and tries to transgress the rights of the people who are temporarily under its power, then through that it is fortifying the legal basis for their right to self-determination. And because the Armenians of Mountainous Karabakh have gained independence a long time ago, Mr. Mehtiyev, be wary of falsifying history and its lessons because doing so, with the growing racist atmosphere in your country, can bring the independence of the Talishes or Lezgins.

Mountainous Karabakh has been, is and will always be Armenian. This is a *de facto* reality, however the day when the two parts of the Armenian people unite as one state is not far off.

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<sup>83</sup> See <http://www.Trend.az>, 29.10.2010, page 27.

<sup>84</sup> See the same place.

P. S. We had no intention to respond to this evident absurdity and ravings. However, some publications of the following content appear one after another in Azerbaijani media: “The book “Goris 2010, A Season of the Theatre of the Absurd” not only knocked out the whole Armenian propaganda...”, “Undoubtedly, it will take quite a long time that Armenian propaganda comes to consciousness after such a “knockout”” and so on.

Of course, it’s a pity to refuse the principles of serious science and go down to discuss such an obvious and unskillful falsification, but we had to. And not because we are heartily “put up”. We had to do this for two main reasons. The first one: we have no right to leave our “scientific neighbor” in such an uncouth situation, we had to put some efforts and enlighten him on principles of humanity. The second one: we do it out of respect for reading public in the whole world, which is nourished with undisguised dirty fabrication.

We hope Mr. Mehtiyev will take a sober view of the criticism and will not fall in a state of shock.