



**The Agency on State Support
to NGOs of the Republic of Azerbaijan**



**Citizens' Labour
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Monuments Subjected to Destruction, Armenianization, or Attribution to Other Nations in Western Azerbaijan (Present-Day Armenia)

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This book, the outcome of meticulous scientific research on monuments that have faced destruction, renaming, or appropriation within the present-day Republic of Armenia, encompassing the historical lands of Western Azerbaijan, serves as a means to distinctly reveal the Azerbaijani heritage in the region. The book presents information on 144 monuments that endured in the lands of Western Azerbaijan, spanning various historical periods, notably following the last deportation of Azerbaijanis in 1987-1991. This information is meticulously organized in tables with corresponding titles, covering the history, classification, typology, significance, current condition, and concise descriptions with dimensions of these monuments. The publication is tailored to cater to both specialists and the general public, offering valuable insights into the region's cultural heritage.

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Brief historical information

On December 24, 2022, during a meeting with a group of intellectuals from Western Azerbaijan, held in the administrative building of the Western Azerbaijan Community, Mr. İlham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, made the following remarks concerning the historical lands of Azerbaijan that have become part of Armenia's current territory: **“Western Azerbaijan is our historical land, a fact substantiated by numerous historical documents, ancient maps, and our rich history. Unfortunately, our historical and religious monuments in Western Azerbaijan, as well as in Karabakh, were destroyed by Armenians in an attempt to eradicate the historical legacy of Azerbaijanis. Despite their efforts, our history, fortified by substantial documented evidence and historical maps, remains steadfast. The map exhibited in this building, dating back to the early 20th century, reaffirms Western Azerbaijan as an integral part of Azerbaijan's historical heritage. The names of cities and villages bear Azerbaijani origins, underscoring the historical presence of Azerbaijani people in the territory that now constitutes modern-day Armenia. Our primary objective now is to disseminate this historical facts to the global community. Initiatives have already commenced in this direction, and I have full confidence that the Community will carry out these endeavors with purpose and a commitment to tangible results”**.

The İravan Khanate is not a far history; it is one of the successors of the Azerbaijan State. Therefore, there is a necessity to research and propagate the issues related to Western Azerbaijan without ignoring the insights from historical-scientific studies and its current status.

In this regard, the historic victory achieved during the Patriotic War, also known as the Second Karabakh War has ushered in a new era in the destiny of our people. The victory and accomplishments in the 44-day historical war provided a substantial impetus for addressing longstanding gaps in our historiography related to nationalism, national self-awareness, national revival, and the broader resurgence of our national identity. Beyond the establishment of fresh strategies and goals for determining our destiny, this pivotal victory has also opened avenues for a more profound exploration, re-evaluation, and appreciation of our rich, centuries-old material, cultural, and spiritual heritage.

As a consequence of the resettlement of Armenians into the historical lands of Azerbaijan, the ethnic composition of the population in the region underwent profound changes, subsequently transforming the Caucasus region into a hotspot of conflict. The detrimental policies pursued by Armenians included a range of actions such as genocide, mass deportations, and the deliberate destruction of settlements, as well as historical and cultural monuments that belonged to our compatriots. These policies further extended to attempts to alter the historical names of material and cultural monuments, originally belonging to Azerbaijanis, through Armenianization efforts. When alterations became unattainable, they resorted to either the destruction of these monuments or the falsification of documents with the aim of armenianizing them. These actions were part of a broader strategy aimed at erasing the historical presence and cultural heritage of Azerbaijanis in the region.

After the Kurakchay Treaty, signed between the Karabakh Khanate and Russia in the early 19th century, and the Gulustan and Turkmenchay treaties between Russia and Iran, a policy of mass resettlement of Armenians into Azerbaijani lands was initiated.

Concurrently, the deportation and genocide of Azerbaijanis, who had historically inhabited regions including Iravan, Goycha, Zangezur, and other areas of Western Azerbaijan, were undertaken with the intent of armenianizing these territories. Supported by a substantial influx of Armenian immigrants and with the support of major powers interested in the region, the Armenian nationalist "Dashnaq" party and their supporters made a declaration on the establishment of the Armenian state on May 28, 1918. This event marked the establishment of the first Armenian state within the territory of the former Iravan Khanate, an ancient land of Azerbaijan. Subsequently, a portion of the Zangezur uezd was transferred to the Armenian SSR, established by the Bolsheviks, while Nakhchivan underwent territorial separation from the main part of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijanis have a historical presence in the territory of present-day Armenia dating back to the 2nd century BC. Various Turkic tribes, including Cimmerian, Sak, Gugar, Shirak, Gargar, Shadili, Kangarli, Jinli, Oghuz, Sabunchu, Baharli, Bayandur, Afgan, Qajar, Kazakh, Afshar, Khalaj, Shamli, Ustajli, Turkmen, Ayrim, Karapapag, Zangi, Mughanli, Bayat, Ilkhichi, Kolani, and Kurakenli (Korakanli), alongside other ancient Turkic groups, inhabited this region. Notably, Turkic tribes like Varsag, Barsil, Shirag (Sirag), Qashgai, Saka, and Arsag, which are integral to the ancestral lineage of Azerbaijani Turks, have also had a longstanding presence in the territory of Western Azerbaijan since ancient times.

The territory of Western Azerbaijan has been under the dominion of various states throughout different historical periods. These states include the ancient Azerbaijani state of Caucasian Albania, which governed the region from the 4th century BC until 705 AD, followed by periods of rule by the Arab Caliphate during the 8th-9th centuries, the Seljuk Empire in the 11th-13th centuries, and the Mongol Empire in the 13th and 14th centuries. Subsequently, the Qaqa Qoyunlu state held sway from 1410 to 1468, followed by the Aq Qoyunlu state from 1468 to 1501. The Safavid Empire then established control from 1501 to 1736, succeeded by the Afsharid Empire from 1736 to 1747. Notably, the Iravan region experienced temporary inclusion in the Ottoman Empire during the Ottoman-Safavid wars at the end of the 16th century and in the 20s of the 18th century. During these Ottoman periods, comprehensive collections were compiled twice, providing valuable historical insights into the Iravan province. According to a comprehensive collection compiled in 1728, the Iravan province encompassed several administrative territorial units, including Iravan city, Girkhbulag, Karpi, Maku, Khinzirak, Karni, Vedibasari, Darachichek, Abaran, Goycha, Mazra, Surmali, Ighdir, Aralik, Sharur, Sadarak, Zarzamin districts, as well as Shuragol and Nakhchivan sanjaks. This historical record unequivocally attests to the enduring presence of Azerbaijanis in Western Azerbaijan, which has been their ancestral homeland for countless centuries. Throughout all historical periods, Azerbaijanis have consistently constituted the primary indigenous population of Iravan. However, during the early 19th and 20th centuries, significant shifts occurred in the ethnic composition of the population due to the migration of Russians from the central provinces of Russia and Armenians from Iran and Türkiye to these territories. These demographic transformations were particularly accelerated in the South Caucasus following the Russo-Iranian wars of 1804–1813 and 1826–1828, the Russo-Turkish wars of 1828–1829 and 1877–1878, and the 1861 Emancipation reform. Notably, after the signing of the Turkmenchay Treaty in 1828 and the Edirne Treaty in 1829, the relocation of Armenians to the Caucasus, particularly to Azerbaijan, was formalized once again. During this period, the illegitimate "Armenian Province" (1828-1848) was established, further contributing to the influx of Armenian immigrants and a significant demographic shift in the region¹.

Armenian historians themselves have acknowledged that Armenians are not indigenous inhabitants of the present-day territory of Armenia. Vardan Parsamyan's research indicates that between 1828 and 1830, around 140,000 Armenians were relocated from Iran and the Ottoman Empire, predominantly settling in the territories of the Iravan and Nakhchivan khanates.²

During various periods, including 1905-1907, 1918-1920, 1948-1953, 1959-1979, and 1987-1991, while the Russian Empire still existed, systematic ethnic cleansing campaigns were executed in those territories with the aim of establishing a "mono-ethnic Armenian state", resulting in the forced displacement and removal of Azerbaijani populations.

On December 27, 1947, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued Decision No. 4083, titled 'On the Resettlement of Collective Farmers and Other Azerbaijani Population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras Lowland of Azerbaijan SSR.' This decision led to the involuntary relocation of 144,654 Azerbaijanis from Armenia to Azerbaijan between 1948 and 1953.³ In 1989, the USSR government revisited the decision titled 'On the Resettlement of Collective Farmers and Other Azerbaijani Population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura - Aras Lowland of Azerbaijan SSR.' During this review, it's notable that although the USSR government had taken steps to restore the rights of nations deported in the 1940s, it did not include the Azerbaijanis who had been deported from Armenia during the years 1948-1953 in this decision⁴.

During the last deportations, which occurred between 1987 and 1991, a total of 250,336 Azerbaijanis (320,000, according to some sources), equivalent to 40,928 families, were subjected to forced relocation from their ancestral lands spanning 22 districts. Among these districts were 172 settlements exclusively inhabited by Azerbaijanis and 89 mixed settlements inhabited by Azerbaijanis and Armenians. Regrettably, during their displacement, a part of this Azerbaijani population suffered acts of violence, with casualties or injuries being caused by Armenians. Furthermore, adverse weather conditions during deportation on the roads tragically resulted in many losses. Presently, there are no Azerbaijanis (Azerbaijani Turks) residing within the territories of Armenia. However, historical records indicate that the number of Azerbaijani population exceeded 575,000 by 1918, a time preceding the declaration of the Armenian state. During this period, the number of individuals of Armenian origin living in these territories was notably smaller than that of Azerbaijanis.

Alterations of toponyms belonging to Azerbaijanis

Subsequent to the dissolution of the Russian Empire, on May 28, 1918, the Armenian National Council, situated in Tbilisi, formally declared the establishment of the Republic of Ararat, with its designated capital in Iravan. Nevertheless, it is of paramount importance to underscore that the principal territories of this declared state were historically Azerbaijani lands, and the majority of its population comprised Azerbaijanis (Azerbaijani Turks). Conspicuously, the toponyms, place names, and geographical nomenclature prevalent in this region were overwhelmingly of Azerbaijani origin.

After the Armenian authorities completed the policy of "ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis," they initiated the subsequent and conclusive phase, which involved renaming villages situated in Azerbaijani-inhabited areas. On April 9, 1991, by a decree issued by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Armenia, the names of 90 settlements were changed. This can be perceived as a continuation of the extensive "renaming operation" that had been conducted in Armenia from 1920 to 1987. Over that span, a total of 517 Azerbaijani settlements in Armenia experienced name alterations. To provide a succinct overview, over the course of the last two centuries, more than two thousand Azerbaijani settlements within the present-day territory of Armenia underwent erasure from records through a variety of methods, including official deportations, forced expulsion, acts of genocide, and the deliberate burning and destruction of villages. This resulted in the establishment of a mono-ethnic Armenian state on the historical lands of Azerbaijan. Subsequently, on November 7, 1995, a new law pertaining to the administrative-territorial division of the Republic of Armenia was enacted. This legislation abolished the prior regional divisions inherited from the Soviet era, replacing them with 11 provinces (marz). The culmination of the "renaming operation" occurred in 2007, marked by the alteration of names for the remaining 21 settlements.

The Remaining Material and Cultural Heritage of the Azerbaijani People in the Historical Lands of Azerbaijan

At the beginning of the 20th century, there were 310 registered mosques within the territory of the Iravan Governorate. However, by 1915, the number of mosques in the Iravan and Zangezur Governorates had increased to 391, with 382 being Shia mosques and 9 Sunni mosques. Tragically, starting in 1918, all of these mosques fell victim to destruction at the hands of Armenians. Between 1987 and 1991, Armenians occupied 234 schools, 214 libraries, 268 cultural institutions, 235 health centers, 112 kindergartens, and 152 housing facilities in the territories where Azerbaijanis were forcibly deported. Additionally, 223 cemeteries, 370 mosques, and 68 historical-architectural monuments were gradually razed to the ground by Armenian vandals. Today, only one mosque, the Blue Mosque, along with several partially preserved mosques in various regions, remain within the territory of Armenia. Regrettably, these surviving places of worship are misrepresented to foreign guests as "Persian" mosques by Armenian authorities. Opposite to the false claims and narratives presented by Armenian sources, the region boasts a wealth of material and cultural heritage.

In total, over 5,000 material and cultural monuments were intentionally and systematically destroyed or seized by Armenians, accompanied by the Armenianization or partial Persianization of all toponyms. This destructive activity has its roots in racism and animosity. Within the territory of Armenia, there currently exist no structures, including religious monuments, cemeteries, place names, and geographical designations that substantiate the historical presence of the Azerbaijani people in these territories, where they have existed for millennia.

Overview

This electronic catalog provides an overview of the current status of the destruction and erasure of material and cultural heritage belonging to Azerbaijanis in the territory of Armenia. It aims to effectively communicate the significance and gravity of this issue to the public. These historical and unique monuments in the territory of present-day Armenia (whether in good condition or in ruins) hold special national and moral value for Azerbaijanis. Unfortunately, in some cases, Armenians have taken possession of these monuments, subsequently presenting them to the world community as "Armenian monuments."

This catalog serves as a valuable resource not only for government officials and diplomatic personnel but also for our society. It is an effort to create a comprehensive national encyclopedia, bringing together material and cultural heritages that, despite having been destroyed over centuries, continue to exist in written sources and in the collective memory of successive generations.

The catalog offers concise information about a fraction of the cultural heritage that has been damaged, altered, or subject to Armenianization and Persianization within the territories of present-day Armenia. Nevertheless, this catalog holds paramount importance in illuminating the deep-seated hostility of Armenians towards our nation, the discriminatory policies pursued by the Armenian state, and instances of deliberate vandalism.

MOSQUES

Blue Mosque – Huseynali Khan Mosque (18th century)

The construction of the Blue Mosque commenced in 1760 and concluded in 1764 under the patronage of Huseynali Khan Qajar (1762-1783), the ruler of Iravan. Hence, it was named the Huseynali Khan Mosque. Remarkably, it held the distinction of being the largest mosque in Iravan, boasting impressive dimensions of 66 meters in width and 97.2 meters in length. The mosque originally featured four minarets; unfortunately, three were subsequently destroyed, leaving only one standing. The complex included a spacious courtyard adorned with a central fountain and a well-endowed library.



Regrettably, the Blue Mosque endured two arson attacks by Armenians in the 20th century, first in 1918 and then in 1955.

The Armenian authorities made the decision to repurpose the mosque into a history museum. Presently, Armenians present this historically significant structure to the international community under the designation of the "Persian Mosque." In a session of the Armenian government convened on December 10, 2015, the proposal submitted by the Ministry of Culture of Armenia regarding the Blue Mosque, esteemed as a rare exemplar of Eastern architectural heritage, was deliberated upon. The Blue Mosque, being a historical and cultural monument, is the property of the Republic of Armenia, as established by the state register of historical and cultural monuments, thus rendering it ineligible for transfer to any other party. It was further resolved that the Blue Mosque, along with its surrounding area, would be entrusted to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Armenia as a cultural center for a duration of 99 years, under the terms of a right-of-use agreement. It is important to note that this transfer was executed without any charges⁵.

Demirbulag Mosque in Iravan⁶ (17th-18th centuries)

The mosque situated in Demirbulag district of Iravan, dating back to the 17th-18th century ⁷, is commonly referred to as the "Gunluklu Mosque" or "Chetirli Mosque" due to an unique sun-protecting architectural feature known as the "gunluk" adorning its roof. This mosque was commissioned and constructed by Haji Muzaffar Agha, a prominent figure in Iravan city. According to inscriptions found on the mosque, it was completed in the year 1327 according to the Hijri calendar, equivalent to the year 1909 in the Gregorian calendar. Interestingly, the mosque did not possess a traditional minaret; instead, a square structure measuring 1.5-2 meters in height was located in an open area on the mosque's rooftop. The mosque remained in operation until 1988, serving the Muslim community of the city. Unfortunately, on February 23 of that year, the Demirbulag Mosque became the target of an attack, looting, and arson perpetrated by radical Armenian nationalists. ⁸ Tragically, the mosque was completely destroyed in 1990, and its location was subsequently developed into a modern residential complex. ⁹



Sardar Mosque in Iravan city

Despite experiencing various appellations throughout its history, official documentation designates this mosque as the 'Sardar Mosque.' It is noteworthy that throughout different historical periods, this mosque held various names, and specific historical records from the period of Tsarist Russia's rule over Iravan Fortress referred to it as the 'Abbas Mirza Mosque.' ¹⁰ Evidently, the name 'Abbas Mirza Mosque' was bestowed upon this mosque due to its reconstruction under the patronage of Crown Prince Abbas Mirza during the early 19th century. In August 1843, German researcher August Haksthausen visited the city of Iravan and noted that one of the two mosques within the Iravan fortress (Rajab Pasha Mosque) had been transformed into a



Russo-Greek church, while the Sardar Mosque had been repurposed as an armory. ¹¹

The renowned Russian archaeologist Countess Praskofya Uvarova conducted a visit to the city of Iravan in 1880, during which she documented the destruction of centuries-old historical and architectural monuments. In a work titled "Ancient Iravan," authored by Armenian writer Yervand Shahaziz and published in Iravan in 1931, Uvarova's accounts are cited. Shahaziz vividly describes Uvarova's perspective, stating, 'She likened the Sardar Mosque, situated near the Khan's palace, to the captivating canvases of Vereshchagin.' Drawing from Uvarova's observations, Shahaziz further elaborates, asserting that 'the Sardar Mosque's central dome, external walls, columns, inner walls, and a multitude of other domes were adorned with colorful stones and exquisite imagery.'¹²

Azerbaijani archaeologist and epigrapher Isa Azimbayov conducted an expedition in Iravan in 1928¹³. His article titled "Muslim Inscriptions of Tbilisi, Iravan, and Nakhchivan ASSR," which presented the findings of the expedition, revealed the deteriorated state of the mosque constructed in honor of Shah Abbas, located near the Sardar Palace within the Iravan fortress. This mosque had fallen into a state of partial ruin, while simultaneously, several Armenian refugee families had settled within its premises. At present, only a small fragment of one of its walls, measuring 2-3 meters in width and 3-4 meters in height, remains from the Sardar mosque-complex. Within the former mosque area, the 'Qlendale Hills' construction company has constructed a 14-story, 18-block residential complex.

Tapabashi mosque in Iravan city

The minaret of the mosque, located in the Tapabashi residential area, collapsed in the 1960s. Its walls are 1.5 meters thick. Currently, an Armenian family resides in the room that was once used by the imam (cleric) within the mosque.¹⁴ There used to be a teahouse around the mosque where Muslims used to gather together. Now that teahouse doesn't exist either. Armenians built shantytowns in the courtyard and around the mosque. According to some sources, Tapabashi mosque was built by Abbasgulu khan Iravansky, a member of Iravan city council, who was of khan's descent. Abbasgulu khan's house was also located in that area.¹⁵ The structure has suffered irreparable damage and is beyond restoration. The current plan involves the development of a modern residential complex in this area.



**Iravan governorate¹⁶, Alexandropol¹⁷ uezd (currently in Talin district)
Akarak¹⁸ village mosque (17th century)**

The Akarak village mosque was distinguished by its unique architecture, constructed using a combination of river and rock stones, bricks, and white lime. The mosque measured 5 meters in width and 20 meters in length, with a soaring ceiling reaching approximately 4 meters in height, adorned with numerous windows. The mosque was structured into two distinct sections, accompanied by an adjoining tomb. This mosque



served various functions, including hosting funerals and religious weddings, as well as providing a place for Quranic education and worship. Mosques also function as community centers, fostering social cohesion and equality among individuals¹⁹. Mosques also served other purposes beyond worship and religious ceremonies; they were considered multifunctional structures that fostered communication and unity among Muslims.

Although the roof of the Akarak village mosque was entirely demolished, the remnants of its outer walls endured. Due to its status as an Islamic cultural monument, it was not subjected to repair or restoration efforts by Armenians. Conversely, portions of the mosque that were suitable for construction were disassembled and relocated. Village residents utilized the sizable stones of mosque in the construction of their courtyard walls.

**Akhta²⁰ district, Yeni Bayazid uezd, Iravan governorate
Bijni mosque²¹ (17th century)**

The Bijni Mosque, an ancient Muslim religious monument built in the 17th century, had an impressive height exceeding 5 meters. It was constructed using large rocks and river stones. The mosque derived its name from "Bjni," which is the Arabic rendition of the Turkic tribe known as the "Bechenek / Pechenek." Regrettably, the Bijni Mosque has been destroyed by Armenians, and today, only its ruins endure.²²



**Zangibasari district²³, Ulukhanli region²⁴, Gulujan village²⁵
Aghadede mosque (19th century)**

The Aghadede Mosque was situated near the village of Gulujan, surrounded by the villages of Ulukhanli, Habilkend, Seyidkend, and Sarvanlar. This mosque, located within the historical Aghadede cemetery along the banks of the Garasu River, was meticulously constructed employing river and rock stones, with its exterior meticulously coated in white soil plaster. Roughly approximated, the mosque spanned dimensions of 5 meters in width, 8 meters in length, and had a height of approximately 3.5 meters. It served as a central gathering point for a substantial congregation during funeral ceremonies and Islamic religious holidays.



During the deportation, that occurred between 1987 and 1991, Armenians perpetrated violence upon the Azerbaijani populace and deliberately razed numerous centuries-old Azerbaijani cultural and historical edifices. In these acts of vandalism, the Aghadede Mosque was intentionally subjected to arson.²⁶

The mosque within the Aghadede cemetery not only embodies Islamic cultural heritage and religious identity but also holds profound significance as a monument for the people. Until the deportation of Azerbaijanis (1987-1991), this mosque served as a place of deep religious reverence and pilgrimage for the Azerbaijani community.

In August 2021, British traveler-photographer Gurdip Mattu visited the Aghadede cemetery in the Ulukhanli settlement of the Zangibasari district. The photographs captured during his visit poignantly depict the near-complete devastation of the cemetery. These images clearly demonstrate that only a 1.5-meter section of the mosque's rear wall, along with smaller portions measuring 1 meter on both the right and left sides, have endured the ravages of time and neglect.²⁷

Shorayel²⁸ district, Amasiya region, Baligli²⁹ village Baligli Mosque (18th–19th centuries)

Baligli village was founded at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, with its name mentioned on the five-verst map of the Caucasus³⁰. The Baligli mosque, located in the village of Baligli in the Amasiya region, boasts a distinctive architectural style when compared to other mosques. Measuring approximately 8 meters in length and 4 meters in width, the mosque's walls are constructed from square-cut white, gray, blue, and red stones, lending a unique aesthetic appeal both inside and outside the mosque.



Its architectural design follows a modern approach and exhibits elements reminiscent of home architecture. There are two oval windows situated at the upper part of the rear, one on each side. On the front side, there is a window, accompanied by a wide entrance door. The lower section of the window is adorned with dark yellow marble stones, enhancing the mosque's overall appearance³¹. After the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis between 1987 and 1991, the mosque was intentionally destroyed by Armenians because it was a Muslim monument.

Loru district³², Mountainous Borchali uezd Loru Castle Mosque (12th century)

This mosque is situated 4 kilometers to the east of the city of Jalaloghlu³³, within the territorial confines of the city of Loru, and is located inside the historical Loru Fortress. It was constructed on the lands of Western Azerbaijan and is recognized as one of the mosques that have been identified as still in existence. The interior architecture of the mosque exhibits similarities to the Govharagha Mosque located in the city of Shusha. It features a spacious and lofty ceiling structure, while the floor is elegantly paved with marble stones. On the right side, a small green table is positioned next to a window. Unfortunately, Armenian alterations, including the addition of a cross symbol to the



tombstone in front of the mosque and similar changes within the mosque itself, have led to its transformation into a church. Presently, the mosque lies concealed beneath a layer of grass.

TEMPLES

Garnibasar³⁴ district, Gamarli³⁵ region Palace and temple in the village of Dvin

The remnants of an ancient palace and temple have been discovered in the ruins of the village of Dvin. This settlement was founded in 350 AD by the Arman king Khosrow II and served as the capital of Armaniya.³⁶ This temple (22x43 m) in the city of Dvin was destroyed by the Persians in 572 AD.³⁷ It was subsequently reconstructed under the patronage of the Turkic ruler Sembat Bagrat (608–615 AD) and finalized shortly thereafter under the patronage of Catholicos Gamata (612–621 AD). However, the temple faced complete destruction during an earthquake in 893 AD, and the city of Dvin was entirely razed during the Mongol-Tatar incursions in 1236 AD.³⁸ The people of Dvin have a history of practicing fire worship, but they adopted Christianity as their religion in Armaniya during the 4th century.³⁹ In the year 450 AD, Arman princes convened in Dvin, where they abandoned Christianity and reinstated their prior faith in fire worship.



Until 1828, the village of Dvin was exclusively inhabited by Azerbaijanis (where the remains of the Dvin palace and temple were discovered). In 1828, the first Armenians (132 people in 36 families) were relocated to the village from the Iranian cities of Khoy and Salmas. Regrettably, the ancient Arman-Turkish monument encompassing the Dvin palace and temple has undergone significant alterations and is currently presented as an 'Armenian cultural monument.'⁴⁰

**Iravan⁴¹ governorate, Uchkilsa⁴² district,
Albanian temple in Haji Gara⁴³ village (6th – 7th centuries)**

The Albanian temple in the village of Haji Gara was constructed during the era when the Albanians inhabited the village. This temple was meticulously built using large square-shaped stones, measuring 3.5 meters in width, approximately 4-4.5 meters in length, and with a height of 5 meters.⁴⁴ An oval window, measuring 50 cm in width and 1 meter in length, is situated in the rear section of the temple. This historic structure is situated near the village. Unfortunately, the upper ceiling and a portion of the front entrance side of the temple have suffered damage. Apart from natural deterioration over time, a notable portion of the edifice has been



intentionally disassembled and vandalized in more recent times. The stones from the temple, now in a partially demolished state, are scattered around the temple's vicinity. The village is documented as "Haji Garali"⁴⁵ in the "Comprehensive Book of Iravan Province" compiled in 1590, and it is referred to as "Haji Gara"⁴⁶ on the five-verst map of the Caucasus. Until 1828, the village was inhabited by Azerbaijanis. Following the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1829, Armenians from the Khoy province of Iran were resettled in this village.⁴⁷ Apart from the Armenian population, there were 27 Azerbaijanis residing in the village in 1831, and this number had decreased to eight Azerbaijanis by the year 1897.⁴⁸ From the early 20th century onwards, Azerbaijanis have experienced a series of deportations from their historic homelands. Unfortunately, the mentioned temple has been completely demolished.

**Sharur-Daralayaz⁴⁹ uezd, Gargar⁵⁰ village
Chikiveng Temple (5th-6th centuries)**

In Gargar village and its surrounding areas, like many historical settlements, there exist ancient monuments and ancient cemeteries. One such example is a small temple known as Chikiveng (referred to as "Chikivank" by Armenians) situated atop a mountain along the Gargar village road.

Armenians claim that the name "Chikivank" is linked to the temple's supposed ability to heal skin diseases through its surrounding soil. However, when examining the etymology of this word in the Azerbaijani language, it aligns with the temple's architectural



characteristics, similar to the case of the Ayriveng monastery⁵¹. In certain Azerbaijani dialects, terms such as "chiki," "cigi," "chiggili," "chikkana," "chiggalanca," and others are used to denote a very small volume of an object or mass.

According to tourists' descriptions and photographic documentation, the church is notably small, with a maximum capacity to accommodate 5 to 6 individuals without the physical distancing. Consequently, the term "Chikiveng" aptly translates to "small church," aligning seamlessly with the building's dimensions. Furthermore, the inscriptions on the walls of the Chikiveng temple, bearing the names Bahram, Goncha, Okan, Amat, Asan, and others, correspond to the nobility and their family members who played a pivotal role in the temple's construction. These names bear no relevance to the present-day Armenian population⁵². Currently, the temple has been completely destroyed by Armenians.

Iravan governorate, Echmiadzin uezd (now in Talin district) Albanian temple in the village of Gozlu (5th–6th centuries)

The Albanian temple is situated on the bank of the river, a short distance from the village of Gozlu. Constructed from red tuff stone, the temple measures 10 meters in length, 5 meters in width, and 4 meters in height. It is surrounded by lush green grass. A small tributary of the river passes approximately 30-35 meters from the temple. While the walls, roof, and tower section of the temple are partially preserved, the roof itself is covered with tall grass.



(Source: based on a photograph taken on 02.04.2011).⁵³ Currently, the temple has been destroyed by Armenians.

The village of Gozlu is marked on the five-verst map of the Caucasus⁵⁴. Azerbaijanis inhabited the village until 1828. Subsequently, after the Treaty of Turkmenchay, between 1829 and 1832, Armenians were relocated to the village from the Turkish provinces of Mush, Alashkirt, and Kars, as well as the Iranian provinces of Ghazvin and Khoy. Consequently, Azerbaijanis were deported from the village.⁵⁵

**Iravan governorate, Yeni Bayazid uezd, Garanlig district
Vanevan temple in the village of Ashagi Alchali (903 AD)**

The Vanevan Monastery is an Albanian temple situated in the valley of the Alchali River, to the south of the village of Ashagi Alchali and southeast of Goycha Lake. This temple was constructed in 903 AD by Princess Shapuh Bagratuni and Maryam, who were the sisters of King Smbat I (Sahl ibn Sunbat). They belonged to the Arranshahik dynasty⁵⁶, which was the first ruling dynasty of Caucasian Albania. In the late 10th century, the Vanevan Monastery underwent repair and restoration under the patronage of Gagik I, who was not only the XXXXI Catholicos of the Albanians but also a



king of the Bagratid dynasty. Gagik I was a proponent of the idea that the Albanians should have an independent temple. As part of this restoration, a surrounding wall was erected around the monastery. The church consisted of four central conjunctions that gradually expanded. Special square white and red tuff stones were utilized in the construction of the Vanevan temple. This architectural choice establishes both the Vanevan and Tatev temples as early pioneers in the use of this technique. The monument is octagonal both from the outside and inside, and there is a script detailing the history of the church. Both monuments have decorative bands, indicating that they cover the same history.

Behind the monastery, in the direction of the valley, lies a spring and a cave, which historically served as an escape route from invaders.⁵⁷ Until the 1820s, Azerbaijanis inhabited the village, which was historically a Turkish-Oghuz homeland. Following the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1829-30, Armenians from the Alashkirt region of Türkiye were resettled here.

Subsequently, during the restoration by Armenians, Armenian architectural symbols were incorporated into the temple, and it is now presented as an 'Armenian heritage site.

Karvansara district, Salah village on the bank of the Tarsachay River Aghavnaveng Albanian temple (12th-13th centuries)

In this village, a multitude of ancient historical monuments with Turkic-Albanian origins, dating as far back as the 11th-12th centuries, can be found. These monuments hold significant ties to the ancestral heritage of Azerbaijan. An example of such a historical site is the Aghavnaveng Albanian-Turkic temple, constructed during the 12th-13th centuries. Situated within a densely forested area on the periphery of Dilijan National Park.⁵⁸ The temple boasts a square dome design. Constructed with sturdy river stones and sizable rocks, its walls have withstood the test of time. Notably, the roof and dome of the temple are now adorned with a natural covering of lush grass and foliage.



Regrettably, the Albanian temple has experienced partial deterioration over the years. It has not undergone any restorative interventions by Armenians. Nevertheless, it has been claimed and promoted as an 'Armenian monument,' despite its true historical origins.

Ganja governorate, Gazakh uezd (later in Chambarak district) Albanian temple in Goturbulag village (5th-7th centuries)

There is an ancient Albanian church in the hilly area near the Goturbulag village.⁵⁹ Historically, the village was inhabited by Azerbaijani and Turkic tribes, and its charm was further enhanced by the presence of the Turshsu spring, renowned for its medicinal properties, which have attracted a substantial population since ancient times. The church, distinguished by its round architectural design, is constructed from river stones and white lime. Its walls are adorned with only a few small windows, and a portion of the brown roof has deteriorated over time. As an Albanian temple, it has not received attention from Armenians for restoration efforts.



Remarkably, despite the passage of time, the church's robust walls remain in good condition. Unfortunately, Armenians have not undertaken any repairs, even though a section of the roof has collapsed.⁶⁰

Until the end of 1920, there were only two Armenian villages in the Chambarak region, which was part of Azerbaijan.

CEMETERY MONUMENTS

Uchkilsa⁶¹ uezd (later Talin⁶² district)

Ram monuments in Masdara⁶³ village cemetery (5th-7th centuries)

Within the village cemetery, which covers a substantial area, one can discover historical monuments dating back to the 5th to 7th centuries, representing the heritage of Azerbaijani inhabitants. The cemetery boasts an extensive collection of chest tombs, numbering well over a hundred, neatly arranged at close intervals. The presence of Turkish-Oghuz and Albanian graves, chest tombs, ram statues, and the inscriptions and images gracing numerous tombstones, some reaching heights of 2 to 3 meters, unequivocally



attests to the enduring Azerbaijani legacy in this region. Notably, it is essential to acknowledge that efforts have been made by Armenians to alter the origins of these monuments. Many have been defaced with Armenian symbols and Armenian crosses, as documented in a photograph dated 07/13/2011.⁶⁴

The toponym "Masdara" derives its etymology from the fusion of two distinct words, namely "mas" and "dara" ("valley" in Azerbaijani), signifying "valley of the Mas" or simply "Mas valley." The Mas tribe, a prominent branch of the Sak tribes, has established their presence in the South Caucasus, particularly within Western Azerbaijan, dating back to antiquity, around the 8th century BC. Notably, the name "Mas" has persisted within numerous toponyms, including Masalli, Masazir, Mashtaga, Masis, Meskhet, and Khachmaz, encompassing the present-day territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Western Azerbaijan.⁶⁵

Some of the ancient cemetery monuments were damaged or destroyed by Armenians, while others are currently presented as 'Armenian monuments'.

**Goycha district, Ashaghi Garanlig⁶⁶ region
Ram Statue in the cemetery of Zolakhach village⁶⁷ (4th-5th centuries)**

In the village of Zolakhach, an ancient cemetery lies in proximity to the village dwellings. This cemetery houses numerous tombstones and chest tombs, each serving as a testament to the diverse historical periods in Azerbaijan's history. Notably, the cemetery features a distinctive collection of ram statues, which set it apart from those found in other regions. These unique statues, crafted from yellow-colored rock stone, are notably larger in size and demonstrate remarkable craftsmanship in capturing the likeness of the animals.



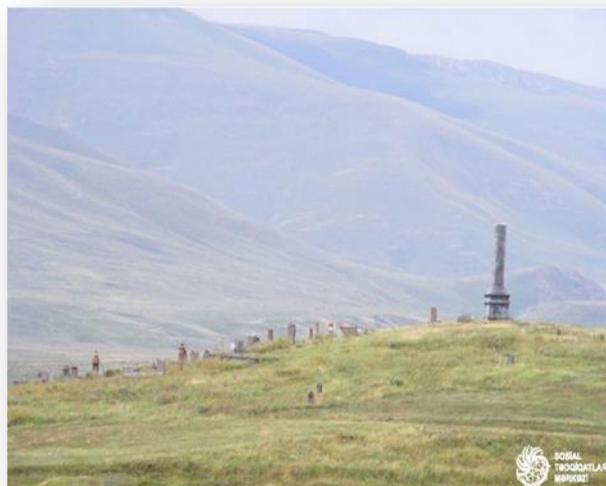
Furthermore, these ram sculptures possess distinguishing features, including an embroidered collar on the throat, a hexagonal star on the front leg and a Sun image, and a propeller-shaped image on the back leg⁶⁸.

The ancient Albanian-Turkish cemetery stands as one of the most cherished material and cultural heritages in the annals of Azerbaijani history. The propeller-shaped image at the leg of the Ram statues symbolizes the concept of 'coming from God and returning to God.' In addition, this symbol was utilized even among the Mongols. While the image of the Sun, accompanied by a six-pointed star on the front leg of the Ram statues, is sometimes associated with the 'Star of David' or the 'Seal of Solomon,' its oldest examples are indeed found within Turks and Turkic territories. Remarkably, this symbol endures to the present day, signifying both 'existence' and 'creation'.⁶⁹

In the 19th century, Armenians who relocated to the village undertook the erasure of inscriptions alongside the Ram statues, mirroring similar actions taken on numerous other monuments. These monuments are now presented as 'Armenian monuments.' Subsequent to the deportations that occurred between 1987 and 1991, certain cemetery monuments were intentionally destroyed, as they could not be incorporated into the Armenian cultural context. The remaining monuments have since been defaced with Armenian symbols.

**Iravan governorate, Sharur-Daralayaz uezd, Pashali (Azizbeyov) district
Long stele statue in Guschu village cemetery**

The grave stele sculpture, believed to date back to the Albanian period, is situated within an ancient cemetery atop a high hill, adjacent to a power station erected along the river in the village of Gushchu. Beneath the monument, there is a square wall with a height of 2.2 meters, measuring 1.2 meters in width and 1.5 meters in length. On this wall, there stands a pillar with a height of approximately 3.5 to 4 meters. The square, flat column measures 0.4 meters in width and 0.70 meters in length. The monument is expertly crafted from gray stone.⁷⁰



631 Azerbaijanis lived in the village in 1897 and 3 Azerbaijanis in 1926.⁷¹ In 1905-1906, Azerbaijanis were subjected to deportations from this region. The village is situated on the left bank of the Arpachay River. In historical records, the village is referred to as 'Gushchu ruins'⁷² in the 'Comprehensive Book of Iravan Province' and as 'Gushi'⁷³ on the five-verst map of the Caucasus.

The stele monument within the cemetery has been defaced with Armenian symbols and is now portrayed as an 'Armenian monument.'

ANCIENT SETTLEMENTS

Iravan Governorate, Uchkilsa⁷⁴ uezd Caves in Bashsiz⁷⁵ village

Caves situated at the mountain's base were inhabited during ancient times and later repurposed as shelters during periods of warfare and Armenian attacks. These naturally formed caves were subsequently expanded by the local population, serving as a refuge for hundreds of individuals.⁷⁶

"Bashsiz", mentioned in a 1728 source, refers to a village in the Karpi region of Iravan province. The actual name is 'Bash Sis.' In a source dating back to 1590, the village is recorded as 'Bashsiz,' while in a 1727 source, it appears as 'Bash Sis.' 'Sis' is a term associated with a city and county located in the province of Cilicia in the

southern region of Asia Minor. Furthermore, 'Sis' and 'Masis' were names attributed to two castles situated in the Karaman province in southern Türkiye during the Middle Ages. This term began appearing in historical sources starting from the 16th century. The village's formation attributed to the settlement of Turks who arrived from Sis.⁷⁷ Subsequently, the village became exclusively inhabited by Azerbaijanis. The caves near the village, which have endured to this day, are currently presented as 'Armenian monument.'



CARAVANSERAIS

Sardarabad⁷⁸ district, Gurdugulu⁷⁹ region Gurdugulu Caravanserai (17th–18th centuries)

The ancient and expansive caravanserai situated within the territory of the Gurdugulu region boasted a comprehensive array of facilities. These amenities included well-appointed rooms and dedicated prayer spaces. The caravanserai featured essential accommodations such as designated parking areas for caravans, hotel-style lodging rooms, stables with mangers for livestock, a commodious warehouse for the storage of trade commodities, a diverse merchandise shop, and a dining-hall.⁸⁰



The caravanserai, constructed from river and rock stones, boasted dimensions of 35-40 meters in length, 12-15 meters in width, and stood at a height of 4.5-5 meters. This three-arched caravanserai featured rooms on both the right and left sides, with a central corridor that provided access to all the rooms. In total, there were approximately 18-20 rooms within the caravanserai. Unfortunately, the caravanserai was destroyed by the Armenians.

Iravan governorate, Uchkilsa⁸¹ uezd (later in Ashtarak⁸² district) Caravanserai in the village of Ushi (9th-11th centuries)

The caravanserai is situated near the village of Ushi, approximately 4 kilometers east of the Ashtarak district center. Constructed from baked bricks, hewn basalt, and marble, the building displayed a magnificent architectural design. It gained renown primarily as a caravanserai where goods imported from Iran were traded. This caravanserai, comprising 38 shops, also served the role of a wholesale warehouse.⁸³,⁸⁴



Caravanserai was strategically situated near the main roads, primarily serving as an inn for travelers. For merchants, it assumed a dual role, functioning both as an inn and a repository for the trade and storage of their merchandise.

The inclusion of information about the caravanserai in the Ottoman comprehensive books of 1590 and 1728, as well as in the historical sources of Tsarist Russia, holds paramount significance in acknowledging its status as a monument of Azerbaijani heritage. Regrettably, this caravanserai, a vital component of Azerbaijan's ancient material and

cultural heritage dating back to ancient times, met its unfortunate demise, attributed to actions carried out by Armenians. Today, all that remains are the ruins of the caravanserai in Ushi village, located within the Ashtarak region.⁸⁵

**Iravan governorate, Shorayel district, Aghin region
Chirpili caravanserai in Chirpili village (16th–17th centuries)**

The Chirpili caravanserai, situated in a verdant area near the village along the main road, was constructed in the style of Eastern architecture and comprised of spacious, numerous rooms. This caravanserai, commissioned by Shah Abbas I, prominently featured horseshoe arches, a hallmark of medieval architecture prevalent in the Muslim East, including Azerbaijan. The caravanserai spans approximately



12 meters in width and 30-35 meters in length, with the entrance section standing at a height of 5-6 meters and the room section at approximately 3-3.5 meters in height. It was constructed using large river and rock stones and features a grand entrance adorned with three arches. After the expansive entrance, a long corridor flanked by rooms on both sides stretches forth. It is estimated that the caravanserai comprises around 12 rooms. 'The Comprehensive Book of Iravan Province' records the existence of 172 villages in Shorayel sanjak, including the Pambak province. During the era of Nadir Shah, historical accounts indicate that there were 109 villages in the Shorayel district of the Iravan khanate. After Russian troops occupied the Shorayel sultanate in 1804, Armenians from Türkiye were relocated and settled in nearly all of the villages.⁸⁶

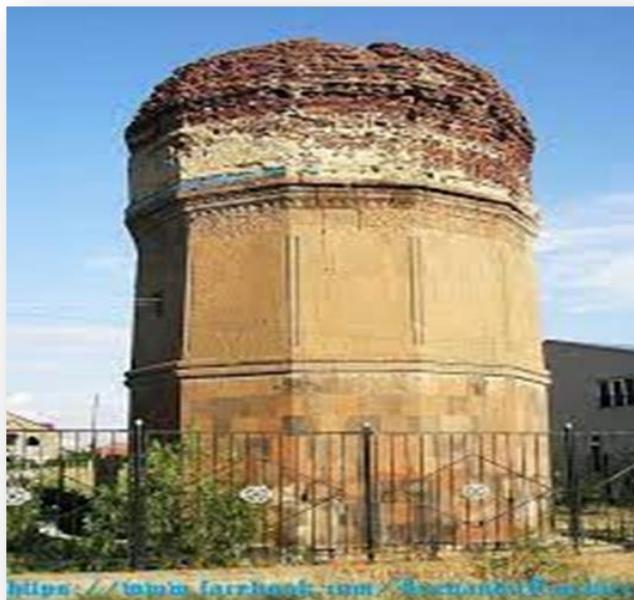
The Chirpili Caravanserai, representing the material and cultural heritage of Azerbaijan through its architecture, serves as evidence of the historical presence of Azerbaijanis in the village and its surrounding areas.

At present, the upper section of the caravanserai's grand entrance has partially collapsed, and an additional cross symbol has been introduced to a small structure located at the front of the caravanserai. Regrettably, both of these monuments have been claimed by Armenians and are now presented as 'Armenian heritage,' despite their Azerbaijani origins.

TOMBS

Zangibasar⁸⁷ district, Ulukhanli⁸⁸ region, Jafarabad⁸⁹ village Pir Huseyn Tomb

It is an octagonal tomb constructed from red tuff stone in Jafarabad village, situated 14 km north of Ulukhanli settlement, which serves as the center of the Zangibasar region, near the city of Iravan.⁹⁰ The tomb, erected above the burial site of the Qara Qoyunlu emirs, stands at a height of 12 meters, excluding the dome's height. Within the upper portion of the tomb, there is a 22-meter-long Arabic-language inscription that mentions the names of the emirs Pir Huseyn and his father Amir Saad (who died in 1411). Both emirs hailed from the Saatlu (Sakadli) tribe of Chukhursad province.⁹¹ The inscription reveals that this domed sacred tomb was constructed on the 15th day of the



month of Rajab in the year 816 of the Hijri calendar, under the order of Pir Huseyn, the son of Amir Saad, during the reign of the esteemed ruler Pir Budag Khan and Noyon Yusif.⁹² The tomb is also recognized as the Tomb of Pir Huseyn. It has undergone restoration and is presently presented as a 'Turkmen monument.'

Zangezur district, Mighri⁹³ region Ancient tomb and crypt in Lehvaz village (17th–18th centuries)

In the Mighri region, there were originally two villages known as Birinci Lehvaz and Ikinci Lehvaz. Subsequently, these villages were amalgamated, giving rise to a single village known simply as Lehvaz⁹⁴. In the village, renowned for its ancient heritage, a historical edifice designed in the Eastern architectural style graced the landscape. This structure, meticulously crafted from river stones and lime, encompassed both a tomb and a crypt⁹⁵. Following



the deportation of Azerbaijanis during the period of 1987-1991, the monument, being of Muslim heritage, was intentionally destroyed by Armenians. Nevertheless, the remnants of the crypt endure to this day.

**Iravan Governorate, Uchkilsa⁹⁶ uezd (later in Ashtarak⁹⁷ district)
Muslim tomb in the village of Takiya⁹⁸ (16th-17th centuries)**

The Muslim tomb located in Takiya village boasts a quadrangular architectural design, featuring walls adorned with quadrangular marble stones. This tomb measures approximately 5 meters in width and stands 4 meters in height. It is graced by an iron gate, measuring 0.80 cm in width and reaching a height of 1.0-2 meters. Above the door, a red board displays inscriptions in red letters using the Arabic alphabet. Regrettably, the tomb's door has been demolished. On the right side of the Arabic inscription on the door, a portion measuring approximately 10 cm from the top and 20 cm from the bottom has been broken and removed, as evidenced in a photograph taken in 2012⁹⁹. In the present era, the tomb has regrettably been entirely destroyed by Armenians.



**Iravan governorate, Alagoz (Aragats) region
Tomb in Jamishli¹⁰⁰ village (15th-16th century)**

Jamishli village in the Alagoz (Aragats) region was established through the amalgamation of Boyuk Jamishli and Kichik Jamishli villages. It was previously part of the administrative structure of the Abaran region until the establishment of the Alagoz (Aragats) region on March 15, 1972¹⁰¹.

The old cemetery in Jamishli village was renowned for its notable collection of ancient Turkish-Oghuz graves and cemetery monuments. Regrettably, following the deportations that occurred between 1987 and 1991, this historically significant cemetery experienced devastation, attributed to Armenian actions. Nevertheless, a lasting testament to its heritage endures – an ancient hilltop tomb. This circular tomb features an entrance door, measuring approximately 1.5 meters in width, adorned with a towering, hat-shaped roof. It is worth

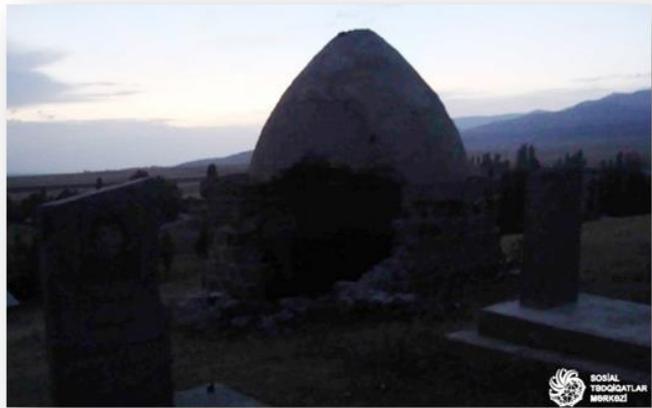


noting that structural deterioration is apparent in several sections of the roof, with roughly 4-5 areas displaying evidence of collapse.¹⁰²

The tomb situated atop a hill within the vicinity of the decimated old cemetery in Jamishli village has endured over time. Regrettably, it has been inaccurately attributed as a monument of Yezidi Kurds.

**Iravan governorate, Yeni Beyazid uezd, Basarkecher district
Tomb in Garaiman village (20th century)**

Situated atop an elevated hill within the historic cemetery of Garaiman village, one finds a Muslim tomb notable for its distinctive architectural style. This particular tomb, dating back to the 20th century, stands as an exemplar of meticulous craftsmanship, meticulously constructed using specially hewn round stones.¹⁰³ The tomb boasts dimensions with a diameter ranging from 7.5 to 8 meters and a height between 2.5 and 3 meters, while the roof of the tomb reaches approximately 2 to 2.5 meters in height. It is widely believed that this tomb was erected by members of the Garagozlular tribe in honor of renowned religious figures. Constructed from the esteemed Subatan stone indigenous to the region, the Muslim tomb in Garaiman village has experienced partial collapse in its rear roof section, presently displaying a state of partial disintegration.



MADRASAHS, RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

Madrasah in Tapabashi neighborhood of Iravan¹⁰⁴ (17th century)

The madrasah was situated within the Tapabashi neighborhood of Iravan city. This neighborhood earned its name, 'Tapabashi,' signifying 'on top of the hill' in Azerbaijani language, due to its elevated and hilly terrain. Following the dissolution of the Iravan Khanate by Tsarist Russia, Tapabashi remained one of the neighborhoods that diligently preserved the cultural heritage of the Khanate era within the city. During that period, the madrasah, recognized as a prominent institution of knowledge, stood as one of the



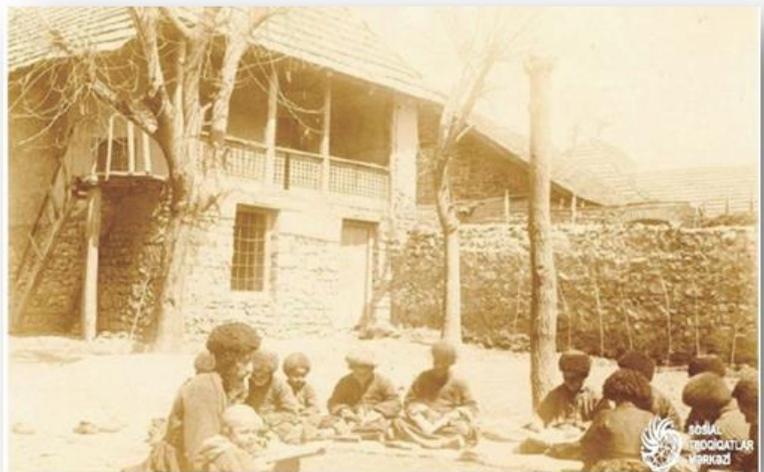
İrəvanda içərisində erməni ailələrinin yaşadığı qədim mədrəsə

neighborhood's distinguished edifices. As of 1828, the neighborhood boasted a population of 2,537 Azerbaijanis. In addition to religious instruction, the madrasah within this neighborhood also provided education in various sciences.

The frontal section of the madrasah was constructed using red bricks, adhering to the architectural style of the East. Following the last wave of deportations of Western Azerbaijanis between 1987 and 1991, the vicinity underwent transformation as the aged residences were razed to make way for towering structures. Subsequent to specific refurbishments, the madrasah found new purpose as temporary housing for several families.¹⁰⁵ In the current era, it is regrettable to note that a portion of the madrasah has been subjected to destruction by Armenians.

Muslim religious school in Basarkechar region of Goycha district (20th century)

In the early 20th century, a religious school known as "mollakhana" was in operation within the Basarkechar region.¹⁰⁶ The religious school, referred to as the "mollakhana," had a curriculum that included instruction in the Arabic alphabet, Islamic religious studies, and the reading of the "Holy Quran." This two-story religious institution featured a front window and a right-side door on the lower floor. Adjacent to the



second floor, there was a stone staircase leading to a balcony. The instruction of the Arabic alphabet, the teachings of Islam, and the study of the "Holy Quran" held paramount importance in the acquisition of religious knowledge and the enrichment of individuals' spiritual well-being.

Following the deportation of Azerbaijanis between 1987 and 1991, this Islamic religious school was subsequently destroyed by Armenians.

CASTLES

Iravan governorate, Yeni Beyazid uezd, Kavar region, Aghgala village Aghgala Castle (3000-3500 years ago)

The castle in Aghgala village was constructed by the Caucasian Albanians, predominantly using large white stones. Situated atop a high hill, the castle boasts robust walls approximately 1 meter in width, which have withstood the test of time. The village derives its name from the prominent white castle erected by the Albanians in the vicinity, with "Agh" signifying "white" and "gala" translating to "castle." Positioned 12 kilometers to the northeast of the district center, the castle stands along the



shores of Goycha Lake, its name documented on the five-verst map of the Caucasus.¹⁰⁷ In the location of the Aghgala castle, there exist ruins of walls of castle, with sections reaching heights of 3-3.5 meters, while in other parts, the walls stand at 1-2 meters. Regrettably, the castle has been appropriated by the Armenians and is currently presented as the 'Armenian castle'.

Shorayel district, Amasiya region, Gulsehran (Chivinli) village Galacha Castle on Mount Galacha (9th–10th centuries)

The Galacha Castle, situated atop Galacha Mountain in the village of Gulsehran (Chivinli) in the Amasiya region, served as a medieval defensive fortification. Despite the castle's walls being largely in ruins, substantial remnants persist. The presence of massive stones



along the castle's walls stands as a testament to the grandeur it once possessed.¹⁰⁸

Constructed from massive stones, this fortress played a vital role in safeguarding the populace from enemy incursions and served as a formidable fortification. It stands as one of the most ancient relics of historical significance in Western Azerbaijan. Regrettably, the Armenian authorities have not undertaken any efforts to restore this monument, leaving it in a state of ruin.

**Iravan governorate, Uchkilsa¹⁰⁹ district
Castle in Gamarli¹¹⁰ village (8th - 7th centuries BC)**

Large rock stones were utilized in the construction of the castle, contributing to its grandeur. The incorporation of brown, orange, and yellow stones adds a unique aesthetic appeal to the structure. Even the remnants of the fort, standing at 1 and 1.5 meters in height, emanate a sense of magnificence and majesty, accentuated by the verdant grass and blossoming flowers that surround them.¹¹¹



It is widely believed that the castle dates back to the Cimmerian era. Gamarli village

is situated 8 km south of the district center, on the banks of the Boyuk Garasu River. The village's name is marked on the five-verst map of the Caucasus. In 1918, the village fell victim to Armenian attacks, leading to the forced deportation of Azerbaijanis from their ancestral homelands. In the aftermath, Armenians from Türkiye were resettled in this region.¹¹²

This historic structure suffered total destruction following the decision made by the Armenian local authorities.

SHRINES, SANCTUARIES

Zangibasari¹¹³ district, Ulukhanli¹¹⁴ region, Gulujan¹¹⁵ village Domed shrine in Aghadede cemetery (19th-20th centuries)

The domed shrine, situated within the Aghadede cemetery along the banks of the Garasu River, was meticulously crafted from red tuff stone during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This architectural marvel takes the form of an oval-shaped structure crowned by a lofty dome adorned with vibrant red tiles. Unfortunately, following the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis between 1987 and 1991, Armenians set fire to the dome, resulting in substantial damage. In video footage captured on 07.08.2013, it becomes evident that the upper section has incurred significant harm, with a portion of the right side having collapsed.¹¹⁶



British traveler-photographer Gurdip Mattu visited the Aghadede shrine-cemetery in the Ulukhanli settlement of Zangibasari district. Based on the photos taken by the photographer in 2021¹¹⁷, it was observed that the cemetery had suffered extensive damage, and notably, there was no image of the dome included in the photos. This leads to the conclusion that the dome may have completely collapsed.

Shorayel district, Agbaba region (later in Amasiya region), Ibish (Aychingili) village Bazirgan Sanctuary

The Bazirgan sanctuary holds a place of utmost reverence among the local inhabitants of the village and the broader region.

As per a longstanding tradition, when caravans traversed the route near Gimi hill and reached the Bazirgan sanctuary, the caravan leader would promptly order a halt. Subsequently, people would unload the cargo from camels, horses, and mules, provide water and rest for the animals, creating a scene where the sounds of neighing horses, the braying of mules, and the bustling voices of people all converged. The Bazirgan sanctuary was considered a sacred place within the community. In its vicinity, one could



find Deve and Taghi springs, located at a

considerable distance from each other. Visitors to this holy site would adhere to Islamic customs, offering animal sacrifices, engaging in prayer, and making heartfelt wishes. They would invite others to join them at their table to partake in the sacrificial meat. As per tradition, they would spend the night here, resuming their journey at the break of dawn. It was believed that dreams experienced after prayers at this location had the power to foretell the fulfillment of those prayers¹¹⁸.

Following the forced deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical-ethnic lands in January 1989, visiting the Bazirgan Sanctuary became impossible.

BRIDGES

Zangezur district, Gafan region Bridge in Shikhovuz village (14th century)

The Shikhovuz Bridge, located on the Shikhovuz River, showcases a unique blend of Azerbaijani and Eastern architectural styles. This single-arched stone bridge, similar to traditional Azerbaijani bridges, is constructed from large hewn river stones. The lower section, made of bricks, boasts an elegant oval shape. The bridge stands at a height of 3.5-4 meters, spans 12-15 meters in length, and measures 3-3.5 meters in width. Its upper part resembles a roof. Adjacent to the bridge, a venerable sycamore tree provides natural shade, enhancing the bridge's picturesque surroundings. ¹¹⁹

Regrettably, despite its historical significance, the Shikhovuz Bridge in the Shikhovuz Reserve is now presented as an 'Armenian monument'.



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- ¹ Dünya Azərbaycanlıları: Tarix və Müasirlik. Bakı, 2009, s.146
- ² (Вардан Парсамян, История армянского народа 1801-1900 гг, Издательство "Айастан", Ереван 1972, с. 68).
- ³ Sərdarov Z. "Ən böyük tarixi ədalətsizlik" məqaləsi. "Xalq qəzeti", 26 dekabr 1997-ci il
- ⁴ Sərdarov Z., "Ən böyük tarixi ədalətsizlik" məqaləsi, "Xalq qəzeti", 26 dekabr 1997-ci il.
- ⁵ Mustafa Nazim. İrəvan şəhəri. Bakı, 2020
- ⁶ İrəvan şəhəri -1828-ci ilədək İrəvan, 1828-1936-cı illər Erivan. 1936-cı ildən Yerevan.
- ⁷ Bayramov İbrahim . Qərbi Azərbaycan: tarixi həqiqətlər və ya Ermənistanın etnik təmizləmə siyasəti. Bakı: "Şərq-Qərb", 2012. səh.276
- ⁸ https://az.wikipedia.org/wiki/D%C9%99mirbulaq_m%C9%99scidi
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- ¹⁵ <https://iravan.info/meschidler.html>
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- ²⁴ 1969-cu il yanvarın 14-də rayon mərkəzi Uluxanlının adı dəyişdirilib Masis adlandırılıb
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- ²⁹ Balıqlı kəndi 19.04.1991-ci ildən Zorakert adlandırılıb.
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- ³³ İndiki adı Stepanavan
- ³⁴ Qərnibasar mahalı 1591-ci ildə yaradılıb. 1829-cu ildə ərazisi İrəvan şəhərinə daxil edilib
- ³⁵ Qəmərli rayonu 04.09.1945-ci ildən Artaşat adlandırılıb
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**Monuments Subjected to Destruction,
Armenianization, or Attribution to Other
Nations in Western Azerbaijan
(Present-Day Armenia)**

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