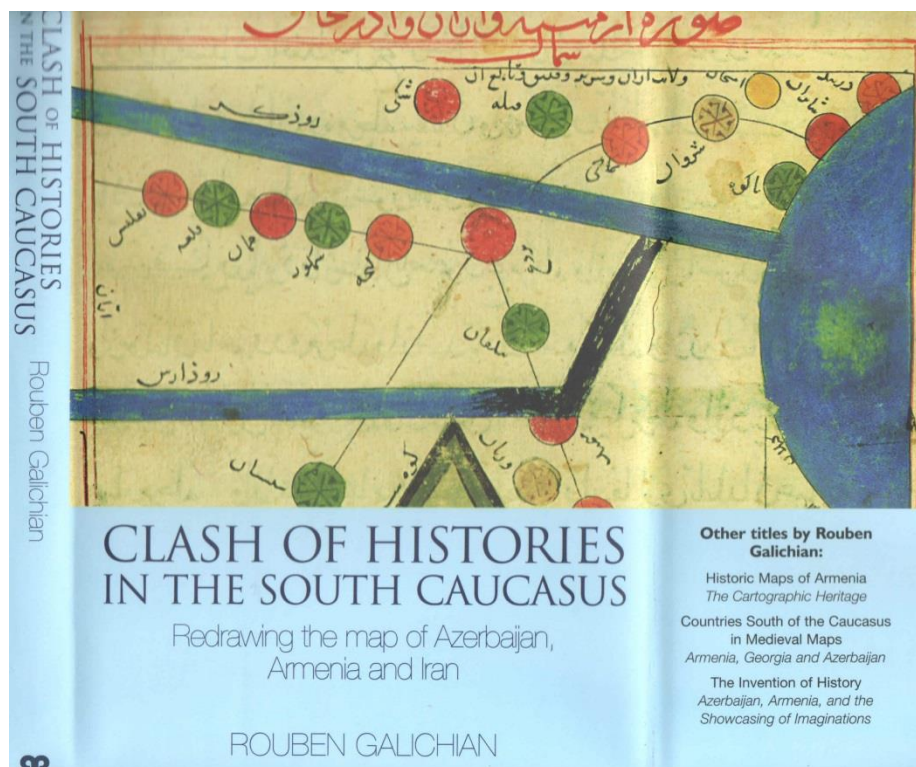


## WESTERN AZERBAIJAN ???

by Rouben Galichian

Lately Azerbaijan's President and their Foreign Ministry announced that the territory of Armenia is in fact "Western Azerbaijan", which, the Armenians have occupied and renamed it. Some Armenians blame the present government for allowing this to happen, forgetting that this fallacy has been going on from early 1980s and to this end, the Azerbaijani Ministry of Tourism in 2007, during the presidency of Mr Kocharian, published a book entitled "The Monuments of Western Azerbaijan" where you can see the map of Armenia, named "Western Azerbaijan"; and its contents are the images of all Armenian Christian and pre-Christian monuments presented as Turkish castles, monasteries and churches.

For forty years none of the Armenian authorities has taken any steps to contradict these wrongful assumptions, and if they have done so, it has been in Armenian language, which is inaccessible for the world at large! When I personally questioned this passivity, I was informed that "no one would believe these fallacies". However, the truth is that in the West and the East, due to the absence of published contradictory evidence, almost everyone would believe it. I think that I am one of the few specialists who have published books in English, contradicting the Azerbaijani claims and prove them to be false. My book "Clash of Histories in the South Caucasus" was published in 2012, followed by its Russian (2013), Persian (2015) and Armenian (2017) translations.



Below you can see some extracts form my above mentioned work.

In the maps dating from earliest ages to 1918, there is no country named Azerbaijan placed north of the Arax River, where the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan exists. (Chapter 5)

Chapter 3, pages 99-116 reproduces the evidence of European and Arab travellers, confirming the existence of Armenian in the South Caucasus.

Pages 119-121:

The same purpose is served by another book published in 2007 by the Azerbaijan Ministry of Tourism and Culture, with the support of Heydar Aliyev foundations, entitled *The Monuments of Western Azerbaijan*. The authors of this speculations are member of the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences, Budagh Budaghov and corresponding members Vali Aliyev, Jafar Ghiasi and Mashadikhanum Nemat, who against their academic calling and duty have reached the apogee of falsifications and fabrications. On page seven of the book under the map of the Republic of Armenia the caption reads, "The map of Western Azerbaijan, historic homeland of the Oghuz Turks, presently occupied by the Armenians". According to the authors, the lands on which Armenia exists belong to Azerbaijan, a country, which appeared in the geographical region only in 1918. The authors either have no knowledge or pretend that they are unaware of the historic facts that the Oghuz Turkic tribes from the Central Asia and Altai reached the Caucasus, Iran and Asia Minor only in the Middle Ages, a fact confirmed by the Islamic world's best-known reference book, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Should we believe Alakbarli's book, we would accept that the tribes of Central Asia are, in fact, indigenous to Asia Minor and Caucasus, and that all the pre-Christian temples, Urartian palaces and monuments found in Armenia and Asia Minor belong to the Oghuz Turks, who, by all other accounts arrived in the area only in the Middle Ages.

The above book contains images of all the important ancient and medieval monuments found in Armenia to which captions are added giving their titles and provenance. These, without exception are claimed to be part of Azerbaijani culture and tradition. They include the millennia old monoliths "Zorat's karer" near Goris, the rock carvings of Ukhtasar, all Armenian monasteries such as Tatev, Gandzasar, Goshavanq, Hagharden, Sanahin, Haghpat, Sevan etc., as well as the Urartian fortresses and khachkars. Below are some samples taken from the Azeri book.

- Pages 28-29. Pictures depict the Urartian fortress of Teishebani near Yerevan dating from around eighth century BC.  
The inscription reads: "Ancient Turkish fortress".
- Pages 30-32. Photos show the Greco-Roman Garni temple, some 25 kilometers east of Yerevan, dating from the first century AD.  
The inscription reads: "Garni Turkish Temple and Fortress".
- Pages 50-51. The photos show the Monastery of Khor-Virap at the foot of Mount Ararat, where St. Gregory the Illuminator, who brought Christianity to Armenia, was imprisoned.  
The inscription reads: "Ancient Turkish Temple".
- Pages 60-61. The Cathedral of Holy Echmiadzin, the center of the Armenian Church dating from the fifth century.  
In the book this is named "Uch Kilissa. Armeno-Turkish Temple, of the seventh century".
- Pages 90-91. The monastic complex of Goshavanq, a medieval Armenian university dating from twelfth and thirteenth centuries, some 120 kilometers north-east of Yerevan.  
In the book this is described as "Gochavang. Armenian-Turkish Temple of 8-9th century".
- Pages 98-99.  
The photos depict the seventh century Armenian Monastery and university of Tatev.  
The book describes it as "Albano-Turkish Christian Temple".
- Pages 106-107. The Monastery of Haghpat in northern Armenia, dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries.  
The book calls this monastery "Aghbat Turkish Temple".
- Pages 126-127. Photos of the Hagharden Monastery and learning centre, dating from tenth to the fifteenth centuries.  
In the book this is described as "Agharchin, Albanian-Turkish Temple".
- Pages 148-149. Here is the photo of one of the churches of the Armenian Monastery of Noravank, built by the Orbelian princes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.  
The book renames it as "Amagou, Oghuz Turkish monument".

- Pages 154-155.  
The Monastery of Saghmosavanq (Monastery of the Psalms) dating from the thirteenth c.  
In the book it is described as “Turkish-Christian Temple of Soghmasavang”.

The book presents problems to the international community of historians and ethnologists. They should now find explanations for the terms Turkic-Christian, Albano-Turks and others, who during the Middle Ages built scores of monasteries and churches and thousands of other Christian monuments?

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