





Summer Palace of the Iravan Khan.
Painter: G. Gagarin.

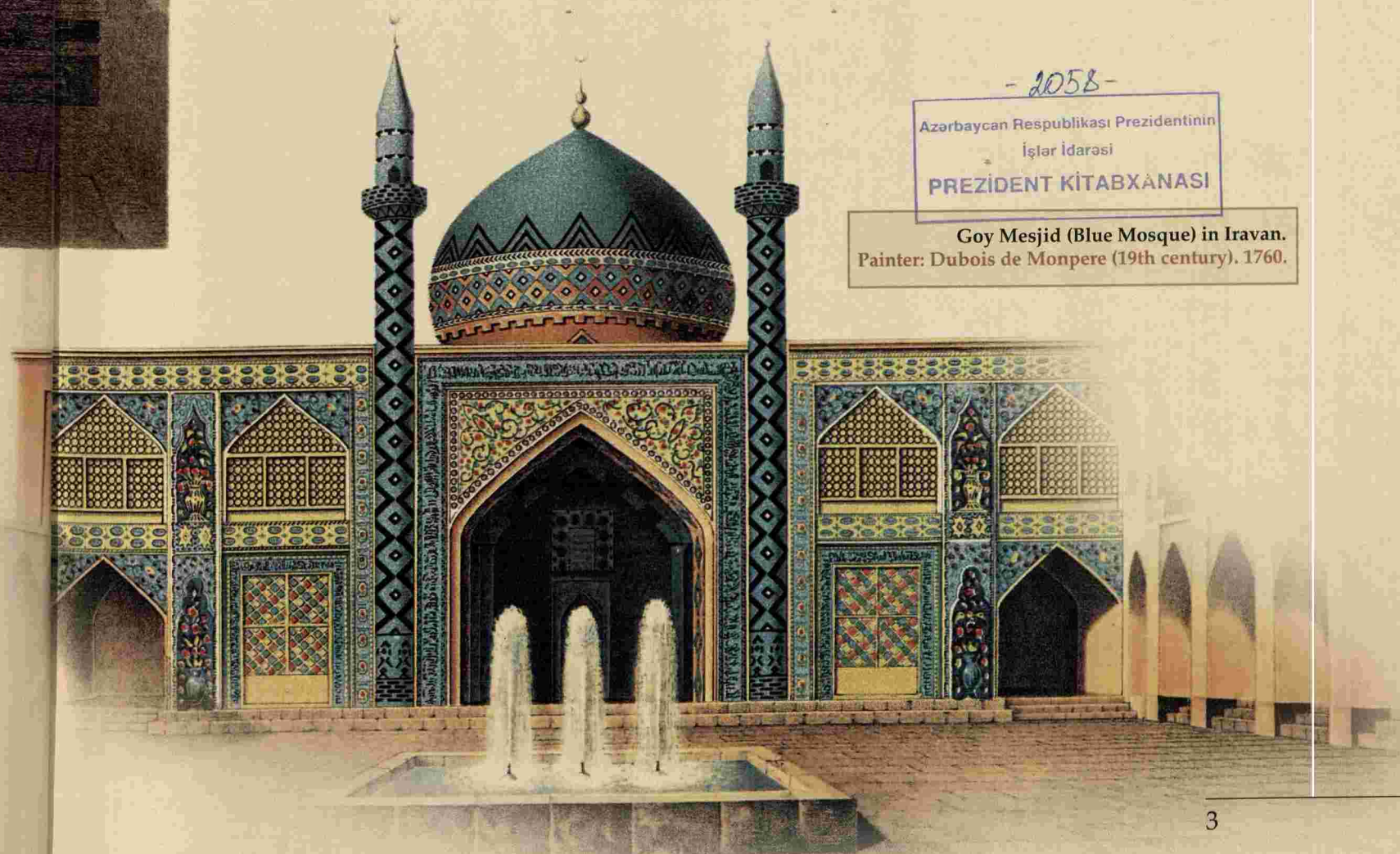
Azerbaijan: Historical and Geographical Territory

Azerbaijani people, who reestablished their independence in some parts of their historical lands at the end of the twentieth century, have an ancient and rich history of statehood. Historical Azerbaijan is an ancient cultural center where modern civilization began its development. The Azerbaijani lands included the area of the Greater Caucasus Mountains to the north and the Goyche Lake basin to the west, surrounded by the Alagoz Mountain Range and Eastern Anatolia, the Caspian Sea to the east and the Sultaniye-Zenjan-Hemedan borders to the south. At present, Azerbaijani people, the second largest Turkic nation after Anatolia Turks, have created rich and unique cultural and national tradi-

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tions in the historical lands of Azerbaijan. As time went by, historical and geographical districts were formed in this territory, including Shirvan, Mughan, Sheki, Karabakh, Nakhchivan, and Iravan. Due to the Gulustan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828) treaties signed between Russia and Iran, the historical Azerbaijani lands were divided between two empires. As a result, political and geographical notions like northern Azerbaijan (Russian or Soviet Azerbaijan) and southern Azerbaijan (Iranian Azerbaijan) were created. Following the Turkmenchay Treaty, the Russian Empire implemented a policy of Armenianization of the western territories of northern Azerbaijan. As a result, an Armenian government was established for the first time in the western lands of northern Azerbaijan, in what used to be the Iravan Khanate of the South Caucasus. As a result of this process, the geographical and political notion of western Azerbaijan (Iravan district) was created due to the establishment of the Republic of Armenia.



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Goy Mesjid (Blue Mosque) in Iravan.
Painter: Dubois de Monpere (19th century). 1760.



The ancient Turkish temple at Gerni Palace.
The Byzantine style polytheistic temple, known as Takhti Tiridat. Built in the 1st century B.C. by Armenian ruler Tiridat I and restored in the 14th century by Hulagu Khan.

History of Iravan

IRAVAN DISTRICT IN THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJAN STATEHOOD

Iravan District since Ancient Times to 1740s

Historical Azerbaijani lands were part of the Caspian and Mediterranean Sea areas as well as the Persian Gulf region where the most ancient civilizations took their first steps. Ancient peoples who took part in the formation of the Azerbaijani nation played an important role in the ancient cultural environment in the region, such as in the formation of Sumerian and Babylonian culture, socio-military life, and the history of ancient states of the Near and Middle East. This evidence is clearly revealed in the scientific investigations, especially archeological excavations, conducted in Azerbaijan and abroad. Azerbaijan's territory is very rich in archeological monuments, proving that this land was in fact home to some of the most ancient human settlements in the world. Archeological discoveries found in the Azikh, Taglar, Damjili, Dashsalahli, and Gazma caves confirm that

Azerbaijan was included in the areas where primitive men developed. In addition to different monuments, the jawbone of an ancient human belonging to the Ashol era (350-400 years ago), the "Azikh Man" (Azikhanthrop), was found in the Azerbaijani cave of the same name. Azerbaijani people began creating a well-developed culture beginning in

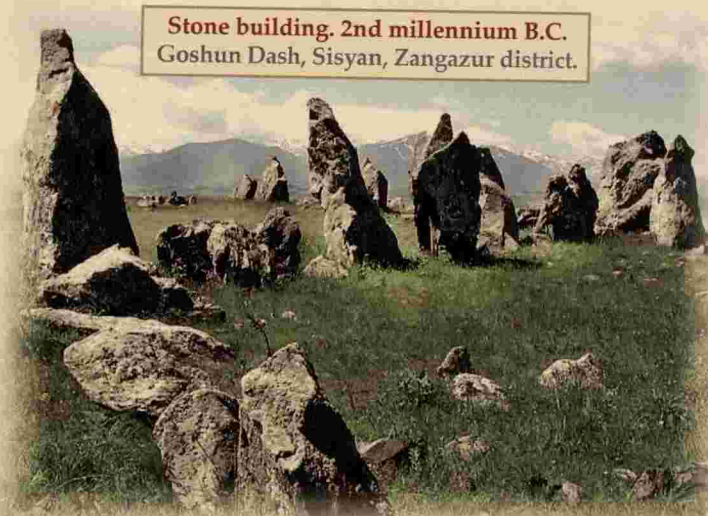
the Stone Age (Paleolithic). During the Middle Stone Age (Mesolithic period) and New Stone Age (Neolithic), Azerbaijani people settled into a sedentary life, engaged in agriculture, raised livestock, and created different arts.

Rich material cultural samples, especially grain remains, labor tools related to agriculture, household items, and different kinds of craftsmanship products have been

found during archeological excavations. These artifacts indicate that Azerbaijani people were one of the original nations to adopt a sedentary life.

In addition, the Azerbaijani nation has one of the most ancient statehood traditions in the world. The statehood history of the Azerbaijani people is approximately five thousand years old. The first government entities, or ethno-political unions, were established at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the third millenniums B.C.

The most ancient governments of Azerbaijan played an important role in the military-political history of the entire region. During that period, there was a strong mutual relationship between Azerbaijan and the ancient Sumerian, Akkad, and Ashur governments located in the Dejle and Ferat valleys, as well as with the Hat government.



Stone building, 2nd millennium B.C.
Goshun Dash, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

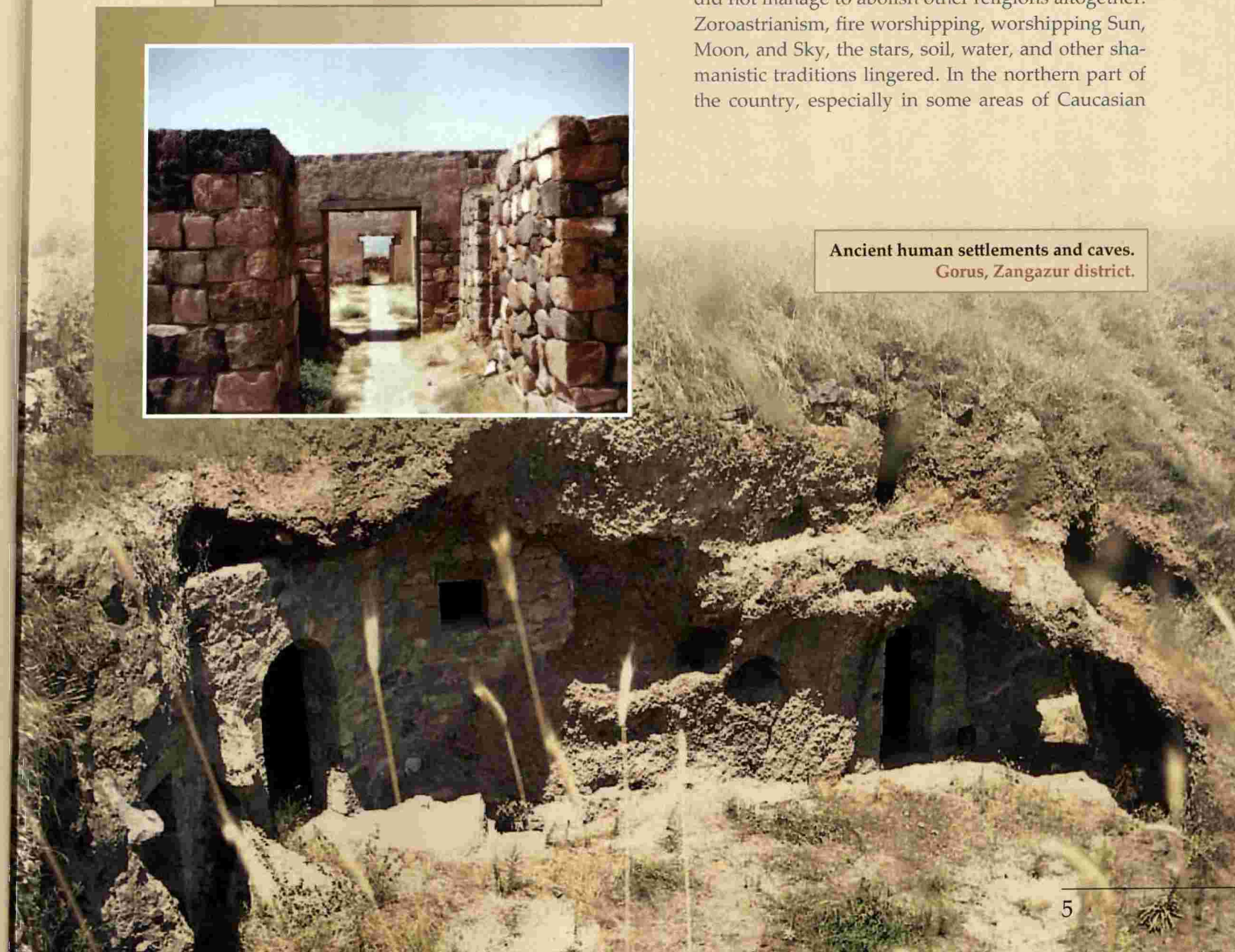


Azerbaijan
(4th century B.C. - 3rd century A.D.)

Arbiuni castle. Built in 782 B.C. by the Turkish ruler Argishti I. Zangibasar district.



Ancient human settlements and caves.
Gorus, Zangazur district.



Azerbaijani carpets/ IRAVAN GROUP

As time went by, Azerbaijan's statehood developed further and new governments covering larger areas were established.

Beginning in the first millennium B.C. and continuing through the beginning of the first millennium A.D., powerful governments like Manna, Scythia, Massaget, Atropatena, and Caucasian Albania were found in Azerbaijan's territory. These governments played a significant role in the improvement of state management in Azerbaijan as well as in the economic, cultural, and ethno-political history of the country and in the formation of a united nation.

At the beginning of the Common Era, Azerbaijan endured one of the most difficult trial periods of its history when the country was invaded by the Sassanid Empire in the third century and by the Arab Caliphate. Persian and Arab oppression continued for about 600 years, but it could not destroy the ancient statehood traditions of Azerbaijani. The development of the Azerbaijani people went on even during these unbearable years of hostile regime and persecution. During this period, one religious view, that of worshipping Tengri, the main Turkish god, was spread in Azerbaijani lands. However, this religious view did not manage to abolish other religions altogether. Zoroastrianism, fire worshipping, worshipping Sun, Moon, and Sky, the stars, soil, water, and other shamanistic traditions lingered. In the northern part of the country, especially in some areas of Caucasian



Stone building ruins. 2nd millennium B.C.
Goshun Dash, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

Albania, as well as in the western mountainous regions, Christianity spread. Numerous Turkic peoples, who became a powerful and leading military-political force in this complex historical situation, were the main carrier of Azerbaijan's statehood. The Turkic ethos and Turkish language linked the entire territory when monotheistic religion did not exist. The Turkic ethos had a significant role in the protection of Azerbaijan's statehood and the country's traditions of independence.

In the seventh century, a major turning point occurred in the historical fate of Azerbaijan with the adoption of Islam.

Islam gave a strong push toward the formation of a united nation. The creation of religious unity between Turkic and non-Turkic people was the reason for the development and deepening of united traditions within the Azerbaijani territory.

However, since inviting other monotheists to become Muslim was against the principles of Islam, Albania's Christian population remained unaffected during the Arab invasions. As a consequence, the country faced religious division: a majority Turkish Muslim population that was spread all over the territory of the country, Albanians who

adopted Islam, and a minority Christian population living mostly in northern Azerbaijan's western district and Albanians who did not adopt Islam.

After the Caliphate collapsed, Azerbaijan's ancient statehood traditions began to flourish again beginning in the mid ninth century. A new political revival emerged in Azerbaijan. In the territories of Azerbaijan where Islam spread, the Saji, Shirvanshah, Salari, Ravvadi, and Shaddadi governments were established.

In this period the Sheki government was founded in northwestern Azerbaijan up to Tbilisi, which marked the border of Islam. Rulers in Sheki held Albanian titles and served as the heirs of the Albanian government. To the west of Sheki there was a Muslim government with its capital in Tbilisi as part of the Tbilisi Muslim Emirate. As a result of the creation of independent governments, a revival was seen in all areas of political, economic, and cultural life. The renaissance era of Azerbaijan was beginning.

Within a historical period of just over half a century (879-941), all Azerbaijani lands were united in a single Azerbaijani Turkish government: the Saji Government. This development led to the strengthening of economic and cultural relations across the entire country, the abolition of ethnic differences, and the formation of an Azerbaijani Turkic nation.

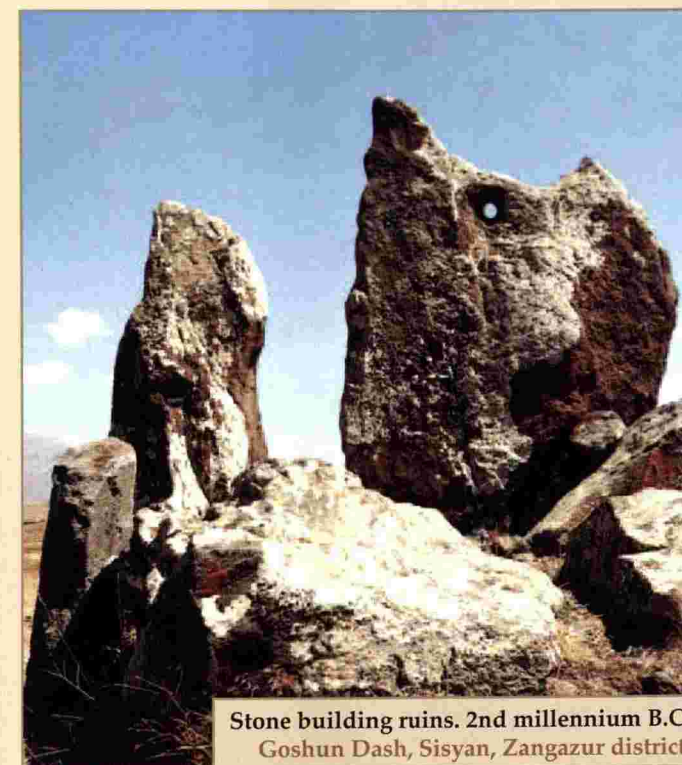
During its reign, the Saji Government ruled over large areas from Zenjan to Derbent, from the shores of the Caspi-

an Sea to the cities of Ani and Debil. The entirety of Azerbaijan was included under the Saji Government. Of particular note for this period, the masterpiece of Azerbaijani and Turkish literature, "Book of Dede Korkut," spread over all Azerbaijani lands.

In the eleventh century, Seljuk Turks seized these lands. A new government, Atabeyler (Eldenizler), was established (1136-1225) after the Seljuk government weakened. Western Azerbaijan was part of this government.

During Mongol rule (mid-13th-14th centuries) and the beginning of the fifteenth century, the western Azerbaijani territories were administrative parts of Arran province and Sherur district.

The Garagoyunlu government founded at the beginning of the fifteenth century (1410-1468) brought certain changes in administrative divisions. The northwest portion of western Azerbaijan became part of Karabakh and the southwest part was included in the newly established Chukhursed Province. The rulers of Chukhursed and later the Iravan Khanate can be identified as Turkish-Muslims until the invasion



Stone building ruins. 2nd millennium B.C.
Goshun Dash, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

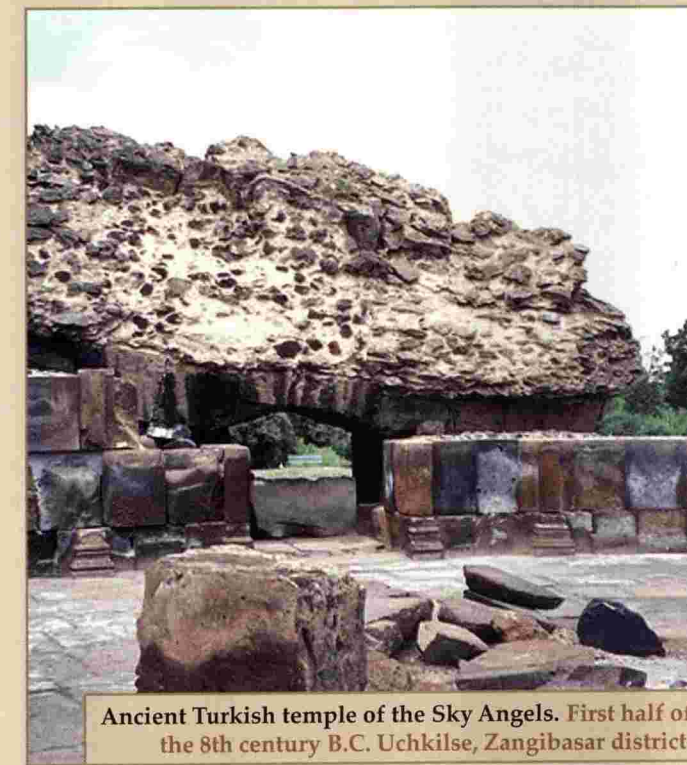
by the Russian Empire. During the Garagoyunlu period, the province was ruled by clear succession: Emir Saad (end of 14th century - 1410), his son Pir Huseyn (1410-1420), Pir Huseyn's sons Pir Yagub (1420-1430) and Ebdul (1430s), Yagub bey (1440s), and finally, Hasan Ali Garagoyunlu (after 1460).

During the reign of the Garagoyunlu, a decision destined to bring extremely grievous results in the later history of Azerbaijan was adopted. Javanshah (1437-1467) gave consent in 1441 to move an Armenian-Gregorian church to Uchkilse-Echmiadzin in the territory of western Azerbaijan. The moving of the Armenian-Gregorian church to western Azerbaijan weakened the position of the Azerbaijani-Albanian church in the Iravan district and had a negative effect on the historical destiny of its Muslim population.

The area of western Azerbaijan is ancient Turkish territory. Hurri, Kimmer, Scyth, Sak, Hun, and other numerous Oghuz and Gipchag Turks lived in this region, specifically around Goyche Lake, leaving behind a rich historical and cultural heritage. After the Armenian government was established in western Azerbaijan (the former territory of Iravan Khanate) in 1918, the name of Goyche Lake was changed to "Sevan" in 1930.

Several important historical events described in the heroic Azerbaijani epic, "The Book of Dede Korkut," occurred specifically in the territory of western Azerbaijan.

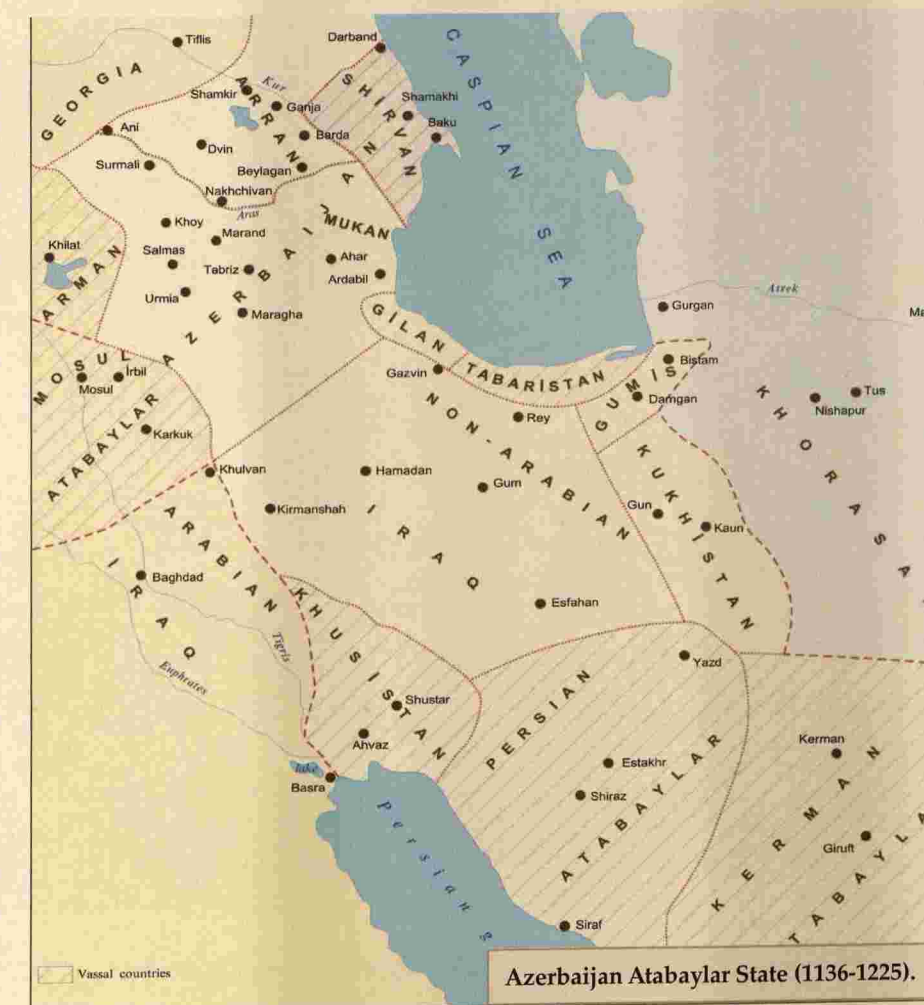
It is noted in the "Oghuzname," Ebu Bekr el-Tehrani's "Kitabi-Diyarbekriyye"



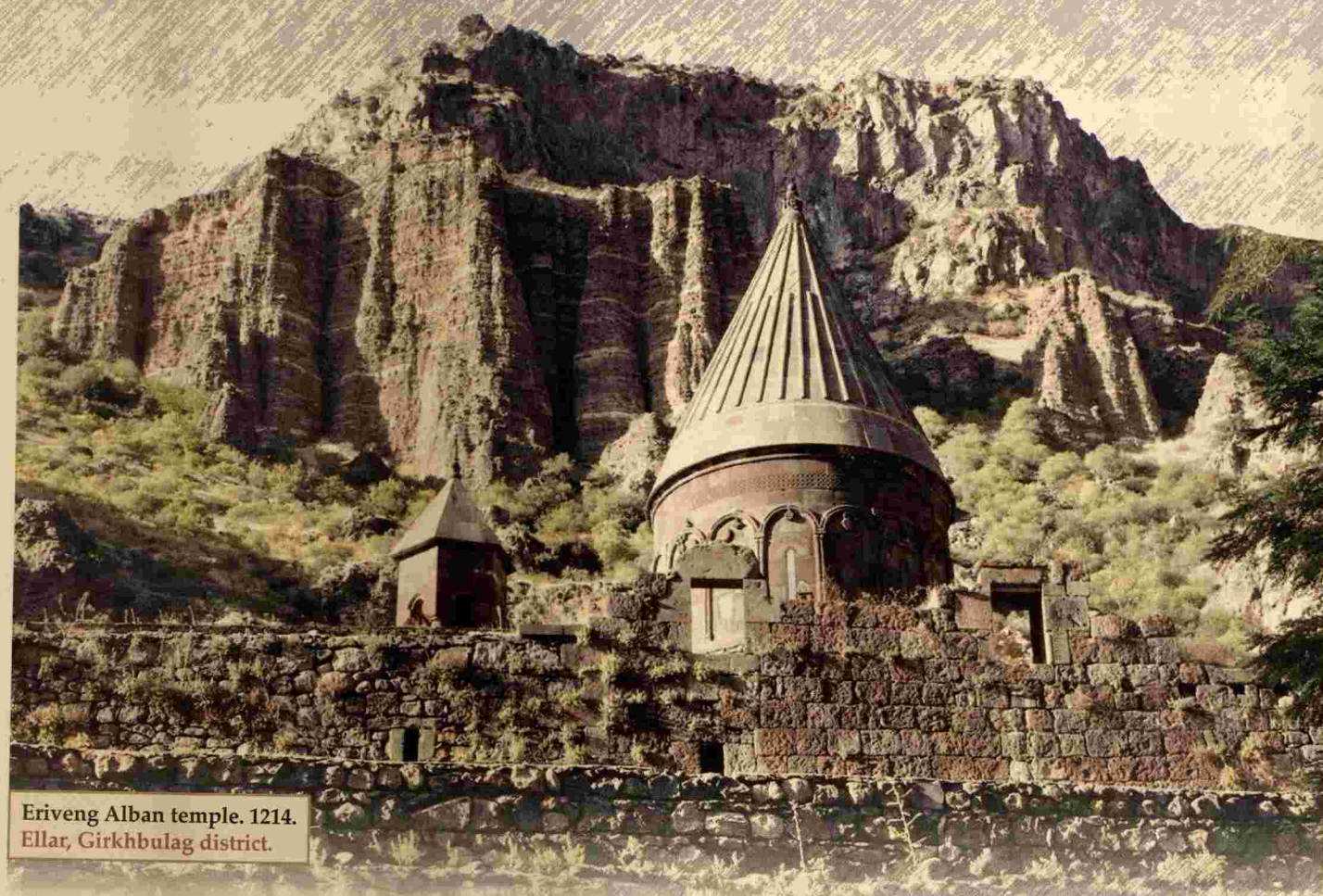
Ancient Turkish temple of the Sky Angels. First half of the 8th century B.C. Uchkilse, Zangibasar district.

written at the request of the great Azerbaijani Ruler Uzun Hasan (1468-1478), that Oghuz Khaqan lived, died, and was buried in the lands around Goyche Lake.

Bayandur Khakan and many other Oghuz-Turk commanders worked, died, and were buried in this ancestral land.



Azerbaijan Atabaylar State (1136-1225).



Eriveng Alban temple. 1214.
Ellar, Girkhbulag district.



Seedli Amir Hasan receives an envoy
from abroad (13th century).



Stone tomb. 15th-16th centuries. Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.
Writing in Azerbaijani using Arabic script: "Ogul ibn Murad is buried here. 963 AH (1555)."

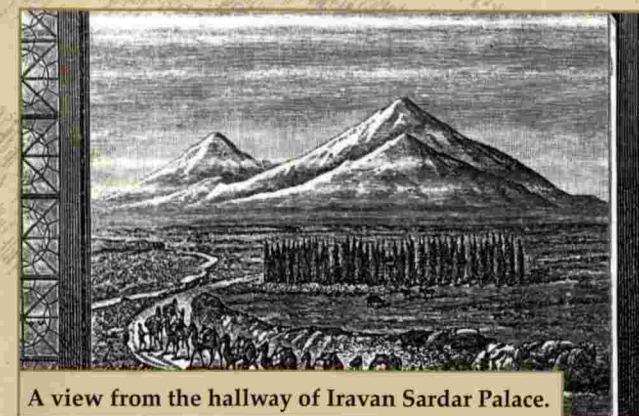


Stone tomb. 15th-16th centuries.
Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

Excluding the ruling periods of various hostile empires, the territory of western Azerbaijan has always been subject to Azerbaijani government. These lands belonged to a region where Azerbaijani-Turkic tribes lived together very closely.

It should be noted that until Armenian Catholicism was moved to Iravan (Chukhursed) district in 1441, there was no village or area belonging to Armenia. Even the toponym of Uchkilse-Valarshabad, where Armenian Catholicism was located, is related to Sanatrak's son Valar Shah (194-216) who was from the Arshakiler Dynasty. During long historical periods, Valarshabad was misrepresented in Armenian literature as "Vagarshabad." Valarshabad (the foundation of which was laid by Valar Shah) village was taken piece by piece from Azerbaijani Turks beginning in 1443. During the Akkoyunlu Government (1468-1501) and following the Safavid government (1501-1736), the Chukhursed's administrative territory division was retained. Bayandur's grandson Hasan bey (1475) ruled Chukhursed during the Akkoyunlular period. During the Safavid period, the Chukhursed beylerbeylik (province) was ruled by the Azerbaijani Div Sultan Rumlu (after 1515), Huseynkhan Sultan (until 1550), Shahgulu Sultan Ustajli (1550-1575), Mahmud khan "Tokhmag" (1576-1583), Emir Guna-Khan Qajar (1605-1625), his son Tehmezzgulu (1635), Kelbeli-khan (1636-1639), Memmedkhan

Azerbaijani carpets/ IRAVAN GROUP



A view from the hallway of Iravan Sardar Palace.



Entrance arch of the Goy Mesjid (Blue Mosque) in Iravan.



Azerbaijan
in the 16th century.

"Jagata Gotuk" (1639-1648), Khosrov Khan (1648-1652), Mehmedgulu khan (1652-1656), Nejeffgulu khan (1656-1663), Emir Guna's son Abbasgulu khan (1663-1666), and others.

The invasion of Chukhursed by the Ottomans during the Safavid-Ottoman wars resulted in certain changes in the division of the administrative territory. Following the Istanbul Treaty signed after the war period (1578-1590), Chukhursed became part of the Ottoman Empire. Chukhursed province was divided into Iravan and Nakhchivan districts. The Ottoman Empire conducted a census in Iravan district in 1590, noting it as a separate province with Iravan city as the center of the province. Thus, the ancient Azerbaijani city of Iravan moved toward more development. The census of 1590 thoroughly describes Iravan province and confirms that the absolute majority of the population were Azerbaijani Turks. The Safavid government reclaimed Iravan province during the war against the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the seventeenth century (1603-1612). However, the Safavids again had to relinquish Iravan Province to the Ottomans during the war in

1723-1728. The Ottoman Empire conducted another census in Iravan Province in 1728. This detailed description of Iravan Province is one of the most important resources about the demographics at that time.

Iravan province returned when the Safavid government weakened, but Azerbaijani commander Nadir khan Afshar's position strengthened. Ottoman armies left Iravan castle in October of 1735. In 1736, Nadir khan declared himself shah in Mughan. Iravan Province became part of Nadir Shah Afshar's empire. In June of 1747, after Nadir Shah was assassinated, independent khanates (government entities) were established in Azerbaijani lands, including Iravan.



IRAVAN KHANATE:

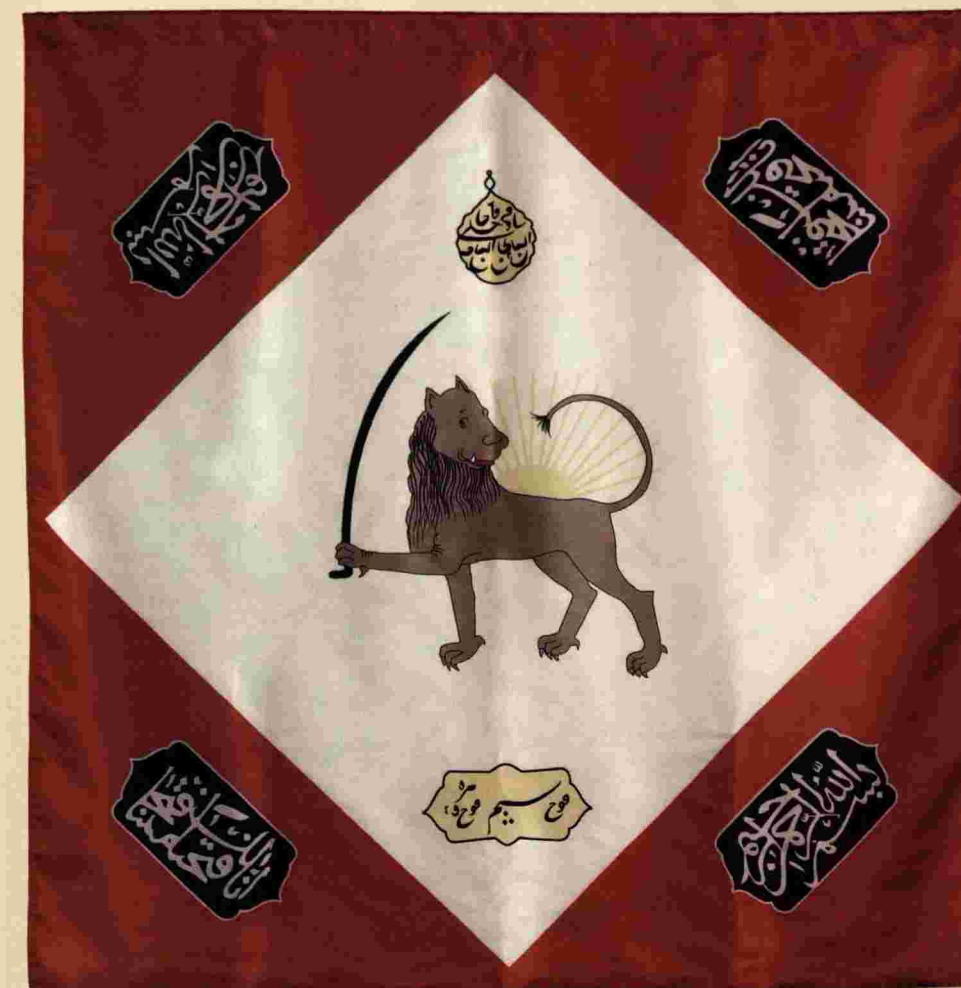
First Independent Azerbaijani Government in Western Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan's Iravan khanate was ruled by khans from the famous Turkish Qajar dynasty, who played a significant role in the government and management history of Azerbaijan. The entire management system, socio-political, cultural, agricultural life and daily lifestyle of people living in the khanate were inseparable parts of the general historical development of Azerbaijan. Regarding its developmental characteristics, Iravan Khanate was no different from other Azerbaijani Khanates of that period in any way. All through history, a number of residential settlements, villages, and cities belonging to Azerbaijani people were built in the territory of the Iravan Khanate. In addition, thousands of historical monuments, castles, mosques, minarets, caravanserais, and hamams were constructed. All the place names in the district were toponyms related to the Azerbaijani people. Even Armenian sources confirm this undeniable truth. In the territory of the khanate, there were endless ancient Oghuz-Turkic graveyards with numerous ram monuments and gravestones belonging to Azerbaijani people. All these were the material cultural emblems of the Azerbaijani people.

The Iravan Khanate covered the western Azerbaijani territory stretching southwest from the Agridag plains, the Goyche Lake basin, and the Aras River. This khanate was administratively divided into fifteen districts with Iravan city as the capital: Girkhbulag, Zangibasur, Garnibasur, Vedibasur, Sherur, Surmeli, Derekend, Saatli, Talin, Seyidli-Akhsakhli, Sardarabad, Karpi, Abaran, Darachichak, and Goyche. Iravan Khanate played an important role in Azerbaijan's history as an inde-



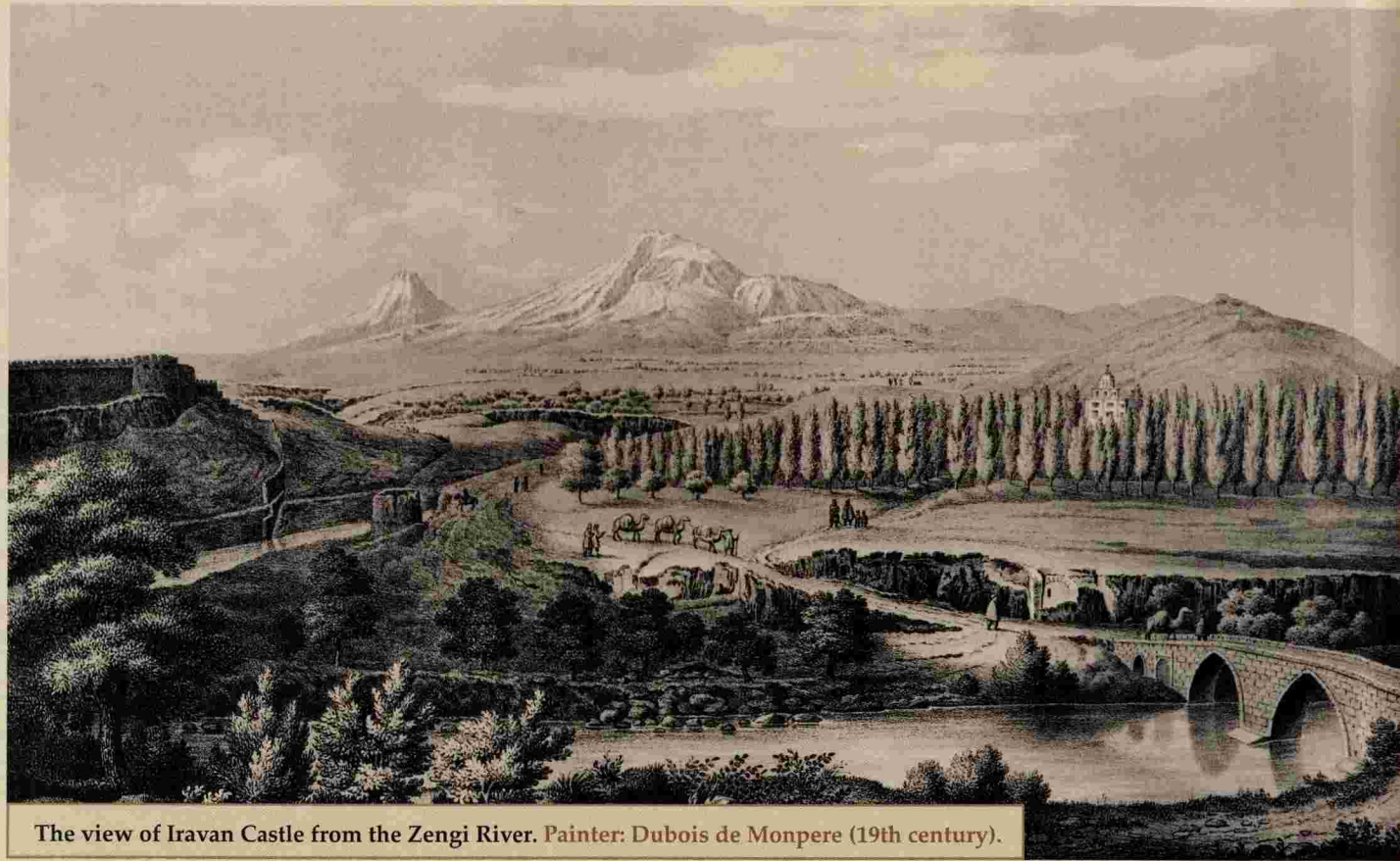
Iravan Khan
Hasan Khan Qajar.
1827.



The flags of the
Iravan Khanate.



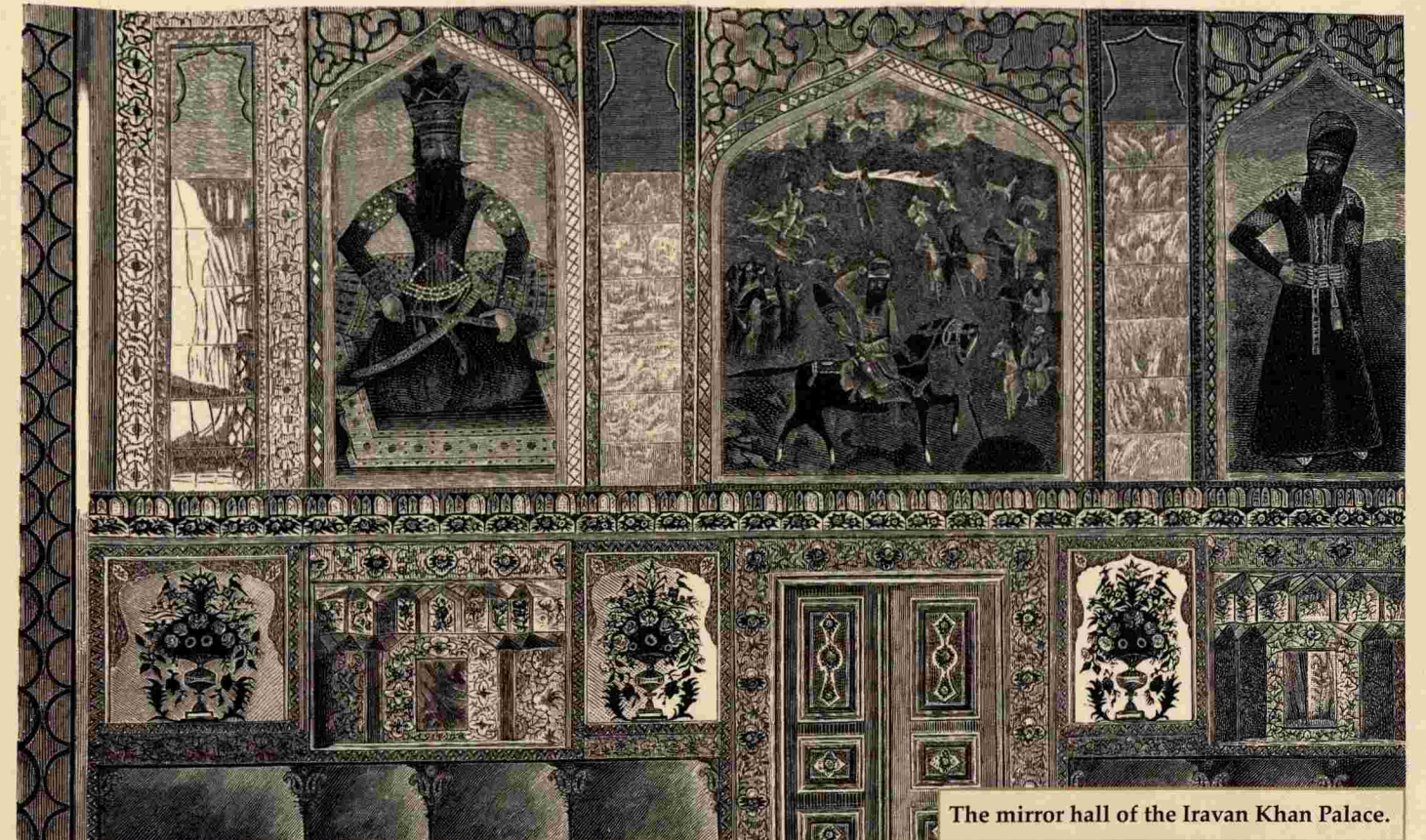
Coins minted in the
Iravan Khanate.



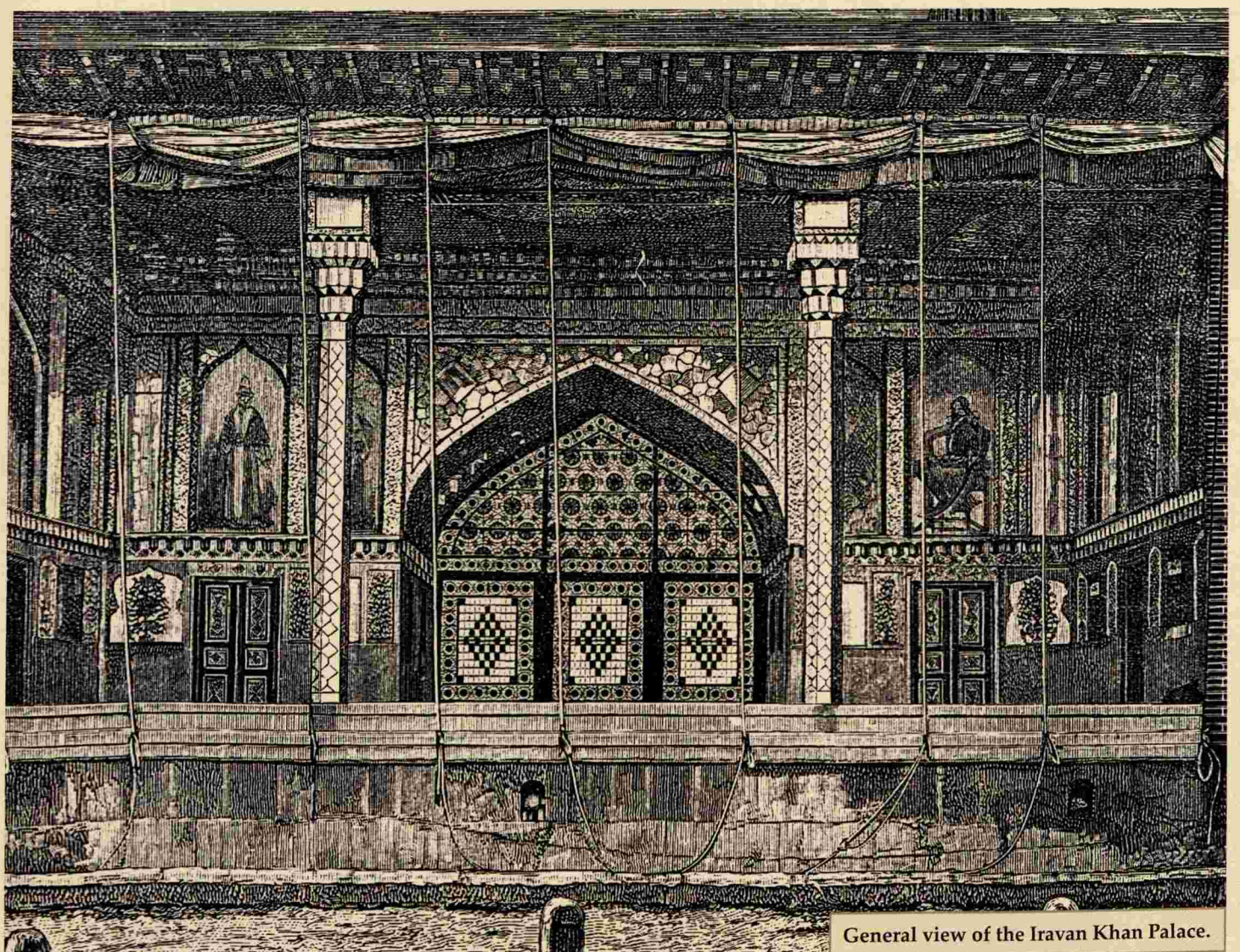
The view of Iravan Castle from the Zengi River. Painter: Dubois de Monpere (19th century).



Iravan Khan hunting. Painter: G. Gagarin.



The mirror hall of the Iravan Khan Palace.



General view of the Iravan Khan Palace.

pendent government in 1747-1828. The head of the government was the khan; after the khan, came the vezir (vizier) or head mirze (teacher), and beys of different ranks (divan beys, commanders, emirs, and so on). The khan directed the army. The majority of the population was Azerbaijani. They were engaged in craftsmanship, especially carpet weaving, trade, cultivation, gardening, vegetable growing, and raising cattle. Land was divided into divan (government), khalise (belonging to the khan and his family members), and public property. The villages paid tithes of taxes and held different responsibilities.

The Iravan Khanate was ruled by the following government figures: Mehdi khan (1747-1748), Mahammad Huseyn khan (1748-1751), Khalil khan (1751-1755), Hasan Ali khan's brother Huseynali khan (1759/60-1784), Huseynali khan's son Mahammad Huseyn khan (1784-1805), Ali Gulu Khan Qajar (June 1797), Hasan khan Mekulu (summer 1797), Mehdigulu khan Qajar (1805-1806), Ahmad khan Maragali (August-October 1806), and Huseyngulu khan Qajar (1806-1827).

The Iravan Khanate has had to fight to maintain its independence since it was established. The Kartli-Kakheti tsar

Irakli II created danger for the khanate. In this situation, confrontations within Iravan shook the khanate and weakened its defense against enemy attacks.

In 1779, Irakli II attacked Iravan Khanate and moved the population of several villages back with himself. In 1780, Huseynali khan reconciled with Irakli II and the people who had been moved to Georgia were brought back. The khanate's defense was strengthened. Relations with neighboring Azerbaijani khanates broadened. This contributed to the aggravation of relations with the Kartli-Kakheti tsar.

To overthrow Huseynali khan, Irakli II came to an agreement with his brother Mahammad khan. However, rebellious Iravan residents assassinated both brothers in 1784. Huseynali khan's son Gulameli khan came to power.

Irakli II maintained close relations with Russia and signed the Georgiyevsk Treaty in 1783, resulting in a growing number of Armenian missionaries in Iravan Khanate, especially in Echmiadzin. The Ottoman Empire also grew more active after this. The Ottoman sultan tried to provoke Gulameli khan against Irakli II. However, the people of Irakli killed the khan. Gulameli khan's brother Mahammad khan then came to power. Although Turkey tried to set Mahammad khan against Russia, this did not happen.

During this period, Armenian-Gregorian missionaries in Iravan khanate extended their activities to implement the policy emerging at the time of Peter I to create a Christian government in the area. The Armenian-Gregorian church paid special attention to make sure that Karabakh's Christian-Alban monarchs were involved in this mischievous policy. In letters addressed to Catherine II, appeals were made to establish an Armenian ruler in the South Caucasus. However, the Russian-Turkish war in 1787-1791 did not permit Russia to carry out this plan. Between 1785-1787, the Iravan khanate was subjected to attacks by Karabakh and Khoy khans and the Jar-Balakan ruler Omar (Umme) khan. The Iravan khanate eventually strengthened its positions.

In 1789, Bayazit pasha attacked the Iravan khanate and surrounded the khan's army troops. Mahammad khan received help from the Nakhchivan khanate and escaped the blockade. Then he counterattacked and surrounded the Bayazit fortress. However, he was unsuccessful in capturing the fortress and retreated.

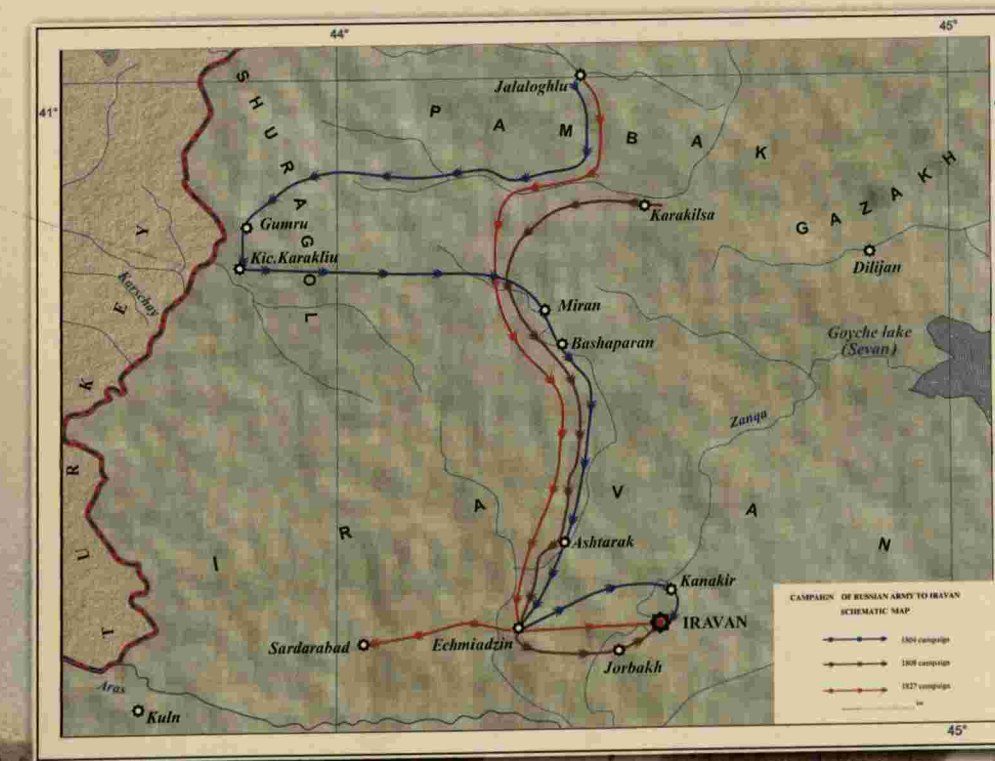
In 1790, the forces of the Iravan and Nakhchivan khanates attacked the Khoy khanate. Then the Khoy khan sided with the Nakhchivan khan to attack the Iravan khanate. The

allies won the battle and remained in Iravan until August 1790. Following the attack of Agha Mahammad Qajar, Iravan khanate's independence was in serious danger.

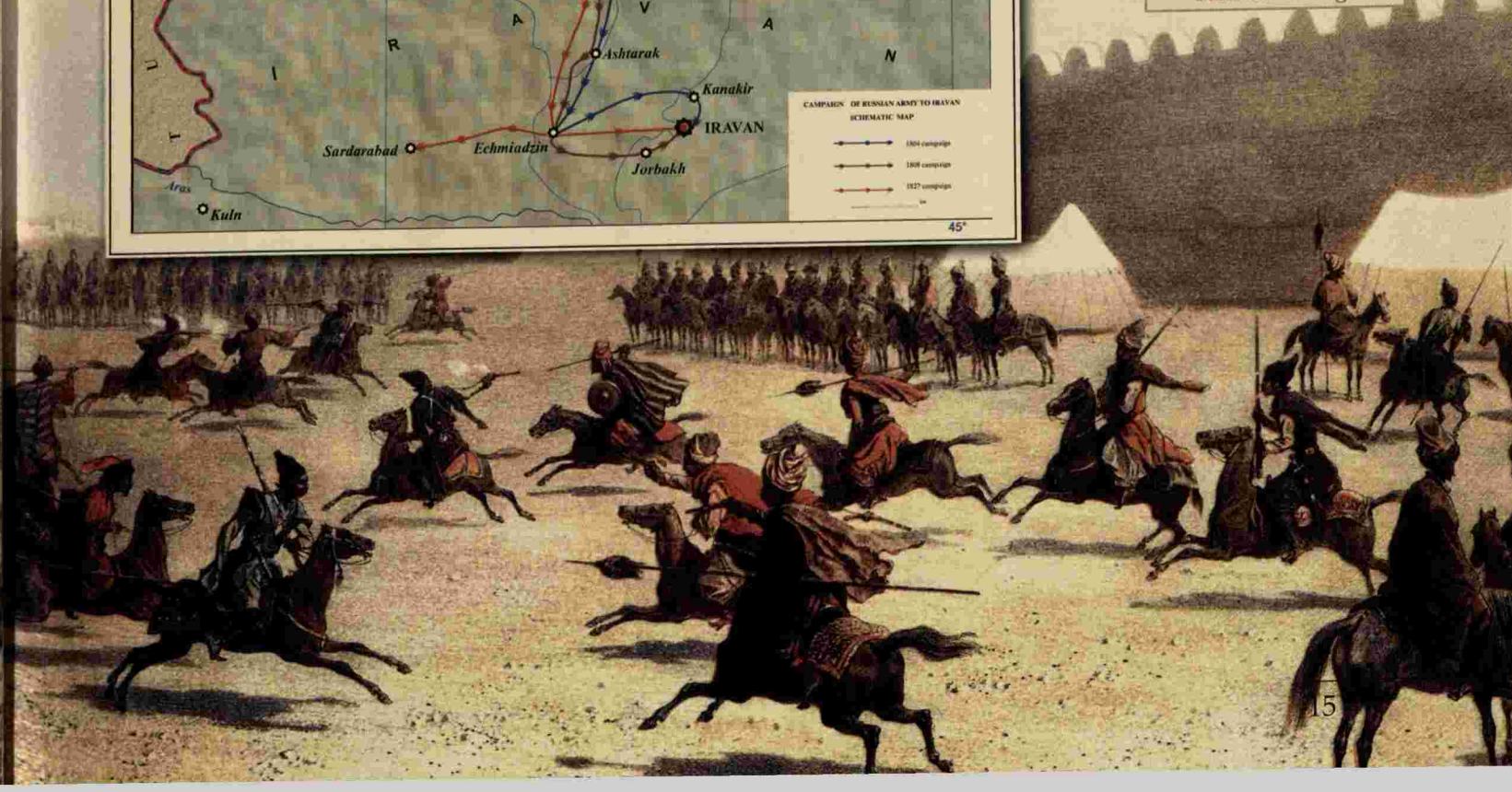
Agha Mahammad Qajar seized Iravan castle in the summer of 1795 after 35 days of siege. In 1796, during the attack of V. Zubov, Mahammad khan made a diplomatic maneuver and acquiesced to Russia. During the attack, Qajar Mahammad khan was captured and the government was handed over to Eligulu khan. However, following Qajar's death, Eligulu khan was chased out of Iravan. The new shah of Iran, Fatali Shah, brought Mahammad khan to power again. During the Russo-Persian war of 1804-1813, Russia's attempt to seize the Iravan khanate was unsuccessful. Iravan khanate became part of Iran through the Gulistan Treaty.

One of the major strategic targets of both sides during the 1826-1828 Russo-Persian War was to invade Iravan city and khanate. Despite heroic repeated resistances against Russia's attacks, Iravan city was invaded in October 1827 due to the betrayal of Armenians. Through the Turkmenchay Treaty, the khanate was joined to the Russian Empire and then invalidated.

Seizure of the Iravan Castle by Tsarist Russia. October 1827.



Scene from the battle for Sardarabad Castle. Painter: G. Gagarin.



INVASION OF IRAVAN KHANATE BY THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND COLONIAL REGIME

"Armenian Province"

During the Russo-Persian War of 1826-1828, tsarist Russia invaded the Azerbaijani territories of the Nakhchivan (June 1827) and Iravan (October 1827) khanates. I.F. Pashkevich, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in charge of military operations in the Caucasus, set up a temporary office in Iravan on October 6, 1827, even before the war was over. The office consisted of three members: Lieutenant-general Krasovski (Chairman), N. Ashtaraketsi, and the commandant of Iravan Castle, Lieutenant-colonel Borodin. After the Turkmenchay treaty was signed (February 10, 1828), the administration of Nakhchivan and Iravan khanates changed. By decree of Tsar Nicholas I (March 21, 1828,) an "Armenian province" was founded on the territory of those Azerbaijan khanates. The provincial office consisted of a chairman, two Russian councilors (one law enforcement and the other finance), and two assessors. One of the assessors was Azerbaijani and the other was from the Armenian community. Beginning with the policy carried out by Peter I and after the tsarist government established an "Armenian province" in the historical lands of Azerbaijan, a pro-Armenian policy was implemented. After the creation of the "Armenian province," a Christian border was established to separate other areas of Azerbaijan invaded by Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Qajar Iran. The "Armenian province" consisted of two provinces: Iravan and Nakhchivan.

In return for their service to the tsarist army, Armenians were rewarded with the gift of an "Armenian province" in the lands of Azerbaijan, on the territories of the Nakhchivan and Iravan khanates. In this way, Armenians created their own territory base in the South Caucasus under the guardianship and help of Tsarist Russia. Following this, Armenians played an active role in the implementation of the anti-Azerbaijani and anti-Turkey policy of Tsarist Russia and later Soviet-Bolshevik Russia. Once the tsarist government had carried out its policy regarding the invasion of the South Caucasus and the strengthening of its positions there, it eliminated the "Armenian province" on April 10, 1840. Iravan and Nakhchivan provinces then became different counties. These counties were subordinate to Georgia-Imereti province. On June 9, 1849, the Iravan governorate was established on the invaded territories of western Azerbaijan.



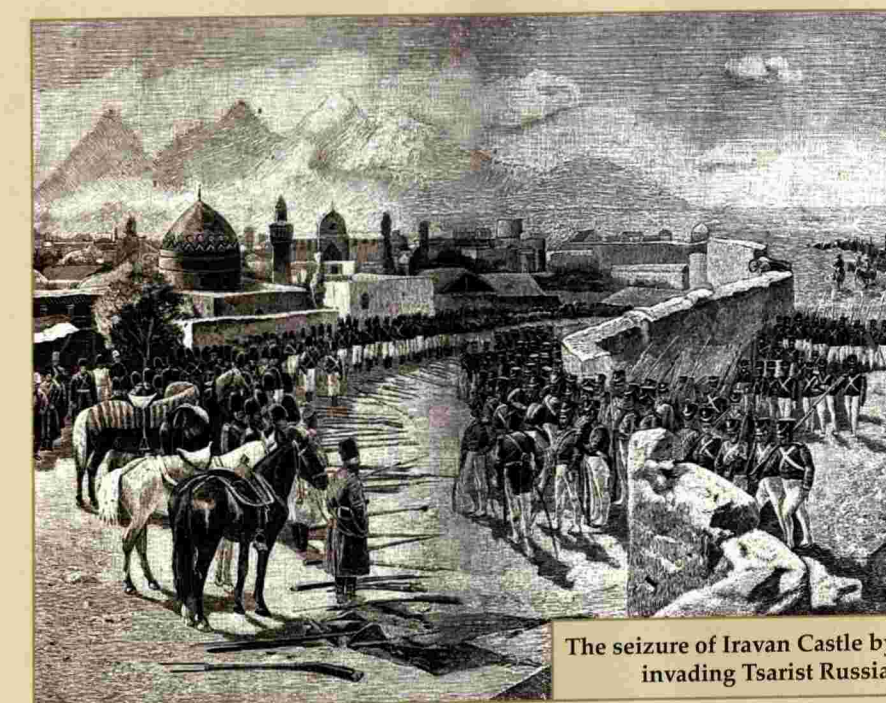
The medal founded by Nicholas I (1825-1855) in connection with the seizure of Iravan Castle, 1827.



The medal founded by Nicholas I (1825-1855) in connection with the seizure of Iravan Castle (1829). On this medal, Iravan city is depicted in its previous incarnation, with its mosques and minarets.

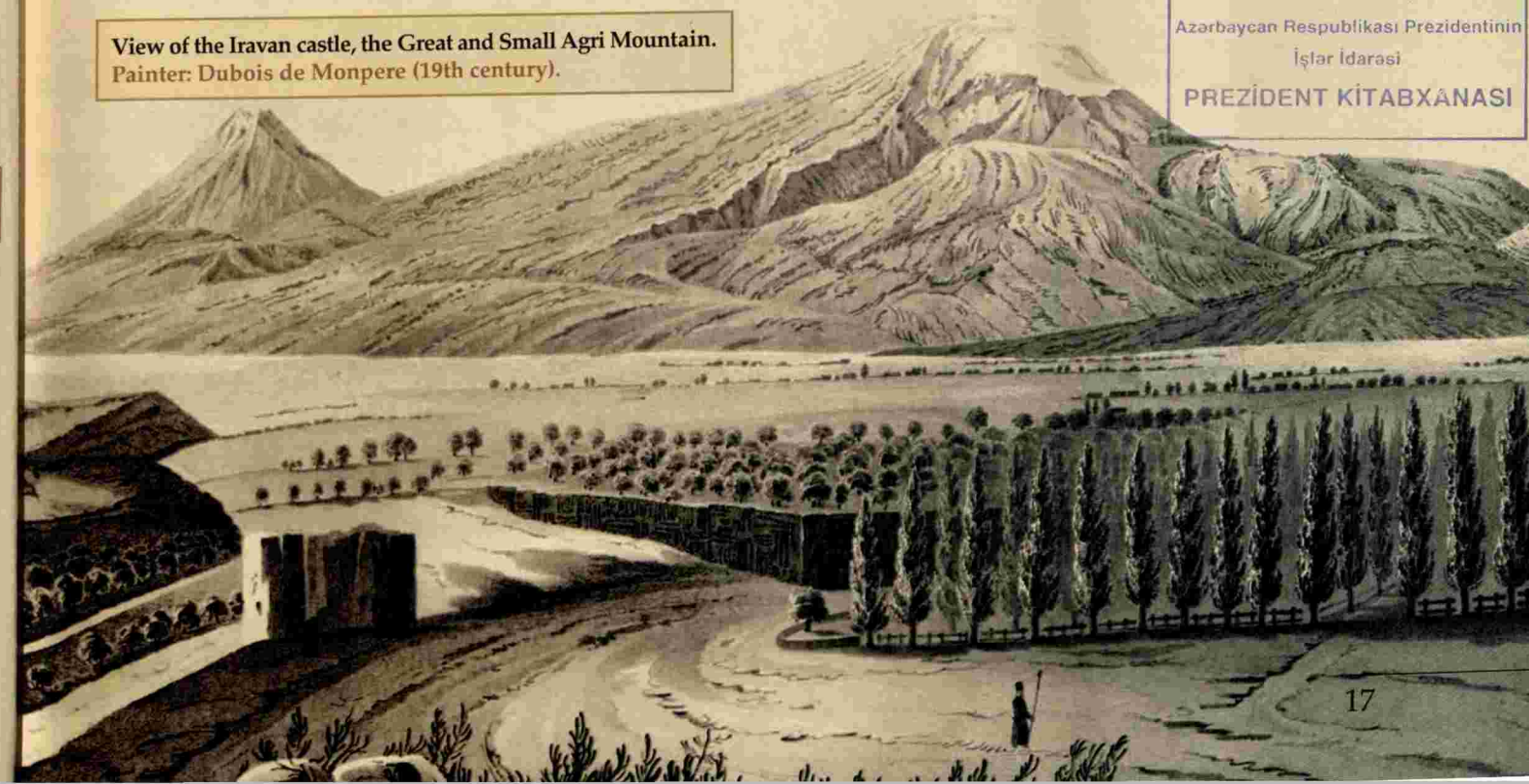


Battles near Sardarabad Castle, 1827.



The seizure of Iravan Castle by invading Tsarist Russia.

View of the Iravan castle, the Great and Small Agri Mountain. Painter: Dubois de Monpere (19th century).



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin İşlər İdarəsi
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Iravan Governorate

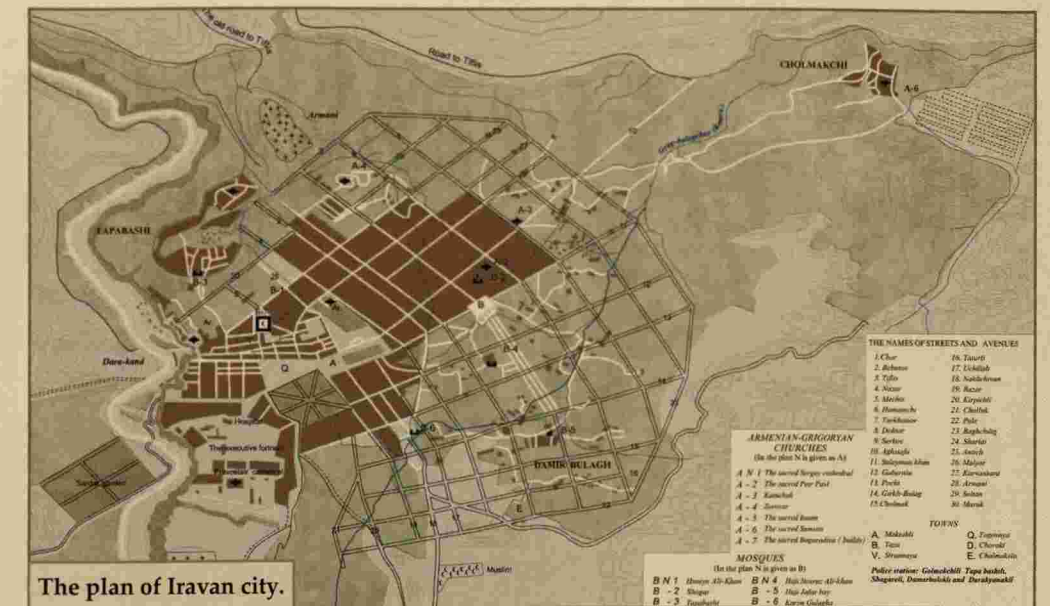
By decree of Tsar Nicholas I, on June 9, 1849, the Iravan governorate was established on the basis of the territory of the former "Armenian province" and Aleksandropol (Gumru) County. After several administrative territory changes, the governorate was divided into Iravan, Aleksandropol, Echmiadzin, Nakhchivan, Novobayazid, Sherur-Daralayaz, and Surmeli counties.

Iravan city was the capital of the governorate. The territory of Iravan governorate was 23,194.79 sq. versts (1 verst = 1,0668 km). According to the 1917 Caucasus census, 1,120,242 people lived in the governorate (48.3 people per sq. verst). 52.6% (589,125 people) of the governorate population were men and 47.4% (531,117 people) were women. 90.6% (1,014,868 people) were local citizens and 9.4% (105,374 people) were temporary residents.

Despite the policy of the Tsar to change the ethnic content of the Iravan governorate in favor of Armenians, the number of Azerbaijanis in the Iravan governorate was always higher. According to the 1917 Caucasus census, despite genocides and deportations for more than 100 years, the number of Azerbaijanis was 373,582 (33.35%). The number of Armenians, however, reached 669,871 (59.8%) because of the aforementioned deportations. The population of the main five cities in the Iravan governorate (Aleksandropol, Nakhchivan, Novobayazid, Ordubad, and Iravan) totaled 132,559 people (11.83%). The remainder of the population was in rural areas (967,683 people or 88.17%), specifically 122,208 in Nakhchivan, 104,791 in Surmeli, and 90,250 in Sherur-Daralayaz. Azerbaijanis comprised 18.9% (25,044 people) of the urban population and 35.3% (348,538 people) of the rural population.

Agriculture was the major contributor to the economy of the Iravan governorate.

70.1% of the governorate lands belonged to the treasury and 25.6% to the mulkedar (landowners). Due to the conditions created as a result of the First World War, such as mobilization of labor animals, involvement of people on the front, and so on, agricultural lands were reduced threefold.



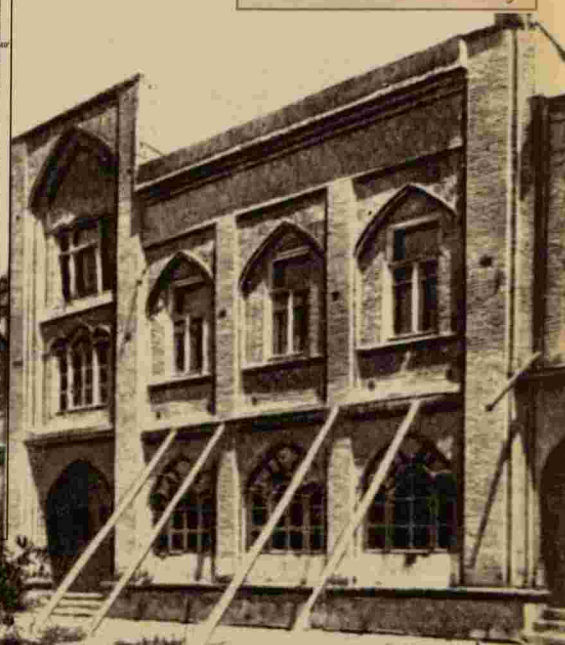
The Iravan governorate was the closest home front for the Caucasus army. Reserve units and voluntary troops were therefore stationed in Iravan, Aleksandropol, Nakhchivan, and other counties of the governorate.

The news of the overthrow of the Tsar following the February Revolution in 1917 reached Iravan governorate at the beginning of March. Local administrative organs of the temporary government began to form. The Governorate Executive Committee established on March 14 (27) declared itself the local representative of the Special Transcaucasian Committee (OZAKOM or Особый Закавказский Комитет in Russian). Executive committees were created in counties as well. Commissaries were appointed to the Iravan governorate and counties by the temporary government.

After the February Revolution, councils began to be formed in the Iravan governorate. On March 8 (21), a soldier's council was founded in Aleksandropol followed by a worker's deputy council. Soon, the councils united. On March 12 (25), a soldier's council was founded in Iravan city followed by a worker's deputy council in April. The councils were organized in the cities of the Iravan governorate in March. The Dashnaks gained the majority in both local organs and councils under the temporary government. At the end of September 1917, Dashnaks convened the "Armenian National Conference" in Tbilisi. The Armenian National Council (chairman A. Agaronyan) was founded during the conference. National councils began to be formed in Iravan city and in the counties of the governorate. The Armenian National Council began planning to



The house of Iravan Khan
Ali Khan. 18th century.



Family photo of the Iravan and Nakhchivan Khans. In the center: Abbasgulu Khan Iravanski, on the left Tarlan khanim (the daughter of Ismayil Khan Nakhchivanli), and their relatives.



Iravan's vice governor, Ismayil bey Gaziyeu and his spouse Efruz khanim.

prepare and implement a genocide policy against Azerbaijani people in Iravan governorate, to organize Armenians' provocative activities in the Ottoman Empire, and to recruit Armenian units to fight in the Caucasus army. After the October Revolution (1917), the South Caucasus Commissariat (November 15 (28), 1917) established its government in the Iravan governorate as well. The Dashnaks and their agents won the election to the Muessis Congress in Russia for the Iravan governorate. The Transcaucasian Seym (meeting) that began on February 10 (23), 1918, ratified the separation of the South Caucasus from Russia (March 1918). The Iravan governorate was united with the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic after it was declared on April 22, 1918.



Iravan teachers: Hashim bey Narimanbeyov and Govher khanim Gaziyeva.



Iravan intellectuals. At the back: Mirza Jabbar Mahammadzade; in front, Ibadulla Muganlinski; on the right, Abbasali bey Agabababeyev.

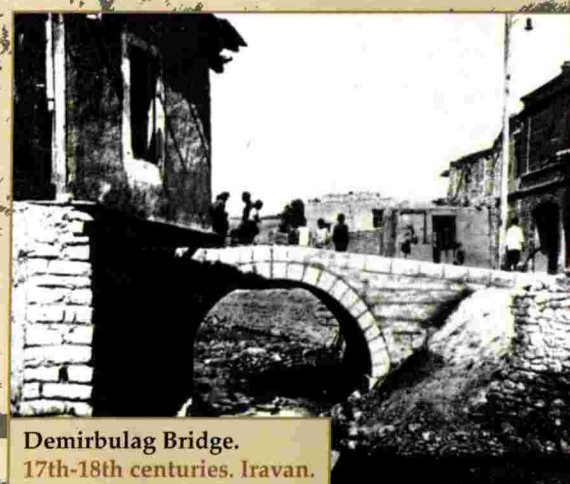


Iravan teachers, 1917.

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) government implemented a special policy to use Armenians living in Iravan governorate and the Ottoman Empire for its political goals. On December 17 (30), 1917, a separate Armenian Affairs Commissariat was founded in the People's Commissariat of National Affairs. The Council of the People's Commissar of Soviet Russia adopted a "Decree of Turkish Armenia" on December 17, 1917 (January 11, 1918). The recall of Russian military units from the Caucasus front (December 1917/January 1918) strengthened the Dashnaks' stance a great deal. Genocide against Azerbaijanis in the Iravan governorate became more widespread.



The yard of Iravan's Goy Mesjid (Blue Mosque).



Demirbulag Bridge. 17th-18th centuries. Iravan.



Iravan bazaar.

ARMENIANIZATION OF IRAVAN DISTRICT:

Resettlement of Armenians by the Russian Tsar in the Iravan District
Armenians' Armed Conflicts against Azerbaijanis

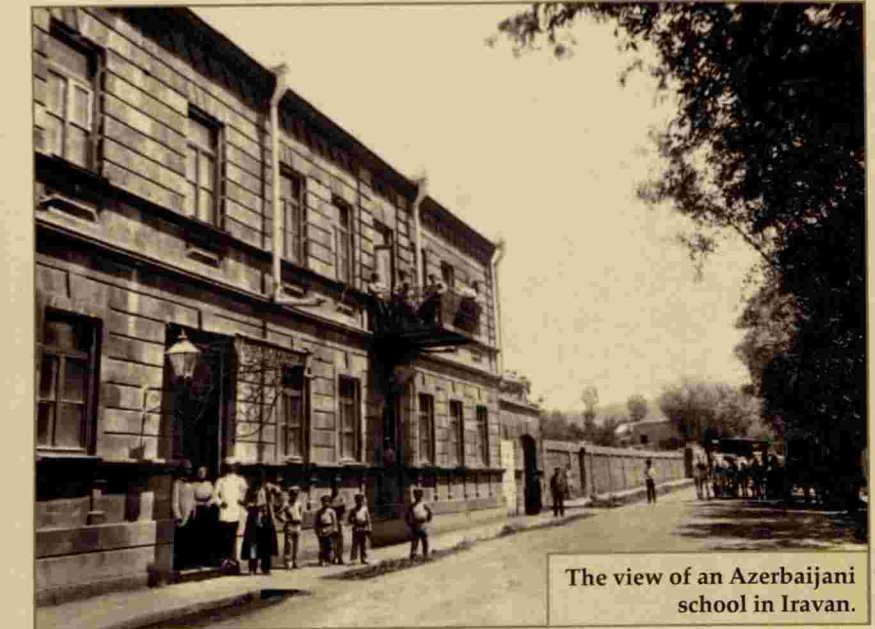
The Russian Empire allocated a large role to Armenians to carry out and strengthen their invasion plans in the east and in Azerbaijan. Armenians wanted to achieve certain political aims by using Russia. Armenian Russianism and Russian Armenianism, which were developing in this period, complemented each other in achieving these political goals and in targeting the destruction of Turkish-Muslim existence. In the anonymous Armenian poem, "I Saw the Tsarina" written at the end of the fifteenth century, the wedding of Russian Duke Ivan III (1462-1505) and Byzantine princess Sophia Paleologue is described. In the poem, Sophia denies gifts presented to her by Ivan III and demands instead that Istanbul be seized. Ivan III tells Sophia that he will liberate the Guds and reach Echmiadzin. Armenians' aspirations for Russia continued later as well, especially in the works and documents circulated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Russian-Armenian relations broadened during the invasion of the Kazan khanate (1552), Heshterkhan khanate (1556), and during the wars with the Ottoman Empire (1635-1639, 1711, 1768-1774, 1787-1791). These relations became stronger following the policy of Russia to invade lands on the shore of the Caspian Sea. As these events occurred, the act of resettling Armenians in Russia and creating Armenian colonies there began. The November 10, 1724 decree of Peter I (1682-1725) to the Armenian people played a significant role in this matter. According to the decree, locations were allocated for Armenians to settle in the lands invaded by Russia. The political policy of Peter I was maintained by Catherine II (1762-1796). The Armenians' role was reflected in the plans of Russia seen in the manifestos of 1801. Russia brought Armenians living in different places to newly invaded lands, created conditions for them to enter the Russian army, and involved them in the operations against local rulers.

We can divide the tsarist resettlement of Armenians in the territory of northern Azerbaijan during the early nineteenth century into two stages: the period prior to the Turkmenchay Treaty (1801-1828) and the years following.

The resettlement by Russia of Armenians in northern Azerbaijan during 1801-1828 was parallel to the invasion process. The Armenians resettled in this period were predominantly from the territories of northern Azerbaijan previously settled but not yet invaded by Russia. In addition, attempts were made to involve Armenian citizens of the Ottoman and Persian Empires in the resettlement.

In 1804, the Russian Empire invaded the Ganja khanate with the assistance of Armenians. The Kurekchay treaty to bring khanates under the protection of Russia was signed on May 14, 1805 with the Karabakh khanate and on May 21 with the Sheki khanate. In December, a similar treaty was signed with the Shirvan khanate. In 1806, the Derbent, Guba, and Baku khanates were annexed followed by the Lankaran (Talysh) khanate in 1813. The Russian Empire was engaged in a war with the Persian Empire at the same time (1804-1813). Via the Gulistan Treaty signed at the end of the war, northern Azerbaijani lands, excluding the Nakhchivan and Iravan khanates, were seized by Russia. The Russian Empire lent great importance to the invasion of the Iravan khanate. Armenians living in the territory of the khanate were used for this purpose. On the other hand, they hurt the khanate by moving them to the areas seized by Russia. General P.D. Sisianov, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army in the Caucasus, was trying to move Iravan Armenians to Ganja (the name of the city was changed to Elizavetpol following the Russian invasion). The Armenianization of Karabakh, Sheki, Shirvan, and other northern Azerbaijani lands continued vigorously. These cases increased further after the Sheki, Shirvan, and Karabakh khanates were eliminated in 1819, 1820, and 1822, respectively.

Relocation of Armenians
in Iravan, 1828.The view of an Azerbaijani
school in Iravan.Iravan girls'
seminary.

Demirbulag quarter, Iravan.



Even the Russo-Persian War of 1804-1813 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-1812 did not discourage Russia's plans for invasion. In 1826, Russia began another Russo-Persian War (1826-1828). Although the first period of the war was successful for the Persians, Russia gained power later. In May 1827, Nakhchivan was taken and in October Iravan was seized. Consequently, the granting of Russian citizenship to Armenians who were earlier moved to northern Azerbaijan ended. The Persian and Ottoman Empires were now the major new geographical sources of Armenian resettlement.

The Armenian Catholic Nerses Ashtaraketsi prepared a plan regarding resettlement. Russian writer and diplomat Griboyedov (1795-1829) participated in the preparation and execution of this plan. Nerses wrote to St. Petersburg native Yegiazar Lazaryan who was invited to lead the resettlement of Armenians in 1827 and who was in Tabriz at that time: "I asked A.S. Griboyedov, loyal protector of our Armenian people, not to forget my request regarding captive Christians and asked him to accept them anywhere under the powerful flag of the Russian Empire... In addition, I asked his Excellency [Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army in the Caucasus I.F. Paskevich] concerning all Armenians in Iran and now I am writing to Sir [Griboyedov regarding this] and I am asking your Highness to involve Ivan Fyodorovich Paskevich so he does not forget to include the article in the treaty during reconciliation in connection with the safe return of Armenians living in cities and villages ruled by the Iranian administration to Armenia under the guardianship of the Great Russian Empire." A.S. Griboyedov and I.F. Paskevich did not forget the resettlement of Armenians when the treaty was prepared. This issue was included in Article 15 of the Turkmenchay Treaty. The Article reads: "His Excellency Fath Ali Shah grants total pardon to the entire population and officials of the province called [southern] Azerbaijan. In addition, officials and residents are allowed to freely go to Russia from Iran province with their families starting on this day, and they are granted one year unimpeded by the local authorities to carry and sell their movable properties and belongings without any tax or customs. Concerning real estate, a five year period is identified to sell it or to have a voluntary decree regarding it." Griboyedov is believed to be the author of Article 15. As is apparent, the term "Iranian Armenian" is not mentioned here. This is a diplomatic choice, allowing the issue to be understood in a general context and permitting it to be applied broadly and purposefully in real life.

An issue regarding Armenian villagers in the custody of Muslim rulers reemerged at this period. The idea to give internal self-management to Armenians in the custody of a majority Muslim area was put forth in the special "Rules" sent to Paskevich by Dibich, the chairman of the chief headquarters. Velyaminov, the judge on civil affairs, did not welcome this idea. However, Paskevich revisited this idea during his later activity.

After the Turkmenchay Treaty was signed, a new era of Armenian resettlement in northern Azerbaijan began. The characteristic features of this period are the large size of the resettlement and Iranian and Ottoman geographical sources.

Resettlement committees were established in Iravan and Nakhchivan to organize resettling Armenians. The resettled people were granted important privileges: they were exempt from taxes and duties for six months and they were given aid and compensa-

tion provided by Iran. The resettlement began after certain preparations were executed. The number of resettled Armenians from Iran comprised 40,000-50,000 people. In 1828-1829 during and after the Russo-Turkish war, up to 90,000 Armenians were resettled from Turkey. The major target of the resettlement was Azerbaijani land in the South Caucasus. In his "New Danger for Russian Interests in Transcaucasia" published in Petersburg in 1911, N. Shavrov wrote, "More than 1,000,000 out of 1,300,00 Armenians are not local population of this land and were resettled here by us." When Armenians were resettled, priority was given to the lands of northern Azerbaijan, especially Nakhchivan, Iravan, and Karabakh. According to Nerses' plan, all Armenians from the districts seized by the Russian army, including Tabriz, Khoy, Salmas, and Maraga, were to be moved to Nakhchivan, Iravan, and Karabakh provinces. A diligent pro-Armenian group systematically realized his request. N. Shavrov noted that during the two years after the war (1828-1830), they moved 40,000 Armenians from Iran and 84,000 Armenians from Turkey to Transcaucasia and settled them in Iravan and Elizavetpol governorates, where Armenians were a minority. 200,000 desyatins (1 desyatina = 1.1 hectare) of treasury land was allocated to them and 2,000,000 manats worth of specially owned lands were purchased for them from Muslims. Armenians were settled in the mountainous regions of Elizavetpol governorate and on the banks of Goyche Lake.

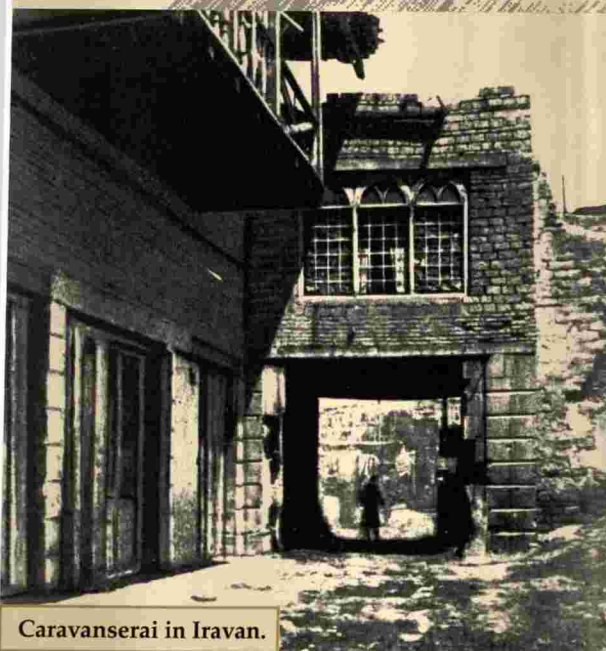
As a result of Armenian resettlement, the ethnic make-up of the Karabakh, Iravan, and Nakhchivan populations were substantially changed. According to the decree of Russian Army Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, Yermolov, the Karabakh province census conducted in 1823 recorded 1,600 (8.4%) of 20,000 families were Armenians, while by 1832 Armenians made up 34.8%. Even though Armenians comprised only a little more than 20% of Iravan khanate's population before it was invaded by Russia, this figure reached over 46% in 1834-1835. Nakhchivan's ethnic make-up experienced the same modification. Prior to the resettlement, 434 Armenian families were counted in Nakhchivan, whereas 2285 families were brought in after resettlement. In general, 2551 families were resettled in Nakhchivan province.

The resettlement of Armenians in the Russian-invaded territories of northern Azerbaijan and in western Azerbaijan was maintained during the Crimean War in 1853-1856, the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-1878, and after the Armenian revolts against the Ottoman Empire in the 1890s were suppressed.

The ethno-demographic situation in the territories of Azerbaijan changed in favor of Armenians through resettlement initiatives by Russia. In addition, their positions were strengthened in the administration systems and agricultural life. All these events were followed by deepening of hostile attitudes of Armenians towards local Azerbaijanis. From the 1905 report of the Iravan governor to the Tsar, the first confrontations between Armenians equipped and incited by Tsarist Russia and peaceful Azerbaijanis occurred in the 1880s. During the events of 1905-1906, called the "Armenian-Muslim Clashes," Armenian armed forces began a wide-scale war against Azerbaijanis. In addition to Baku, Nakhchivan, and Karabakh, in June 1905 and August 1906, Armenians waged open war against Azerbaijanis in Iravan city and county, Uchkilse (Echmiadzin), and Zangazur and committed massacres, robberies, and genocide.



The view of Iravan from Zengi River.



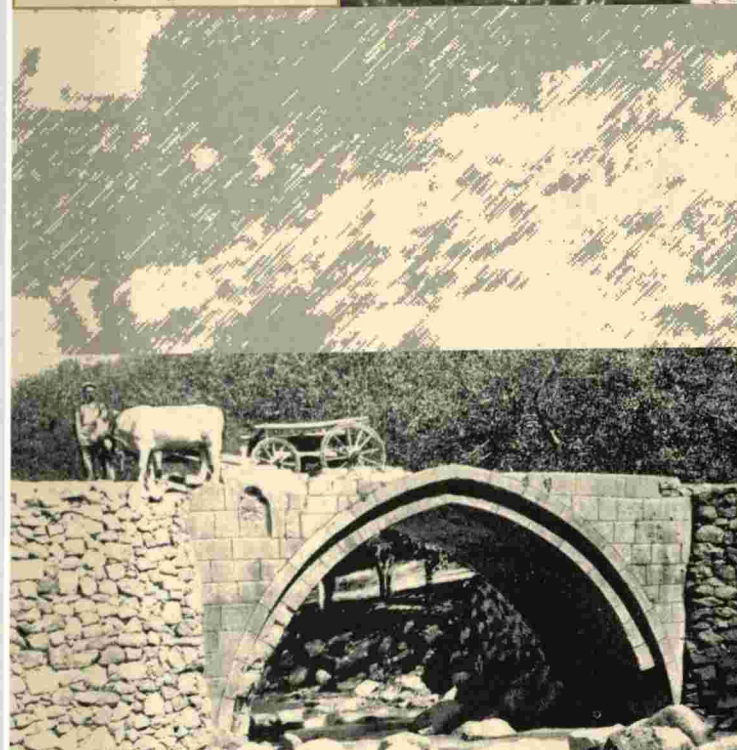
Caravanserai in Iravan.



The houses of Azerbaijani noblemen in Iravan.



Azerbaijani quarter, Iravan.



Bridge over the Geder River.

Creation of an Armenian Government in Western Azerbaijan

Republic of Armenia (Ararat) 1918-1920. After the destruction of the Transcaucasian Seym (May 26, 1918), the Dashnaks declared the foundation of the Republic of Armenia (Ararat) on May 28, 1918 in Tbilisi.

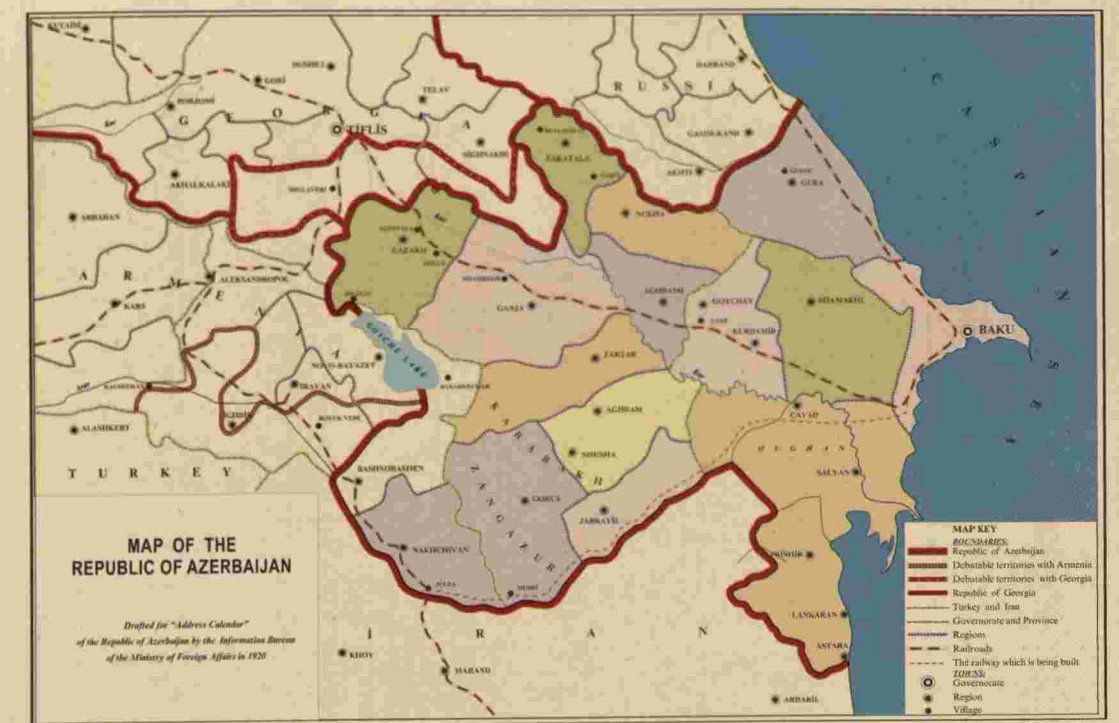
Forfeit of Iravan to Armenians. On May 29, 1918, the Azerbaijani National Council held a meeting in Tbilisi. According to Protocol 3 of the meeting, Fatahi Khan Khoyski delivered a speech concerning the results of the negotiations held between the council members and the Armenian National Council in connection with the borders of the territories of Azerbaijan and the Armenian Federation. After reporting that Armenians would need a political center to create an Armenian Federation, and that since Aleksandropol (Gumru) was transferred to Turkey, Iravan was the only choice to become such a center, Khoyski stated that it was necessary to forfeit Iravan to the Armenians. Khalil Khasmammadov, Mammad Yusif Jafarov, Akbar Sheykhulislamov, and Maharram Maharramov delivered speeches on this issue and called the "compromising of Iravan to Armenians" a historical necessity, but inevitable misfortune. As a result of voting on this issue, sixteen out of the 28 council members voted in favor of forfeiting Iravan, one voted against it, and three people abstained (as stated in the protocol). In this context, the Azerbaijani National Council adopted a decision to forfeit Iravan to the Armenians without seeking the opinions of the Azerbaijani public. On May 29, the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, Fatahi Khan Khoyski, wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mammad Hasan Hajinski: "We put an end to all the disputes with Armenians; they will accept this ultimatum and end the war. We compromised Iravan." This issue was discussed in the meeting of the National Council on June 1 and a protest was proclaimed against this decision. Three members who were originally from Iravan signed the protest. The National Council decided to add the protest to the meeting protocol without ever discussing it. Despite all the cited evidence requiring this action, the adoption of the decision to forfeit Iravan was a complete misstep from a political point of view.

On the basis of the Batumi treaty signed June 4, 1918 between the Republic of Armenia and the Ottoman Empire, a large part of Surmeli, Aleksandropol (Gumru), Sherur, Echmiadzin, and Iravan counties were transferred to the Ottoman Empire. Less than one third of the Iravan governorate's territory remained in the hands of Armenia. However, the Mudros settlement of 1918 following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War did not allow for reestablishment of these lands. The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic therefore could not establish its government in the areas of the Iravan governorate.

Aggressive policy of the newly founded Republic of Armenia (Ararat) against Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Ottoman Empire. Armenia put forth ungrounded claims against Akhalkalaki and Borchali counties of the former Tbilisi governorate. Although the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic

implemented an active foreign policy to unite its historical lands within its own borders, it could not join the war. However, Armenia took the path of war to achieve its hostile plans. Based on the 1918 Batumi treaties signed between the Ottoman Empire and the republics of the southern Caucasus, Turkish troops were positioned on the border between the two regions. On October 18, Turkish troops left this position and German troops defending Georgia took over. When German troops, who were defeated during the First World War (1914-1918), left these areas, a considerable part of Borchali County remained under the supervision of the Georgian government. Armenia sent a notification to Georgia demanding that it leave Akhalkalaki. Mutual accusations between the parties became tense in the months of October and November, and Armenians began to cause provocations and armed conflict in Akhalkalaki and Borchali. Armenia sent a cavalry squadron to Akhalkalaki and units of the 4th Armenian regiment to Borchali. On December 9, military operations were launched. Fighting took place in Borchali County where Azerbaijanis lived, as Borchali historically belonged to Azerbaijanis. According to the announcement of Armenia, Georgia should have relinquished a part of Tbilisi County in addition to Borchali and Akhalkalaki counties. On December 17, Georgia officially declared war and cut diplomatic relations with Armenia. December 18-31, military operations were carried out between the parties. Azerbaijan's historical lands and population suffered serious damage due to the war. With its positions strengthened in the Caucasus after victory in the First World War, England participated actively in halting the war between Armenia and Georgia. On December 31, Armenia consented to a ceasefire and the Georgian government agreed. January 9-17, 1919, an Armenia-Georgia conference was held in Tbilisi. Until the border issue between Armenia and Georgia was solved by the Atlanta Supreme Council, a decision was adopted to give the northern part of Borchali to Georgia, the southern part to Armenia, and to create a "neutral zone" in the middle where the Allahverdi copper mines were located. The management of the neutral zone was entrusted to the English governor-general. The representatives of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic were not invited to the conference where the destiny of Borchali, to which Azerbaijan had legal claim, was being decided. Therefore, the representative of Azerbaijan in Tbilisi stated that his country would not acknowledge this decision. Later, by decision of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party Central Committee Caucasus Bureau on July 7, 1921, the "neutral zone" was joined to Armenia. Thus, the rights of the Azerbaijani population of Borchali to decide their own fate were rudely violated; Borchali, historically Azerbaijan's territory and an area where Azerbaijanis lived, was divided between Georgia and Armenia.

Armenia attempted to realize its territorial claims against Azerbaijan through an aggressive ethnic cleansing policy. In the fall of 1919, the territorial claims of Armenia against



Azerbaijan became more strained. The plans of Azerbaijan's administration to protect the territorial integrity of the country destroyed the diplomatic work of the Armenians. The representatives of the United States and England in the Caucasus expressed their concerns before the heads of the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia that the intensification of the military situation in the region would impede the work of the Paris Peace Conference. U.S. representative J. Ray offered to hold a conference in Tbilisi to solve the disputes between the parties peacefully. November 20-22, rep-

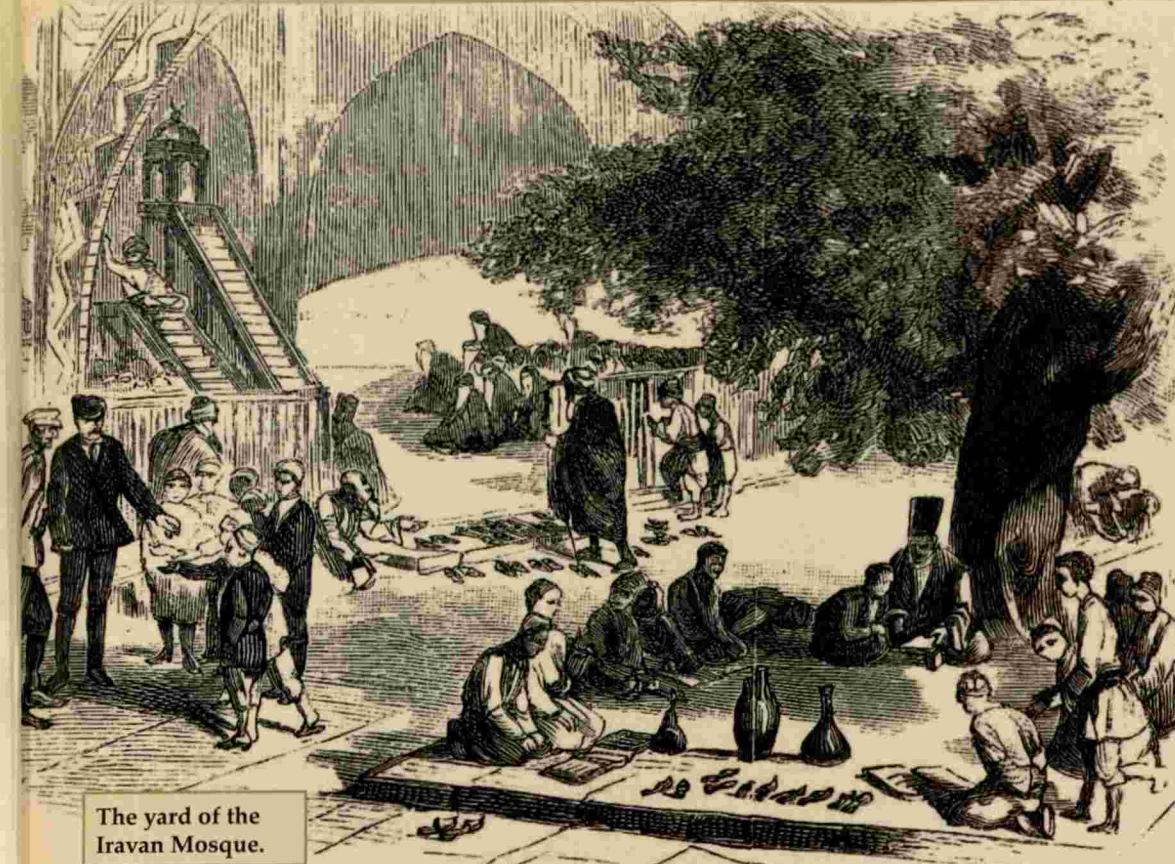
resentative board meetings were held in Tbilisi that were led by the heads of the Azerbaijani and Armenian governments, Nasib bey Yusifbeyli and A. Khatysyan, respectively. On November 23, an agreement was signed between the parties with the participation of J. Ray, the deputy of the Supreme Commissar of Mediation and the Security Council in the Caucasus, and Y. Gegechkor, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The agreement was comprised of five articles: first, the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia made commitments to halt the confrontations and not to



resort to violence again. In the second article, they came to an agreement to repair and open the roads to Zangazur and to prepare effective measures to secure the safety of these roads. In the third article, the parties made commitments to solve all the disputes peacefully, including the issues regarding borders. When peaceful agreement was not reached, both parties consented to accept American Colonel Ray as a neutral arbiter and to implement his decisions obligatorily. In the fourth article, a decision was issued to hold an Azerbaijani-Armenian conference in Baku on November 26. The fifth article considered the agreement in force as of the day it was signed and asserted that it would come into legal force after it was ratified by the parliament. However, real historical facts showed that Armenia did not adhere to its commitments as envisaged in this agreement. The Azerbaijani-Armenian conference that was supposed to be held on November 26 was realized on December 14-21. An adoption of practical decisions did not occur at this conference either. Discussions carried out among the governments of the southern Caucasus during the Tbilisi conference in April 1920 did not yield any positive results.

The Azerbaijan-Armenian agreement of 1919 lost its efficacy after the April 1920 invasion of Azerbaijan. The Armenian Dashnak government carried out a hostile policy against Turkey also. This policy led to a war between them. The anti-Turkey policy of large countries also played a significant role in the launch of the war. The Treaty of Sevres (1920) signed during the Paris Peace Conference (1919-20) as part of the Versailles-Washington System considered dividing the Ottoman Empire. The Republic of Armenia (Ararat) was involved in signing the treaty along with the victorious countries of the First World War. According to the

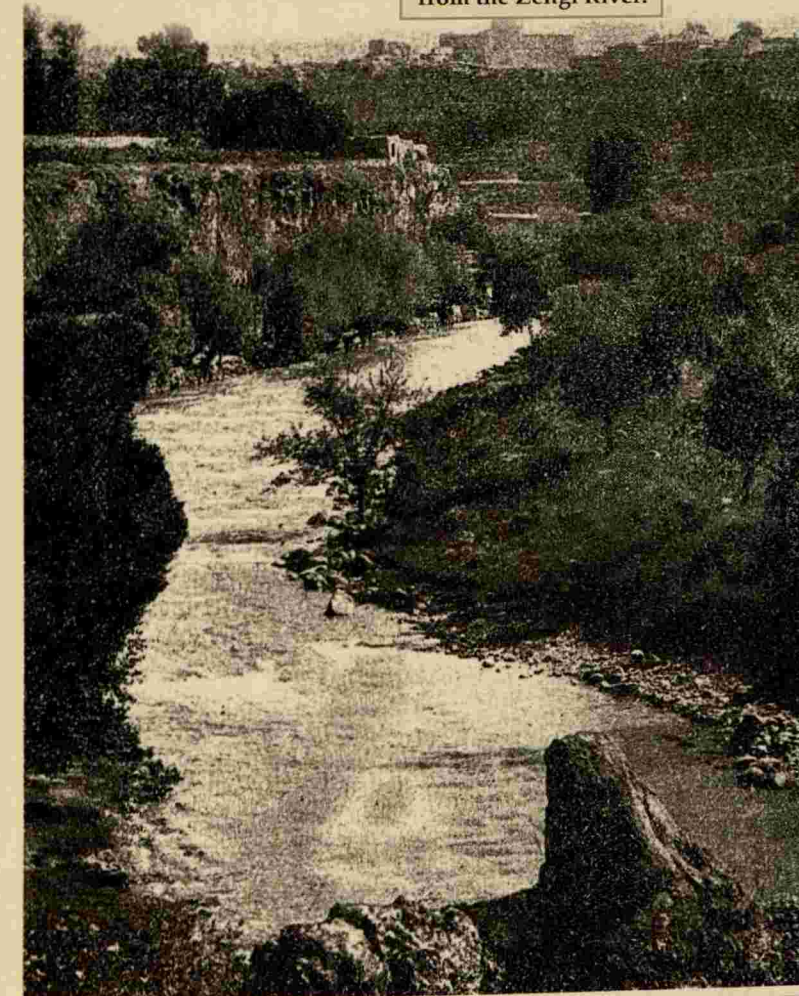
treaty, sections of Turkey's Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and Trabzon provinces were to be given to the Armenian Dashnak government. The Great National Assembly of Turkey denied this treaty dividing the territory of their country and the sultan did not ratify it. Armenia began a war against Turkey to accomplish its ungrounded territorial claims. On June 18, 1920, Dashnaks seized the city of Oltu. During conferences held in Moscow in May and June with the Armenian government and with Turkey in July and August, the Russian government wanted to interfere in the events. However, neither of the parties accepted their offer. The Turkish army began to liberate the invaded lands. First Sarikamish was liberated on September 29 and then Erdehan was freed. Seeing that it was in a desperate situation and in order to halt the freedom march of Turks, the Armenian Dashnak government appealed to Western countries, to the "entire civilized world" and allies, but the successful and fair fight of the Turkish people left these "appeals" unanswered. On October 30, Turks entered Kars proceeding further towards Aleksandropol (Gumru). Armenia's appeal to the U.S., Great Britain, France, and Italy remained unanswered as well. The Republic of Georgia declared its neutrality on November 6. Using this war, Soviet Russia tried to reinforce Armenia. However, this dream was not fulfilled when the Armenian Dashnak government turned down its offer for military assistance. As a result of successful military operations, Turks liberated Aleksandropol on November 7. A march began towards Iravan. On November 18, Armenia was forced to sign reconciliation. On November 29, Soviet government was established in Armenia. It signed the Gumru Treaty in 1920 to mobilize Dashnak government forces that were defeated following the military operations



The yard of the Iravan Mosque.

of Soviet Russia against the Soviet government. On behalf of Turkey, the treaty was signed by Farid Kazim Karabekir pasha, the governor-general of Erzurum Hamid bey, the deputy from Erzurum Suleyman Nijati bey, and on behalf of Armenia by Prime Minister A. Khatisyan, Minister of Finance A. Gulkhandanyan, and Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs S. Gordanyan. The treaty consisted of eighteen articles. The first article stated that the war was halted and that the parties had begun permanent peace negotiations. The border between Turkey and Armenia was delineated in the second article. Consisting of Iravan and Goyche Lake, the territory of the Republic of Armenia was returned to its previous borders on June 21, 1918. It was said in the second part of this article, "Armenia will not interfere in Kuku mountain, Hemeshur mountain, Gurdgulag village, Sayat mountain, Arpachay station, Komurlu mountain, Saraybulag, Ararat station, the territory close to the Aras River south of the strip passing through the spot where the Ashagi Garasu flows (Nakhchivan, Shahtakhti, Sherur); administration would be defined through a referendum later and the lands covered by this administration, and local office in the custody of Turkey will be established in that territory." Taking into consideration the hostile policy of the Republic of Armenia, restrictions for its armed forces were identified in the treaty. According to Article 4, the Armenian government made a commitment "not to exceed its military force over 1500 hired soldiers possessing light arms, gendarme forces to defend its internal security at the needed level, eight mountain or desert guns to protect the country, and twenty machine-guns." The Republic of Armenia was not allowed to have a military force. Concerning Article 5, Turkey's political representative or ambassador in Iravan was trusted to oversee the implementation of the terms of the treaty. In return for this, the Turkish government made a commitment to pro-

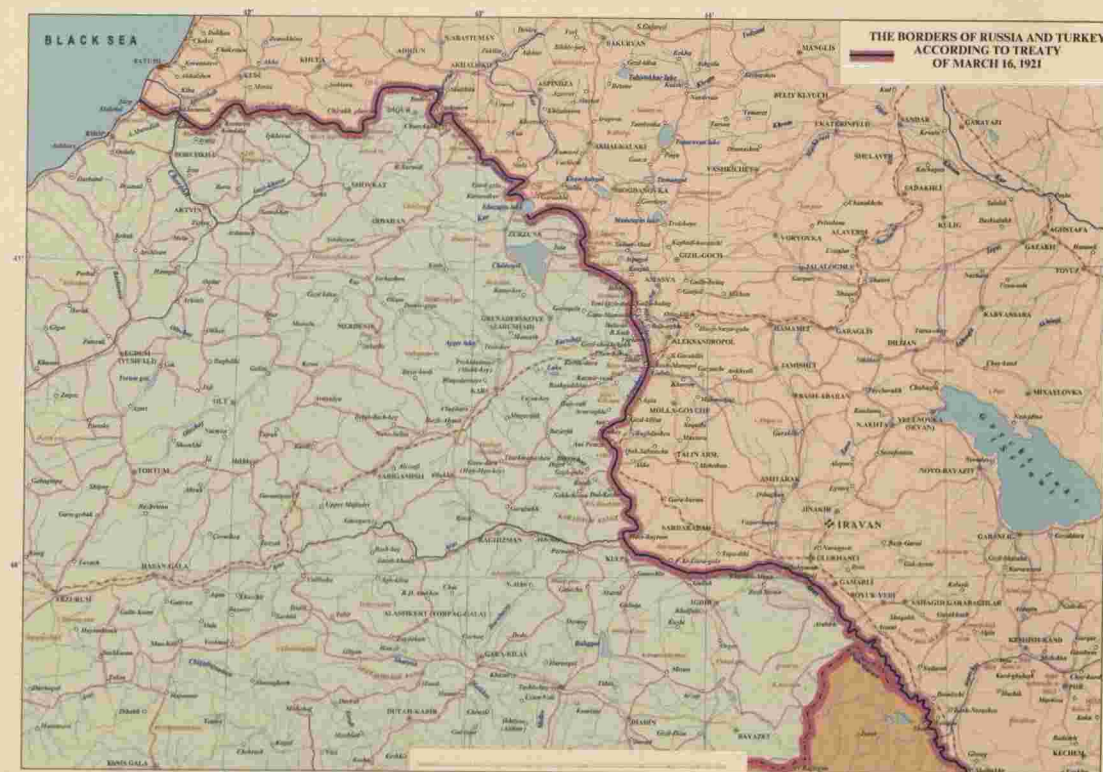
View of Iravan city from the Zengi River.



vide armed assistance if needed toward the Republic of Armenia. In case danger was created for Turkey from the territory of the Republic of Armenia, the Turkish government had the right to lead troops into Armenia. Articles 6 and 7 were related to displaced persons. Both parties consented to the return of the displaced persons to their homelands within the previous borders, excluding those who took the side of the enemy army and used arms against their own government or who took part in massacres in the invaded lands. Although Turkey had every right to demand that the defeated party, the Republic of Armenia, who was also the major reason for the war, pay compensations, respecting humanistic principles, Turkey refused to do so (Article 8), and promised that it would help Armenians develop and strengthen their sovereignty within the borders indicated in Article 2. According to Article 10, the Armenian government accepted as invalid the predatory Treaty of Sevres (August 10, 1920) that was completely denied by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and ratified its existence within the borders of the territories envisaged in the Batumi Treaty (August 10, 1920). Article 11 concerned the rights of the Turkic-Muslim population living in the territory of the Republic of Armenia. The Armenian government pledged

nal articles considered the regulation of socio-economic relations and the ratification of the treaty. At the end of the treaty, an idea adopted by both parties prompts contemplation: when a misunderstanding occurs between the parties, the treaty should be examined on the basis of the Turkish language text. If we do not reflect on certain unfair articles of the Gumru (Gumru) Treaty with regard to Nakhchivan province (giving the ancient Turkish lands of Ulukhanli, Gamarli villages and most importantly, several Azerbaijani villages around Great Vedi to Armenia), this treaty played an important role in determining the current borders of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

The Armenian SSR (1920-1991). The next government established in the territories of Azerbaijan was the Armenian SSR. Soviet government in Armenia was founded on November 29, 1920. This was different from founding the Armenian (Ararat) Republic as concerns some particular characteristics. First of all, the Armenian (Ararat) Republic was declared under the same historical condition and at the same time as the other South Caucasus countries, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The Sovietization of Armenia occurred seven months (April 28, 1920) after that of the Azerbaijan SSR. To speed up this process, Soviet Russia donated



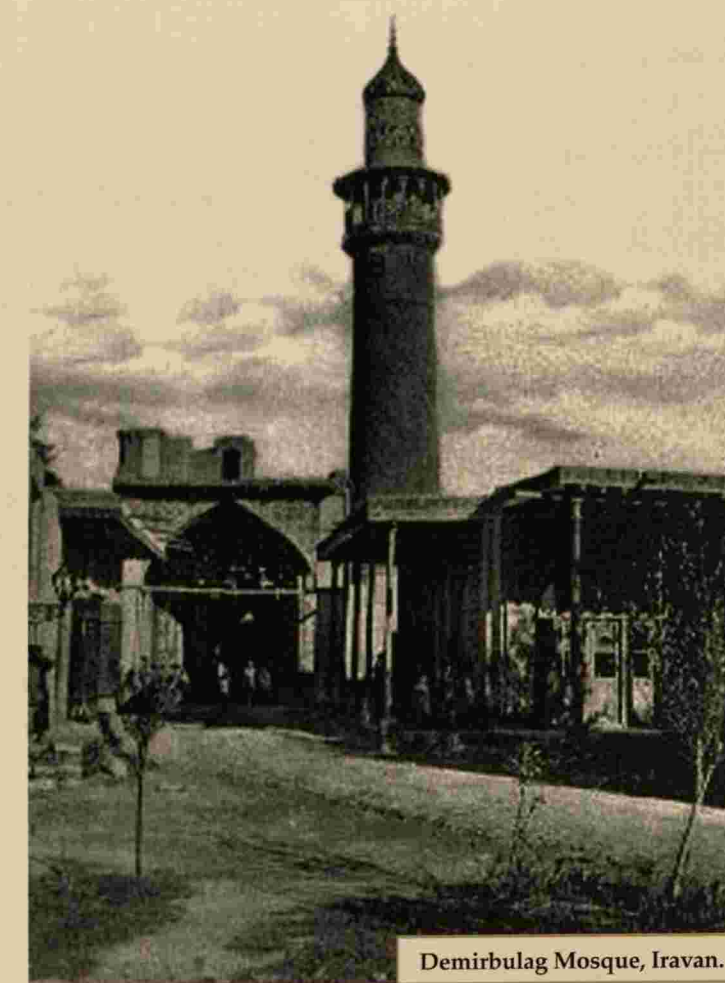
to guarantee conditions for the Turkic-Muslim population's cultural and religious development. Article 12 was about regulating transport issues, especially transit. The Turkish government made a commitment to secure the independence of transit relations along the Sherur, Nakhchivan, Shahtakht, and Julfa roads. The Turkish government gained the right to keep military forces temporarily in the Republic of Azerbaijan (Article 13). The Armenian government agreed to consider invalid the articles of agreements against Turkey signed with any governments (Article 14). The fi-

Azerbaijani lands to the Armenian SSR. Second, ignoring the Azerbaijanis living in Armenia, Soviet Russia carried out plans to give autonomy to the mountainous region of Karabakh in the Azerbaijan SSR. Consequently, in addition to establishing the Armenian SSR in the historical lands of Azerbaijan, grounds were laid for territorial claims through attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of Azerbaijan by establishing an autonomous body within its territory. As a result of concerted efforts of the Armenian SSR and Moscow, a large part of Zangazur, historical Azerbaijani lands,

was given to Armenia. Direct contact between Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan was broken off. Direct contact was created between Armenia and Iran at the same time. On the basis of the new administrative-territorial division ratified on July 20, 1921 by the Armenian NCC (XKS), one more region, Zangazur, was added to the eight counties. Following all these changes, Soviet Russia began the ratification of the borders between the South Caucasus (Soviet government was established in February 1921 in Georgia) and Turkey. On October 13, 1921, with the participation of RSFSR, a new treaty was signed in Kars among the republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia on the one hand, and Turkey on the other hand in accordance with the RSFSR-Turkey Treaty. The Kars Treaty consisted of twenty articles and three additions. With the exception of the Moscow Treaty (March 16, 1921), it was stated in the first article that the treaties signed among the governments realizing their sovereign rights in the territories belonging to the agreed parties, and the ones associated with the aforementioned territories and the South Caucasus republics and the treaties signed with third governments would be rescinded and lose their force. As regards the second article, parties agreed not to acknowledge any peace treaty or other international act that was introduced to them forcefully. The republics of the South Caucasus pledged not to acknowledge any international act not considered by Turkey and vice versa. In the third article it was noted that all the functions and rights relating to the capitulation regime lost their force and were eliminated. Article 4 was dedicated to the issue of borders. Article 5 of the Kars Treaty was about Nakhchivan. It was stated in this article: "The Turkish government, Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan governments agree to the Nakhchivan province being an autonomous territory under the control of Azerbaijan within the borders shown in the third addition of the treaty." Under Article 5, Turkey conceded the city and port of Batumi to Georgia under certain terms. Articles 7, 8, and 9 discussed the border issues between Turkey and Georgia, and the status of the Black Sea and strait. Under Article 10, the agreed parties made commitments not to permit in their territories the creation of other governments, organizations, or groups making claims to govern in some areas of their lands, and groups aiming to fight against other

countries. Articles 11, 12, and 13 were about the issues regarding the citizens of the governments joining the treaty. Under Article 14, within six months of the treaty, a special agreement concerning the refugees of 1918-1920 was to be signed. Articles 15 and 16 considered the declaration of total amnesty regarding the crimes committed because of the military operations on the Caucasus front and the return of military and civil captives. Articles 17 and 18 were about the communication and economic relations between the agreed parties. Under Article 19, the parties committed themselves to sign a consular convention within three months. Article 20, the last, oversaw the ratification of the treaty. It was noted that the exchange of the ratification decrees would be realized in Iravan. With the exclusion of articles 6, 14, 15, 16, 18, and 19, which entered into force right after the treaty was signed, the treaty was supposed to enter into force at the time when the ratification decrees were exchanged. Ratification exchange of the Kars treaty took place on September 22, 1922. The working period of the treaty was not restricted. After the foreign borders of the South Caucasus were ratified, Soviet Russia began taking inter-Republic relations under its control. In 1922, the Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (TSFSR) was established. TSFSR also created conditions to expand the territories of other republics, especially Armenia, at the expense of the territories of Azerbaijan.

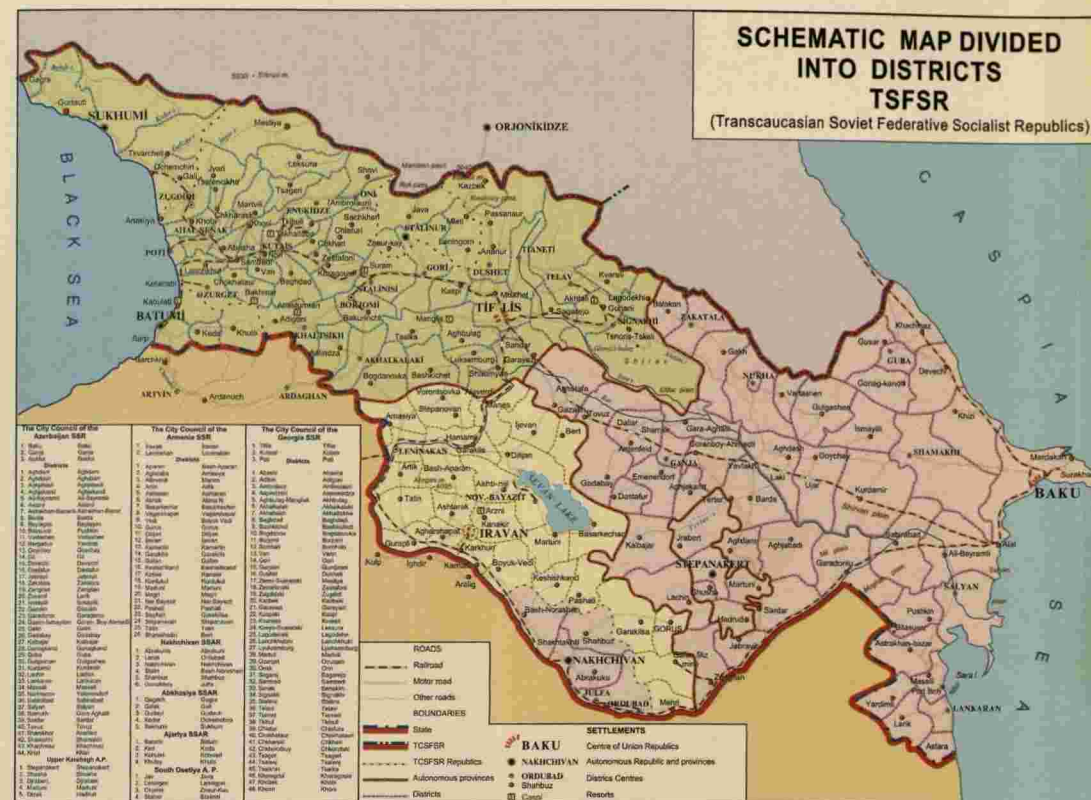
As was clearly stated in the February 4, 1999 decree of Heydar Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, regarding the 75th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, "The ruling forces of Armenia were able to tear



Demirbulag Mosque, Iravan.



Iravan's city bazaar.



Deportation of Azerbaijanis from Western Azerbaijan – the Territory of Armenia

For 70 years, since 1918, when the Armenian government was established in western Azerbaijan, up to the end of the 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, Azerbaijanis had been subjected to mass deportation three times from their historical lands: 1918-1920, 1948-1953, and the end of 1980s – the beginning of 1990s.

1918-1920: This is the first period of the history of forceful deportation of Azerbaijanis from their ancestral lands that were “turned into” Armenia. This deportation was implemented by the newly emerged Armenian government. At this point, the deportation was executed through other forms of ethnic cleansing, specifically by using genocide. According to the calculations of Armenian sources, 565,000 of 575,000 Azerbaijanis living in Armenia at the end of the First World War were either killed or deported. According to Armenian writer Z. Korkadyan, “In 1920, after the Dashnak’s ruling, there remained a few more than 10,000 Turks (Azerbaijanis).” In 1922, there were 72,596 Azerbaijanis here after the return of 60,000 refugees. Another Armenian author, A. Lalayan, wrote that Armenia’s Dashnak administration “exterminated 60% of the Azerbaijani population during the 30 months of its power (May 1918 - November 1920).”

English military reporter Robert Scotland Liddell’s information confirms these figures. He wrote, “When I was in Shusha in January, I told one English officer that I was getting ready to go to Zangazur to see in which conditions are found 40,000 Muslims that suffered at the hands of Armenians.”

First in Azerbaijan (April 28, 1920), then in Armenia (November 29, 1920), a certain part of the deported Azerbaijanis were returned to their previous lands thanks to the Soviet government. They then became the victims of the 1948-1953 deportations.

1948-1953: After Armenia became a Soviet republic in November 1920, the policy of Azerbaijani deportation went in a more dangerous direction. In 1920-1930, the ideological declaration of “proletarian internationalism” played the role of a mask in organizing the oppression of Azerbaijanis in the Armenian SSR. On the contrary, special conditions were demanded for Armenians living in Azerbaijan and other Soviet republics. The result of this was that in 1923, Azerbaijan’s historical Mountainous Karabakh Region was artificially separated from the plain regions and became the Daglig (Mountainous) Karabakh Autonomous Region. During that period when national government-building movements were prevalent in the USSR, the non-Azerbaijani Head of Azerbaijan S.M. Kirov (1922-1926) and others did not demand relevant status for the Azerbaijanis

living in the Armenian SSR. Consequently, Azerbaijanis living in the Armenian SSR remained outside the political structures.

Armenia obtained a favorable opportunity to further oppress Azerbaijani citizens who remained without autonomy. Then Armenia began to incite the Armenians who had gained autonomous status for the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabakh (ARMK) of Azerbaijan to separatism. Soon after World War II in November-December 1945, the Armenian leadership raised the question with the USSR leadership of handing Mountainous Karabakh over to Armenia. This question was not resolved. A short time later, on December 23, 1947, Stalin signed a resolution by the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the resettlement of Azerbaijani kolkhoz (collective farm) members and other Azerbaijanis from the Armenian SSR to the lowlands of the Kur and Aras Rivers of the Azerbaijan SSR.

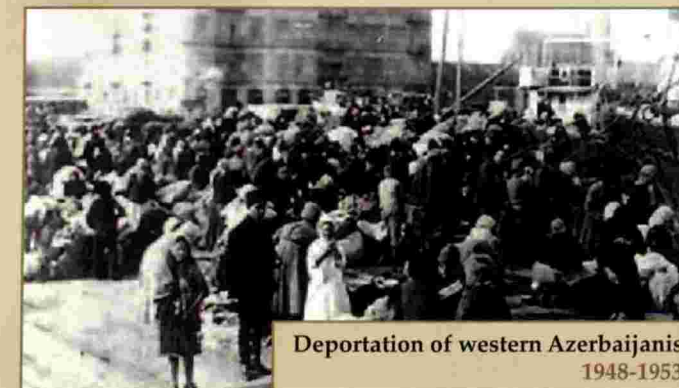
On March 10, 1948, another resolution was signed on resettlement. The period between the dates of the resolutions exposes another problem. A resolution on the resettlement affecting the destiny of more than 10,000 people was adopted hastily and related measures were identified later. Therefore, it is obvious that there was a close connection between the Soviet leadership’s consideration for Armenia’s claim to the ARMK of Azerbaijan and the resolutions regarding the resettlement of Azerbaijanis from the Armenian SSR. In fact, the leadership of the USSR worked out the sequence of these two issues: first, Azerbaijanis were resettled from Armenia and then the claim concerning the ARMK was addressed.

Textual study of the resolutions by the Council of Ministers of the USSR shows that they did not meet any demands for human or civil rights. It was clearly stated that the deported persons would be settled only in the lowlands of the Kur and Aras Rivers. However, it was stated that Azerbaijanis should not be removed from certain territories of Armenia,

but from the entire country. It is apparent that the plan was to get rid of all Azerbaijanis from Armenia. According to the 11th Article of the resolution dated December 23, 1947, it was intended to settle foreign Armenians in place of the deported Azerbaijanis.

Although this process was called resettlement in the official documents, it was in all respects an act of deportation (deliberate, unexpected, and compulsory). A reference by the Minister of the Interior, dated May 3, 1948, sheds light on these issues. The reference, conducted on the basis of agents’ reports, considered the main reasons for resettling Azerbaijanis in addition to the settlement of foreign Armenians: an anticipated war between the USSR and Turkey, distrust of Azerbaijanis, and the hostile attitude of Armenians against Turks. Opinions about the resettlement being compulsory and serious protests against it were also recorded.

From 1948-1953, when the deportation was realized (this process was halted after Stalin’s death), about 150,000



Azerbaijanis were expelled from the Armenian SSR. All the property, history, and cultural monuments belonging to the people in the Armenian SSR were left there. The Armenian government and Armenians added to their wealth with these properties.

The arbitrariness of Armenian governmental bodies, hostile actions by Armenians against Azerbaijanis, mass acts of violence, incorrect selection of the location for the resettlement of these people in the Azerbaijan SSR during the deportation of Azerbaijanis subjected innocent people to death.

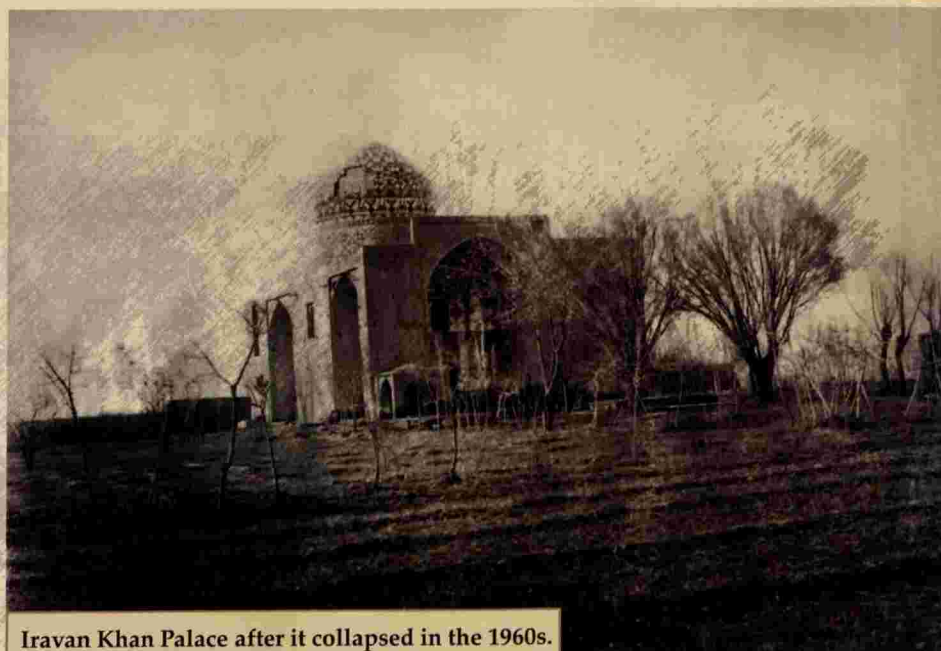
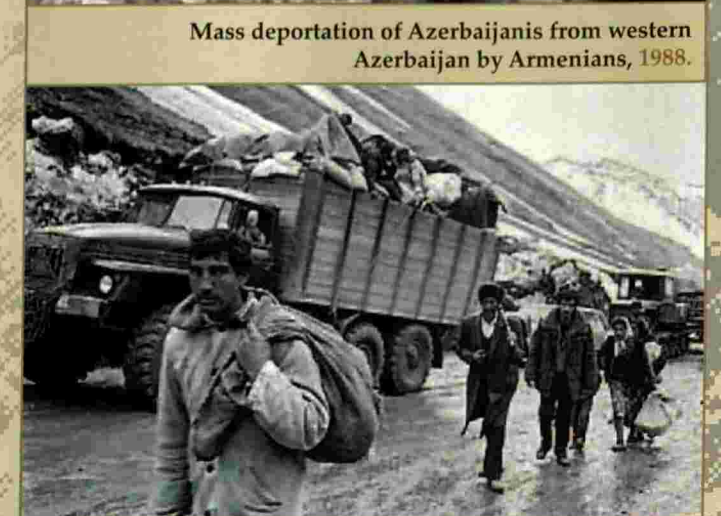
The deportation of Azerbaijanis from the Armenian SSR from 1948-1953 was one of the harshest episodes in the history of Soviet deportations taking place up to that time (including the deportations of Koreans in 1937; Germans at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942; Poles in November 1942; Crimean Tatars on May 18, 1944 and others).

The end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

The Armenian SSR and the Soviet leadership that supported Armenia were not completely successful in deporting all Azerbaijanis from Armenia. On one hand, the process of deporting Azerbaijanis from the country was not achieved and on the other hand a certain fraction of those deported returned to their native lands after Stalin’s death.

The Armenian government maintained its anti-Azerbaijani policy. In the early 1960s, during the Cuban Missile crisis, relations between the USSR and the U.S. became tense. NATO member Turkey was drawn into the conflict and Soviet-Turkish relations cooled. The USSR began

an anti-Turkey hysteria. In this situation in the mid 1960s, Armenia was granted permission to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the events of 1915 which took place in the Ottoman Empire. This was accompanied by mass violence against Azerbaijanis living in the Armenian SSR. This case recurred every year at the same time. In 1977, during the adoption of the new constitution of the USSR, Armenia failed once more in its claim on Mountainous Karabakh and this aggravated the anti-Azerbaijani policy in Armenia. In 1987, with solid support from the Soviet leadership, the “issue of Mountainous Karabakh” was included on the agenda. At the beginning of 1988, Azerbaijanis were deported further from the Armenian SSR in order to realize territorial claims against Azerbaijan. The deportations became cruel and more than 250,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to leave in 1988-1989 and they were subjected to genocide. The last Azerbaijani location, the Nuvadi village, which had withstood Armenian pressure for nearly three years, was evacuated in August 1991. Thus, in consequence of the deportation policy implemented deliberately and systematically by Armenia, the expulsion of Azerbaijanis from their historical country was completed. At this time, to realize its claim on Mountainous Karabakh, Armenia launched an undeclared war on Azerbaijan to invade the country. Azerbaijan’s Mountainous Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts, 20% of the Azerbaijani territory, were occupied. Armenia invaded the historical homeland of Azerbaijanis by means of deportations and infringed on the internationally recognized territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by occupying its lands.



Iravan Khan Palace after it collapsed in the 1960s.

Mass Name Changing of Historical Places Belonging to Azerbaijanis in Armenia

The names of residential settlements of Turkic origin were preserved as they were on the map and in the statistical information issued under tsarist Russia. During the Soviet administration, however, official "changing of names operation" in Armenia was executed in 1935, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1957, 1962, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, and 1980 through the decrees of the Armenian SSR Supreme Council. By August 1988, the names of 521 residential settlements of Turkic origin in the territory of Armenia had been changed. It is possible to follow the list of changed residential settlement names systematically in the 1976 and 1988 publications of "Administrative Territory Division of the Armenian SSR," the April 9, 1991 decree of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR, and the map of the Republic of Armenia printed in 2000. Name changing operations were carried out in the following order:

1. First of all, special attention was given to the changing of the names of residential areas related to Azerbaijanis' family roots and their historical past. For instance, Ashagi Turkmenli — Lusagyug (Echmiadzin), Gorchulu — Mrgashad (Hoktemberyan), Sardarabad — Hoktember (Hoktemberyan), Bayandur — Vagadur (Gorus), Shirvanjig — Lernakert (Artik).

2. The names of several residential settlements were literally translated into Armenian. For example, Armudlu — Tandzut (Hoktemberyan), Dashgala — Karaberd (Ani), Derekend — Dzoragyug (Gugark), Darachichak — Tsakhkadzor (Razdan), Gol — Lichk (Martuni), Gullubulag — Dakhpuyr (Gukasyan).

3. The names of several residential settlements were changed under the guise of "internationalization." For instance, Garagishlag — Dostlug (Masis), Sultanabad — Shurabad (Amasiya), Jujukend — Gizil Shafag (Kalinino), Ashaghy Nejili — Sayat-Nova (Masis), Chanakhchi — Sovetakert (Ararat).

4. The names of some residential settlements were merely changed into similar but Armenianized names. For example, Derabbas — Darbas (Sisian), Deliler — Dalar (Artashat), Eleyez — Aragats (Talin), Erebus — Arevis (Sisyan), Gabud — Kapuyt (Azizbayov), Chirpili — Jrapı (Ani).

5. In the aforementioned publications of the "Armenian SSR Administrative Territory Division" the words "upper," "lower," "big," and "small" in front of the names of residential areas of Turkish origin were translated into Armenian as "verin", "nerkin", "mets", and "pokr" to create an image that the names are in fact Armenian. They tried to give the impression that the changed names are of Armenian origin. For instance, Verin Zagali — Akhpradzor (Vardenis), Nerkin Zeyve — Hartashen (Echmiadzin), Mets Kepenekchi — Musaelyan (Akhuryan), Pokr Shish Tepe — Pokr Sepasar (Gukasyan).

6. Before 1935, the names of the residential settlements of Turkish origin changed in Armenia were changed without the decrees of the Supreme Council. For instance, Bebirli — Bartsrashen (Ani), Deymedagli — Shrvnantz (Gafan), Tovuzgala — Berd (Shemsheddil), Shirabad — Parakar (Echmiadzin).

It is worth mentioning that in addition to changing the names of the residential settlements through the decrees of the Supreme Council, hundreds of names of Azerbaijani villages were wiped from the list of Armenian residential settlements under the pretext that the villages were united. For example, through the February 5, 1978 decree of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR, the names of Ashagi Kilse (Gufaark), Agtala (Kamo), Rahimabad (Masis), and Gamishli (Vardenis) were removed from the list. During the years of 1918-1987, 254 Azerbaijani residential settlements in the territory of Armenia were erased from the list of residential settlements through different means (by subjecting the population to genocide, by deporting, and so on).

After the 1948-1953 deportation, more than 60 names of residential settlements were changed. In 1978 alone, sixty toponyms of Turkic origin in 23 regions were changed. Through the April 9, 1991 decree of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR, the names of 90 settlements belonging to Azerbaijanis were changed. In general, 667 toponyms have been changed through to current times.

The deportation of Azerbaijanis from their ancestral lands by the Republic of Armenia yielded grave results. Thousands of people were subjected to genocide during deportations. However, the Republic of Azerbaijan took any measures necessary to secure the safety of each Azerbaijani deported from Armenia. Azerbaijanis from Armenia successfully integrated into all areas of life in the Republic of Azerbaijan and participated in its socio-economic, political, and cultural development. Despite all the attempts of Armenia, the historical traditions, rich cultural heritage, and folklore samples created in western Azerbaijan across thousands of years were not obliterated; they preserved their existence in a new historical situation and continue to do so. Hundreds of thousands of people deported from western Azerbaijan, from the territory of the Republic of Armenia, live with one dream: the great return and union with their ancestral lands.

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Iravan Carpets

Characteristics and Artistic Features



Stone tomb. 15th-16th centuries. Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

Inscription on the grave: "Aysoltan 992 AH (1584)." From the description on the grave, it is clear that Aysoltan was a carpet weaver.



The "Ulduzlu Gazakh" (Starred Gazakh) carpet, woven in the Urud village of Sisyan in the Zangazur district. Carpets woven here are unique for their dark colors. This is due to the native plants of the district. The patterns depicted on the middle border of the carpet match the patterns on historical monuments and stone tombs in the territory of Urud village. These geometric shapes are related to the ancient beliefs of Azerbaijan and reflect the figurative expression of earth and sky. Ancient Turkic epic stamps are also encountered on this carpet. This assortment, which belongs to the "Ulduzlu Gazakh" collection, was woven in limited numbers in the areas where the Azerbaijanis were settled in the Caucasus. The size of this carpet, which was woven in Sisyan is 250x150 centimeters; the carpet woven in Gazakh's Shikhli village is 280 x160 centimeters; the carpet woven in Georgia's Gabal village, where Azerbaijanis lived, is 180x180 centimeters. The "Ulduzlu Gazakh" carpet woven in Sisyan has darker colors and was woven based on Karabakh technology; carpets woven in Gazakh's Shikhli village were woven on the basis of Gazakh technology; and the tall pile-weave carpet woven in Georgia's Gabal village was woven on the basis of ancient Turkic-Seljuk technology. "Ulduzlu Gazakh" carpets were woven in Zagatala's old Jar and Mukhakh villages. The "Ulduzlu Gazakh" carpets woven in Mukhakh were woven using Turkic-Seljuk technology, but the ones woven in Jar were woven using tekargaj technology. The limited number of these carpets makes them unique and increases their artistic and historical significance. They are assessed highly by world carpet masters for their composition. The stone tombs with descriptions and writing on them as well as this carpet speak about the ancient culture and carpet weaving traditions of the Azerbaijanis living in Urud village.

The city of Iravan and its surrounding provinces were residential areas of the Turkic Oghuz tribes. Signs of the local population's history, worldviews, and ethnic identity can be seen in numerous locales in this area: tombs and burial grounds (including Turkic kurgans), the remains of castles, palaces and fortresses, caravanserais, bridges, strangely-formed stones, horse and ram monuments, temples, churches, mosques, and sacred places like pirs and ojags. The evidence of the past and the rich cultural heritage of Azerbaijani Turks (Azerbaijanis) that once lived here is shown in the names of places and the examples of folklore that have reached modern times. Relying on nature's blessings, the people of this area were often engaged in craftsmanship, agriculture, and cattle rearing.

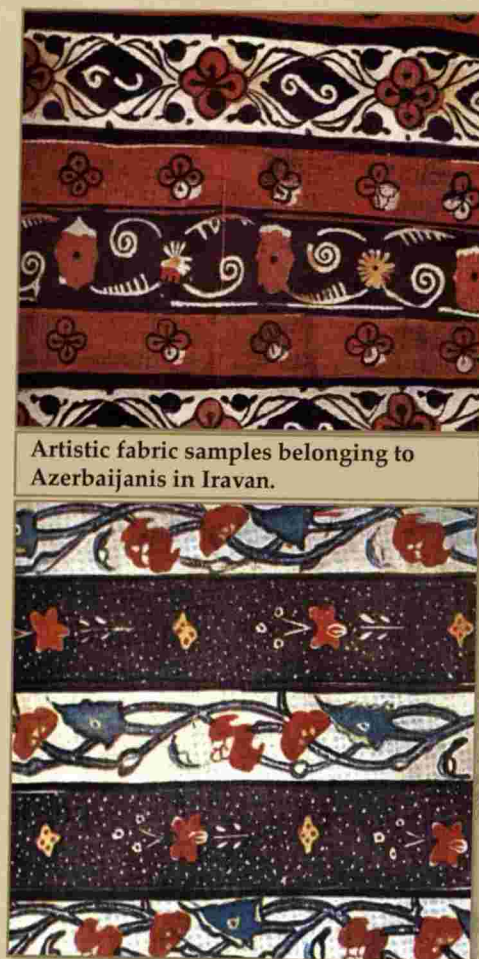
The world outlook of the people that once settled here can still be traced through the folklore, myths, poetry, and tales that sprung from local imagination. In addition to the myths and legends reflecting the traditional Turkish outlook of this region, stories commemorating the history of each geographic and sacred place were also created. From Agbaba to Vedibasar, from Loru to Zangazur, and from Goyche to Zangibasar the architecture and art examples reflect ancient historic roots.

Most monument names in western Azerbaijan exemplify originality and semantics of Turkic origin. The mythical views of the inhabitants, their oral storytelling and characters are manifest in the architecture and especially in the carpet weaving of this region. By studying the place names and origins (toponymy and ethno-toponymy) of this region, each province and village in the area has a relationship to the legend of Noah's Ark connected to Gemigaya and Nakhchivan. The name of Vedi was taken from Agridagi (Mount Ararat) and the valley's Vad idol, and other places like Goger, Erbi, Zengi, Gerni, Gamer, Artash, and Saklar were taken from the names of ancient Turkic tribes. The traces of most of the place and tribe names in "The Book of Dede Korkut" are linked to western Azerbaijan. In Iravan folklore, time begins from Noah. In the folklore of this region, Agridagi is the place that is mentioned most often. As sacred signs in Iravan myths, Agridagi represents the first place and Noah's era represents the first time. In the imagination and folklore of this region's residents, the image of Agridagi in Iravan (including mythical views of people regarding the mountain) has a semantic interpretation as the sacred center of the world. As symbols in the value system of people living in this area, the lands and mountains were represented not only as living places in the folklore, but also as access points to the world. The epics of ancient Turks assigned saintly meanings to names such as Ergenekon, Altay, Altuntug, Altungan, and other mountains like Agridagi and Alayaz. The characters created in the myths, legends, and stories of this mountainous re-

Illustration of the legend about Noah's arrival in the lands of Nakhchivan and Iravan from Mount Ararat.



Carpet. "Ulduzlu Gazakh" (Star Gazakh). Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur, western Azerbaijan. 250x150. 1880.

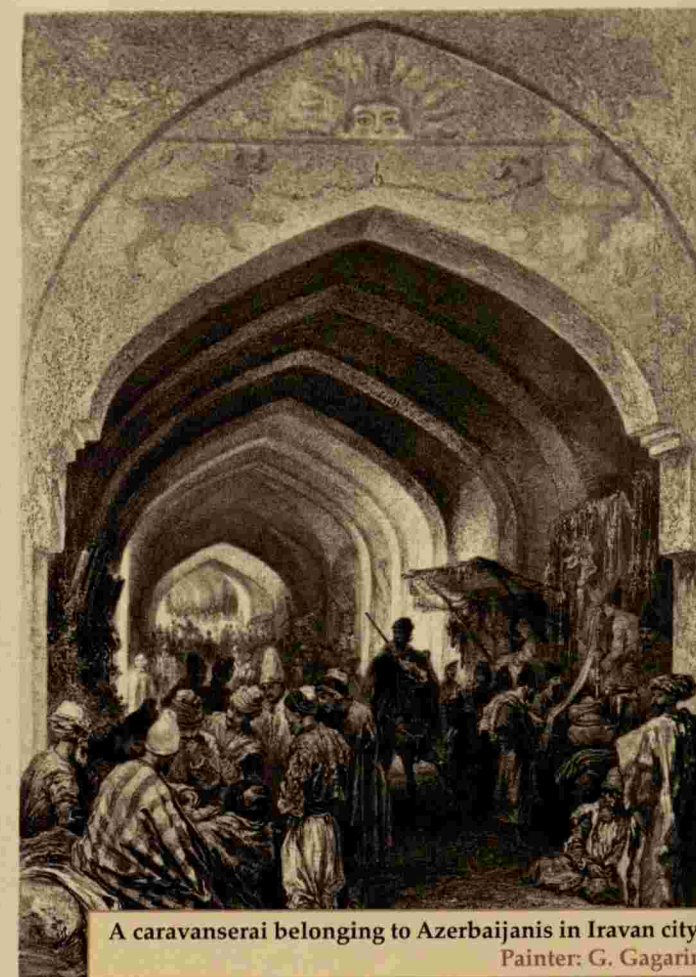


Artistic fabric samples belonging to Azerbaijanis in Iravan.

gion were associated with dragons. The spirit of the mountain was portrayed as a dragon in the mythical views of both the Huns and Bulgarians. The region is located in a mountainous area and is therefore described in the folklore as a symbol of defense and protection. The fight between good and evil was one of the major motifs in the oral literature, especially as related to times when enemies directly attacked the mountains. According to the legends and sagas that depict both sacred places and historical figures, the population of this area epitomized the Turkish faith and worldview.

The city of Iravan and districts such as Vedibasar, Zangezur, Daralayaz, Agbaba, Shorayel, Loru, Pambak, Goyche, Garagoyunlu, and Shamshaddin used to be in close contact with other districts as part of western Azerbaijan. Strong ties connected this region, which is on one of the large trade routes, with the Ottoman government, northern and eastern Azerbaijan, and Georgia's Borchali district. According to historical facts, the traditions and way of life of the Turks living in Shamshaddin, Karakoyunlu, and Goyche were the same as those of the people of Ganjabasar. Historically part of the Karabakh Khanate, life in the Zangazur district was very similar to Karabakh Turks regarding customs and daily routine. The western part of this area became very connected with Anatolian Turks. Ties were also formed between Iravan and Zangibasar and Southern Azerbaijan's cities of Tabriz, Khoy, and Maku. Examples of these ties can be clearly seen both in the dialects and artistic traditions. This region is distinguished by its rich cultural heritage, folklore, literature, and music, forming part of Azerbaijani culture in general. The history of different regions, their cultural heritage, and toponymy prove that they are directly connected with general Azerbaijani history and culture.

Western Azerbaijan is mainly considered a mountainous and hilly region, with colorful and rich natural beauty. Rivers and meadows make this area useful for cattle breeding. Six climate zones lend particular colors and shades to this region. The districts of Vedi, Gamarli, and Ashtarak are identifiable for their abundant gardens and grapevines, while Mehri is distinctive for its



A caravanserai belonging to Azerbaijanis in Iravan city.
Painter: G. Gagarin

subtropical fruits. Other areas are famous for their alpine meadows and mountain plants. In addition to forests covered with oaks, hornbeam, sycamores, pear, apple, cherry, nut, cornelian cherry (zogal), and plum (alycha) trees, this land grew wormwood and various colorful plants in fields and on rocks. Its multifaceted and complicated topographic relief contributed to the incomparable flora. In the high mountains, alpine meadows covered with colorful flowers looked like a big carpet. These features aided in the development of animal husbandry, especially the rearing of sheep, and the extraction of natural dyes.

Carpets and carpet products hold a special place in the daily life of Azerbaijanis living in this area. In addition to different-sized carpets and kilims, there were namazligs (prayer rugs), chuls (saddle blanket), and other woven products in western Azerbaijan. Its rich nature lent exceptional shades to the carpets of this region and contributed mixed dyes to their color compositions. A large assortment of dyes is one of the main features distinguishing the carpets of this region from others. The imaginations, mythical views, and beliefs of the local population took on a special meaning in the patterns and compositional structures of carpets. Mythical birds and animals, as well as specific semantic elements signifying a certain approach to the world were particular to the carpets of this region. Even as Iravan carpets maintain strong ties with different carpet-weaving schools of Azerbaijan, they expertly represent the thinking and feelings of people in this area.

The Iravan Khanate and surrounding districts maintained extensive trade relations with other Azerbaijani khanates as well as many foreign countries. Reyneke, a Russian who visited Iravan in 1782, noted that it had abundant cotton fab-

ric, silk, spring wheat, and wine. In addition to paddy rice, sesame and flax were cultivated. While visiting Iravan, I. Chopin talked about the connection between the number of tokhmacharligs (place where silkworms were kept) he noticed in the area of the khanate and the development of silkworm breeding. Iravan was famous for its vineyards, as well as for different kinds of fruits and vegetables. According to a contemporaneous source, in 1782 Isak Pasha requested the transfer from Iravan to Beyazid of black watermelon, blue watermelon, mursegulu, cucumber, surahi, basil, henna dust, eggplant, and other seeds valued at seven thousand dinars and two abbasi. The names of the seeds that were written in the expenditure notebook of the Uchkilse (three churches) temple are all in Azerbaijani Turkish. This indicates that Azerbaijani Turks lived and settled in this land and had been engaged in agriculture, especially farming. All this proves that Armenians came to this area later.

Year-round cattle farming specific to Azerbaijan's other regions developed in the Agri valley. Pastures in the districts of Girkhbulag, Goyche, Aparan, Darachichak, Garnibasar, Vedibasar, and Talin created fertile conditions for cattle rearing. According to a contemporaneous source, a number of caravans were brought from Tabriz to Iravan. Iravan exported cotton to Tbilisi, Erzurum, Akhaltsikhe, and Kars, as well as rice, wheat, barley, and salt to Tabriz, Khoy, and Bayazid. Iravan's position at a crossroads created a reason for the construction of many bridges, caravanserais, zerbkhanas (mint), and bazaars. One of the trade routes was a caravan road connecting India, Central Asia, and Iran with the Iravan Khanate through Tabriz and Nakhchivan. This road was also called the Erzurum or Bezirgan road. Another caravan road from Iravan to Erzurum passed through the

Akhi Tavakkul Zaviyeh ruins in Daralayaz district are very interesting. There is a board three meters tall and two meters wide at the entrance of the Zaviyeh. Three circles representing three beliefs in Earth, Moon, and Sun were engraved on this board, and in each circle there are twelve lines symbolizing the twelve Imams and eight-pointed stars indicating the number of Turkish tribes living in this district. In general, 120 historical monuments, 230 mosques and pirs (sacred places), and 670 cemeteries existed in the area of Iravan.



Tovuz khanim. The daughter of the Nakhchivan Khan and the daughter-in-law of Abbasgulu khan Iravanski.



"Oturmush gadin" (Seated woman).
Painter: Mirza Gadim Iravani.



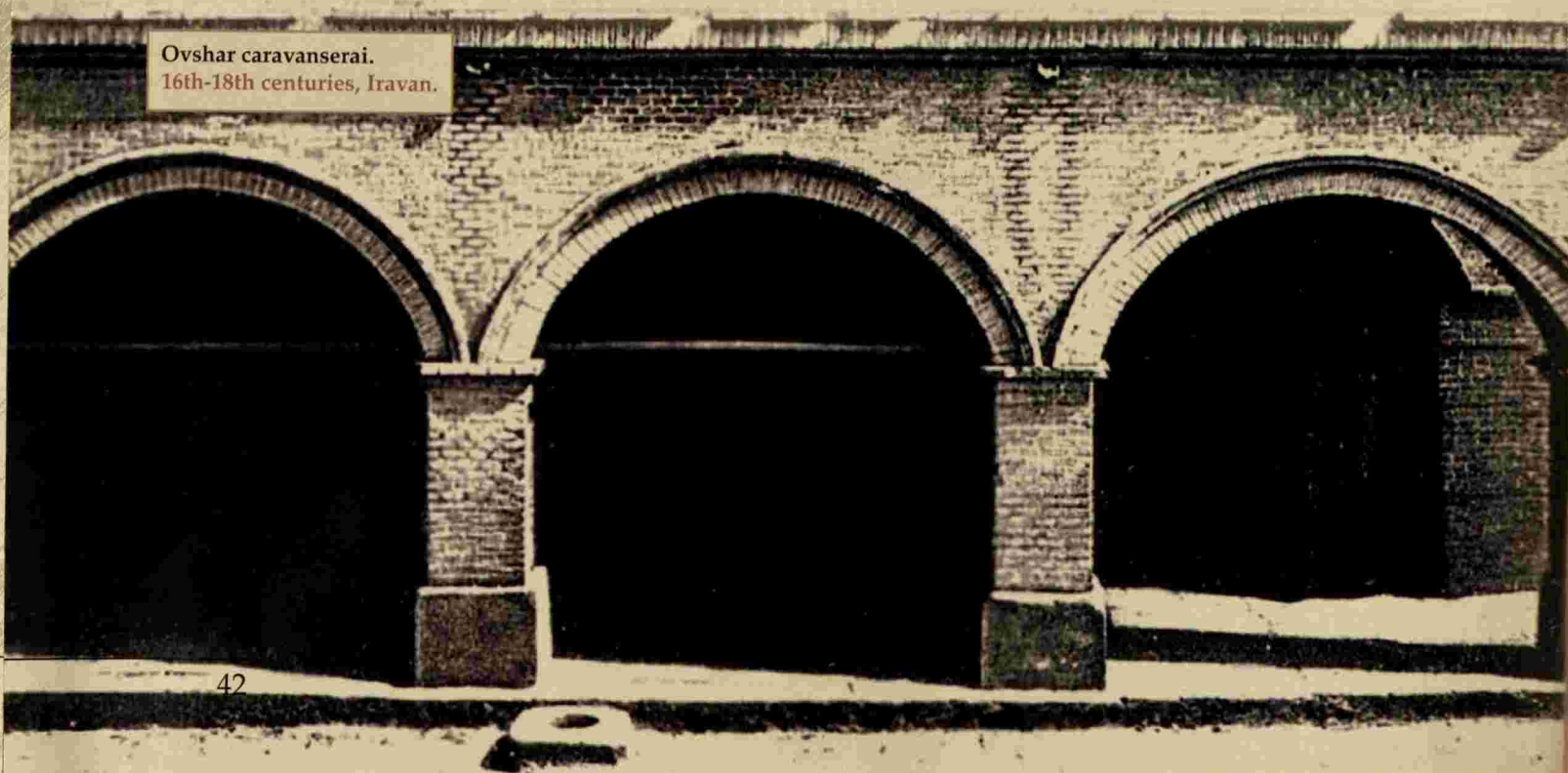
Dervish, Iravan.

northern foothills of the Aparan and Alagoz Mountains and reached Kars and Hasangala, joining a major route there. The caravan road from Iravan to Tbilisi passed through Uchkilse, Sardarabad, Hamamli, Jalaloglu, and Shulaver as well. In the seventeenth century, French traveler J. Chardin wrote that this road was as long as the Iravan-Agstafa road. Chardin even mentioned the names of residential settlements situated on this road: Bjni, Keshikkend, Delijan, Garadash, Melikkend, and Korpukend. This road linked Iravan to Ganja. Then in Shamakhi it merged with Azerbaijan's main trade road going to Russia. In the districts within the Iravan Khanate, the writings on monuments, inscriptions on rocks, and the symbols carved on stones hinted at the lifestyle of the residents. Emblems of Turkic Oghuz sagas and even occasionally their names were clearly depicted in these areas, which are unmistakably similar to the monuments in other districts of Azerbaijan.

The remains of some constructions from the second century B.C. found in the Zangazur district at Garakilse were known as "Goshun Dash" and they resembled the monuments encountered in several ancient Turkish settlements.

A number of monuments in Zangazur's Urud village denote that this land is ancient. Some examples include ancient bridges, graveside monuments, ram statues, the Babek Castle kurgans (burial tombs), a nine meter grave-top monument from the seventh century in Agdu village that was decorated with Turkish ornaments, the remains of the fortress walls in Kirmizi Tepe, cuneiform scripts on the ruins of Kolagiren castle on the shore of Goyche lake, the Gerni castle of Gargars with calligraphy patterns and ornaments, monuments belonging to the fourth century near Uchkilse, the Goy Melekleri (sky angels) Temple rich with cuneiform scripts, Galinja, Anagala, Ganlija, Kechorus, Gosh, Gipchag Ojagi, Ergez Pir, and numerous other monuments.

Akhi Tavakkul Zaviyeh ruins in Daralayaz district are very interesting. There is a board three meters tall and two meters wide at the entrance of the Zaviyeh. Three circles representing three beliefs in Earth, Moon, and Sun were engraved on this board, and in each circle there are twelve lines symbolizing the twelve Imams and eight-pointed stars indicating the number of Turkish tribes

Stone tomb. 15th-16th centuries.
Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.Ovshar caravanserai.
16th-18th centuries, Iravan."Scene with two figures."
Painter: Mirza Gadim Iravani.

Art played an essential role in the life of the Iravan Khanate, including Azerbaijan's traditional arts such as weaving and pottery that were widespread in all of western Azerbaijan.

living in this district. In general, 120 historical monuments, 230 mosques and pirs (sacred places), and 670 cemeteries existed in the area of Iravan. Even before the existence of the Iravan Khanate, carpet weaving held a special place in the decorative applied arts here. For years, samples of Iravan carpet-weaving schools have been exhibited in foreign countries and as resources of Armenian collectors, although their pattern compositions are closer to Gazakh, Karabakh, and Tabriz carpet-weaving schools. These unique samples introduced as Armenian carpets were woven by Azerbaijani carpet masters. Woven products like carpets, kilims, palazs, and sheddies, among others were not characteristic for Armenians, who did not historically raise sheep.

Another area of national ingenuity is embroidery. Two needlework samples from Iravan Khanate are preserved in the National History Museum of Azerbaijan. In fact, the flags of the Iravan Khanate captured when the Russians invaded in 1827 are believed to be rare needlework samples. Historical facts confirm that colorful dyes were extracted from plants in the Shilechi district, formerly located in the middle of Iravan, and fabrics with pressed patterns were made from these dyed threads. Western Azerbaijan's districts were identifiable by their various and colorful carpets: Loru, Pambak, Shamshaddin, Aparan, Talin, Ashtarak, Arzin, Akhti, Girmizikend, Basarkechar, Kavar, Sardarabad, Uchkilse, Daralayaz, Vedi, Gamarli, Zangibasars, and Soy-lan. In general, just as the rich culture, literature, and folklore of Azerbaijanis living in western Azerbaijan affected their neighbors, carpets woven here also influenced others. Art played an essential role in the life of the Iravan Khanate, including Azerbaijan's traditional arts such as weaving and pottery that were widespread in all of western Azerbaijan. General weaving as well as carpet and palaz production were particularly specialized. The travelers of that time wrote about how local people raised sheep and wove beau-

tiful carpets, bags, palazs, chuls (saddle blankets), warm winter clothes, gloves, and socks out of sheep wool. I. Chopin particularly noted that every household had weaving equipment. Another art related to weaving was dyeing. Different shades of a dye called girmiz or koshenli were used in this region. Gammel, an Academician of the Russian Science Academy, researched this dye and compared the quality of Iravan girmiz to Mexican dyes.

The region was also famous for the production of leather products and soap making, as well as butter and salt production.

Given their historical roots, the carpets of the region were famous across the world. The carpets discussed in this book mostly cover the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a result of the deportations of 1948-1953, thousands of people were forced to leave their homelands and move to different places. There is no doubt that these villages lost their carpet traditions. However, the carpets woven in western Azerbaijan can be grouped in accordance with their artistic resources, weaving technology, color-pattern composition, and by provinces:

- Group I: Agbaba and Shorayel provinces
- Group II: Loru and Pambak provinces
- Group III: Shamshaddin province
- Group IV: Goyche province
- Group V: Garnibasars and Vedibasars provinces
- Group VI: Zangibasars and Sardarabad provinces
- Group VII: Girkhbulags and Ashtarak provinces
- Group VIII: Aparan, Darachichak, and Talin provinces
- Group IX: Zangazur province
- Group X: Daralayaz province
- Group XI: Iravan city

Agbaba and Shorayel provinces

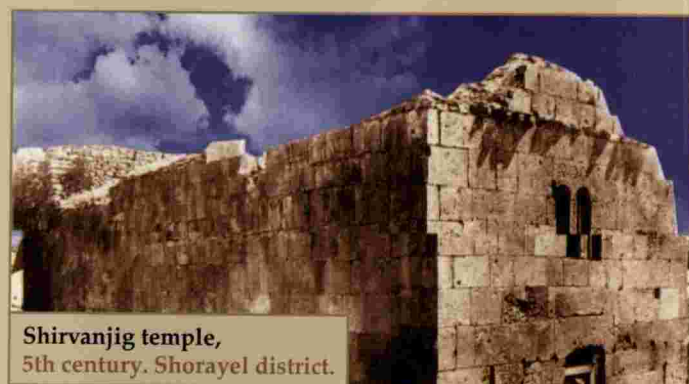


Place names like Ibish, Delisereran, Chalab, and Il-anli in the Agbaba province were linked to the names of tribes living there. The word cheleb, which conferred the notion of Allah (God), expressed place names related to the animistic and toponymic views of the Turks in the Agbaba area. The relationship with saintly spirits and with the animals in which these spirits presented their images show traces of shamanistic beliefs that reflected themselves on the carpets. As Islam spread in Agbaba, the worldviews of Turks living there were affected by the new religion.

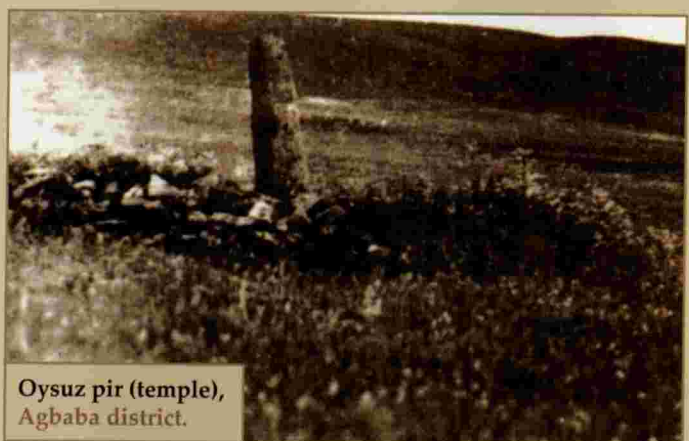
Namazligs (prayer rugs) woven for the mosques and houses in this district demonstrate the Islamic culture of the Turks living in this area. This shows that Turks have historically lived in Agbaba and have engraved the traces of their worldview on monuments and carpets. Beliefs became symbols and materialized in the carpets that kept the people's spirits alive and passed on to our time.

Carpets were believed to be very important for the households of people in Agbaba. In addition, palazzs, chuls, salt bags, khurjuns (saddle or carpet bags), me-freshs, and other products made life easier for the people. The weaving technology and color compositions of these artifacts reflected the aesthetic views of local people, who were mainly engaged in rearing cattle and different breeds of sheep, and who wove stunning carpets using natural dyes extracted from plants. Grain crops like wheat, barley, and flax were planted and used to produce butter and linseed oil. In addition, bushes and flowers in the mountains were used to prepare medicine and a variety of colors to dye yarn.

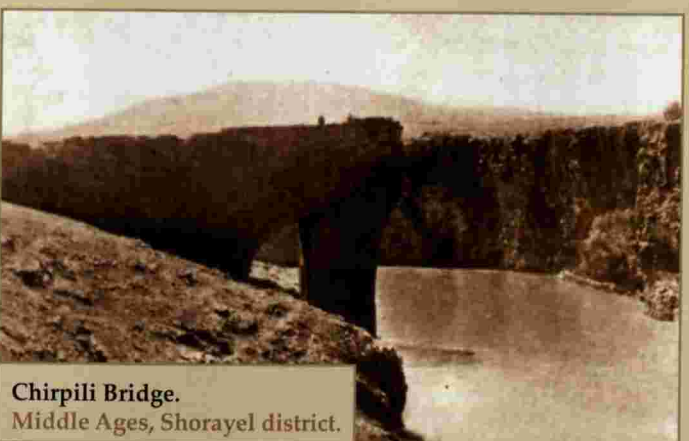
The Agbaba district is surrounded by mountains to the west and north. Despite its harsh winters, this area is rich with mountain flowers. The sources of the rivers Garakhan, Jivinli, Seldagidan, and Mokuz begin at Ziyarat and Goy Dag in the Agbaba Mountains and pour into the valley's beautiful Arpa Golu (Arpa Lake). The scenery surrounding Arpa Gol almost creates a mysterious world wrapped with a colorful, beautiful carpet adorned with flowers emerging at the arrival of spring. "The Book of Dede Korkut" traces the names of almost every village, valley, and mountain in the ancient Turkic land of Agbaba. The following names have taken their sources from the epic: Okhchu Oglu village from Ense Goja Oglu Okhchu, Goy Dag from Kochke Dagi mentioned by Gazan Khan, Domrul Galacha near Gulluje village from Deli Domrul's name, Gara Guney hill from the name of Gazan Khan's brother Gara Gune, and the name of Mumu Khan from the name of Demir Donlu Mumag.



Shirvanjig temple,
5th century. Shorayel district.



Oysuz pir (temple),
Agbaba district.



Chirpili Bridge.
Middle Ages, Shorayel district.

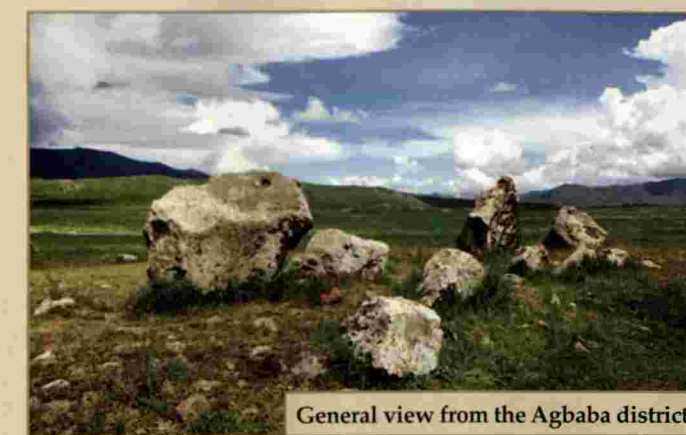


Agbaba district is rich with mountains, hills, and springs whose names find their roots in Turkic languages. Local traditions, names, and images were depicted on the carpets. This land, rich with different minerals, provided specific shades of dye when mixed with the colors of meadow flowers. Unfortunately, not a single knot is being made in Agbaba today. Those hands that made friends with the rainbow-colored strings and caressed them with love were driven out of this land. After the Azerbaijanis were forced by Armenians to leave this district, it seems as if Agbaba has hidden all its beauties from people, and the sacred land has turned to ruin.

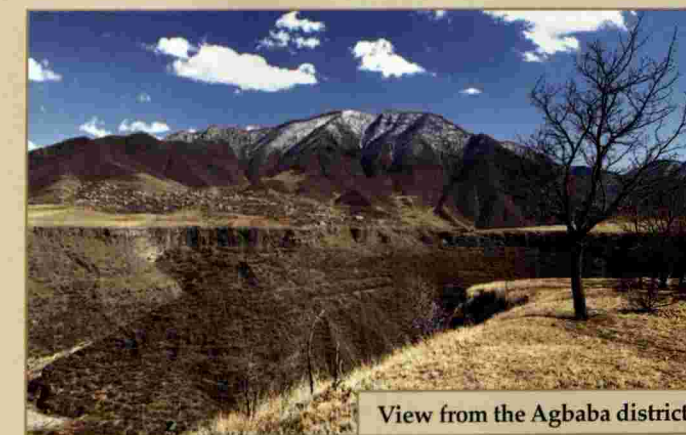
During long winter nights women used to gather to chant bayatis, tell stories, and weave carpets. Only a few artifacts have remained from those days. However, in these few samples, the patterns and colors of those lands show their artistic reflections through the traces of Azerbaijanis who have the legacy of ownership of this territory.

Carpets and carpet products woven in Agbaba and Shorayel are close to the Gazakh carpet school in relation to their specific weaving technologies, shades of natural dyes, and compositional structures. In accordance with technological methods, high heavy piles and soft and shiny wool differentiate the carpets woven in this area. These carpets that seem thick at first sight were woven from the highest quality wool. Extracted through natural methods, the red, sumagi (dark red), yellow, brown, green, cream, and blue colors on these carpets are visually appealing. Emerging from the lifestyle of Azerbaijanis, the compositional structures of these carpets were passed down through centuries. An abstract geometric pattern system is preferred on these carpets. Water, tree, pomegranate, plant and animal motifs, complex geometric elements often appear and a hooked cross is interpreted as a symbol protecting and defending people. This district where different Turkish tribes were settled was singled out in the diverse semantic elements pictured on its carpets.

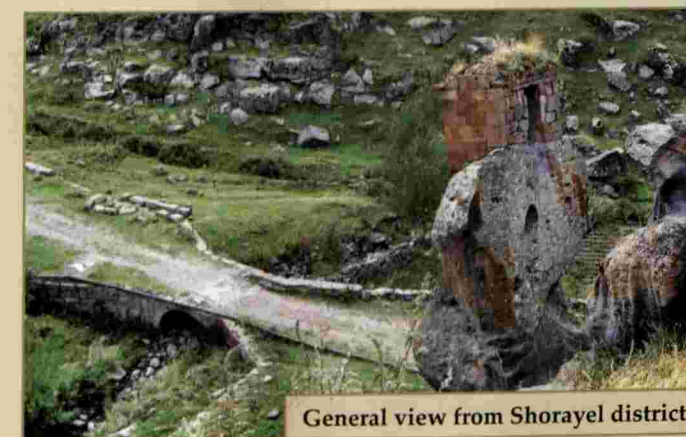
Carpets woven using techniques for kilims and palazzs were more common in Agbaba-Shorayel provinces. Certain motifs were specific to the carpets of these provinces, such as damga (emblem), goja damga (old emblem), dilikli damga (toothed emblem), and garmagli (hooked emblem). The colors of these carpets catch the eye with their vibrancy and liveliness. Sometimes vibrant colors were juxtaposed with calm colors, creating a specific color arrangement. Carpet colors in these provinces were changed from seven to ten and were designed using traditional patterning.



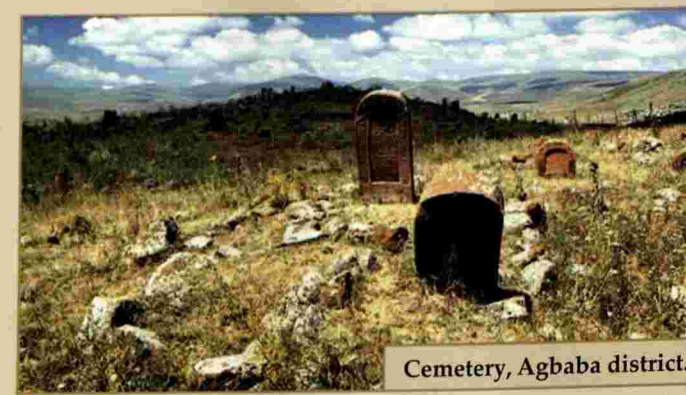
General view from the Agbaba district.



View from the Agbaba district.



General view from Shorayel district.



Cemetery, Agbaba district.

Loru and Pambak provinces



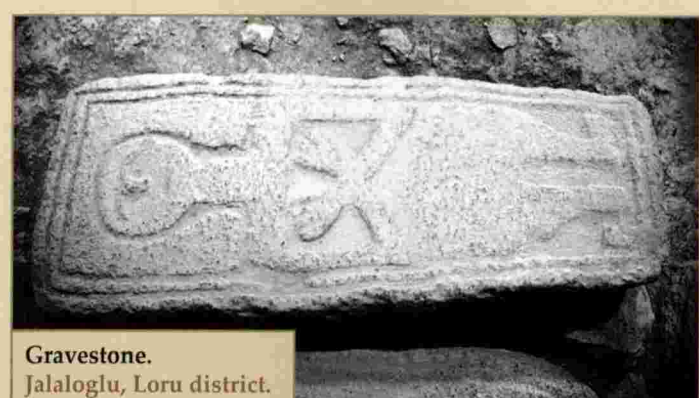
Carpets from Group II woven in the Loru and Pambak provinces obtained unique colors owing to the dyes obtained from fruits and plants in this mountainous and hilly region. It is impossible to imagine these carpets separate from the Gazakh carpet school. We can identify the carpet patterns here as complex samples of artistic craftsmanship.

As time went by, these categories were embodied in different ways and turned into an inseparable part of the artistic style following carpet's developmental path.

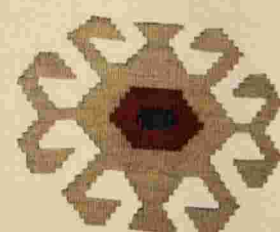
Due to the distinct breeds of black sheep in Loru and Pambak, yarn had different color shades there. As goats were also raised here, local people used goat wool to weave special carpet products. The namazlig (prayer rug) merits particular attention among the carpets encountered in this area. Carpets of both complex and simple compositions were woven and were consistent with people's religious views and Islamic faith. Among the carpet weaving districts, the most important were Allahverdi, Boyuk Ayrim, Yukhari Akhtala, Pedik, and Mosul, which were famous for their copper fields; Ashagi Kilse famous for its coal and basalt; Mollagishlag known for its ancient Oghuz graves, faience (pottery) water wells, and pilgrimage sites; Jalaloglu District's Chubuglu and Gerger villages famous for their cattle breeding, gardening, and vegetable growing; and many more places including Hollavar, Heydarli, Voronsovka, Gara Gala, Gizil Dash, Sariyal, Soyugbulag, Barana District's Yukhari Korpulu, Lembeli, Lelver, Hamamli District's Gursali, Giziloren, and Saral. Most of the people in Gursali were intensively engaged in weaving carpets and carpet products. The Loru and Pambak districts were rich in mineral resources and these minerals were used in dyeing. Palazs and kilims woven in Loru and Pambak districts are similar to those of Agbaba in their color design and patterns. "Pair emblem," "single emblem," and rhombus-shaped elements were widespread in kilim and palaz weaving in this district. Kilims and palazs woven here were similar to those of Baku and Shirvan in their colors and patterns.



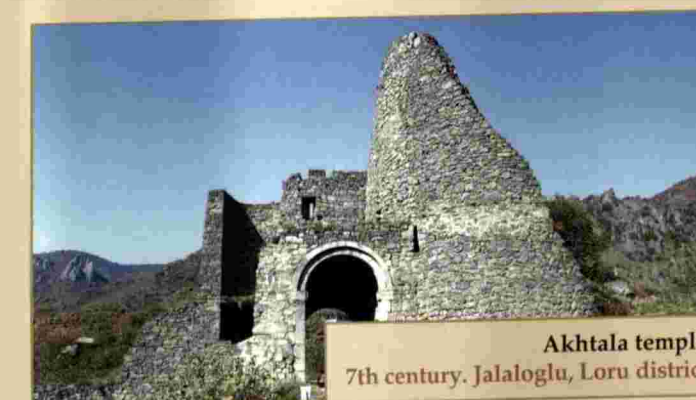
Rock carvings.
Soyugbulag village, Voronsovka, Loru district.



Gravestone.
Jalaloglu, Loru district.



Stone monument, Loru district. Depicted on the monument is a person praying in Turkish fashion. Stones with the same ornament are encountered in the districts of Girkhbulag, Zangazur, and Talin.



Akhtala temple,
7th century. Jalaloglu, Loru district.



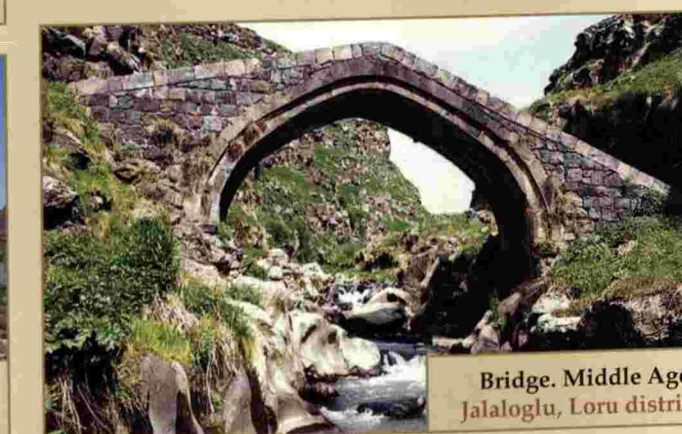
Goy gush (Blue bird) temple. Jalaloglu, Loru district. Ancient Turks built White Bird and Blue Bird monuments at the top of the mountains, which were used as altars.



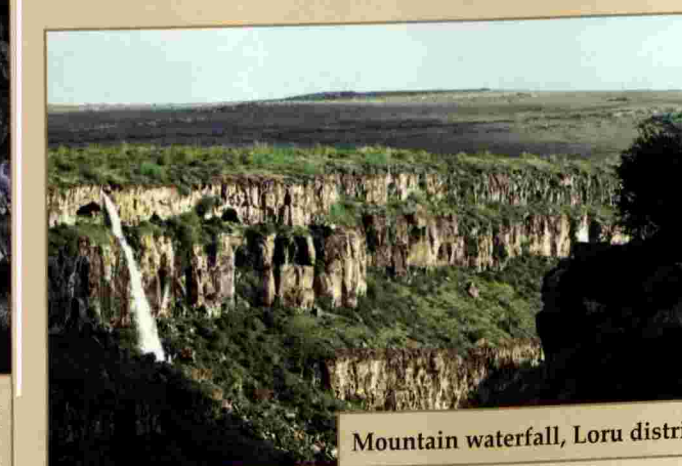
Loru castle. 11th century.
One of the main residences of the Seljuks.



Gelinjer castle. 12th century.
Barana. Loru district.

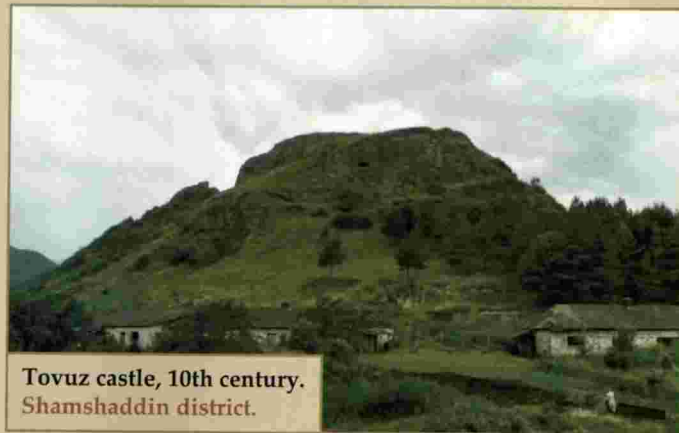


Bridge. Middle Ages.
Jalaloglu, Loru district.

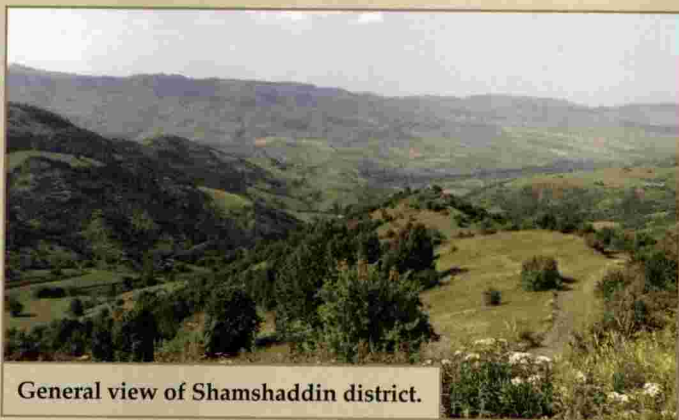


Mountain waterfall, Loru district.

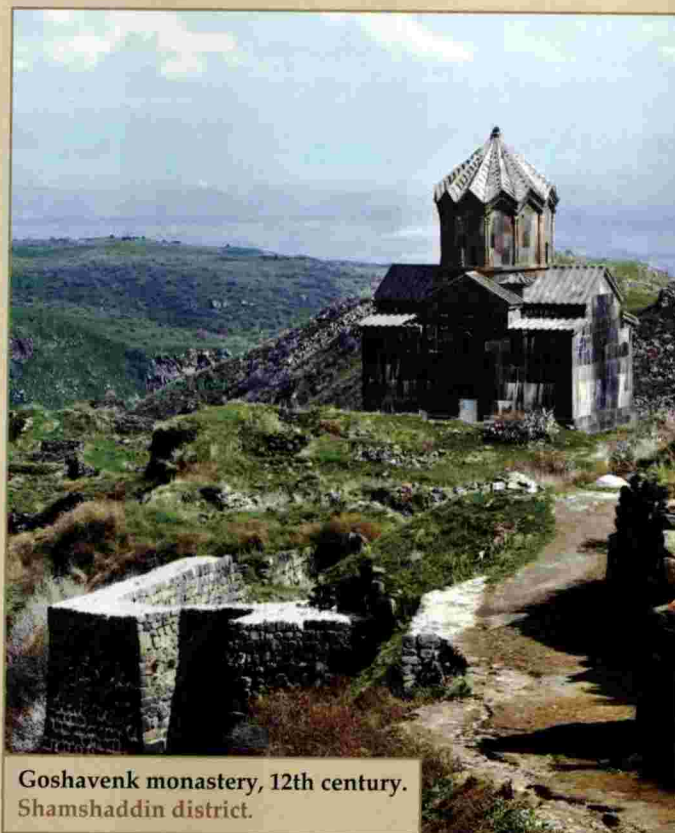
Shamshaddin province



Tovuz castle, 10th century.
Shamshaddin district.



General view of Shamshaddin district.



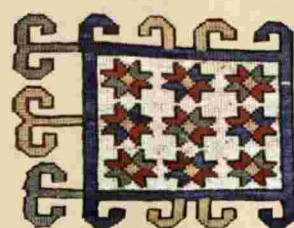
Goshavenk monastery, 12th century.
Shamshaddin district.



The Shamshaddin district comprises Group III. Carpets woven in this district are comparable to the Gazakh carpet school's style in their artistic compositions. Since the people of this district were mostly engaged in cattle breeding and had a cultural relationship with the regions of Gazakh, Tovuz, and Agstafa, they bestowed great importance to carpet weaving.

One of the major residential quarters of Shamshaddin was the Tovuzgala area. The Veligah, Gulali, Girgi and Haggin villages of this district that were once a part of the Gazakh-Shamshaddin khanate developed carpet weaving. Orchards, apiculture, and viticulture were the major occupations of the population. Surrounded by low mountains rich with springs, lakes, and mineral resources, this district had a mild climate that contributed to the fertile soil and abundant plant life.

Areas of this district like Karvansara and Dilijan are famous for their thick forests. The Terse chay, Armudu, Ag Kilse, Goyerchin, Polad, Salah, and Haggikhli villages were well known for their carpets. The Agstafa River played an important role in the economic life and agriculture of the Karvansara region. People used to wash wool and carpets on both banks of this full river. The carpets of this area were identifiable by their assorted colors and fine patterns. On the carpets, mefreshs (catch-all), khurjuns (saddlebag), palazs, and chuls (saddle blanket) woven in the district, it is possible to find totems and emblems of mythological images belonging to different tribes. The color harmony, artistic structures, pattern designs, and weaving styles encountered on the flat-weave carpets, kilims, vernis, sheddies, and zilis are different from those belonging to other districts. Carpets woven in Shamshaddin have unique patterns and color designs. In addition to small and large medallions, goshabuynuz (double-horned), dordunsur (four elements), s-shaped forms, hooked shapes, geometric shapes (triangles or squares), gozqaytariji (eye-catcher), gaychibalig, gazayagi (goose feet), dilikli (toothed) and other motifs were also commonly employed.



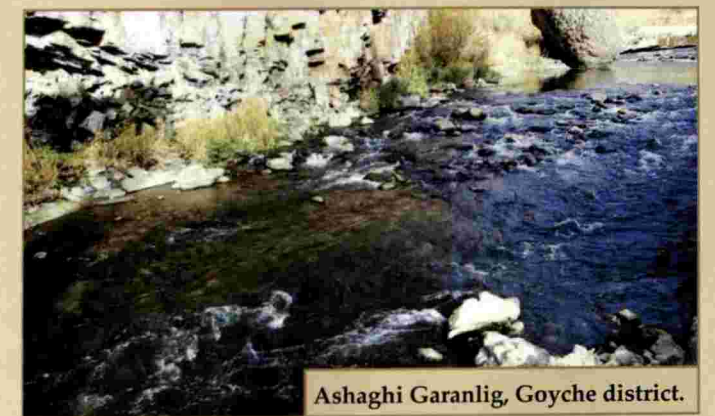
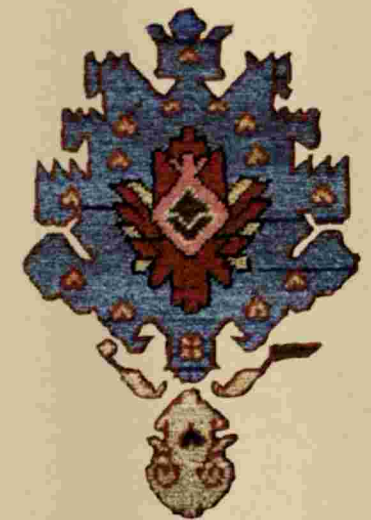
Goyche province



Among Iravan carpets, the samples belonging to the Goyche province comprise Group IV, specifically due to their patterns and colors. Carpets woven by Azerbaijanis living in the Goyche province resemble the compositions of the Karabakh carpet weaving school. The people of this province located around Goyche Lake had strong cultural and daily ties with Karabakh. This relationship demonstrated itself mainly through folklore and lifestyle.

Goyche was famous for its charming nature, ashug culture, artistic embroidery, coppersmith work, and pottery. Sheep breeding was widespread in this area, which provided beneficial conditions for the development of carpet weaving. Sheep with black, gray, and brown wool were raised in Goyche and plants were widely available for dyeing thread. All these, and most importantly, carpet weavers who were able to keep patterns alive for thousands of years in their collective memories gave Goyche carpets their uniqueness. The natural colors of Goyche soaked into the carpets and remained bright and vibrant. Goyche craftsmen reproduced the surrounding landscape, green meadows, fresh flowers and Turkish emblems passed from generation to generation on the carpets, kilims, mefreshs, chuls, and other products. Goyche carpets affirm the great culture, rich imaginations, and artistic talents of carpet weavers.

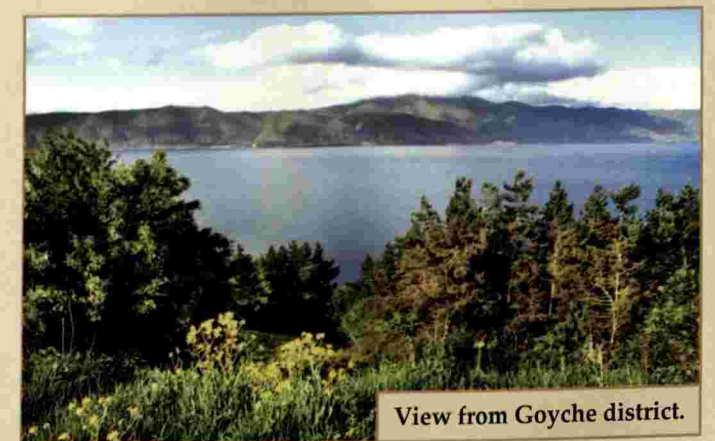
The traces of place names encountered in "The Book of Dede Korkut" can be identified in many place names along Goyche Lake. Toponyms like Goyche Province, Goyche Lake, Aglagan Mountain, and Aygur Spring are the traces of the ancient culture and memories of Azerbaijanis. Goyche Province is surrounded by Aglagan Hill, Delik and Chenlibel Mountains, as well as Selimiye from the south, and Murguz and Shahdag ranges from the north. When looking from Shahdag, this province appeared like a flowery saucer with its center facing a mirror. The great Goyche province was famous not only for its magnificence and natural beauty, but also for being home to national art and to well-known state poets. Saz masters (ashugs) who lived and composed in the Goyche district warmed the hearts of the Turkish world with their ashug music. On both happy and sad days, the people of this area tuned their saz, the heir of the ancient gopuz, and expressed their heartbeats, inner feelings, and sadness through its voice. There is no corner of Goyche where there are no traces of the Turkish Oghuz tribes. Strong reminders of the Oghuz can be seen in Gangali Mountain in Tokhluja village, Gara Guzeyadli Mountain at the pasture in Goyerchin village, and the cold spring in Zod Bay. The roots of the beliefs concerning mythological creatures in the folklore of Goyche are supported by the shamanism of ancient times. The Aye belief was considered a holy guardian bringing health, happiness and



Ashaghi Garanlig, Goyche district.

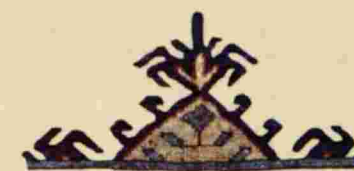


Goyche Lake.



View from Goyche district.

Garnibasar and Vedibasar provinces



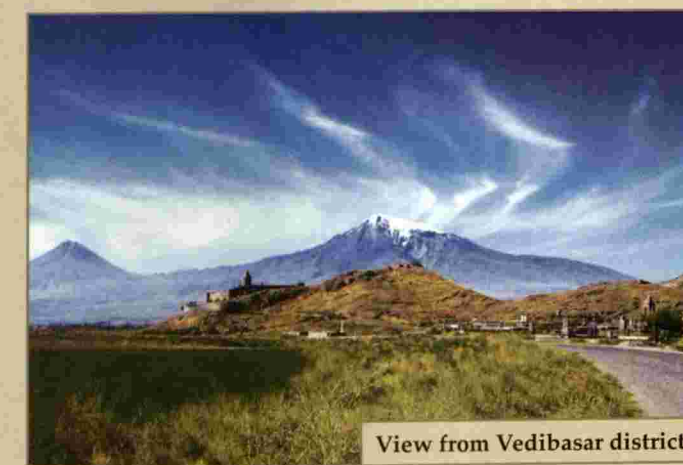
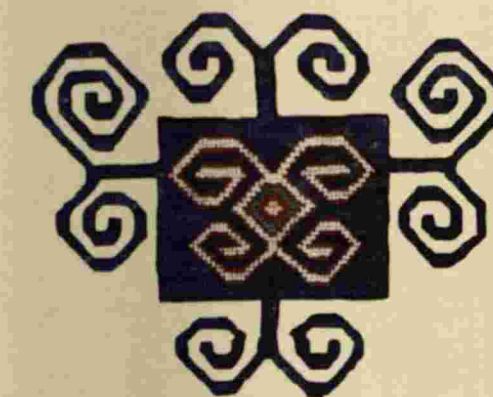
Given both the color composition of the carpets and geographical closeness of Garnibasar and Vedibasar, it is possible to join them into one group. Garnibasar and Vedibasar provinces were believed to be the most fascinating places in Iravan. Covering the Vedi and Gamarli regions, this district is located in the Agridagi Valley, which has a mild climate.

The Araz River borders Vedibasar province on one side and flows along the bottom of the Agridag, Goyche, and Daralayaz provinces. It is distinguished by its pleasing nature and ancient history. The mountainous regions of Vedibasar are comprised of unyielding rocks, bare slopes, and green forest. Flat areas of this province are known for their milder climate. Well known for its valleys, rivers, and lakes, Vedibasar featured a plant cover that created excellent conditions to extract different shades of dyes. The carpets of Vedibasar and Garnibasar provinces have similarities to those of the Gazakh School. The natural geographic conditions of Vedibasar affected its agriculture and daily life. Plants like oaks, pine trees, hawthorn, yellow flower, perpiyan, sweet liquorice, and grape vines made dyeing the yarns easier and created different shades. The carpets of this district, famous for apricots and cherry plums, were brighter and more colorful.

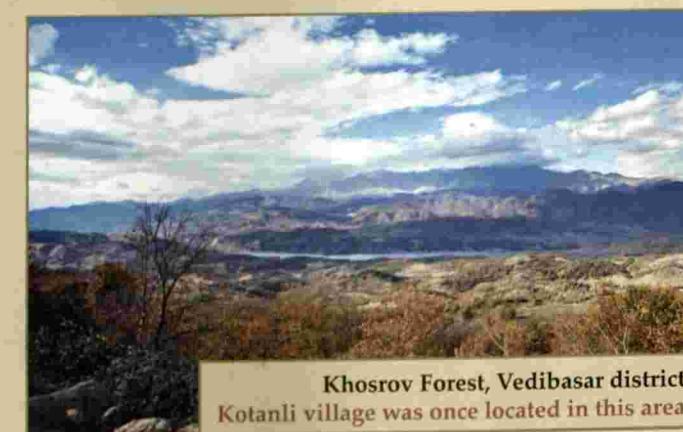
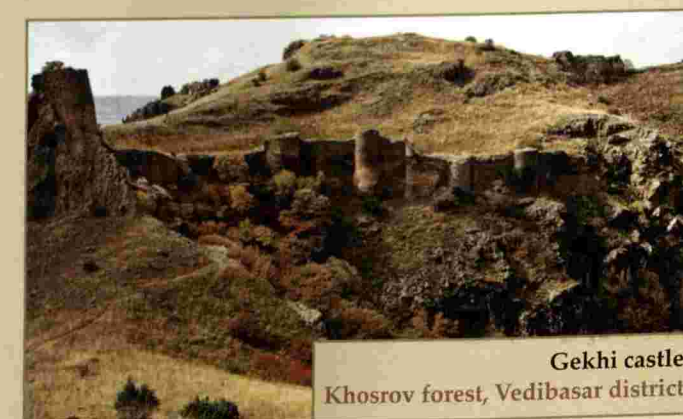
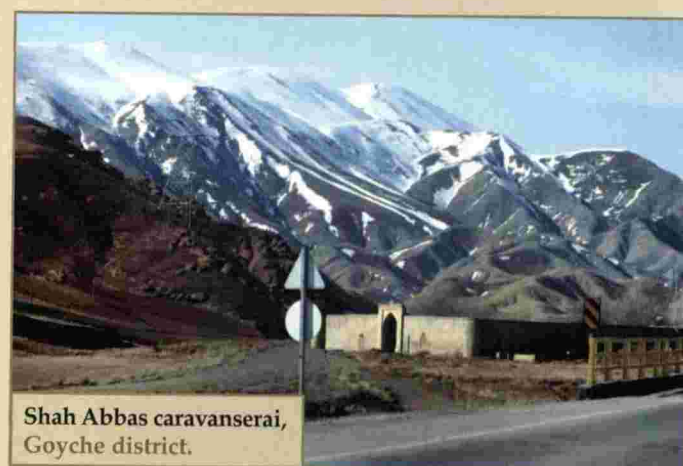
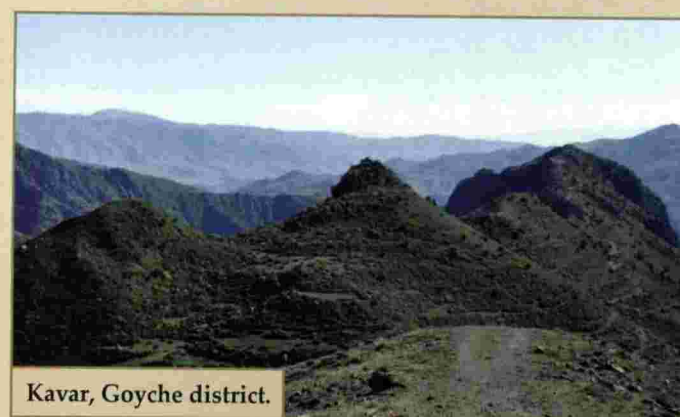
There were large carpet weaving quarters in the Vedi district villages of Avshar, Turk gol, Agasli, Arazdeyen, Bayburt, Boyuk Vedi, Garalar, Develi, Yengije, Kolanli, Taytan, Shidli, Shirazli, and Shikhlar. Asli Khanim lived in the Kotanli village that was notable for its fascinating nature and eye-catching landscapes. The influential Seyitler family also settled here. Asli Khanim's hands wove carpets with fine knots that were stunningly beautiful and the patterns she created captivated all the carpet weavers in the surrounding villages.

Such quarters also existed in the Gamarli district of Garnibasar province. Carpet weaving was also widespread in the villages of Arpavar, Bash Nali, Yamanjali, Mugamli, and Sabunchu. Here, priority was given to carpets, namazligs, kilims, mefreshs, and chuls.

"Cherkhi-felek" (the ups and downs of life) and "goshaguyrum" (double-horned) elements were commonly employed in the center of medallions in carpets woven in Garnibasar and Vedibasar provinces. Classic elements like rhombus, hooks, x- and z-shapes, stepped edges, geometric figures, and other motifs were used in weaving carpets in these provinces.



View from Vedibasar district.

Khosrov Forest, Vedibasar district.
Kotanli village was once located in this area.Gekhi castle.
Khosrov forest, Vedibasar district.The grave of Ashug Alasgar.
Agkilse village, Basarkechar, Goyche district.Shah Abbas caravanserai,
Goyche district.

Kavar, Goyche district.

abundance to the people. "Garachukha" was the god of fortune and fate. The symbols of these gods were transferred to carpet art and reflected in their patterns and compositions.

The artistic traditions of these carpets were embodied in centuries-old forms. Sometimes related colors were collected in cheerful harmony on one carpet, creating a dazzling palette. The richness of small or large elements and medallions decorated with broken and sometimes curved lines made these carpet products more appealing for daily life. Traditional abstract geometric symbols are characteristic for most carpet weaving schools of Azerbaijan, including Goyche carpets. Goyche's jejims, ladis, zilis, heybes, yeherustus (saddle covers), lemiga bags, and kharals (large sacks) became very famous and found their place in many world collections. The Goyche province covered the districts of Basarkechar, Chambarak, Ashagigaranlig, and Kavar. The carpet weaving art developed a great deal in the Chambarak district, especially in the villages of Agbulag, Ardanish, Garagaya, Yanigpeye, Golkend, Tokhluja, Chaykend, Jiyil, and Shorja. Carpets and carpet products were widely used in people's daily lives and were woven in the Basarkechar region's villages of Ag Kilse, Kerkibash, Pambak, and Chakhirli as well.

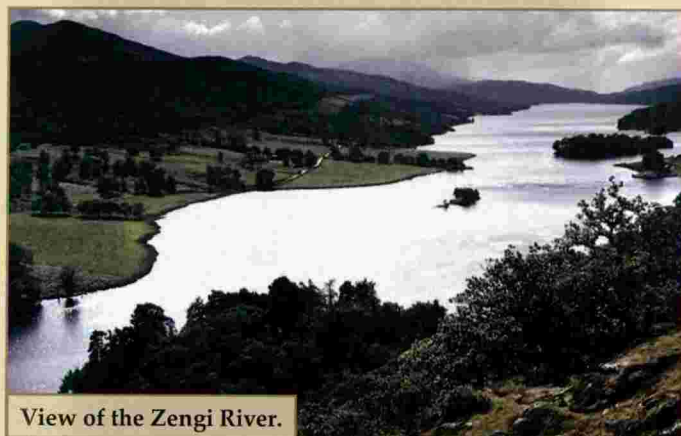
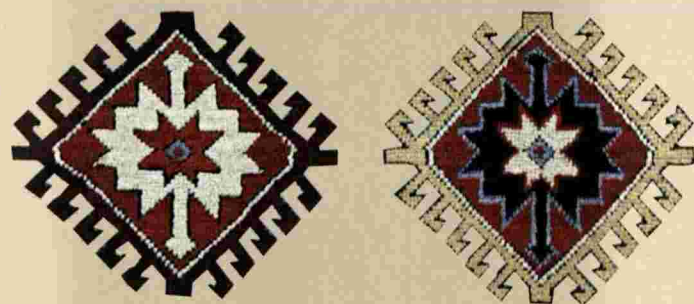
One of the most beautiful corners of Iravan was the Ashagi Garanlig district. The colorful flowers of this mountainous region looked like a khali woven by nature itself. Azerbaijani Turks living in the villages of Yanikh, Eyrije, and Khartlig wove beautiful carpets, with samples surviving to this day.

Although some Karabakh elements are visible in the carpets woven in Goyche's Kavar area, Gazakh elements are more prevalent. The "Goycheli" carpet from the Gazakh School was woven in this village. Later, part of this village's population was moved to the Agstafa region where they named their new settlement "Kavar." Different elegant carpets, kilims, palazs, chuls, mefreshs, khurjuns and heybes were woven in Kavar's Aggala, Agzibir, Eyriyeng, Efendi, and Mugan villages.

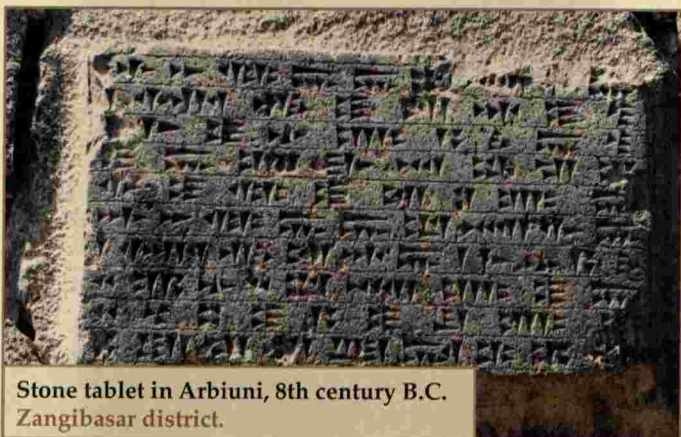
As on most carpets, priority was given to large medallions as the major elements of the khalis woven in Goyche province. Stylized camels and images of other animals and birds could be seen on these carpets. Carpet weavers of Goyche province used hooked cross motifs both as major and filler elements. They employed rhombus, buta (almond-shaped), star, hook, x- and z-shapes, leaves, flowers and small tree images as filler elements. Zulfelem motifs specific to the main border of the carpets in this region were applied to the carpets in other provinces also.



Zangibasar and Sardarabad provinces



View of the Zengi River.

Stone tablet in Arbiuni, 8th century B.C.
Zangibasar district.

Sky Angels' temple showing ancient Azerbaijanis' faith in the sky god. First half of the 8th century B.C. Uchkilse, Zangibasar district. The writings and stamps on the temple indicate that it belonged to ancient Azerbaijani tribes.

It is reasonable to associate Zangibasar and Sardarabad carpets with the next group. Zangibasar was one of the ancient settlements of Azerbaijanis attached to Iravan. This area could be called the center of culture and education. The people of this district studied at different centers of the Islamic world, contributing to the religious and scientific understanding of people living here. The Zangibasar district was a cultural center as well. Its geographic closeness to Iravan helped shape the cultural environment in the area. The soil of the Zangibasar province was fertile due to the abundant water of the Zengi River, mentioned in several ancient texts.

Many travelers wrote historical notes about this district. Describing local people and their daily lives, travelers wrote about bey and sultan families living there and stressed that there were many religious figures and intellectuals there. Local people created their own farming traditions, especially for planting wheat, growing vegetables, and planting melons. Raising cattle and breeding silkworms was widely developed in the region as well. With endless and attractive hayfields, Zangibasar developed a tradition of dyeing with special quarters to prepare the dyes.

People's attire in this region was very distinctive. Men's clothing mainly consisted of arkhaluk (over shirt), chukha (shirt) and pants, large cotton gushag (waist band), leather charig (bast sandals), and bashmaks. Women's attire included a long arkhaluk, cotton shirt, shawl, and headscarf. Living on a caravan road, the people of Zangibasar wore a great deal of jewelry. Special silver money, chains made out of silver and gold, and belts provided particular beauty for women.

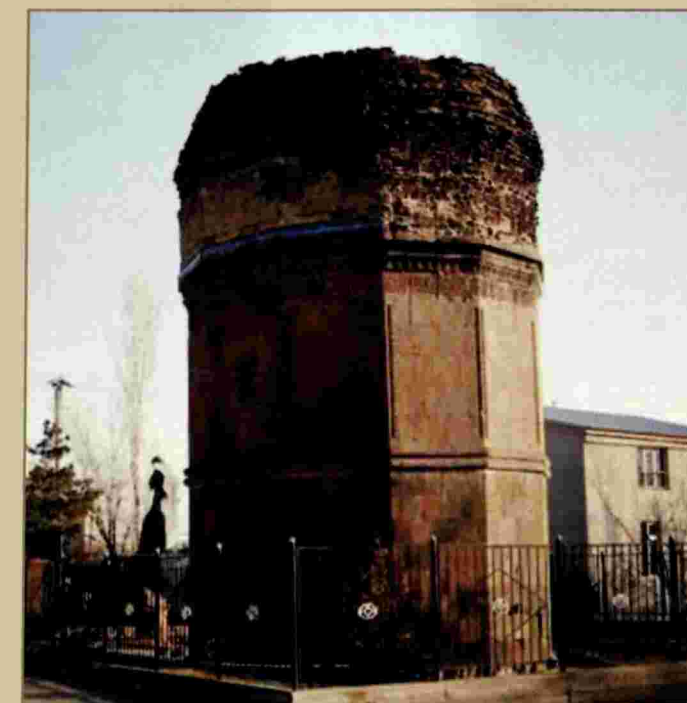
Zangibasar province is celebrated for its rich cuisine, folklore, country games and stage shows, as well as its remarkable carpet traditions. The world vision, culture, and Turkic roots of people living here are reflected in the famous Ulukhanli School, Agdede ojagi (holy place), Garapirim ojagi, Shahin castle, hamams (bathhouse), and a number of mosques in Zangibasar. Carpets unique for their fineness and elegance were woven in Zangibasar's quarters such as Arbat, Ashaghy Nejili, Garagishlag, Demirchi, Zengiler, Zehmet, Renjber, Ulukhanli, Aji Ellez, and Shorlu. When most of the villages of the region were artificially eradicated, their population was forcefully moved. However, the carpets woven there have



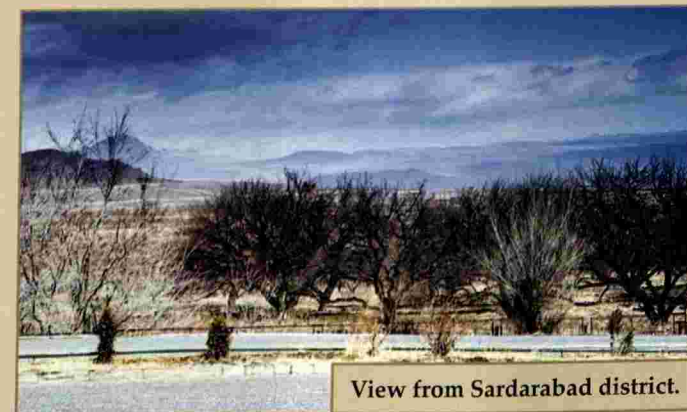
protected the memory of this land even now. The art samples obtained from the area carry messages about a great culture abolished in the middle of the last century.

Sardarabad, one of the ancient provinces of Iravan, was well known for its castle. The Iravan khan used these areas for both protection and combat. Special ties between this province and Iravan Khanate's history and historical importance can be seen. Azerbaijanis populated the city of Sardarabad as well as the villages of Karimarkh, Gatirabad, Kheyirbeyli, and Shaverdi and different kinds of kilims, palazs, and khurjuns were woven in these areas. During archeological excavations, several household items and stone fragments with engraved images were found here, traces left by Turkic culture.

Carpets woven in this area are similar to Azerbaijan's Gazakh and Tabriz carpet schools in their compositional structures. Carpet products depict both the mythological and natural beliefs of the district's people as seen through geometric elements. In addition, there are products with finer designs and subjects. Due to their geographic position close to southern Azerbaijan, the people living in Zangibasar and Sardarabad provinces visited the cities of Tabriz, Khoy, and Maku. The traces of southern Azerbaijani culture were transferred to the carpets through the fingers of the craftsmen who had strong memories of this culture. One of the characteristics of the Tabriz carpet school is to have a closed compositional structure; motifs include rhombuses, squares, stars or full roses, and one-quarter sized flower elements (petals, ketebe, or gubbe) repeated on both sides. Plant elements were characteristic for carpets woven here also, and they represented Mother Nature. Feelings were also reflected on the carpets; for example, faith in the world, the search for eternity, or worshiping divine forces. The portrayal of roses, irises, violets, and other flowers on the carpets displayed the aesthetic tastes and beliefs of those who wove those rugs. Significantly, the dates were shown in the Hijri calendar (Muslim calendar) on Zangibasar and Sardarabad carpets, just as on most Iravan carpets. Zili, jejim, soumak, chul, chanta (bag), and kharal were woven in this area, employing themes and geometric, plant-like, or zoomorphic elements. The carpets of Zangibasar and Sardarabad featured rhombuses, emblems, s-shaped long images and geometric motifs. These motifs are encountered on Shirvan carpets as well.

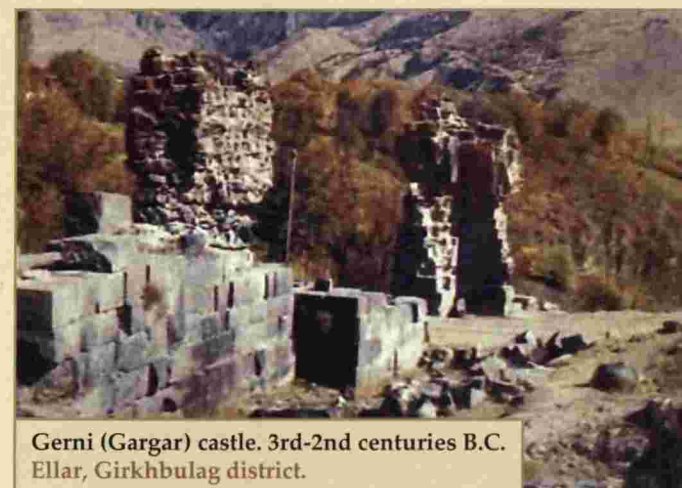
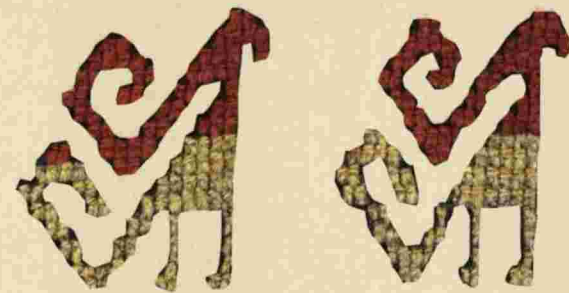


Jafarabad tomb belonging to the Azerbaijani Garagoyunlu emirs, 1413. Ulukhanli, Zangibasar. The names of the emirs of the Saatli tribes, Pir Hasan and his father Emir Saed, are engraved on the tomb.

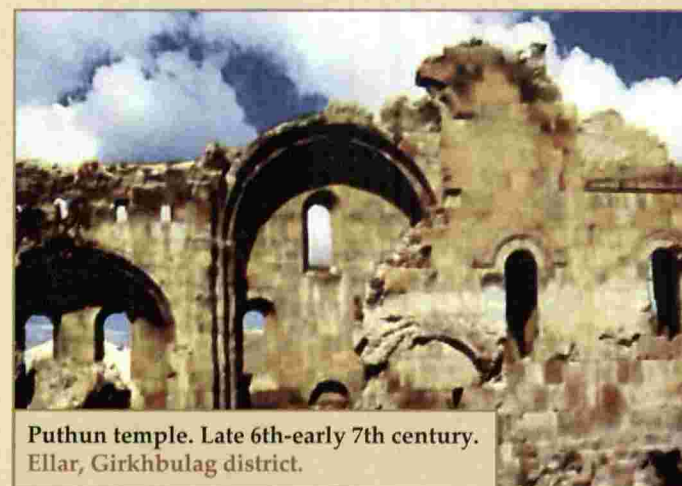


View from Sardarabad district.

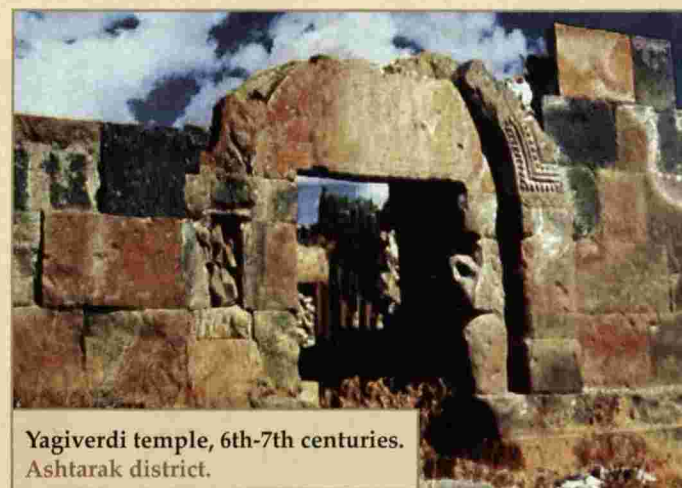
Girkhbulag and Ashtarak provinces



Gerni (Gargar) castle. 3rd-2nd centuries B.C.
Ellar, Girkhbulag district.



Puthun temple. Late 6th-early 7th century.
Ellar, Girkhbulag district.



Yagiverdi temple, 6th-7th centuries.
Ashtarak district.

Given their similarities, carpets woven in the Girkhbulag and Ashtarak areas can be joined into one group. Situated thirteen kilometers northeast of Iravan, Ashtarak is known as an ancient Oghuz-Turkic land. The Old Turkish words *terek* (pine tree) and *khach* (cross), the symbol of Turkish Christianity, can be found in the names of this area. There are also many monuments relating to the ancient Turkic faiths and Islam. In addition, the Seljuk left traces on carpets and architecture.

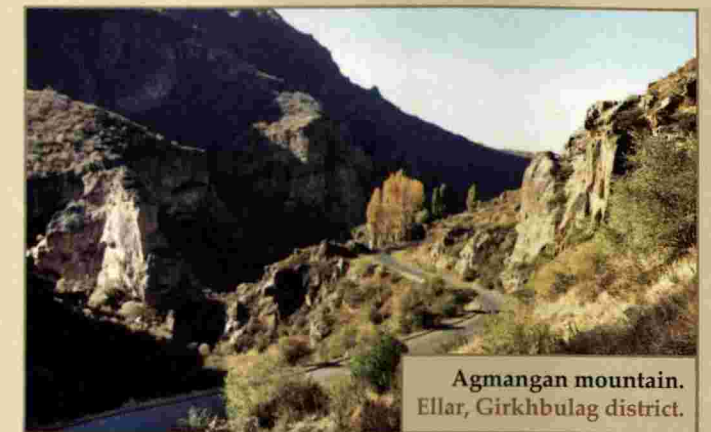
The area of Ashtarak consists of both mountains and plains. This district is close to the Alagöz Mountains on one side and to Iravan on the other and is known for mysterious alpine meadows and foothill forests. The forests are full of oaks, walnuts, wild apricots and cherry plums, hawthorns, and figs. In the past, people used to boil unripe walnuts with fig leaves to obtain a green dye. Dark blue was created from *lajverd* stone (azure) extracted from the soil, and purple was made out of *lazurite*. Developments in sheep breeding resulted in an abundance of carpets and carpet products. The beauty of the enigmatic landscape, flower gardens, green forests and meadows of this district were absorbed in the carpets, giving them a thousand colors. The folklore, traditions, cuisine and daily life of the people living in Ashtarak are part of general Azerbaijani culture. The splendor of stunning landscapes, flower gardens, green forests, and alpine meadows are reflected in the carpets woven here.

Near Iravan, Girkhbulag province is famous for its rivers and springs. Located on the Tbilisi road, this province was noteworthy for its old bridges, mosques, and temples with traces of Turkish Christianity. Colorful flowers and bushes grew on the snowy hills along the Agmangan Mountains. Historically, this district was famous for its camels. The richness of mineral resources and different kinds of plants created positive conditions for the ancient arts and traditions of dyeing. Carpet weaving quarters were prominent in Girkhbulag province, as well as in the Ellar district settlements of Avdallar, Goykilse, Jadirgan, Jivriş, Ellar, Erzni, Kenekur, Nurnus and other villages.

Ancient Azerbaijanis living in the city of Ashtarak and the district's Ujan, Fetriji, Perpi, and Kotekli areas were engaged in carpet weaving. Girkhbulag and Ashtarak carpets are close to the Gazakh carpet school in their compositional structures. Carpets woven in the Girkhbulag and Ashtarak provinces widely employed elements like flowers, trees, stars, rhombuses, butas, s-shapes, squares, diamonds, and stepped edges.



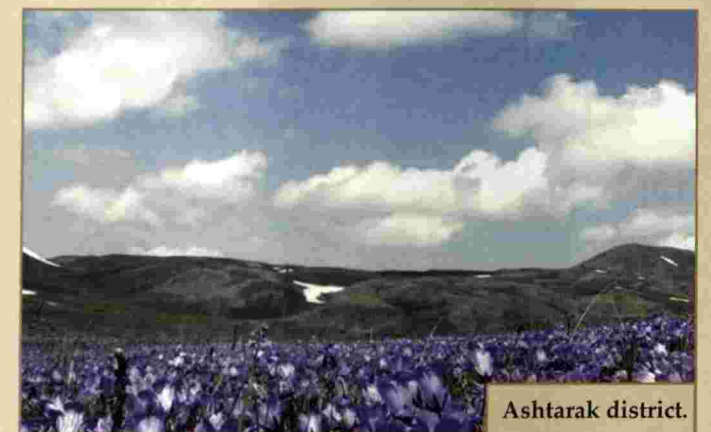
Gargaveng, 7th century.
Ashtarak district.



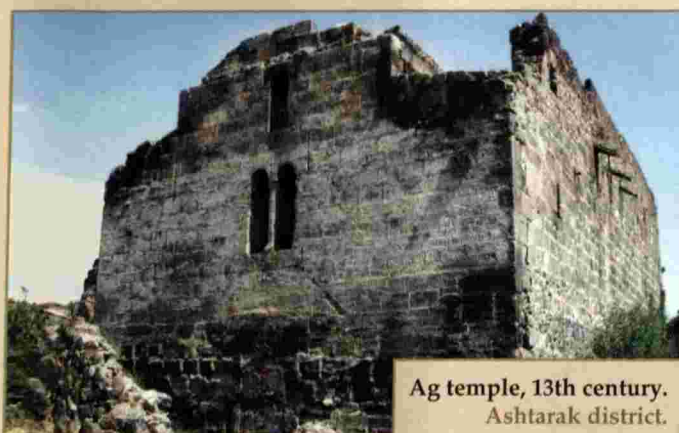
Agmangan mountain.
Ellar, Girkhbulag district.



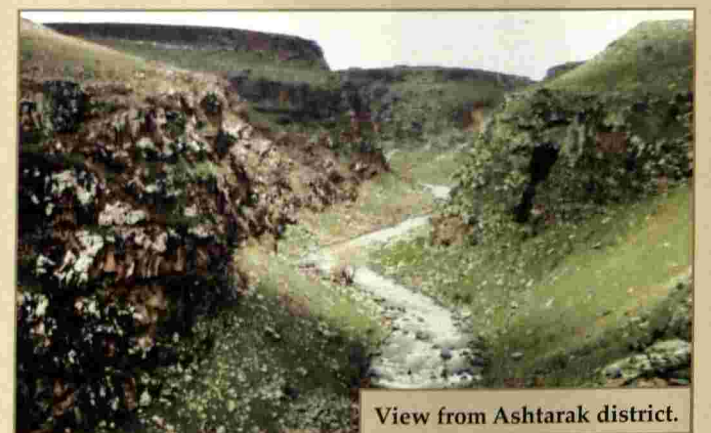
Erzincan castle (Bechni). 11th century.
Ellar, Girkhbulag district.



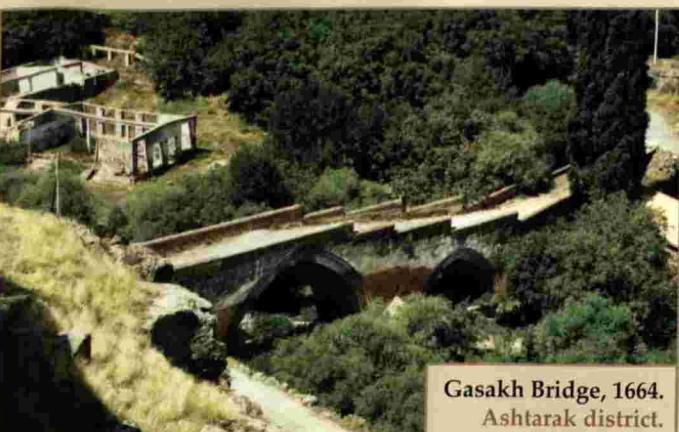
Ashtarak district.



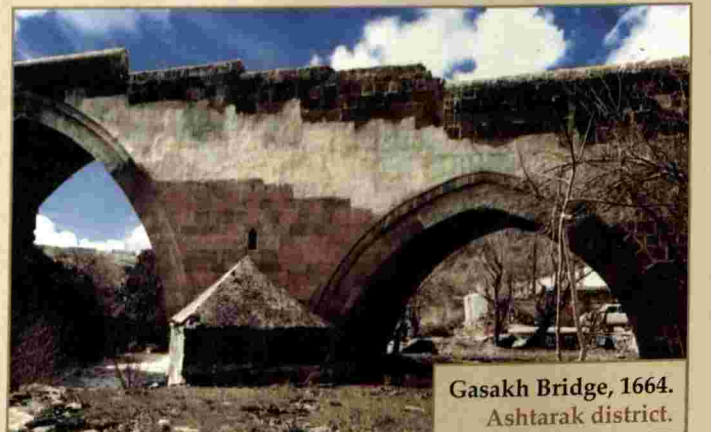
Ag temple, 13th century.
Ashtarak district.



View from Ashtarak district.

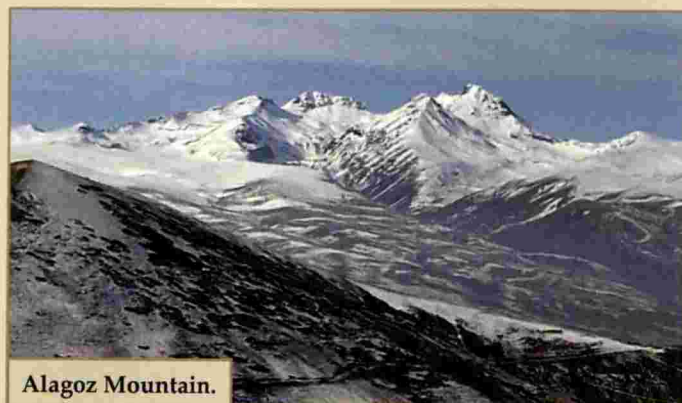


Gasakh Bridge, 1664.
Ashtarak district.

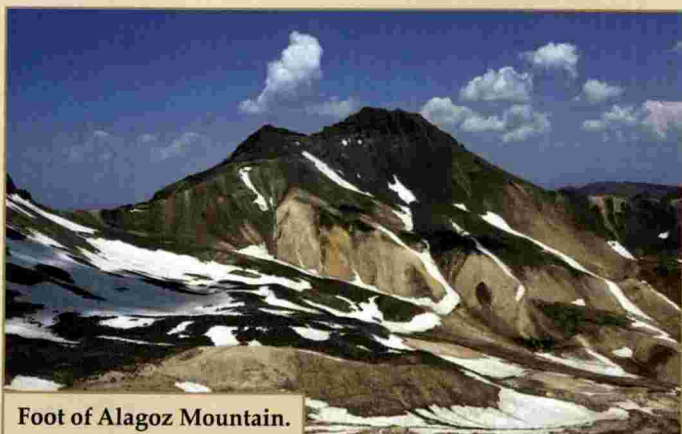


Gasakh Bridge, 1664.
Ashtarak district.

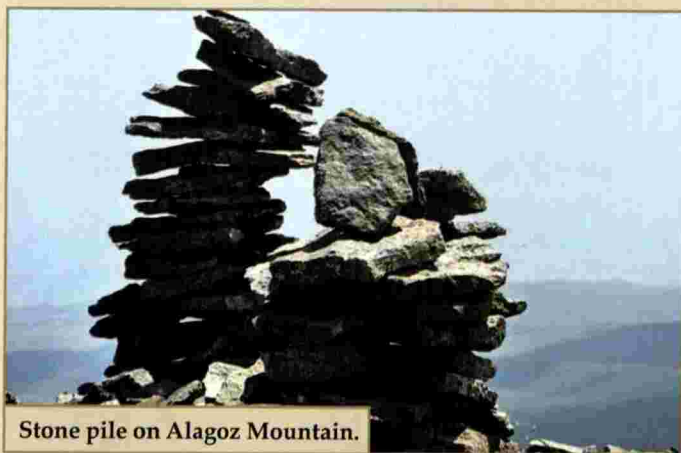
Aparan, Darachichak, and Talin provinces



Alagoz Mountain.



Foot of Alagoz Mountain.



Stone pile on Alagoz Mountain.



Meadows on Alagoz Mountain.



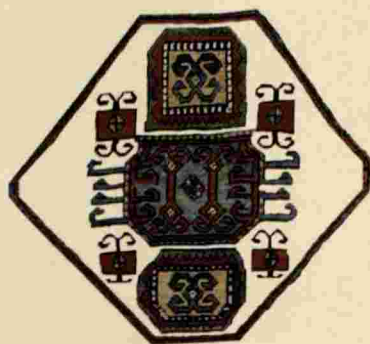
The next group was formed based on the carpets from the provinces of Aparan, Darachichak, and Talin. The carpets belonging to these provinces are also close to the Gazakh School concerning their compositional structures and elements.

Talin province has an elevation of 2047 m. The great Alagoz Mountain reaches to 4095 m. The mountain is volcanic. Since ancient times fine carpets and carpet products have been woven in this region of striking landscapes like alpine meadows and high mountains. Cattle rearing developed well here. Breeding sheep with fine wool resulted in a wealth of raw resources to improve carpet weaving. Natural dyes increased the emotional impact of the carpets woven here and added to their arresting beauty.

The reason for the splendor and brilliance of Talin carpets came from the fine and elastic wool used to spin yarn. These carpets used seven, ten, or sometimes more, colors and color shades. Carpet weaving quarters existed in the Talin district villages of Aynali, Guldervish, Ekerek, Ashnag, Mehriban, Irind, and Sultanabad.

Aparan, situated 59 km northwest from Iravan, is on the Gazakh River. The population of this ancient city and surrounding villages consisted mostly of Azerbaijani Turks, as evidenced by the place names. With its complex nature, Aparan is surrounded by snowy mountains to the north and plains to the south. Alpine meadows and bushes grown on the rocks had their effect on carpet weaving arts in this area, resulting in bright colors.

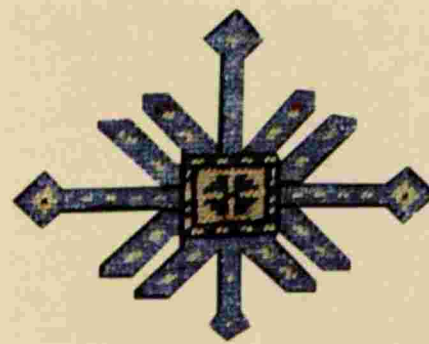
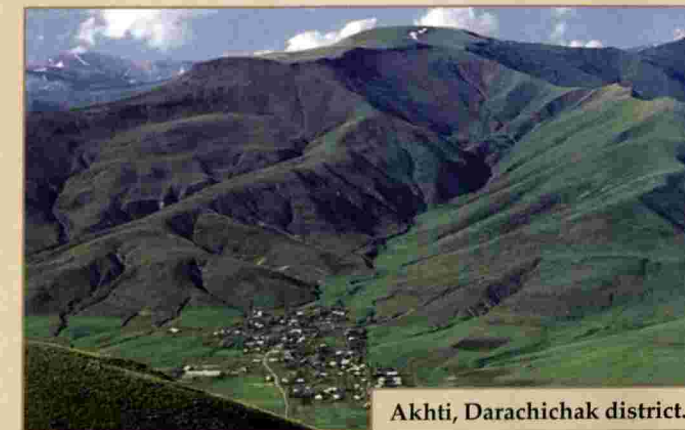
Different kinds of carpets, mefreshs, khurjuns, heyves, chuls and other household goods were woven in the



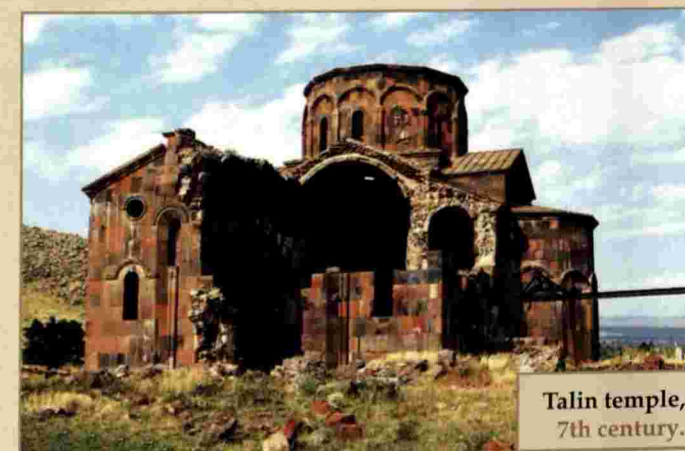
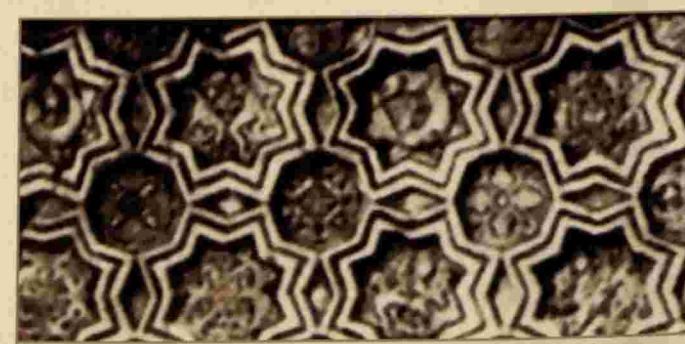
villages of Babakishi, Kireshtli, and Duzkend. The art of carpet weaving was eventually forgotten in the city of Aparan, lingering in only a very few houses.

The carpets of the Akhta district of Darachichak Province (valley flower) were famous. Situated 50 km from Iravan, Darachichak and Akhta were the summer headquarters of the Iravan Khans. The traces of the Summer Palace and the Khanbagi (Khan's garden) can still be seen here. The Zengi and Boyuk Rivers flow through the district, creating a captivating beauty. As seen in the name of the province, the forests were full of flowers, stretching from Ashagi Akhta towards the east of Elibey Mountain. Darachichak province's Tesh Mountains stretched from the north up to Garakishi to mark the borders of the ancient Turks, the Dish Oghuz. The summer settlement in Darachichak is the same as the Altuntakht mentioned in the "The Book of Dede Korkut." This district is mountainous and is situated 1500-2000 meters above sea level. Agriculture was the major occupation of the local people. Since ancient times, the villages of Alapars, Gorchulu, Bigli, Garagala, Garniyarig, Ozanlar, and Ulashig have been famous for their carpet weaving traditions. In general, the carpets of the aforementioned three provinces show that rearing black and brown sheep with long wool and goats influenced weaving technology in these areas.

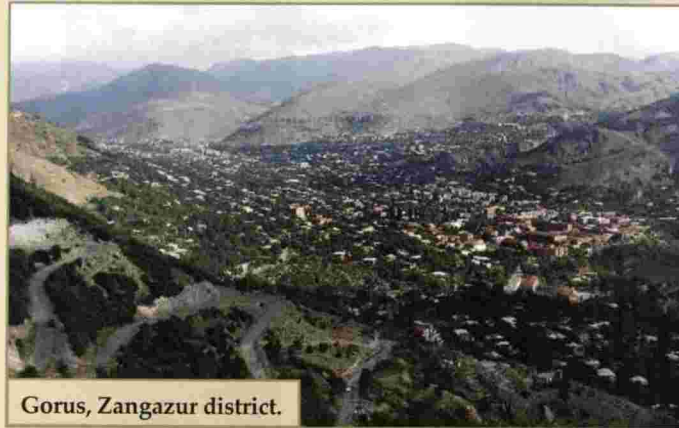
In addition to typical major elements, sallama, goshabuynuz (double-horned), darag (comb), shamdan (candlestick), s-shapes, stars, and dordunsur (four part elements) motifs were applied to the carpets woven in Aparan-Darachichak-Talin. Between seven and ten color shades were used on the carpets of this district.

Gamsaragan temple, 7th century.
Talin district.

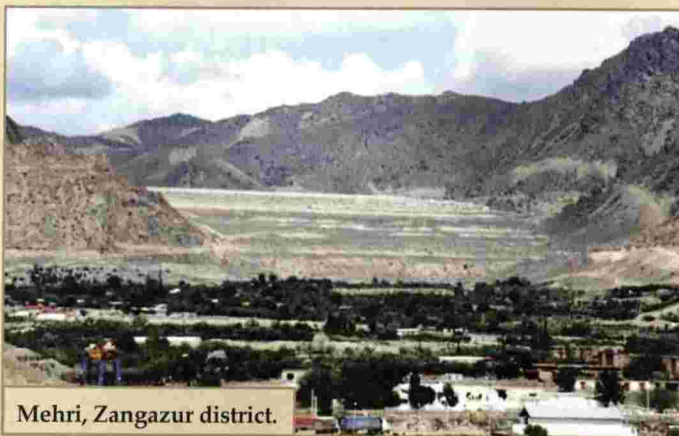
Akhti, Darachichak district.

Talin temple,
7th century.Azerbaijani ornaments on the walls of Maragaveng temple,
10th century. Akhti, Darachichak district.

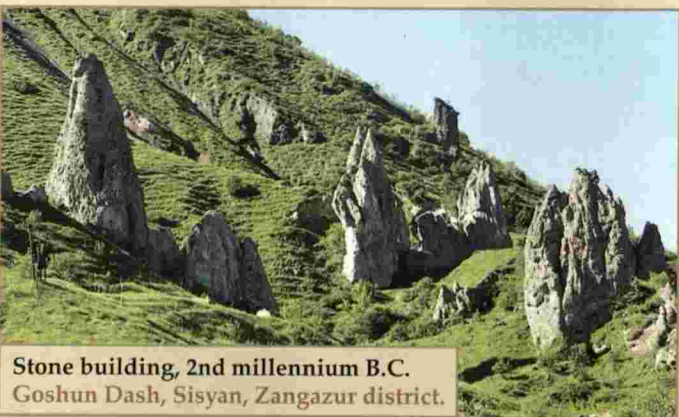
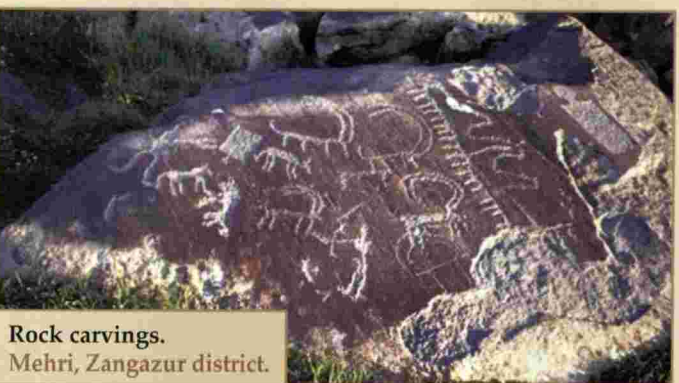
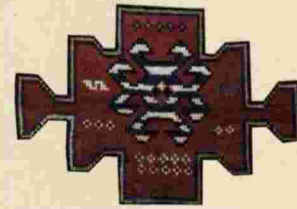
Zangazur province



Gorus, Zangazur district.



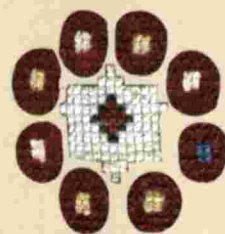
Mehri, Zangazur district.

Stone building, 2nd millennium B.C.
Goshun Dash, Sisyan, Zangazur district.Rock carvings.
Mehri, Zangazur district.

Zangazur district is bordered by Karabakh to the east, by Nakhchivan to the west and by Araz to the south. Although a part of Zangazur was given to Armenia in 1920, it always had strong ties with Karabakh. The folklore and culture of this area are very close to that of Karabakh, Nakhchivan, and Goyche. Zangazur was a main road and bridge between Tabriz and Iravan, as seen in its ancient monuments, prolific ram stones, and tombs. The colorful natural ground cover is connected to Zangazur's geographic location near the Lesser Caucasus Mountains. Its districts were well known for their mines and minerals.

At the crossroads of Zangazur Mountain and Araz, Mehri, which was situated at the east of Zangazur, was noted for its assorted gardens and delicious fruits. The breezes coming from the other side of Araz softened Zangazur's typically harsh climate and this mild air was the source of productive orchards. Ample and colorful plant cover and endless pastures created productive conditions for carpet weaving also. The mixture of air, water, and plants provided a thousand shades of color. The wealth of plants, animals and mineral resources made the development of dyeing inevitable. Traditional dyeing technology was improved with centuries of experience by professional dyers and assisted the carpet weavers in creating unparalleled harmony by using and coordinating different shades of colors.

The Sisyan region was renowned for its historical monuments and ancient graveyards. Its geographical position contributed to the development of cattle breeding and plants gathered from mountainous and hillside areas played a part in making natural dyes. As a result, carpet weaving was developed. The carpets woven here were unusual with their compositional structures and semantics of images that were based on ancient worldviews.

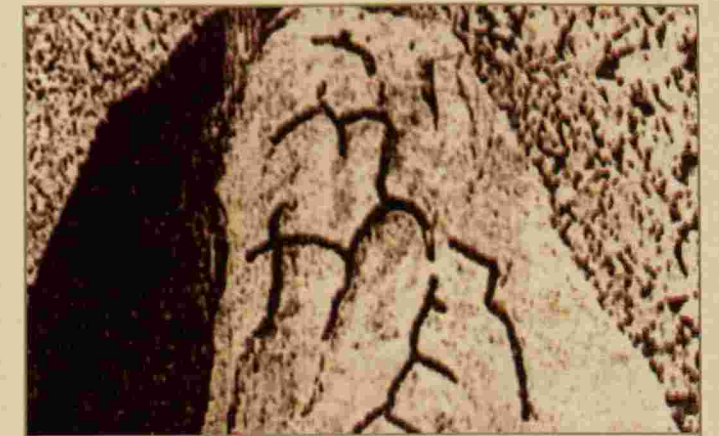
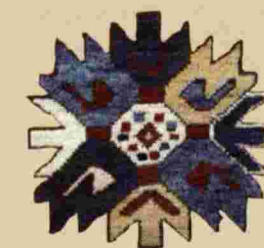
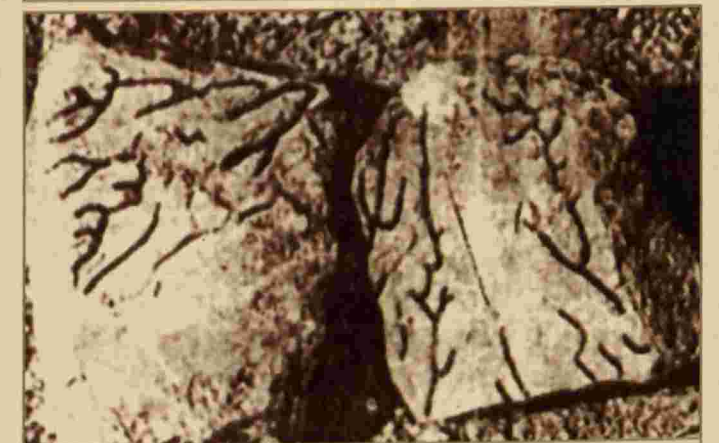


Similar situations were found in the carpets woven in Gafan and Gorus. In general, as a residential district of Azerbaijanis, Zangazur had its own developmental path in Azerbaijan's history. Local people here maintained Azerbaijani cultural values and traditions in their daily lives.

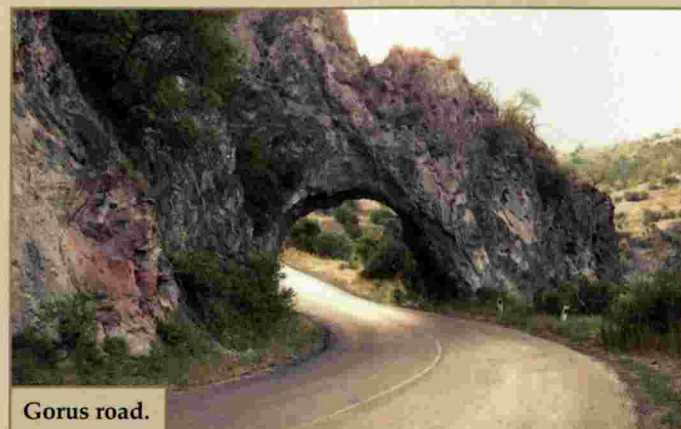
Zangazur's carpet masters produced works that were different from those of other districts. The carpet traditions of Zangazur province are closest to Karabakh traditions. This was because Zangazur had cultural and economic relations with the Karabakh Khanate and the people living there. It is impossible to separate Karabakh from Zangazur in terms of cultural and social matters. Zangazur borders Nakhchivan, southern Azerbaijan, and Karabakh, and these districts had an obvious impact on its folklore and applied art. Different mythological and zoomorphic elements as well as geometric symbols were used in legends, stories, and images on rocks. Mythological images like Ujubilikh, Tekgoz, Div, Garajukha, Virgin, Albasti, and Kaftarkush were reflected in the folklore and applied art of this district. Depictions of Ag Yol and Gara Yol (White Road and Black Road) gods, which used to be worshipped by Azerbaijanis living here, were depicted on carpets. In addition, a Khizir image was adorned by complex geometric elements believed to dole out fate and give life.

Zangazur was noteworthy for its pirs, ojags (holy places), and pilgrimages. Its location surrounded by mountains strengthened the belief in sacred mountain and stone elements. As snakes were seen as the holder of a mountain's spirit, the people of the district used snake images in their faith and daily lives.

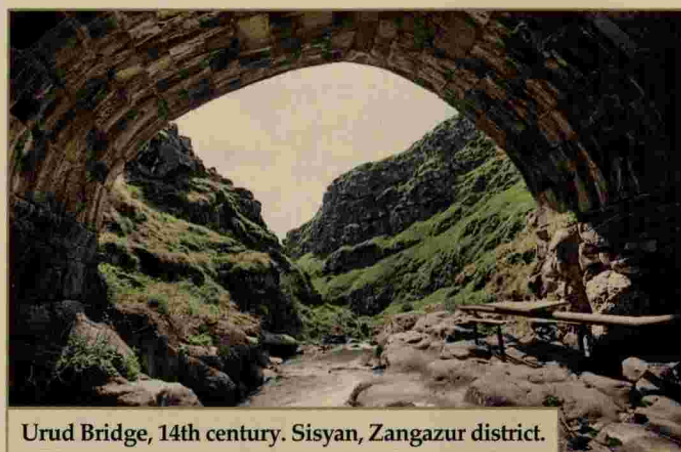
Zangazur is well known for the monuments, temples, and colors that reflect the Caucasian Albanian govern-

Transcription of the stone Orhon-Yenisei (Old Turkish)
script writing, 1st millennium B.C.
Nuvedi village, Mehri, Zangazur district.1. On uch ok erinj ay es, ay erinj es Er Odsan okun.
Tell me friend, do we have 13 arrows?
My friend Er Odsan admitted, yes.2. En er Az ekuch bey erinj, Er Az el. You have raised up, Er
Az bey. Er bey felt proud of the existence of the Az nation.

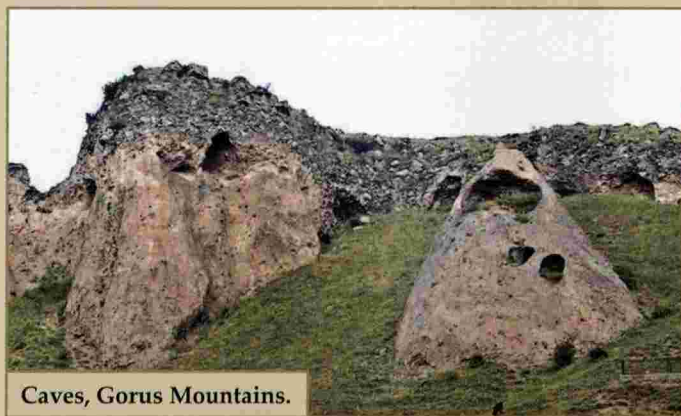
Ram figure. Sisyan, Zangazur district.



Gorus road.



Urud Bridge, 14th century. Sisyan, Zangazur district.



Caves, Gorus Mountains.


Stone tomb, 15th-16th centuries.
Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.


ment. Based on its structure and form, the Gushundash monument is a collection of stone elements emerging from Oghuz Turkish beliefs and traditions. Graveyard inscriptions on Gargi Dashi Mountain in Nuvedi village and their explanations hint at Turkic-Azerbaijani traces. The original fifteenth and sixteenth century images found on the stones that were laid on graves as well as patterns found in Urud village show clearly that this land was part of Azerbaijan. Patterns, calligraphy, notes written using the Arabic alphabet, and graves belonging to Sheikh Riza Amrusal, and the Eliyar, Shahnaz, and Chelebi families give detailed information about people living here. One of these gravestones is particularly interesting. Two carpet-weaving women and carpet-related images like khana, combs, and others were depicted on a stone engraved with the Hijri date 992 (1584) and the word "Aysoltan." This proves once again that Azerbaijanis had been engaged in carpet weaving here since ancient times. It is believed there are remnants of lost cities in this district. The history of Sheki village lends credence to claims that there used to be an ancient city in this area. The ancient Azerbaijani song "Apardi Sella Sarani" (Torrents Took Sara Away) indicates a connection of the described incident and actual place names.

Zangazur's Gafan district is a mountainous region. It is surrounded by the Bergushad Mountains in the west and the Zangazur Mountains in the north. There used to be carpet-weaving quarters in this district's villages such as Aralig, Atgiz, Achagu, Ajibaj, Baydak, Garachiman, Ga-



tar, Kigi, Chaykend, Khelej, Jirish, Sheherjik, and in the center of Gafan city.

The Gorus region is another district of Zangazur province. Famous for its flowers and rivers, this was an area where Azerbaijanis lived. Historical evidence suggests that there were also carpet-weaving quarters in the villages of Agbulag, Gurdgalag, and Shurnukhu.

The Mehri district of Zangazur province was noted for its rich nature and abundant gardens and is located at the crossroads of Nakhchivan, Karabakh, and southern Azerbaijan. The villages of Mehri's Lok, Eldere, Lehvaz, Maralzemi, and Nuvedi used to be the homeland of carpet masters who created perfect art samples based on ancient traditions. For hundreds of years, they enshrined fine patterns on carpets, kilims, mefreshe, chuls, khurjuns, and heybes.

The Sisyan district, located 227 km south from Iravan city, is considered one of the great historical places of Zangazur province. Carpet weaving traditions were carried on in large residential quarters of Agudi, Agkend, Vagudi, Garakilse, Shikhlar, Giziljig, Destekerd, Murkhuz, Urud, Jomerdli, and Sheki villages. The district remained famous for its colorful and lively carpets.

Notes about Zangazur carpets indicate that kilims woven here were recognized by their elegant designs; motifs like goshabuynuz (double-horned), garmagli (hooked), s-shaped, t-shaped flowers with four, six, eight or twelve petals, spiral shapes, arrows, mashal (torch), shamdan (candlestick), and damga (emblem) were widely used in this province.

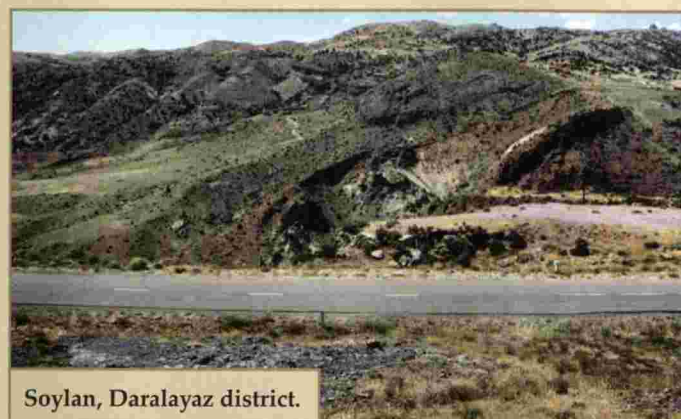

Stone tomb, 15th-16th centuries.
Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.

Stone drawing of the sky angel reflecting an ancient Turkic belief.
Sisyan, Zangazur district.

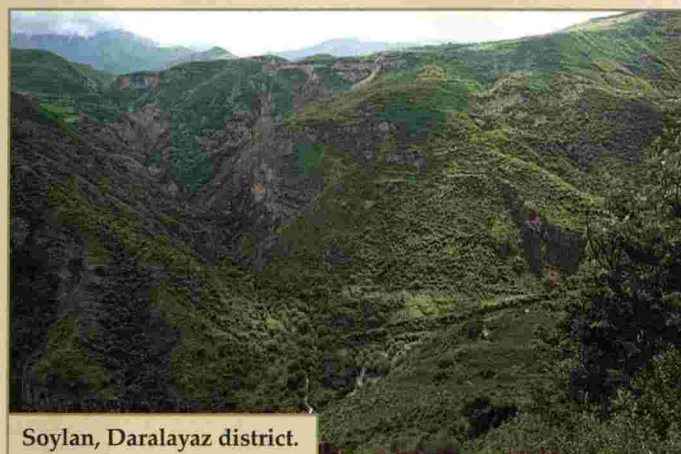
Stone tomb, 15th-16th centuries.
Urud village, Sisyan, Zangazur district.


Zangazur mountains.

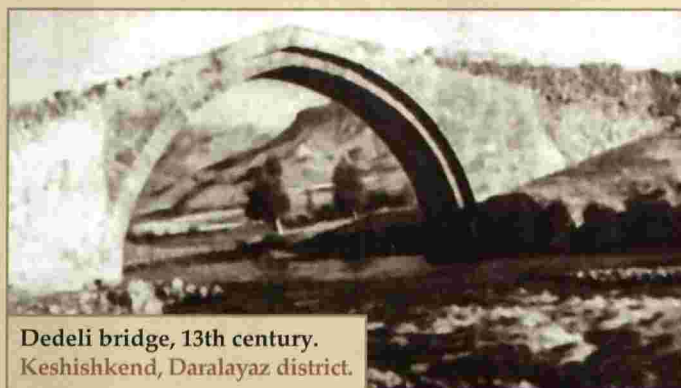
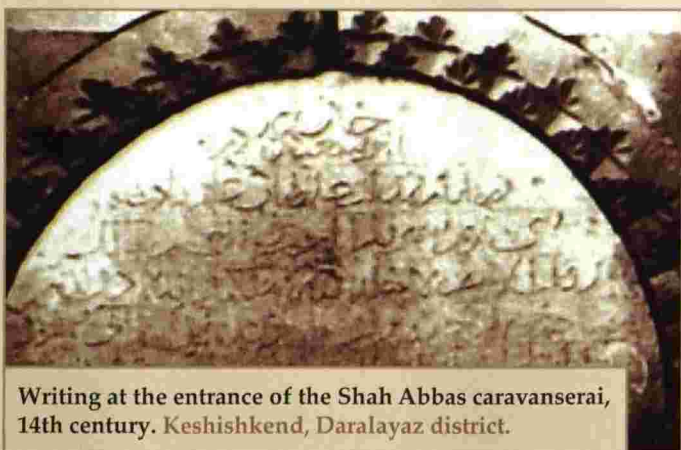
Daralayaz province



Soylan, Daralayaz district.



Soylan, Daralayaz district.

Dedeli bridge, 13th century.
Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.Writing at the entrance of the Shah Abbas caravanserai,
14th century. Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.

The Daralayaz province was known for its different carpet styles, forms, and color shades. It is no coincidence that I. Chopin called Daralayaz province the "Switzerland of the Southern Caucasus" when he visited. Fertile soil, forests, and meadows surrounded the province. A thousand shades of flowers on the slopes contributed to the development of animal husbandry, growing fruit, and weaving carpets. Daralayaz is considered one of the cradles of the carpet weaving arts of Azerbaijan. The high fat content of the plants here created fresh and cheerful dyes.

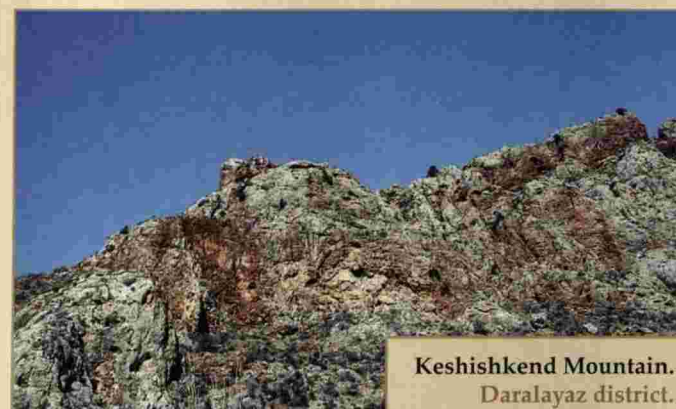
Daralayaz province was situated on the road connecting Tabriz and Iravan with Karabakh. Therefore, the number of bridges and caravanserais was outstanding. Azerbaijani motifs are obvious in the folklore of the people living in this province. Dragon and snake motifs were particularly widespread in both architecture and decorative applied art. Castle ruins, caves, and abundant mineral springs complemented the fascinating landscape of this region, leading to the transmission of nature's beauty onto carpets and carpet products.

One of the largest residential districts of Daralayaz province is Keshishkend. Carpet weaving was common in the villages of Almali, Bulbulolen, Gabakhli, Garagaya, Govushug, Eleyez, Emagu, Kedikveng, Guluduzu, Salli, Hors, and Jive. Different areas of art with ancient historical roots were developed in the villages of Akhta, Zeyte, Kabut, Kotanli, Kochbey, Gomur, Itgiran, and Her-her. Carpets woven in Daralayaz resemble both Karabakh and Gazakh carpet schools in their compositional structures. Symbolic images of snakes and dragons were depicted on carpets in this district, mostly using yarn spun out of black and brown sheep wool.

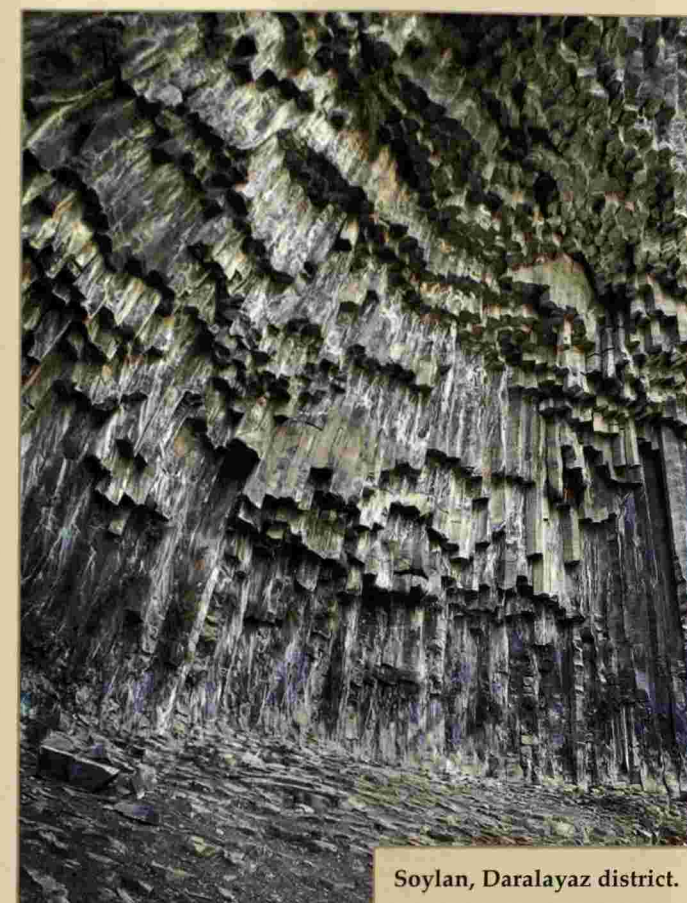
Carpets woven in Daralayaz province are unique in their highly artistic designs. Motifs such as dragons, s-, t-, and z-shapes, emblems, stylized birds, cherkhi-felek (the ups and downs of life), clouds, goshabuynuz (double-horned), girkhuynuz (forty-horned), elibelinde (hands on waist), serme, flames, and buta (almond-shaped) are found on carpets belonging to this province. Daralayaz carpets contain between seven and eleven colors.



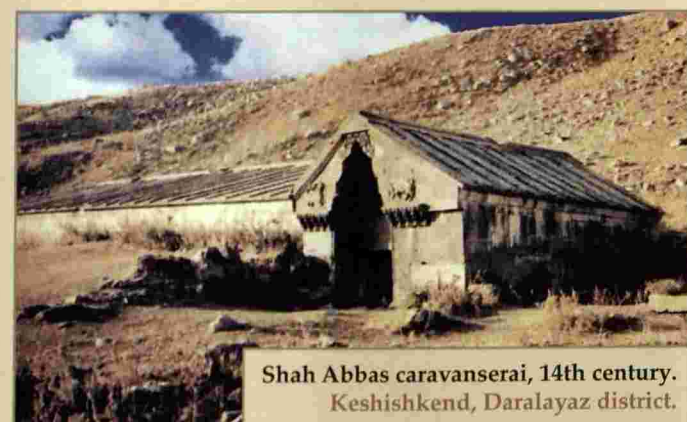
Gala. Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.

Keshishkend Mountain.
Daralayaz district.

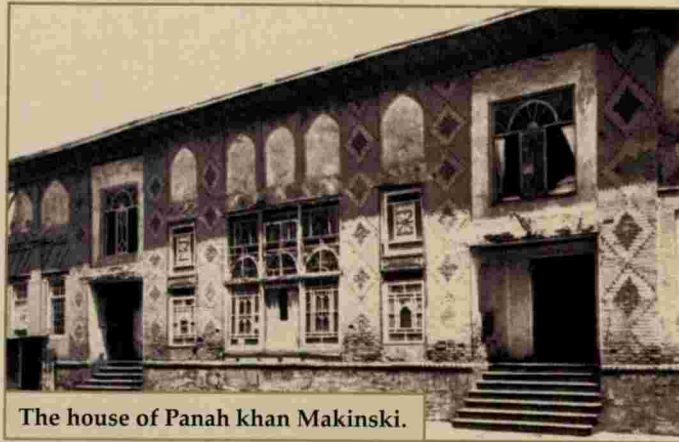
Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.



Soylan, Daralayaz district.

Shah Abbas caravanserai, 14th century.
Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.Agkend caravanserai, 14th century.
Keshishkend, Daralayaz district.

Iravan city



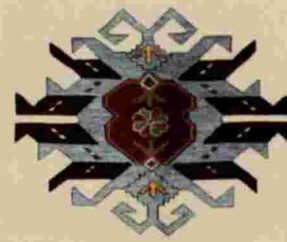
The house of Panah Khan Makinski.



Theater troupe, Iravan Azerbaijani Theater, established in 1882. Photo of the first theater troupe.



Mirza Husayn Aga, chairman of the Iravan National Council and Kheyriyye (Charity) society, Scholar of Oriental Studies, Philosopher. Well-known intellectual and scientist of his time.



Among Iravan carpets, the carpets woven in Iravan city belong in a special group. Iravan city was the center of the Iravan Khanate and its cultural and political capital. The notes left by travelers, who came to these lands to explore the history and culture of ancient Oghuz-Turkic lands as well as to describe their beauty and the daily life of people, are very significant. French traveler J.B. Tavernier (1655), J. Shardenne (1673), Italian Gemelli (1694), English J. Moriyer (1813), Ker Porter (1817), Duboi de Mon Pero (1848), P. Cameron, and M. Vagner described the beauty of Iravan. Asserting that Iravan was an ancient cultural center, Shardenne wrote that he watched a performance in the Sardar's Palace in 1664 on the occasion of the Novruz holiday. Emphasizing that there were skilled performers here, the author likened the staged actions to those of European operas. "Iravan Khan Celebrating Novruz" was performed in Penah Khan Makinski's house in 1881. In 1882, the play "Greediness Earns Enemies" was staged with the participation of local amateurs. All these examples point to the high level of civilization of the Azerbaijanis living here. The name of this city, famous for its mosques and minarets, was mentioned in ancient sources. I. Chopin wrote that there were twelve mosques in the city in 1832. The most attractive among them is the Goy Mesjid (blue mosque) built by Haji Huseyneli Khan. Great Azerbaijani artist Mirze Gedin Iravani played a significant role in the restoration of the irreplaceable Goy Mesjid, in the inscription and decoration of its walls. The first mosque in Iravan was built in 1510 at the request of Shah Ismail. Safavid Mahammad



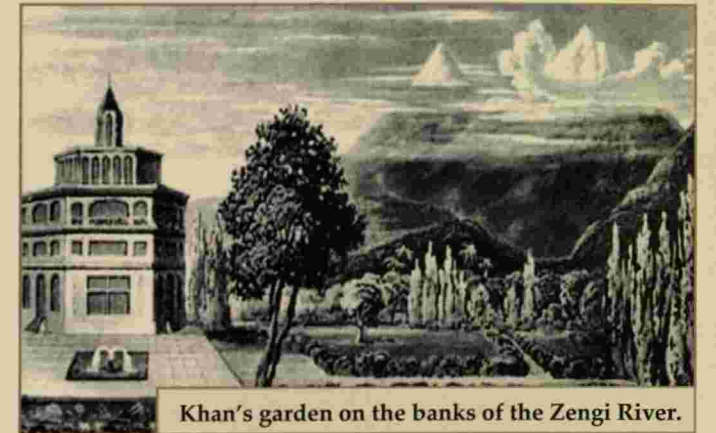
Shah Khudavend issued an order in the sixteenth century to build a mosque considered very impressive for that era. As in all cities of Azerbaijan, the Shah Abbas mosque was erected in honor of Shah Abbas. French traveler J.B. Tavernier who came to Iravan in 1655 described Iravan fortress as "a small town." The traveler mentioned the names of towers, gates, particular landmarks, and rivers in his description, giving evidence that this area was an ancient Azerbaijani land. However, a strong earthquake in 1679 destroyed many ancient Iravan monuments before the city was rebuilt.

There were three separate quarters in Iravan in the seventeenth century. Travelers described the quarters of Tepebashi and Demirbulag as containing shile (red) dyers, soap makers, and blue cloth dyers. The travelers mentioned names like shilechi (red dyer), sabunchu (soap maker), and boyagchi (dyer).

The description of Iravan encompasses buildings constructed using bricks and stones, latticed, arched, and four-cornered caravanserais, fountains decorated with specific ornaments, flower drawings, shiny mirrored salons, the Tabriz door, Sardar's Palace, and castle walls.

In describing Sardar's palace, the travelers spoke about its highly decorated ceiling and walls, flower and bird drawings, and linen portraits that hung on the walls.

Large medallions were used as main elements on carpets woven in Iravan. Goshabuynuz (double-horned), s-forms, forks, flames, arrows, five-, six-, or eight-pointed stars, crowns, images of stylized dogs, and other animals were depicted on these carpets.



Khan's garden on the banks of the Zengi River.



Kubra khanim Bagirbeyova Iravanskaya, daughter of Hajibey Bagirbeyov and spouse of Mehdi khan Iravanski.

Carpets woven in Iravan are very close to Gazakh carpets from the standpoint of their artistic structure. Carpet weavers call this carpet "Gazakh." At the bottom of the carpet's middle field in the right corner, the Islamic date 1201 AH appears.

The main decoration of the middle field of the carpet consists of nine hexagonal medallions placed on a red background. In the first row from the top, the medallions have one light green and two blue backgrounds, in the second row there is one light and two dark brown backgrounds, and in the third row there are light blue, dark green, and navy blue backgrounds.

On the medallions, square elements are positioned vertically and motifs resembling stylized human figures are found at the top and bottom corners and to the right and left of the center.

The gaps of the middle field are filled with hexagonal medallions, rhombic elements, and four-petal flowers. Inside the medallions, there are arrow-like motifs pointing in all directions. On the right and left, the large border of the carpet is decorated with motifs resembling arrows. These motifs are red, yellow, navy blue, blue, and brown. Tree-like motifs decorate the wide borders at the top and bottom.

The wide border is surrounded on both sides by narrow borders decorated with zigzags. The zigzags are designed in light brown, cornelian, yellow, blue, dark and light green, and white. The internal border is encircled with white su (water) and filled with brown and white sichandishi (mouse teeth).

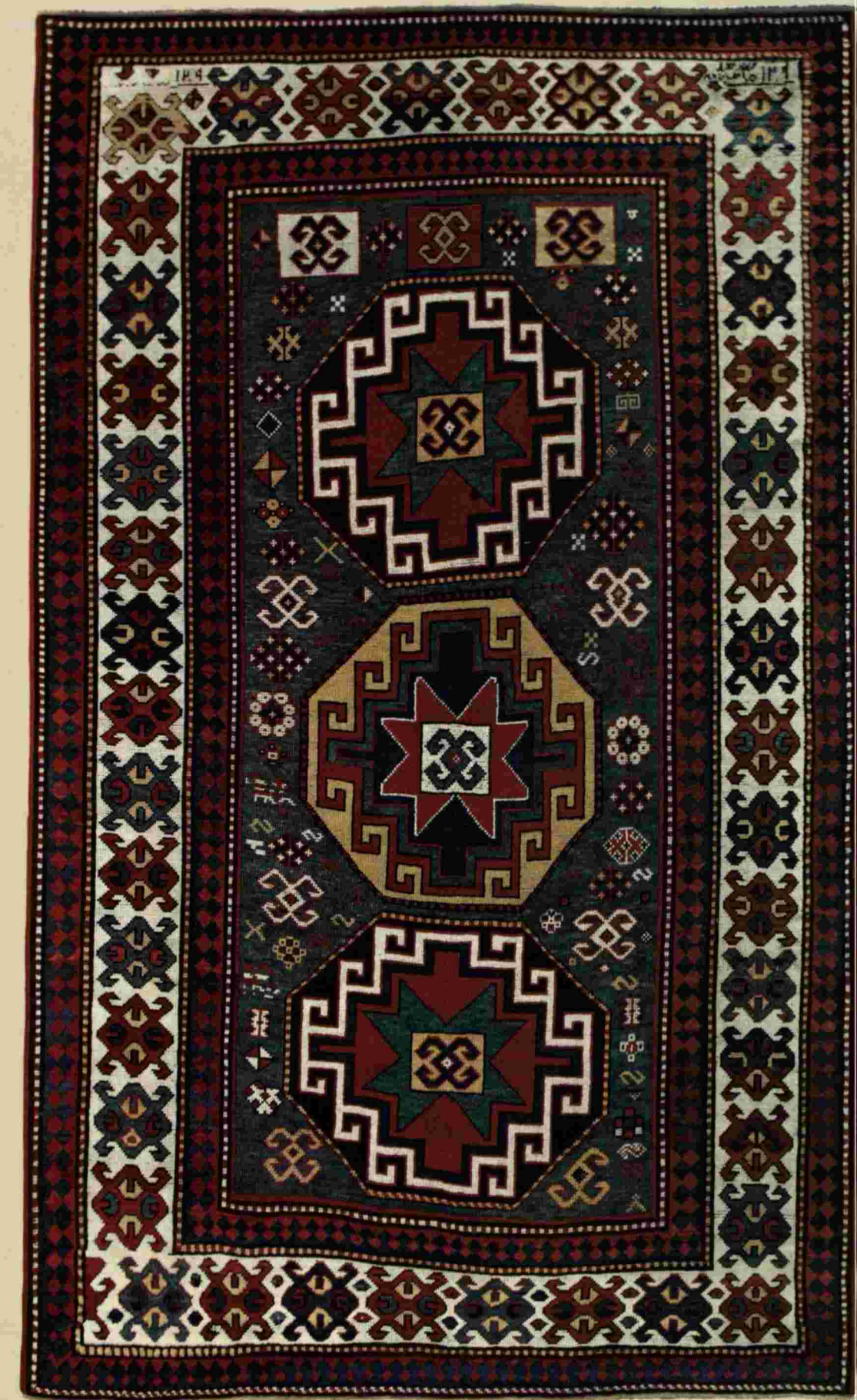
The outside border is complemented by dark brown and yellow su on the outside and cornelian su inside.

The ebresh (dapple-grey) clearly attracts attention at the bottom of the middle field of the carpet.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Iravan city, western Azerbaijan. 178x124. 1201 AH/1780 CE.

The date 1209 AH and writings in Arabic are embroidered at the top part of the carpet, inside the border with the white background on the right and left. This carpet is unique for its artistic features. The carpet was woven on the basis of a Gazakh composition. The main decoration of the green background center field consists of large gyols (medallion), two of which have dark brown backgrounds and one with a yellow background. Inside the brown background gyols, there are dark red classic elements with stepped edges, but inside the yellow background medallion there are classic elements with stepped edges on a navy blue background. The edges of the red stepped motifs are adorned with navy blue stripes and red su (water), but the edges of the navy blue stepped motif are embellished with red su and green stripes. The edges of the white hooks on the edge of the red-set motifs were designed with twelve red hook motifs. The rims of the navy blue background motif in the center are adorned with red hooks. At the top part of the center field of the carpet, white, red, and yellow rectangular elements are found. There are also goshabuynuz (double-horned) motifs among these elements. The empty parts of the middle field are filled with other goshabuynuz, hexagonal, classic stepped edge, evil-eye-catching, damga (stamp), and floral motifs. The wide white background border of the carpet is decorated with dark red, green, yellow, navy blue, and blue rhomboid motifs that have hooked protrusions at the top and bottom. The colors of the border elements create a rhythmic pattern ranging through alternating colors. The middle border is surrounded with guard stripes designed with navy blue and dark red mollabashi (chamomile) motifs on both sides. The inner border is complemented by yellow and red sichandishi (mouse teeth) on the outside and white and red sichandishi on the inside. The edges of the sichandishi are designed with dark brown su. The overall color range of the carpet is in harmony and the contrast of all colors makes them more noticeable.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Soyulan, Daralayaz, western Azerbaijan. 261x157. 1209 AH/1788 CE.

A two-part depiction of the date 1230 AH appears at the top of the carpet's middle field with a dark red setting, below the navy blue medallion.

There is one blue and two navy-blue medallions on the middle field of the carpet. Inside the medallions at the top and in the center, square net-like motifs designed of dark red, cream, and blue appear.

The edges of the medallions are accompanied by white su (water). The gaps in the center field are filled with triangular and rhomboid elements. These elements are adorned with blue and cream colors. The top and bottom of the middle field are decorated by blue elements with a protruding center. The edges of these elements are surrounded with su.

The wide border of the carpet with a green setting is embellished using dark red eight-petal flowers. Navy blue, yellow, white, and blue motifs similar to eight-pointed stars are used inside the flowers, but at the bottom there are rectangular motifs with bulged edges. The border is surrounded with white and dark red zigzags inside and red stripes outside. The red stripe is complemented with yellow su on the inside and incomplete white and red lines on the outside.

The edges of the zigzags were finished with brown and red su. The narrower border of the carpet is decorated using brown and white hooked elements. There are red gazma on the edges of the hooked elements. Blue and red zigzag madakhils surround the border. Red and yellow square motifs and incomplete lines surround the madakhils. The edges of the carpet are traditionally finished in red and blue, using a winding method.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Sisyan, Zangazur, western Azerbaijan. 180x112. 1230 AH/1809 CE.

The date 1240 AH appears at the top of the carpet to the right of the middle field near the corner.

In the middle field of the navy blue background carpet there is a large medallion in a red setting. Hooks surround the medallion on all sides and the edges of the hooks are patterned with white sichandishi (mouse teeth). A rhombus medallion designed with green, white, yellow, orange, and navy blue is found inside the medallion. The rhombus element is surrounded with yellow su (water) and hooks. Small medallions of the same pattern are depicted in the empty spaces of the middle field and in the upper and lower parts of the medallion. Dordunsur (four elements), hooked, s-shaped, rectangular, rhomboid, and netlike elements decorate the empty parts of the other spaces. One stylized bird appears in the upper part of the middle field on the right and several red and yellow stylized bird images are aligned horizontally, slightly below the center.

The cream-colored middle border of the carpet is adorned with zulfelem patterns. The color design of these patterns consists of green, blue, light blue, orange, dark brown, purple, and dark red. Green and red mollabashi (chamomile) motifs decorate the inside of the middle border on both sides. White sichandishi complete the edges of the mollabashi motifs. Black su is employed for the edges of the carpet's middle border. The edges of the outside guard stripe are adorned using a braiding method with red, light blue, brown, yellow, orange, blue, and navy blue yarn from right and left, but with black su in the upper and lower areas.

Eleven colors were employed in the color design of the carpet, giving the carpet a rich color palette.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Ashtarak, western Azerbaijan. 282x142. 1240 AH/1819 CE.



The date 1240 AH appears in the upper section of the carpet's middle field in the right corner.

The artistic structure of the carpet consists of a middle field and border. Two large medallions with pointed arms comprise the major decorations of the simply structured middle field. In addition, three rectangular medallions are placed on the main medallions. X-shaped motifs with hooked tips inside the medallions are located in the center of the gyols (medallions). On the right and left of the upper and lower navy blue medallions, there are spiral-shaped bulges facing each other. The medallions depicted in the upper and lower parts are repeated in smaller sizes (with narrower centers) on the branches of the gyols facing towards right and left. Inside the medallions in the upper and lower areas, there are dark red hooked motifs. The edges of these motifs are decorated with light blue su (water). The edges of the medallions are outlined with z-shaped red and white stripes on the inside and with light green stripes on the outside.

Dark red su completes the stripes ornamented with z-shaped light green. The wide light brown border of the carpet is decorated using elements similar to grapevine leaves. The elements are navy blue, grey, and dark red. The border is surrounded with madakhils adorned using dark red and cream-colored z-shaped motifs on both sides. The color pattern of the carpet has been realized with great professionalism.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Mehri, Zangazur, western Azerbaijan. 210x121. 1240 AH/1819 CE.

The date 1250 AH appears in the left-hand corner of the upper part of the carpet's middle field.

The name of the carpet is historically related to the Borchali district (currently the Kvemo Kartli district of the Republic of Georgia) situated to the northwest of the Gazakh district. One large eight-pointed medallion with cream-colored background and two smaller eight-pointed medallions with red background decorate the center field of the red carpet. A dordunsur (four elements) motif appears inside the central medallion. Hooked elements are placed in the upper and lower parts of this motif, in addition to a goshabuynuz (double-horned) on the right and left, a four-petal flower in the center, and white and navy blue triangles inside the hooked elements. In the upper and lower parts of the medallion there are arrow-like motifs with hooked edges that point towards the center. Goshabuynuz motifs fill the empty spaces in the center field of the medallion while zigzag elements and hooked elements are depicted on the inside and outside, respectively.

The inside of the eight-pointed star with a cream-colored background is divided into six red and navy blue triangles inside the smaller medallions. The edges of the medallion are surrounded by navy blue hooked elements from inside and outside.

The wide border of the carpet is decorated with triangular motifs with stepped edges, designed in cream, navy blue, and red. Yellow, red, blue, navy blue, and cream colors are employed to adorn the zigzags along the edges of the carpet. The middle border is surrounded by narrow stripes decorated using hooked and mollabashi (chamomile) motifs on both sides. The edges of the middle border are adorned with white su (water). The narrow stripes are surrounded with yellow and red incomplete lines. Flowers characteristic of Guba carpets and motifs characteristic of Gazakh carpets embellish the empty spaces of the center field. The flower motifs are yellow, navy blue, white, and red, while other motifs are navy blue, red, and cream colors. The carpet belongs to the category of simple patterned compositions. Black su complements the edges of the carpet on the right and left. The characteristic colors of Gazakh carpets of Azerbaijan have been applied to this carpet.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Tovuzgala, Shamshaddin, western Azerbaijan. 231x190. 1250 AH/1829 CE.

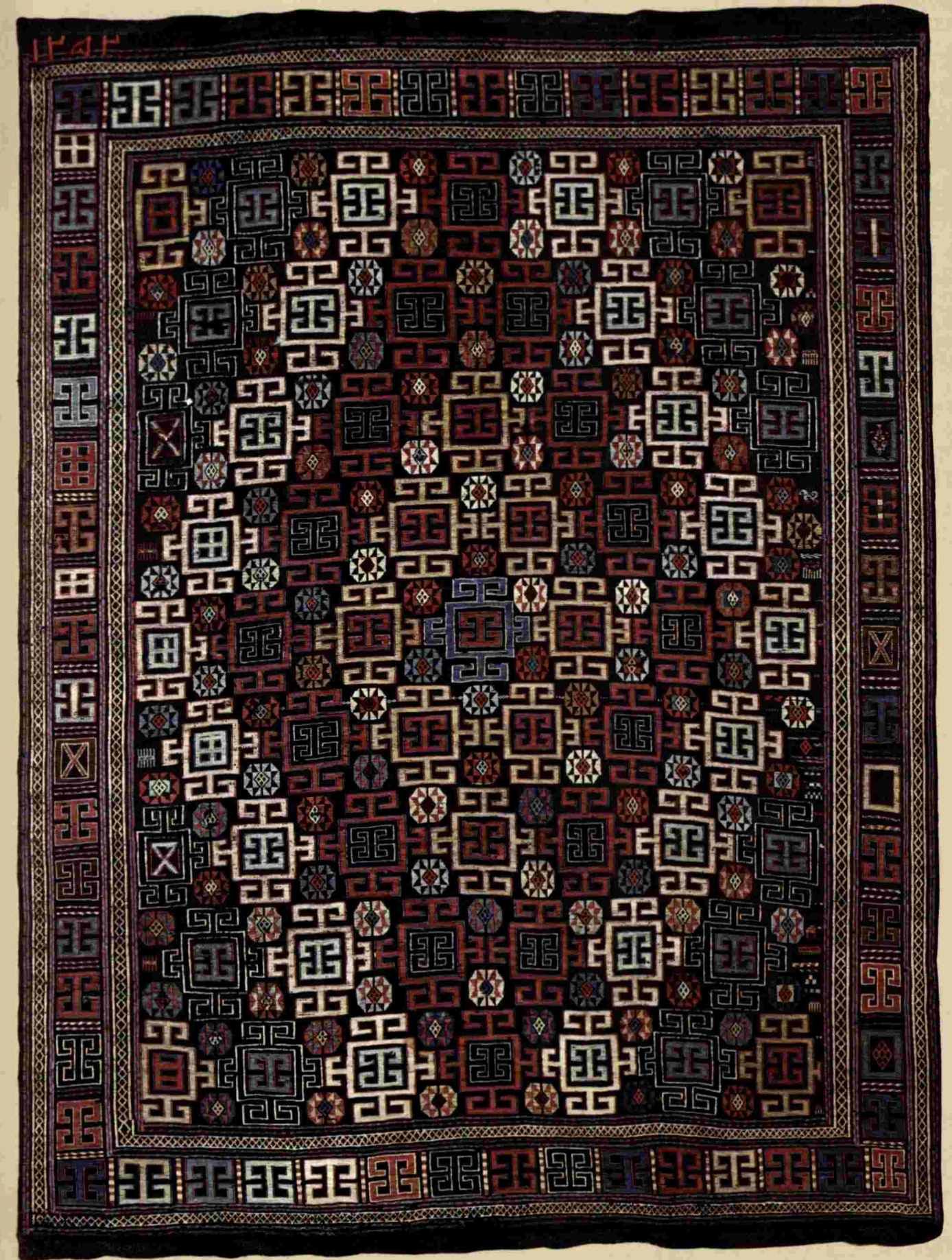
The date 1252 AH appears in the upper part of the carpet, on the edge of the border on the left.

Whether due to their weaving forms or artistic features, zili carpets, woven using a complex winding method, have developed a lot compared to other flat-weave carpets. In addition to animal images, several geometric elements emerged in primitive form in the design of zilis.

Zilis woven in ancient times in different districts of Azerbaijan became famous for their highly artistic designs, both in the country and abroad. The main decoration of these carpets with dark brown settings consisted of square medallions placed in a central field. There are t-shaped projections on all sides of the medallions.

The medallions are designed with cream, navy blue, blue, yellow, and pale red colors. Motifs called changal (fork) are placed in the center of the medallions. The empty spaces of the central field are filled with small octagonal elements. There are eight-pointed stars inside the octagonal elements. These elements are adorned using yellow, cream, blue, light blue, pale red, and light brown. The edges of the carpet on the right and left are decorated with small darag (comb), rhombic, three-petal flowers, square shaped, tiny elements, and incomplete body motifs. The history of the darag motifs depicted on the carpet is very ancient, symbolizing moral purity.

A wide border with a brown background surrounds the central field. The changal motifs depicted inside the medallions in the central field of the carpet are repeated on the border. Rhombic and x-shaped motifs are employed inside the rectangular elements depicted on the right and left borders. On both sides, the border is surrounded with madakhils decorated using small rhombic motifs. Madakhils are embellished with yellow. The edges of the border are decorated with light blue and red, using a winding method.



Zili. Wool. Flat-weave. Iravan group. Aparan, western Azerbaijan. 204x150. 1252 AH/1831 CE.

The date 1254 AH appears in the lower part of the carpet. A white background medallion with its edges like flaming palmettos is placed in the center of this red field carpet with an original compositional structure. A smaller blue medallion appears inside the white medallion. A red rhombic gyol (medallion) designed with blue, white, yellow, and red eight-petal flowers with yellow and red edges adorn the inside of the medallion. There are two incomplete large gyols in the upper and lower parts of the center field. Decorated with tree branch-like motifs, the arms of the incomplete gyols point towards right and left. Navy blue and red are used to decorate the tree-like elements on the white background arms. Incomplete medallions with dark brown fields close to the border wall complement the general composition in the upper and lower parts of the carpet. The edges of the medallions are appointed with white, blue, and brown wavy bulges. There are tree branch-like brown, white, and navy blue motifs in the empty upper and lower parts of the middle field. The white background border of the carpet is decorated with blue, red, green, and dark brown eight-pointed star motifs. The centers of these motifs are decorated using small yellow, blue, red, and light and dark brown rectangular elements. On both sides, the white background border is surrounded with madakhils adorned with dark brown and blue motifs. The madakhils are finished with red and yellow incomplete lines on the right and left, and yellow and red z-shaped motifs at the top and bottom.

The color design of the carpet was prepared using traditional conformity and professionalism.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Keshishkend, Daralayaz, western Azerbaijan. 220x136. 1254 AH/1833 CE.

The date 1260 AH appears in the center of the carpet's middle field inside the red medallion. This carpet reflects characteristics specific to Gamarli carpets.

The composition of this red carpet consists of a middle field and a border. The main decoration of the middle field is a large gyol (medallion). A green medallion is placed inside the gyol. There is a white rectangular element in the center of the smaller dark red medallion inside the similar-shaped medallion. An eight-pointed star motif is depicted inside the rectangular element. This element is surrounded by navy blue su (water) on the inside, yellow and navy blue su on the outside, horseshoe-like motifs on the right and left, and tree motifs in the upper and lower areas. In the empty parts of the white gyol, there are small green background octagonal medallions designed with hooked motifs inside. The x-shaped elements are represented in navy blue, dark red, yellow, and black. Jutbuynuz (double-horned) bulged elements are depicted at the top and bottom.

Green, navy blue, and dark red s-shaped motifs decorate the edges of the gyol on the right and left. The edges of the gyol are surrounded by navy blue stripes, decorated with dark red serrated waves. The navy blue stripe on the edges of the gyol is adorned using yellow su inside and white su outside.

Green elements with ridges of jutbuynuz and small navy blue medallions ornamented using stepped rhombic evil-eye-catcher motifs from inside are depicted in the corners of the carpet's middle field. The gaps are filled with small four-petal flowers and green x-shaped motifs. Classic elements with stepped rims and small evil-eye-catcher motifs embellish the dark brown main border of the carpet. The classic elements are designed using white, blue, yellow, green, dark red, navy blue, and light blue, and evil-eye-catcher motifs use dark red and white. The main border is surrounded by yellow guard stripes decorated using serrated waves on both sides. The serrated waves are designed with dark red, navy blue, and black. The inner border is surrounded by red and white madakhils on the outside and white and brown madakhils from the inside. The outer border is surrounded by madakhils designed using dark red and white squares on both sides.



Carpets. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Gamarli, Garnibasar, western Azerbaijan. 196x131. 1260 AH/1839 CE.

In the lower part of the white gyol (medallion) of the middle field, the date 1270 AH appears.

A large gyol with a white background is placed in the middle field of this carpet with a brick red setting. A green medallion is found in the center of the gyol. A red hexagonal element is placed in the center of the medallion. The rectangular motif with goshabuynuz (double-horned) bulges and edges designed using blue hues attracts attention. A yellow eight-pointed star is found in the center of the rectangular element's purple background. The rims of this geometric element are surrounded by small red and yellow square motifs and light blue su (water). The images of a stylized pair of birds and flowers decorate the gaps in the red hexagonal medallion. The edges of the medallion are completed with white sichandishi (mouse teeth). White background rectangular geometric elements divided into dark and light brown triangular parts are depicted in the corners of the green medallions. The edges of these elements are complemented with red colors. Motifs like dordayagli gush (four-legged bird), evil-eye-catcher, rectangular shapes, and goshabuynuz bulges set opposite each other fill the empty spaces of the white gyol. Elements called sirga (earring) are designed in a chain arrangement to fill the gaps on the edges of the gyol. The borders of the gyol are finished with red su and green stripes designed using red zigzags on the inside. Red, black, and yellow su are used for the inside and white and black su are used for the outside of the stripes. Small blue rectangular medallions are depicted in the upper and lower parts of the large white mehrab-like gyol, to the right and left of the mehrab (altar). The inside of the medallions is divided into red and yellow triangles. There are tiny red and white star motifs on the edges of the medallion. The brick-colored gaps in the middle field are decorated using images of yellow, light blue, green, brown, and white hooks, flowers, goshabuynuz, stylized humans, four-legged fictional birds, stylized deer, and points. The carpet's white border is designed using classic elements characteristic for Ganja-Gazakh. Light blue, green, yellow, blue, red, and navy blue are employed for these elements. The narrow navy blue stripe is finished with white, red, yellow, light brown, and green eight-pointed stars. The white, red, and yellow sichandishi surround the borders on both sides. Light and navy blue zigzag madakhils, complemented by sichandishi on the edges, comprise the white border on the outside.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Agbaba, western Azerbaijan. 244x162. 1270 AH/1849 CE.

The date 1271 AH appears in the upper left-hand corner of the carpet's middle field.

The main decoration of this cornelian field carpet consists of a compositional structure alternately pointing right and left, beginning from the top row. The butas (almond-shaped) are green, cornelian, blue, and white in the first row; in the second row, they alternate, creating a particular harmony. The butas have leaf-like bulges and pompoms on their edges. Among weavers this kind of buta is called "pompom buta."

Buta motifs have an ancient history. As in other regions of Azerbaijan, they have been repeatedly depicted not only on carpets in western Azerbaijan, but also in architecture, jewelry, wood carving, coppersmith work, pottery, embroidery, and in many other areas of applied art. As each period of 33 years passed, buta motifs changed their forms and developed in different contexts. As the forms of the butas improved, the craftsmen gave them new names and tried to develop them further.

The main green border is decorated with small eight-petal flowers. The gaps between the flowers are filled with serrated branches. Serrated elements are seen more in the Guba-Shirvan and Ganja-Gazakh carpets of Azerbaijan. The notches are designed in a specific arrangement on the edges of oblong leaves.

The branches appear wavy by virtue of being joined together. The cornelian branches on the right and left of the flowers, as well as the barely noticeable flowers in the branches, enrich the border. On both sides, the main border is surrounded with guard stripes decorated using s-shaped motifs. S-shaped motifs are depicted in white, cornelian, dark brown, light blue, and yellow. Among these motifs, there are small elements called sirga (earring). The colors of the s-shaped motifs are repeated in the sirga elements. Cornelian and white sic-handishi (mouse teeth) complete the guard stripe borders. The border encircling the middle field is surrounded by light blue notches on the inside and the cornelian edged border is surrounded by the same colored notches on the outside. The flowers in the border are depicted in cornelian, yellow, light blue, white, brown, green, and navy blue.



Carpets. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Uchkilse, western Azerbaijan. 267x110. 1271 AH/1850 CE.

The date 1273 AH appears in the right-hand corner at the bottom of the carpet's middle field.

The main decoration of the middle field of this red background carpet consists of two light green and one light blue large tree images. Yellow and white buds decorate the branches of the trees.

Trees are designed differently in the decorative-applied art of Azerbaijan. Spring and fall trees are designed with blossoms or crops. In most cases, cypress, willows, or weeping willows are depicted as decorative trees. In ancient times, in the Near East, Central Asia, and in Azerbaijan olive trees, cypress, mulberry trees, fig trees, and grape vines were considered holy trees. Trees with crooked branches were believed to be especially holy. In decorative-applied art, weeping willows were considered a symbol of love, oaks were symbols of power, and pomegranate trees symbolized luck and family growth. Azerbaijan's artists, particularly carpet masters, depicted these images in stylized forms. All these images held symbolic meanings on carpets. In most cases, there are one or two large tree images in the middle field, although in some cases more tree images are seen.

At the bottom end of the carpet, beneath the green tree, there are yellow motifs with their edges decorated using brown su (water). The same motif is repeated in the brown and yellow motifs in the center. The empty parts of the middle field are filled with s-shaped, buynuz (horn), and chichak (flower) motifs. Rectangular elements are depicted in the empty spaces between the trees. Inside these elements, small red, blue, yellow, light blue, green, and brown classic elements are depicted on the white background along the edges of light blue and yellow triangular elements at the top and navy blue and yellow triangular elements at the bottom. There are yellow, navy blue, light blue, red, and green stepped elements on the wide border of the carpet. These elements are separated from each other by white su. The wide border is encircled by narrow light blue stripes on the outside and narrow navy blue stripes on the inside. Yellow, red, orange, white, light blue, and blue four-petal flowers, motifs with stepped edges, and rhombic elements are patterned inside the narrow stripes. White and red incomplete lines surround the outer edges of the stripe, while the edges of the inner stripe are surrounded by yellow and red on the outside and white and red incomplete lines on the inside. The weaver professionally designed the color palette of the carpet. The colors of the ornamental motifs of the middle field and the middle stripe of the carpet are in bright contrast. The carpet's harmonic color range and decorative composition complement each other, generating a cheerful mood. The artistic union among the colors of the motifs and the shimmer of the piles are clearly visible.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Jalaloglu, Loru, western Azerbaijan. 254x147. 1273 AH/1852 CE.

The date 1274 AH appears on the red background at the bottom of the carpet.

In the middle of this red field carpet, three large whole and one incomplete medallion is depicted. The medallions are reminiscent of chagan (kite) or frog motifs. Arranged alternately along the vertical axis, the three whole and one incomplete element produces a dynamic and rhythmic composition.

The medallion in the center is designed with navy blue, dark red, white, and green. A geometric eight-pointed star appears in the center of the medallion. Inside this element, six four-petal flowers are designed inside a yellow flower that looks like an oblong rectangular ketebe. At the top and bottom of the rectangular element, there are arrow-like bulges. An eight-pointed geometric element appears in the center of the medallion. Inside this element, on the yellow background gyol (medallion) reminiscent of a rectangular oblong ketebe, six four-petal flowers are depicted. There are arrow-like bulges at the top and bottom of the rectangular element. S-shaped elements are depicted along the white bulges pointing towards the right and left of the medallion and elements similar to stylized horse figures are depicted on the white background at the top and bottom. A light green color dominates on the similar-shaped medallions at the top and bottom of the middle field. The empty areas of the field are decorated using rhombic, rectangular, three- and four-petal flowers, spirals, stylized goats, birds, and other motifs.

The wide white border of the carpet is adorned with eight-pointed flowers. Red, navy blue, blue, green, yellow, brown, and light green colors decorate the flowers. The edges of the flowers are finished with su (water). The border is surrounded with narrow stripes decorated using red and navy blue zigzag elements. The edges of the borders are designed with madakhils decorated with yellow and red square elements.

Having decided on the color palette of the carpet, the weaver switched from one color to another using traditional unions, thereby achieving contrast. The colors therefore create harmony and a pleasant mood.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Irvan group. Vedi, Vedibasat, western Azerbaijan. 226x118. 1274 AH/1853 CE.

The date 1278 AH appears inside the green background gyol (medallion) second from the top in the middle field of the carpet.

The name of the carpet is related to Fakhrali village situated 25 km to the northeast of Ganja. Veteran weavers call this carpet "Ganja's Proud." In the 19th century, this type of carpet was woven in many districts of western Azerbaijan, including the Goyche district. In the middle field of this red carpet, a large medallion with mehrab (shrine) images appears at the top and bottom. Inside the gyol, four hexagonal medallions are depicted, completed with goshabuynuz (double-horned) motifs at the top and bottom, and arranged one after the other. In the center of the medallions, oblong elements reminiscent of ketebe appear and are decorated with t-shaped motifs from right and left and with tree-like motifs at the top and bottom. Similar elements are encountered more often on Ganja and Gazakh carpets. The empty spaces inside the gyol are filled with goshabuynuz, eight-pointed star, rhombus, floral, and other classic elements. The gaps in the corners of the carpet are decorated with eight- and four-petal motifs. At the top and bottom of the carpet, to the right and left of the mehrab, cream-colored classic elements are depicted. These elements are also encountered on faience dishes found in kurgans (tombs) during excavations around Goygol city and on the surme (antimony) boards of medallions. Researchers interpret these elements as cult symbols belonging to the early agricultural period. A navy blue border designed inside with red, yellow, white, and green rhombic motifs with stepped edges surround the large cream-colored background field. The wide blue border of the carpet is adorned with floral elements using red, yellow, white, green, purple, navy blue, cream, and blue. Narrow borders with yellow inner backgrounds and with red outer backgrounds surround the wide border. Inside the borders, rhombic elements with stepped edges designed using red, yellow, blue, white, and light and dark green colors are depicted. The red background border is surrounded by blue, yellow, and red small z-shaped elements. The yellow background border is enclosed by white and red small z-shaped elements. A very beautiful vision has been created through the harmony of the different colors.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Chambarak (Girmizikend), Goyche, western Azerbaijan. 272x105. 1278 AH/1857 CE.

The date 1282 AH appears at the top of the middle field of this carpet. Although this carpet has a simple compositional structure, it is distinguished by its unique original design.

The decoration of the red background middle field consists of medium-sized rectangular motifs and eight-petal flowers in the center and small rectangular motifs and eight-petal flowers at the top and bottom.

Red goshabuynuz (double-horned) motifs are depicted inside the yellow background medallion in the center, but inside the blue medallion at the top and the green medallion at the bottom, yellow goshabuynuz motifs are depicted. The geometric medallion in the center is surrounded with white and red sichandishi (mouse teeth) on the outside and red and navy blue zigzag motifs on the inside. The geometric medallions at the top and bottom are surrounded with red, white, and navy blue sichandishi. There are stylized navy blue uzungulag (donkey) images in the bottom corners of the middle field. The middle field is enclosed with a green background border designed using yellow, red, and white. The border is narrower at the top and bottom. Inside the borders on the right and left, there are jutbuynuz (double-horned) motifs designed with red, yellow, and white on the inside. Yellow and white rhombic elements are depicted in the empty spaces of the border between these motifs. The narrow green border at the top and bottom is decorated with red, white, and yellow rhombic elements with stepped edges. These elements are small in size. The jutbuynuz and stepped motifs depicted on the green border reinforce the general and dynamic nature of the composition. The red background border of the carpet is designed with eight-petal flowers. The flowers are adorned using navy blue, yellow, and white. Barely-noticeable square elements decorate the petals. The white background border of the carpet is decorated with arrow-like and rhomboid elements decorated in navy blue, green, and red and arranged one after the other. Inside this white background border, rhombic elements are depicted. The borders are surrounded with red, yellow, and white sichandishi. They are completed with brown su (water).



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Barana, Loru, western Azerbaijan. 217x137. 1282 AH/1861 CE.

The date 1287 AH appears at the top of the carpet's middle field.

The middle field of the carpet is dark and light blue. Light blue is used in the center, dark blue in the lower part, and half-light and half-dark blue in the upper section. The main decoration of the middle field represents fourteen whole and eight partial medallions arranged symmetrically. The medallions are placed on a dark red, white, yellow, sumac, and black background. Classic elements are designed on the medallions: sumac, white, green and black elements on the dark red background; red, black, and green on the white background; green and red on the yellow background; yellow and brown on the green background; and white elements on the black background. The edges of the medallions are surrounded with hooks, while octagonal star motifs are depicted in the center.

In the empty spaces of the carpet's middle field, octagonal stars, small eight-pointed elements, s-shaped, and rhombic elements are depicted; on the right and left, t-shaped elements with stepped edges are used. There are stylized bird images on the right and left.

The main dark red background border of the carpet is decorated with classic elements that have hooked edges. In the center of these elements there are rhombic elements divided into four parts on the inside. The classic elements are yellow, dark green, white, navy blue, light blue, and light brown. Guard stripes decorated with rectangular elements surround the main border on both sides. The rectangular elements are designed in dark red, light blue, navy blue, dark green, yellow, light brown, white, and blue. The inside of the rectangular elements are divided into four parts. White su (water) decorates the edges of the guard stripes and small rectangular elements. On both sides, the borders are surrounded with madakhils decorated with yellow and red small square motifs. The edges of the madakhils are represented by black su.

The colors of the elements in the middle field of the carpet are repeated in the motifs on the border. A very attractive color arrangement is achieved as a result of alternating different color shades.



Carpets. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Zangibasar, western Azerbaijan. 271x140. 1287 AH/1866 CE.

The date 1292 AH is depicted on the top left section of the carpet.

The main decoration of this kilim contains a composition, designed on the basis of a scheme. In this type of composition designed on the basis of continuous repetition of schemes, there is no compositional center in the middle field. In the parts divided into schemes, elements called kilimgulu (kilim flower) specific to Iravan kilims are depicted. These elements are called hooked elements. The hooked elements specific to Iravan carpets are also encountered on the kilims of the Gazakh and Karabakh Groups.

The empty spaces on the green background divided into schemes are filled with red hook-like elements that are reminiscent of birds standing face-to-face, while the red background empty spaces are filled with similar navy blue motifs. Due to the size of the carpet, the compositional structure created conditions for a consistent arrangement of colors of the motifs along the carpet and for an original design of ornamental decoration. As they are known among weavers, motifs called mollabashi (chamomile) are depicted on the border of the carpet. These motifs are represented in navy and light blue, red, and green. The middle field of the carpet is surrounded with zigzag lines on the right and left of the inside. The colors of these elements depicted on the right and left of the carpet on the white background and at the top and bottom on the red background are systematically changed, creating a very beautiful and bright color arrangement. Incomplete classic elements called kilimgulu as well as navy blue, yellow, light blue, cornelian, and green burma elements are depicted in the middle field inside the narrow stripes that separate the schemes. The empty spaces on the edges of the narrow stripes are filled with mollabashi elements. The colors used for the motifs in the middle field of this kilim are repeated in the motifs on the border, giving the kilim cheerful colors. A very attractive color arrangement is achieved from the harmonization of bright contrasting colors with professionalism and consistency.



Kilim. Wool. Flat-weave. Iravan group. Gumru city, Shorayel, western Azerbaijan. 302x193. 1292 AH/1871 CE.

The date 1299 AH appears at the bottom of the gyol (medallion) in the center of the middle field of the carpet. Three large hexagonal gyols are located in the middle field of this dark red background carpet. A red rectangular medallion appears inside the gyols. The edges of the medallions are surrounded with yellow su (water) and are designed with hooked motifs from the left and right. A tree is shaped out of the hooks, designed face-to-face at the top and bottom of the medallions. Turkish people had strong faith in trees and plants, related to their mythical views. They always viewed trees as creative forces. Some Oghuz legends note that humans were created out of trees. The edges of the navy blue background gyol are surrounded with green su and completed with buynuz (horn) motifs in the upper and lower sections. Similar colored hooked elements are depicted from the right and left along the edges of the gyol. In the upper center sections of the navy blue gyol in the empty spaces of the middle field, rhombic medallions are depicted. Octagonal stars are placed on the black background inside the medallions; there are small rhomboid motifs in the lower and upper corners. The top corner nooks of the stars are reminiscent of bird heads facing opposite directions. The edges of the medallions are surrounded with hooks. Two large black background rhombic medallions with hooked edges designed with star-like motifs on the inside are depicted in the empty spaces at the top of the carpet's middle field, on the right and left. There is a rectangular geometric element placed horizontally inside the medallions, using red and white incomplete lines. There are rectangular elements in the bottom corners of the carpet's middle field. Classic motifs are designed inside these white background elements and the edges are surrounded with stripes designed using wavy lines. There are deer, goat, and bird images in the empty spaces of the middle field. Zoomorphic and legendary images have been employed in Azerbaijan's decorative applied art throughout history, giving great artistic meaning to the objects they depicted. These images include birds, animals, fish, and mythical beings. Bird images developed in relation to artistic features that became motifs encountered continuously on art samples. Throughout the centuries, these images have been employed in different areas of Azerbaijani art, such as metal products, faience dishes, and fabrics. Deer, goat, and other animal images are encountered in Azerbaijan's decorative applied art in addition to in carpet design. These images are even found in the depictions on rocks in Gobustan. The white background border of the carpet is designed using main border motifs specific to "Salahli" carpets of Gazakh. The same motifs are decorated with green on a red background border as well. The borders are surrounded with blue su and white sichandishi (mouse teeth).



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Hamamli, Pambak, western Azerbaijan. 376x191. 1299 AH/1878 CE.

The reason behind the extraordinary beauty and shiny appearance of the carpets woven in Talin is that they are woven out of yarn produced from fine and glossy elastic wool. The number of colors and color shades on the carpets woven here change from seven to ten and sometimes more. This carpet contains a simple pattern design. The main decoration of the middle cornelian field consists of four eight-petal medallions arranged horizontally one after another. The edges of the medallions are surrounded with white su (water) on the inside and blue zigzags on the outside. Smaller dark red octagonal star-like medallions are placed inside the medallions. A brown rhombic element appears in the center of these medallions. There are light blue arrow-like motifs at the top and bottom and on the right and left of the rhombic elements. The arms, which are directed towards all four sides from the nooks on the right and left in the center, top, and bottom of the medallion, are shaped like flamed palmettos. Flowery branches diverge out of these arms, which look like tree trunks. There are also flowery branches in other niches of the medallions.

The empty spaces of the carpet's middle field are ornamented in light blue, brown, cream, navy blue, and red classic elements and at the lower parts with stylized peacock motifs.

Light blue and black su encloses the edges of the carpet's middle field. The motifs with forked tips, which are directed towards the middle field su, give the carpet a special beauty.

The carpet's narrow light brown border at the top and the half light brown and half dark brown at the bottom is designed with wavy lines decorated with black, red, white, and blue. The intervals of the lines are decorated with four-petal flowers of dark red, navy blue, light blue, and cream. The border is surrounded with cornelian, light blue, and navy blue madakhils on the inside and with madakhils designed with cream-colored zigzags on the outside. The edges of the madakhils are completed with su.

Cornelian, dark and light brown, navy blue, and light blue colors dominate on the carpet. The colors are traditionally harmonized in accordance with the color palette of this district.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Talin, western Azerbaijan. 262x119. 1309 AH/1888 CE.

The carpet was woven on the basis of the Gazakh composition. The date 1312 AH appears at the top part of the carpet.

The patterns of the kilims belonging to the early developmental period of carpet art are woven with a simple winding technique and are called gazmali or gazmasiz. The kilims were used in huts, nomad tents, and wedding houses as internal decoration and flooring as well as external cover.

The kilims were used on the internal flooring for funeral ceremonies and this tradition is followed in many districts of Azerbaijan today.

The main decoration of the carpet consists of horizontal narrow and wide schemes. Jutbuynuz (double-horned) motifs are depicted on the wide schemes. There are classic elements with stepped edges between these motifs. These classic elements are depicted in the center of the jutbuynuz elements by alternating the colors.

The jutbuynuz motifs are designed in dark red, navy blue, green, and blue on the white field schemes; in cream, red, white, and light brown on the navy blue background; and in light green, navy blue, and yellow on the dark red background. Elements called damga (stamp) are depicted on the narrow schemes. These elements are designed in red on a dark green background; in yellow and blue on the black-red background; in red and cornelian on the white background; and in cream and red on the blue background.

The history of jutbuynuz and damga motifs as depicted in different areas of Azerbaijan's decorative applied arts, including carpet weaving, is very ancient.

Contrasting colors dominate on the carpet. A very attractive color arrangement has been produced by harmonically alternating colors on the repeated schemes.



Kilim. Wool. Flat-weave. Iravan group. Akhti, Darachichak, western Azerbaijan. 267x204. 1312 AH/1891 CE.

The date 1314 AH appears in the lower section of the carpet, inside the dark red background medallion. The middle field of the carpet is divided into schemes. The narrow scheme in the upper part of the middle field and the wide scheme in the lower part are depicted with dark brown; the scheme in the center is depicted with light green. Dark red background hexagonal gyols (medallion) are located inside the schemes. There are rectangular medallions in the center of the gyols. Goshabuynuz (double-horned) motifs are depicted inside the green rectangular medallions. The edges of the medallions in the center are decorated in blue and yellow; the edges of the medallions in the upper and lower parts are decorated with white and red zigzags. Red su (water) completes the edges of the zigzags in the central medallion; black su completes the edges of the medallion in the lower section. In all areas on the left and right of the medallions, there are bulges designed with t-shaped motifs; vertical tree-like elements and horizontal elements with hooked edges decorate the top and bottom. Four- and eight-petal flowers represent the empty spaces between these elements. Four-petal flowers are arranged one after the other on the right and left of the carpet's middle field. The empty spaces on the schemes are filled with jutbuynuz (double-horned) and flowers.

The edges of the brown background schemes on the middle field of the carpet are decorated with yellow zigzag waves and the edges of the green background schemes are represented with white sichandishi (mouse teeth). The wide dark brown background border of the carpet is decorated with eight-pointed geometric elements. There are eight-pointed stars inside these geometric medallions. The medallions and stars are depicted in dark red, dark brown, yellow, white, navy blue, dark and light green. The edges of the stars are adorned with su. The border is finished with yellow and red incomplete lines and dark red su.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Sardarabad, western Azerbaijan. 210x140. 1314 AH/1893 CE.

The composition of this carpet contains a middle field, a main border, and two guard stripes. The date 1317 AH appears in the lower section of the middle field on the left. A large navy blue gyol (medallion) occurs on the rosy red background middle field. To the right and left of the gyol, four geometrical bulges occur. The edges of the gyol are surrounded with red zigzag madakhils on the inside and green madakhils on the outside. The green madakhils contain flower images depicted in light blue, red, yellow, and white. Tree and octagonal star motifs are depicted vertically inside the gyol along the carpet. The bulged areas of the gyol are adorned with octagonal star motifs. Among the floral patterns of Azerbaijan, tree images, designed mostly in small sizes and occasionally in larger sizes, are widespread on carpets and carpet products and in different areas of decorative-applied art. These depictions taken from Azerbaijan's rich natural landscape (leaves, branches, flowers, trees, boughs, and so on) explain that people live in close connection with the soil and nature. In most cases, tree images are depicted in large fields, although in some cases they are used as filler elements. Tree motifs depicted on decorative-applied art samples of Azerbaijan are included in both floral and decorative emblem samples. Tree motifs have become sacred as symbols of richness, abundance, spring, and vitality among people since ancient times and have been depicted in art in different forms throughout time. Worshipping tree pirs (sacred place) in most districts of Azerbaijan is evidence that its ancient emblematic symbolism has not been lost. Octagonal motifs depicted on the edges inside the gyol and on the empty spaces of the carpet's middle field are clearly noticeable. Research conducted in the field of carpet patterns of Azerbaijan show that many geometric forms (plain, wavy, incomplete, triangle, rectangle, circle, three-, four-, five-, six-, eight-, and twelve-pointed stars and so on) have developed beginning in ancient times, have obtained traditional forms, have not lost their meanings, and have been depicted (and remain so today) on carpets and in all areas of decorative-applied art. In the corners of the lower part of the carpet's middle field, motifs called golichi with arrow-shaped edges are depicted. Navy blue and green dordunsur (four elements) are placed in the center of this motif. Navy blue and green colors are separated from each other with incomplete red lines and are completed with sichandishi (mouse teeth) with white and red edges. The navy blue background main border is decorated with red wavy zigzag lines. The empty spaces between the wavy lines are filled with red, green, white, and light blue motifs called chapar (runner) that are reminiscent of rehil (for reading books). The main border is surrounded with green background guard stripes on the inside and light blue guard stripes on the outside. The white background border is decorated with green, white, navy blue, red, yellow, light and dark brown butas (almond-shaped). The borders are enclosed with sichandishi. The colors of the carpet are designed with a traditional consistency and professionalism, creating an eye-catching view.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Ellar, Girkhbulag, western Azerbaijan. 248x165. 1317 AH/1896 CE.

The date 1326 AH appears at the top of the carpet's middle field on the left side. This original carpet was woven on the basis of Gazakh's "Gaymagli" composition. The name of the carpet is related to the Gaymagli village situated 32 kilometers northwest of Gazakh. Some weavers call this carpet "Lembeli." The "Gaymagli" carpet is counted as part of the simple composition carpet group. The "Gaymagli" carpets woven at the beginning of the 19th century are different from the carpets, which use the same composition, woven recently due to their compositional structure and color design. The carpets of this composition have lost some of their artistic features due to mass production. A dark red, large octagonal gyol (medallion) is depicted in the middle field of the carpet. There are hexagonal elements designed in yellow, navy blue, red, and green inside the gyol, slightly above the center. On the left of this element there are two green flower images and on the right there are two blue flower images. The edges of the gyol are designed with black su (water) while in the corners there are barely-noticeable red sichandishi (mouse teeth). The corners of the middle field are designed in light blue. The ebresh (dapple-grey) is clearly visible on a light blue background. The edges of the middle field are surrounded with light blue and red zigzags. The middle field is enclosed with a dark green background border. Inside this green background border, there are small hexagonal motifs designed with white, red, yellow, navy blue, light blue, green, and black. These motifs are divided into quarters by black su. There are leaf and flower images on the black branches along the middle red background border of the carpet. Rectangular geometric motifs and hexagonal yellow, light blue, navy blue, green, and white elements are depicted between the branches. The rectangular motifs on the branches are designed with navy blue, black, light blue, brown, green, and red. Navy blue background borders surround a red background middle border. Cream, yellow, red, light blue, green, and white flowers are depicted inside these borders. The navy blue background outer border is surrounded with red and white sichandishi and the internal border is enclosed with yellow and red sichandishi on the outside and red and yellow on the inside. The sichandishi are designed with su on both sides. The "Gaymagli" carpets usually have standard sizes. Usually these carpets measure between 6-7 m². In rare cases it is possible to encounter large khalis woven based on the same composition. From 70,000-90,000 knots are woven in each square meter of a "Gaymagli" carpet; the pile of these carpets is 8-12 millimeters. This carpet has a unique color design. Most of the colors used on Azerbaijani carpets are represented on this carpet.



Carpet. Wool. Pile-weave. Iravan group. Garakilse, Pambak, western Azerbaijan. 193x134. 1326 AH/1905 CE.

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