

XIX – XX CENTURIES

Baku as a crosscultural center in the 19th – early 20th centuries

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After the invasion of the Caucasus by Russia in the early 19th century, the whole Muslim Caucasus, and Azerbaijan in particular faced alien civilization values and entered the zone of cultural transformations, which tore the country out of the context of its gradual historical development. This transformation took place throughout the 19th - early 20th century and touched almost all aspects of social and cultural life. Metropolitan policy led to a complete change of the existing social status and differentiation within the various social groups, and to the diversity of the national composition of the population of Azerbaijan, especially Baku. “Broad communicational areas were being created, in which industry, being actively developed around Baku, the centre of oil production and processing, tried to acquire mobile labour force with a single standardized culture and, which is particularly important, with a single standardized colloquial language. This new situation set new tasks before the broad masses of population, and particularly before the elite”.¹

Despite all the negative aspects of the conquest, the Muslim nations of Russian Empire, including Azerbaijanis, were able to get acquainted with culture and socio-political doctrines of Europe. According to G. Gubaydulin, the pressure of the European capitalism stimulated the modernist movement in Egypt, Iran, Turkey and India, while the East of the Russian Empire was influenced by the advancing Russian capitalism.² Along with political, legal, social and economic changes, the Russian conquest brought some innovations into the spiritual and cultural field. Firstly, the Muslim peoples included in the empire could familiarize with the culture and social and political doctrines of Europe. It should also be noted that the contact between

¹Аух Е-М. Между приспособлением и самоутверждением. Ранний этап поисков национальной идентичности в среде мусульманской интеллигенции и возникновение нового общества на юго-восточном Кавказе (1875-1905) // Азербайджан и Россия: общества и государства. / Отв. ред. и сост. Д.Е.Фурман. – М.: Летний сад, 2001. p. 51

²Губайдуллин Газиз: «К вопросу об идеологии Гаспринского»// «Гасырлар авазы» (Эхо веков) – Научно-документальный журнал, 1998, № ¾, p.7

the two civilizations, the European one represented by Russia and the traditional Muslim civilization, resulted in the appearance of a new social stratum – the Azerbaijani intelligentsia.

The aspiration of the Russian Empire for Russification and Christianization of the Muslim population in the Caucasus and, particularly, in Azerbaijan faced with big problems. According to the Russian ethnographer Lurie, “the main disadvantage of this policy was that ‘Russian’ Muslims were considered in the context of the internal relations of the Russian Empire, which was why they were supposed to get accustomed to new conditions, to become closer to the Russian Christian population and, finally, to wish to join with it. However, the fact that the Muslims were a part of the Islamic world, with which they would under any circumstances feel affinity and try to keep relations, was completely ignored”.³

Subsequently, however, this factor had to be considered. Carried out in 1840, the administrative reform abolished the military commandant's management in the Caucasus, has established a system of provinces and thereby eliminated the traditional ethnic and political borders in the region. In addition, representatives of the local Azerbaijani aristocracy – Becks and Aghalars were deprived of their lands, were eliminated from power and replaced by Russian officials.⁴

As a result of the reform all management was conducted exclusively in Russian, the number of Russian officials has increased more than two times.⁵ Administrative reform has not coped with the tasks, and royal officials had realized that they needed a stronger social base. M.S. Vorontsov appointed in 1844 as the first governor of the Caucasus was trying to decide on this problem. He returned many Azerbaijani feudal lords of their land rights, making them privileged class, and concluded an alliance with them.⁶

In addition, in 1849, "Regulations on the education of the natives of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia to the Treasury in higher and specialized secondary educational institutions of the Empire", bill was adopted, which was intended to prepare officials

³Лурье С. От древнего Рима до России XX века: преемственность имперской политики. Общественные науки и современность. 1997. № 4. р. 131

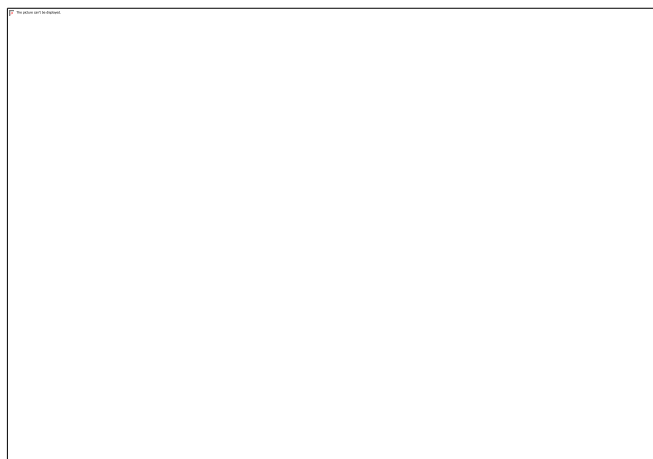
⁴Петрушевский И.П. Система русского колониального управления в Азербайджане в перв. половине XIX века. Колониальная политика российского царизма в Азербайджане в 20-60-х годах XIX века . – М.-Л., Изд-во АН СССР, 1936, Ч. 1. р. 23

⁵ Из записок барона Корфа. Русская старина. 1900. Январь. Т. 101. р. 43.

⁶ Эсадзе С. Историческая записка об управлении Кавказом. – Тифлис, 1907, Т.1, р. 80-81.

for the public service.⁷ Although this provision applies primarily to Christian peoples of the region - Armenians and Georgians, to some extent this also affected the Azerbaijanis of the highest nobility. During this period, schools were established, cultural and educational institutions, and publishing institutions were set up. In 1870, City Duma, elected for 4 years based on the property qualification, started operating for the first time in Baku.⁸ The number of deputies from non-Christian voters in the Duma was one half of the votes. Therefore, in 1877, as the result of the election of the first Duma, 2900 Azerbaijanis, 499 Russian and Armenians had the right to choose the same number of votes,⁹ i.e. ethnic discrimination was evident. But on the other hand, the Muslim population for the first time got the right to be elected to local authorities.

The Industrial Revolution, which happened in 19th century led to the need to use energy resources for the economic development. Since that time the conversion of the most important energy resource - oil, in an economic and political weapon, which causes inter-state relations began. Azerbaijan, in whose history oil had a great impact on the socio-economic and political processes, was not an exception.



Oil rigs of Nobels in Baku

After the abolition of tax farming system in 1872, rapid development of the oil industry began. The lack of domestic capital forced the Tsarist government to attract foreign capital, and in 1872, foreign citizens given the same rights as the citizens of the Russian Empire in oil production. Since that time the rapid inflow of foreign

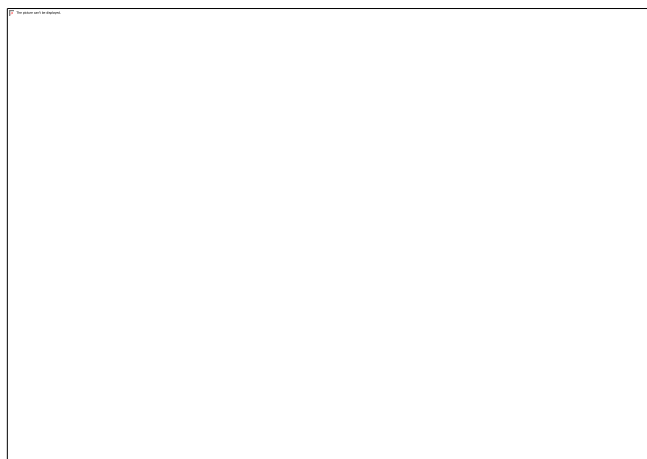
⁷ Полное собрание законов Российской империи. Изд. 2-е. – СПб., 1847. Т. XXIV. Отд. 1. № 23307.

⁸ Оджагова К. Городское самоуправление Баку в конце XIX- начале XXвв. Баку, 2003, С.26

⁹ GIAAR (The State Historical Archive of the Azerbaijan Republic), F. 50, L. 1, R. 4, P. 41.

capital to Baku oil industry began and turned Baku into an oil Klondike beyond Russia.

The most prominent representative of the oil capital in Baku became "a partnership of Nobel br.", which was founded by Swedish businessman Ludwig Nobel and Baron P. Bildering. Within a short time period, the company became the leading Russian monopoly both on production and export of oil.¹⁰



Oil refinery of Nobel brothers in Baku

In May 1883, one of the largest oil company in Baku – “Caspian-Black Sea Oil and Trade Association” (abbreviated as "Caspian-Black Sea society"), headed by the famous Parisian bankers Rothschild brothers started it's work.¹¹ In a short time, "Caspian-Black Sea society" and "Partnership of br. Nobel br." turned into a major monopoly in the Russian oil market.

An interesting fact is that the chief engineer at the Rothschild company was David Landau - the father of Nobel Prize winner Lev Landau, and one of the heads of the company was the famous chemist, a member of the Imperial Russian Technical Society Adolf Gukhman.¹²

¹⁰ Монополистический капитал в нефтяной промышленности России.1883-1914. Документы и материалы. М.Л., 1961, p.689

¹¹ Мир-Бабаев М.-Ю. Транскавказский трубопровод и братья Ротшильд «Азербайджанское нефтяное хозяйство».2007.№11-12.p.68

¹² Sadıqlı F. Azərbaycan hələ XIX əsrin sonunda neft ixrac edən ölkə kimi tanınırdı. Azərbaycan.2013.17. sentyabr.

For the export of Baku oil to the world markets, Rothschilds financed construction of the Baku-Batum pipeline, which was completed in 1907.¹³

The activities of the Rothschild's company in Russia and Azerbaijan was completed in 1912, when they sold all of their enterprise to English-Dutch "Royal Dutch Shell" trust. Since the late 19th century the English capital became more and more active in Baku oil market. If in 1898 there functioned 6 British companies, already in 1903 their number increased to 12 with a total capital of 60 million rubles.¹⁴

"Baku Russian oil company", "B.M. De Boer", "European oil company" were among the most prominent companies. In 1897, a major Azerbaijani oilman G.Z. Tagiev sold his company for 5 million rubles to British G. Gladston and J. Moore. On the basis of it, a joint-stock company "Oleum" was established.¹⁵ At the same time, Tagiyev managed to keep 13.7% of the shares in his hands and became a member of the board of directors of the company's board of directors, together with E. Gubbart - the director of the Bank of England.¹⁶

At the beginning of the First World War, "Corporation of the oil industry and finance", bringing together all the British oil company started its activity in Baku and London. Trading activity of the company was fully controlled by the "Shell", and its total capital was 28 million rubles.¹⁷ Thus, the trust has become the biggest oil producer in Russia, second only to the American "Standard Oil" in the world market. Naturally, each private company is guided by its own interests and the maximum exploitation of the labor force, there was no exception in Baku. However, at the same time, investments and latest technology, which brought these companies to the region, had a major impact both on the economy and other spheres of life.

After the earthquake in Shamakhi in 1859, Baku became a province center and in the second half of the XIX century rapid growth of the city began with the development of the oil industry. If in 1826 there lived only 4,5 thousand people, then in 1903

¹³ Пригула В.А. Транспорт нефти и газа. М., Гостехиздат, 1848, С.72

¹⁴ Ибрагимов М.Дж. Нефтяная промышленность Азербайджана в период империализма. S.103

¹⁵ Ibid, p.16-17

¹⁶ Ibid, p.68

¹⁷ Садыхзаде СМ.. Проникновение английского капитала в нефтяную промышленность Азербайджана (1896-1914 гг.): Автореферат дисс. канд.ист.наук. Баку., 1967, p. 31.

already 155,786 and in 1913 - 214 679 people.¹⁸ The number of new buildings in the early twentieth century was 878, and in 1910 had reached 1404.¹⁹

The development of oil fields, refineries, the shipping company in the Caspian region, shifting the capital to Baku, and the construction of the railway to the Black Sea (Baku-Batum) changed Baku beyond recognition. No city in Russia was not developed and did not change so quickly. However, ethno-demographic picture of the city had changed very much. From all parts of Russia and Iran, thousands of workers came here in search of work. In addition to local Azerbaijani workers, number of Russian, Armenian and immigrants from South Azerbaijan increased from 1903 to 1917 to 65.1%, 77.8% and 132%, respectively.²⁰ In addition, the engineering staff and the banking sector was replenished by specialists from England, France, Germany, Finland and other countries.²¹

Most of the population of Baku were Azerbaijanis, who were represented in all social strata - from workers and peasants to merchants and oilmen. Many of the laborers in oil fields came from South Azerbaijan (Iran). The second place was occupied by Armenians, in who possess a large part of trading and oil fields. Even the chairman of the Council of the Congress of oilmen was an Armenian M. Gukasov. Russians are also made up a significant part of the population, these were mostly officials and the military. There were also a lot of Russians among owners of oil fields and other manufacturers, they were presented and Molokans - Russian sectarians, who settled here in the mid-19th century, who composed most part of the group were the workers and artisans, cabbies in Baku.

In this regard, the construction of Christian churches began. In the early twentieth century, there were several churches for Christians and mosques for Muslims in the city: 6 orthodox and 2 Armenian Gregorian Churches, a Catholic church, a Jewish synagogue, two Lutheran churches.²² However, some of these temples were built in account of Azerbaijani businessmen. For example, the Cathedral of the Holy Bearers was built in 1909 with the support of philanthropist Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev, a prominent son of Azerbaijani people, and private donations of the believers.²³ It is

¹⁸ Известия Бакинской городской Думы, 1915, №5-6, p.7

¹⁹ Бретаницкий Л.С. Баку в крепостных стенах. М-Л.: 1976, p.93,95.

²⁰ Покшишевский В.В. Положение бакинского пролетариата накануне революции 1917 гг. - Баку: 1927, p.8.

²¹ Ростовцев Г.И. Болезненность населения бакинских нефтяных промыслов (по данным обращаемости населения в лечебницы в 1909 и 1910 гг.). Баку: Типография «Труженик» А.А.Куинджи, 1912, p.16.

²² Томсон Г. Бакинские воспоминания 1914-1917 гг. Баку: «QHT Nəşriyyatı», 2013, p.20

²³ Юницкий А. И. История церквей и приходов Бакинской губернии. 1906, С.15;
<http://baku.eparhia.ru/church/cathedral/>

characteristic that in our time, in 2003, reconstruction of the the church was financed by Azerbaijani businessman and philanthropist A. Kurbanov.

Within two decades Baku had become a major cosmopolitan center, wherein not only industry, but also cultural life developed. A new way of life as a bizarre combination of Asian and European elements was created by the representatives of the Azerbaijani bourgeoisie – H.Z. Tagiyev, M. Nagiev, Sh. Asadullaev etc. and came from European and Russian bourgeoisie -. L. and E. Nobels, S.M. Shibaev, A. Benkendorf etc., the royal bureaucracy, as well as a multinational technical and humanitarian intelligentsia with reformist, liberal and socialist ideologies.

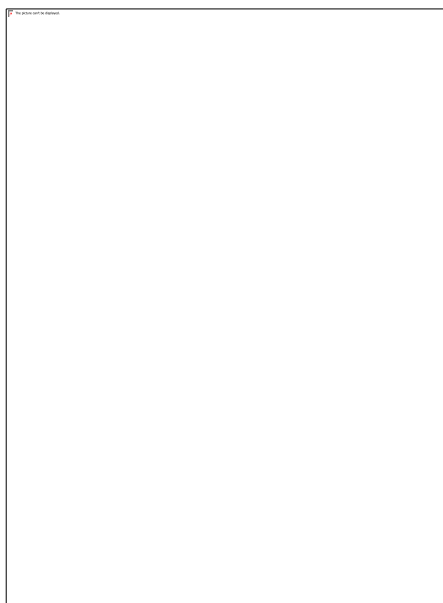
Increase in oil revenue, and population led to demand for construction of houses, and facilities. And, with oil money in abundance, European and Russian architects were hired to design and build new buildings paying homage to classical, and baroque style.

On the embankment, where there was a large marina society "Caucasus and Mercury", was located the house of the governor, and next to it the Khan's garden. Behind the waterfront there were well-paved streets with houses built in European style. On the slope of the hill Asian city with flat roofs made of thin boards with Cyrus (oil underground) and narrow streets was built. There were ruins of the Khan's palace with beautiful Islamic architecture of the XV century, and next to it was Shah's mosque, built in 1078. On the seashore, near the fortified walls of the old town, stood the Maiden Tower, the theme of many oriental legends, which was used as a lighthouse then. So-called Black City, where oil refineries were concentrated, was not far from the pier of the beach. Its name comes from the thick black smoke released during heating oil remains.

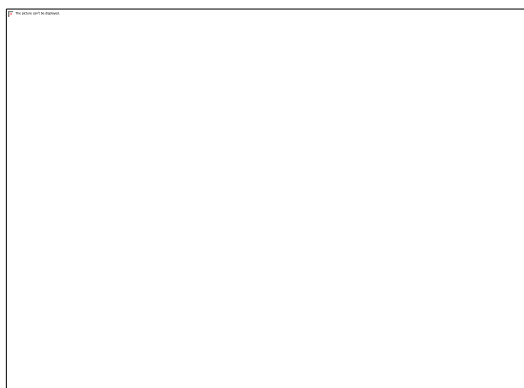
In the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, great contributions to the construction of the most beautiful buildings in Baku was made by Polish architects. Most prominent representatives were Y. Goslavsky, Yu. Ploshko, K. Skurevich, E. Skibitsky and others.

From 1893 to 1904, Josef Goslavsky was the chief architect and engineer of Baku, designed and built a great number of buildings in the city center. After graduating from the St. Petersburg Institute of Civil Engineers in 1891, a young specialist was sent to the oil capital - Baku - for construction of the Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral.

This cathedral, built in 1898, was the largest Orthodox church in the city, it was demolished under Soviet rule in 1936. Admirer of the classics, he paid tribute to other style trends, so widespread among architects of the second half of the XIX century. During the creative activity, Goslavsky, managed to prepare projects and build 12 fundamental objects in seven years; it is striking. House-museum of Taghiyev in Gorchakovskaya str. (now Taghiyev, 4), three-storeyed apartment house in Nikolaevskaya str. (now Istiglaliyat, 7), Villa of Taghiyev in the village of Mardakiani in Absheron, building of the Baku Technical School in Stanislavsky str. (now Azadlig, 20), the building of Baku branch of the Imperial Technical Society in Torgovi street (now Nizami) were among these buildings.



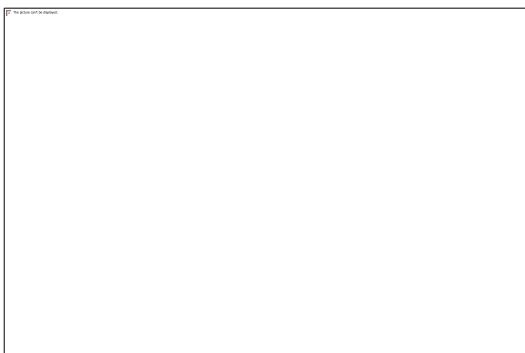
Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Baku



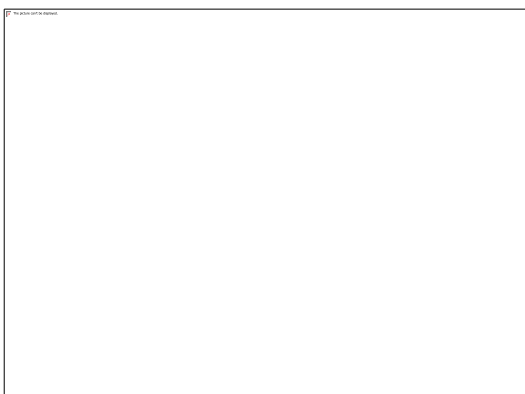
At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Baku millionaires, having traveled to famous resorts in European countries, decided to organize resort zones at home. The village of Mardakian in Absheron was the most favorable for this purpose. Soon the Mardakan became the residence of local business men. One of the most interesting buildings of Mardakan is Taghiyev's Villa, designed by Goslavsky in 1893-1895.

The end of the 19th - the beginning of the 20th centuries also witnessed construction of industrial structures in Azerbaijan. There include a textile factory in the town of Zikh near Baku, designed by Goslavsky and built with the order of Taghiyev, who decided to create a light industry factory because of the cheap fuel-oil, cotton and sales (in Iran and Central Asia). This textile factory was located on the seashore, and

the right choice of territory for building provided direct communication with ports of Iran, Central Asia and Russia.²⁴



Institute of Manuscripts of the National
Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan



Baku City Duma

One of the best works of Goslavsky was the women's Muslim school of Taghiyev in Nikolaevskaya street. (now Istiglaliyat, 8). The school had a closed courtyard, formed due to the fortress wall, which was on the south side of the site. This perfectly suited to climatic and domestic conditions of the city. In this building, in 1918-1920, the parliament of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was located, and now the Institute of Manuscripts of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan functions therein.

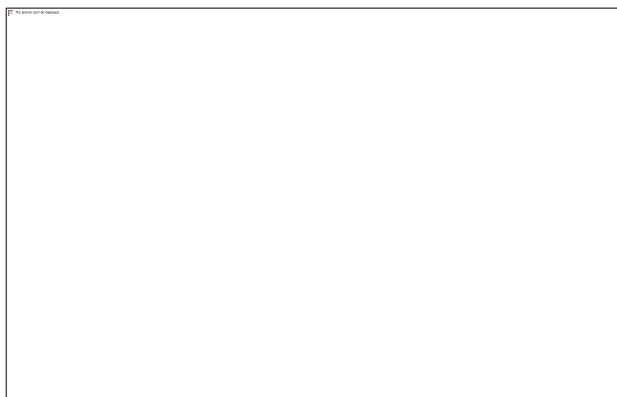
The last architectural masterpiece of Goslavsky was the building of the Baku City Duma. The building bears the features of a classical composition and was the only purely administrative building in the city executed in this style, in which original interpretation of architectural motifs of the Baroque were used. Currently, the Baku

Mayor's Office is in this building. Goslavsky died in 1904 at the age of 39.

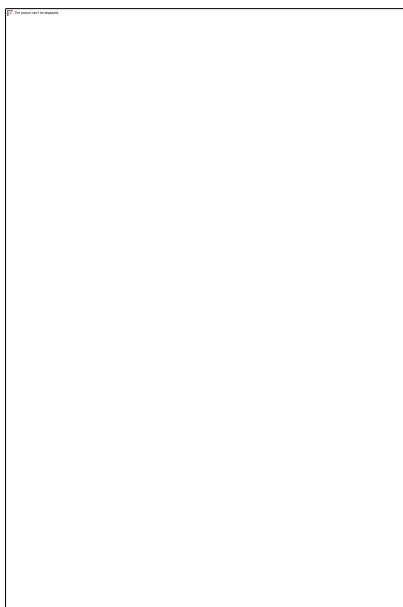
In 1897, at his invitation, another Polish architect, Józef Ploshko, arrived in Baku. He was the author of the most beautiful and monumental buildings in Baku and occupied the position of chief urban architect after Goslavsky's death. The style of architectural works of Ploshko was European classicism, Venetian and French Gothic style of high class and especially modern at the beginning of the twentieth century. The architect's customers became well-known local millionaires, who was admiring his creative imagination. Ploshko was an approximate architect of the

²⁴ Фатуллаев-Фигаров III. Юзеф Гославский. <http://www.polonia-baku.org/ru/goslowski.phtml>

millionaire Aga-Musa Nagiyev, but Murtuza Mukhtarov, Nuri Amiraslanov, the family of the Polish rich man Rylsky and others were also among his customers.



“Ismailia”



Catholic Church of the Blessed
Virgin Mary

The first and most famous work of Ploshko in Baku was the monumental building "Ismailia". In 1907, Baku oilman Aga Musa Nagiyev asked the architect to build a public charity building in memory of his deceased son Ismail. The work of the Polish architect became a real decoration of the city.

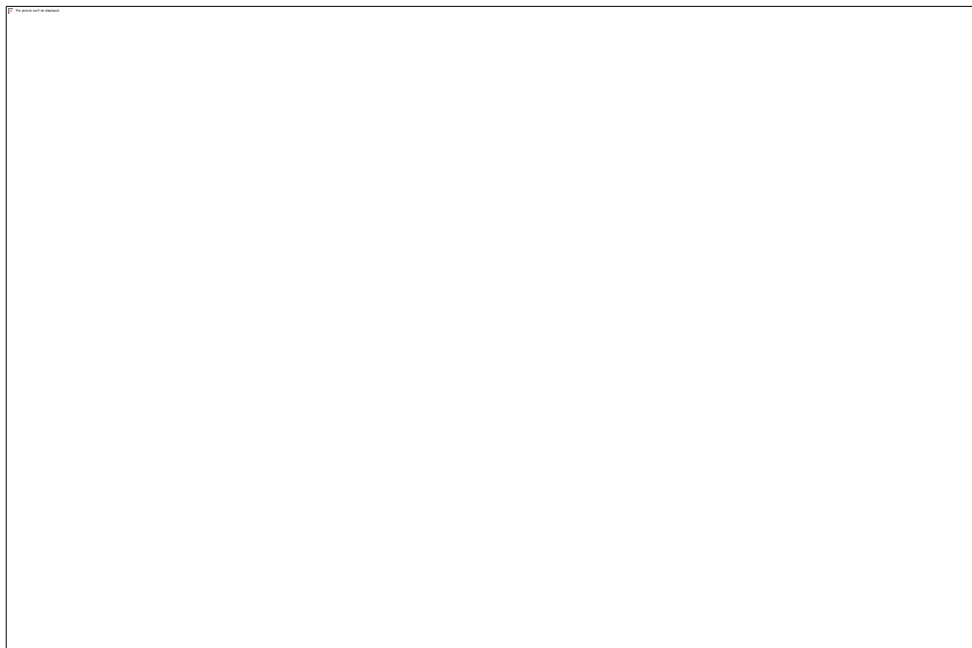
The magnificent Palazzo "Ismailia", executed in the

style of Venetian Gothic, is very harmonious, evokes admiration for the mastery of the architect and the art of masons, who embodied a true symphony of stone. Today, the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan is located in the building of Ismailia.

Another, very interesting cult work of Jozef Ploshko was the Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baku, whose construction was completed in 1912. The church was called "Polish" and was built in the Gothic style. Its main sponsors were the Rylsky family - oil owners of Polish origin and Vitold Zglenitsky - the founder of oil production from the Caspian seabed. The building was located in the prestigious district of Baku and was a real decoration of the city. The church was demolished in the 1930s.

As bourgeois were getting richer due the oil boom, by ordering more and more magnificent villas and palaces for themselves they started to compete in the field of architecture. Murtuza Mukhtarov, already mentioned, decided to create a palace in the Gothic style and approached to Ploshko

for construction of it. Murtuza Mukhtarov was married to the hereditary Ossetian noblewoman Elizaveta Tuganova, daughter of Colonel Aslan-bek Tuganov and presented this palace to her as a token of his love. The building of the Mukhtarov Palace on Persian Street (now M. Mukhtarov str.) was built in different architectural styles, Art Nouveau, Baroque and Classical style were also represented there.



Mukhtarov Palace

Mukhtarov's palace was the best building of the city in the second decade of the 20th century. The fate of the owner of this palace was tragic. When Baku was captured by the Bolsheviks in 1920, Mukhtarov himself stood up for his defense and fired by soldiers of the Red Army until they occupied the palace, then he committed suicide by shooting himself with revolver.

After the establishment of Soviet power in 1920s, Ploshko worked in Baku as an engineer and, together with Z. Akhmedbekov participated in the discussion of the project of city-gardens in Absheron. In 1925, after almost thirty years living in Azerbaijan, he left for Warsaw, and then - for France.²⁵

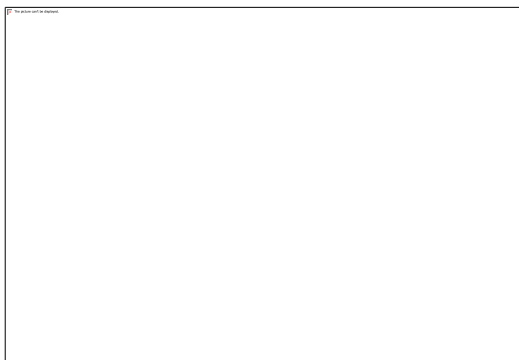
The building of the railway station was also originally designed by the Polish architect Eugene Skibinsky. The popular and spacious deli (former Tagievsky

²⁵ Фатуллаев-Фигаров Ш. Йозеф Плошко. <http://www.polonia-baku.org/ru/ploszko.phtml>

passage) was designed by Kazimierz Skurevich. He also owned Baku Boulevard project.

In total, about 500 buildings were built in Azerbaijan based on the projects of Polish architects. Thus, the Poles played a significant role in formation of a unique architectural appearance of Baku, which became native for them.

A huge contribution to formation of oil industry in Azerbaijan in the early twentieth century, was made by a talented Polish origin engineer Pavel Pototsky. He was invited in the early twentieth century from St. Petersburg to Baku to lead the work on filling Bibiheybat Bay. This was due to his engineering talent and the project developed by him, a part of the sea was reclaimed and the basis of oil extraction from the depths of the sea was laid. Already being blind, in 1922 he drafted a backfill of nearly 100 hectares of the sea and, moreover, personally supervised all works, accurately and precisely guided in the chart. P. Pototski did not live enough to see end of all the works, but he bequeathed to bury himself on that very land in Bibiheybat Bay on the Caspian coast.²⁶



In addition to the development of oil industry and trade, due to the convenience of its harbor and the fact that there was a central point of the Caspian Shipping Company, Baku became a reserve clause of Caucasus and Persian goods coming to internal province of Russia and partly abroad via the Black Sea.²⁷

A related factor in economic development was a kind of cultural renaissance that took place in Baku in the beginning of the twentieth century. Modernization, a transition from traditional to modern society, i.e., from pre-industrial to industrial, from closed to open, from undifferentiated to a high level of structural differentiation, from corporatism to individualism, from despotism to democracy, and so on,²⁸ was typical for the Azerbaijani society of that period.

The era described above was primarily turning point in the cultural transformation of the traditional Oriental society. Despite thousands of negative consequences of

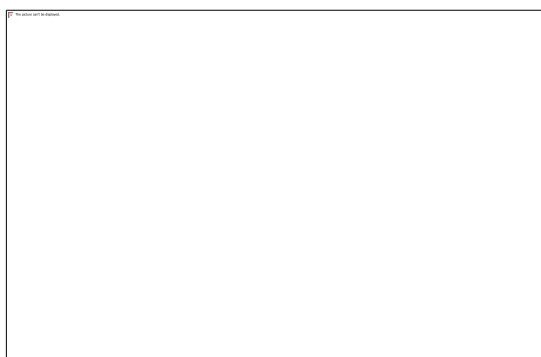
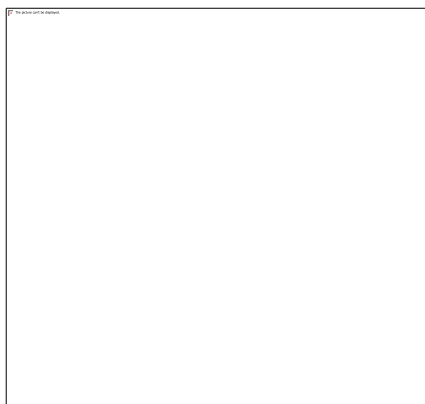
²⁶ Ханджанбекова Ф. Бакинские шедевры руками польских архитекторов. <http://www.1news.az/society/20121223034936267.html>

²⁷ <http://www.ourbaku.com/index>.

²⁸ Никитин М.Д. «Ориентализм» Э.Саида, теория колониального дискурса и взаимодействие Востока и Запада: к выработке нового понимания проблемы.

Russian colonization - breaking traditional forms of life and value systems, stealing of national natural resources - Muslim nations increasingly fell under the influence of Russia, and through it, Western civilization, it was drawn into the system of global relationships, gradually mastered the ideological and political institutions, created a new economic infrastructure.

However, when inexhaustible richness of the cultural heritage of the eastern society that had created new forms of literary, philosophical and historical works and unknown hitherto genres of theatrical and musical art was opened to the world, the real revolution took place in the cultural sphere. One of the peculiar bearers was A.O. Chernyaevsky, an outstanding teacher, inspector of Transcaucasian Gori Teachers Seminary, who played a great role in familiarizing of Azerbaijani youth to the Russian and European culture in the late 19th century. Born in Shamakhi and perfectly knowing the local language, he was the author of one of the first books of the Azerbaijani language - "Vatan Dili" (Native language). Together with S. Velibekov he published the second part of "Vatan Dili", in which the majority of fables and poems were composed by G. Karadagski and content of fables was taken mainly from the works of the great Russian poet Krylov, since in Azerbaijani literature there was not that kind of poems. Famous Azeri writers, educators and journalists, such as Firidun bey Kocharli, Rashid bey Efendiyev, Safarali bey Velibekov Mahmud bey Makhmudbekov, Teymur bey Bayramalibekov, Suleyman



H.Z. Taghiyev's theater

Sani Akhundov, Jalil Mammadgu-

luzadeh, Nariman Narimanov and others studied in the Gori seminary with his direct supervision. Chernyayevsky's name assigned to the school in the Maraza village of Shamakhi region, and his bust was set in front of it. His image was embodied in the novel of I.Shikhly, famous Azerbaijani writer of Soviet period ("Dali Kur" (The tempestuous Kura)).²⁹ Uzeyir Hajibeyov, outstanding Azerbaijani composer, the

²⁹ Заплетин Г., Ширин-заде Г. Русские в истории Азербайджана. Баку, 2008, С.156

creator of the first opera in the East- "Leyli and Majnun"-, was also the graduate of the same seminary. It is an interesting fact that the composer was inspired from Chernyaevsky's "The Barber of Seville" opera, which he watched at Tiflis Rossini's opera³⁰. For the first time the synthesis of European symphonic music and eastern mugham improvisation was embodied in Baku on the stage of the H.Z. Taghiyev's theater in 1908.

As Muslim women were not allowed to appear on stage, the role of Leyli played by A. Faradzhev and the role of Majnun – by well-known singer H. Sarabski.³¹ This



The theater group of Hajibeyovs brothers

opera is still sold out marks in many countries, and in 2008 the 100th anniversary of the opera was held in the framework of UNESCO.³²

With specific regard to the theatre, for the first time in Baku, theatrical performance in Azerbaijani language was made in 1873 based on the play written by M.F. Akhundov "Vizier of Lankaran khanate". Throughout

the several years in Baku and Shusha (Karabakh), playwrights of G. Vezirov and Akhundov, who has repeatedly been thwarted by fanatical mullahs and believers who considered the theater contrary to Islamic canons and brought here by Europeans devil sin, were staged.

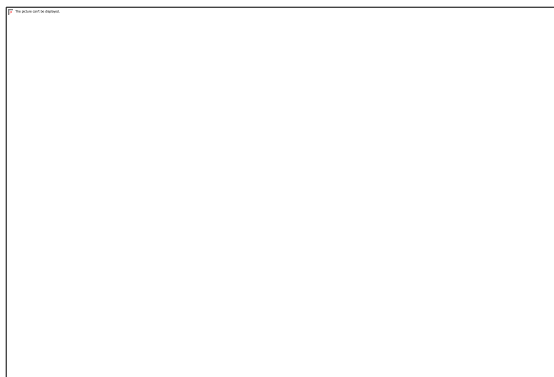
Despite all the obstacles, staging performances continued, and the first professional team- "The Muslim drama troupe" was formed in 1897. They staged works of Azerbaijani, Russian and European classics - Shakespeare, Schiller, Moliere there. In 1919, during the First Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan State Theatre was established.³³ Mailov's theater was also functioning in the city and Russian and Armenian plays were being staged there. The famous Russian and foreign artists

³⁰ Toumani Meline. For the love of Layla. The New York Times, February 27, 2009.

³¹ Абасова Э., Касимов К. Узеир Гаджибеков – музыкант-публицист. «Искусство Азербайджана», Баку, 1968, Т.ХІІ, р.17.

³² Celebration of anniversaries with which UNESCO is associated in 2008-2009. Sector for External Relations and Cooperation (ERC), UNESCO – Paris, 20

³³ Алиева А.А. Азербайджанский театр за 100 лет. Азерб.гос.изд-во, 1974, р.35



Theatre "Phenomenon" (now Puppet theatre)

often went on tour in Baku. For example, in 1904, an inimitable American dancer Isadora Duncan performed on the Baku stage as a part of her Russian tour.

This period is characterized by an unprecedented flourishing of the press, about 60 newspapers and magazines in different languages were published in Baku. According French historian A. Benningesen, between 1875 to

February 1917 in Russian Empire, Muslim newspapers and magazines in 172 names, more than 66% - in Azeri and Tatar languages were printed.³⁴

emerging in Russian newspapers "Caspian" and "Baku" were also popular and published in Tiflis "Caucasus", "New Review", whose pages were published works of many well-known Russian educated Azerbaijani progressive-minded leaders, such as A. M. Topchibashev, E. Sultanov, M. E. Rasulzade, G. Minasazov, S. Mehmandarov, F. Kocharli and others.³⁵ They introduced a wide range of Russian-speaking readers with the problems of the nation and all Muslim nations, trying to convey to them the diversity of cultural -historical past and present issues of the day.

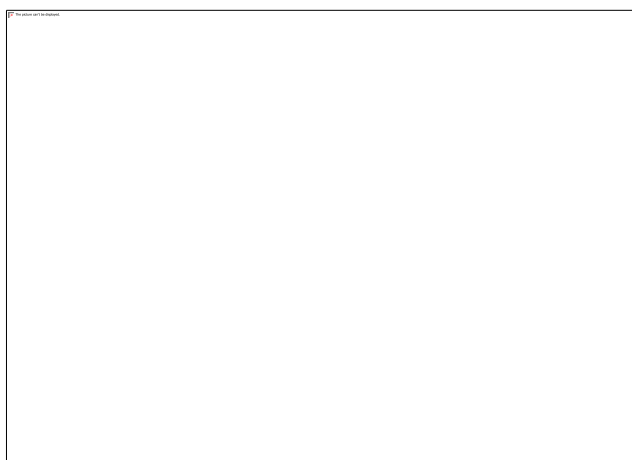
Multinational face of Baku was not limited to the three main ethnic groups. Germans, Poles, Jews, Estonians, Latvians and others with their trading houses and charities resided here as well. A major role in the development of local industry was played by German settlers relocated to Azerbaijan in the beginning of the 19th century by the order of Tsar. They were particularly distinguished in the field of wine production and copper smelting. Wines of merchant houses "Forer Bro." and "Hummel Bro." won numerous awards at international exhibitions, their collection champagne was delivered to the Russian royal court and Europe. In the late 19th century, famous electrotechnical concern "Siemens" built Kedabek's copper smelting plant in Azerbaijan. Large contributions were made by the Germans in development of science and culture of Azerbaijan. They marked the beginning of the archaeological research; famous archaeologist Y. Gummel published a number of

³⁴ Беннинген А. Печать и национальное движение русских мусульман до 1920 года. Пер. с франц. С.М. Полякова. Баку, 1971. р. 7, 49-50, 58.

³⁵ "Закавказье", 1907, 10 апреля; 22 мая; 1908, 16 сентября.

articles and created a local history museum in the German colony Elenendorf (Shamkir).

V.Abih, academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, physicist E. Lents, who studied the reasons of the Caspian Sea level fluctuations,³⁶ played a major role in the origin of geological science in Azerbaijan. Germans made notable contributions in the creation of the architectural masterpieces of Baku, the most famous architect was N.A.fon der Nonne - urban architect and military engineer, who served in the 1889-1902 biennium as the mayor and created an architectural plan of the city. The role of the German Cultural Centre also played an incredibly beautiful role in German Lutheran Church, located in the heart of the city.



German family in Elenendorf, 1910.

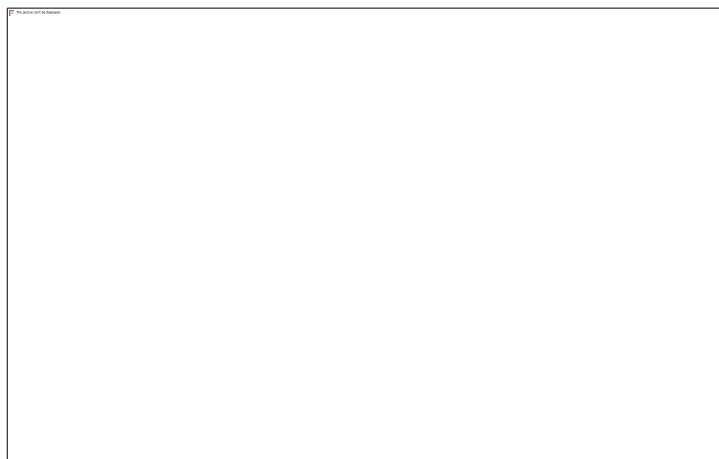
In the early twentieth century, huge mass of the Jewish population came to the South Caucasus fleeing the massacres of Kishinev and Belostok in 1906, as the most developed industrial and cultural center much of them settled in Baku. They took an active part in the cultural life of the city and at the same time created public and political organizations. Baku group of Jewish Social-Democratic Labour Party - "Poalei Zion" (Workers of Sion), the Bund, the Zionist-socialist organization³⁷ were among them. Zionist cultural and educational society "Kadima " functioned here,

³⁶ Венгеров С. А. Абих, Герман Вильгельмович. Критико-биографический словарь русских писателей и ученых (от начала русской образованности до наших дней). СПб.: Семеновская Типо-Литография (И. Ефрона), 1889. Т. I, с. 8-11; Ленц Э.Х. Русский биографический словарь А.А.Половцева. СПб, 1896-1913,р.192-194

³⁷ Багирова И.С. Политические партии и организации Азербайджана в начале XX века. Баку, Элм, 1997, р. 287

whose purpose was to support the local public interest in the works of national art. In addition, the society held a lecture "on Zionism and Palestinian history".³⁸

In 1908-1909, Latvian and Estonian societies uniting representatives of these nationalities and organizing public and charity events appeared in Baku. Following the February 1917 revolution that toppled the monarchy of the Romanovs in Russia, a noticeable revival occurred in the social and cultural life of Baku.



Jewish synagogue in Baku

In March 6, one of the first acts of the new post-revolution government was declaration of the abolition of all religious and national restrictions for citizens living in Russia. This news caused unprecedented enthusiasm for all non-Russian nationalities hoping to get full civil and political rights under the new democratic system. National councils and committees, which subsequently became unification of public organizations and political parties began to emerge in Baku and Elisavetpole (Ganga), as well as in many other cities of Russia, in addition to the local authorities. In the second half of March, the Armenian National Council consisted of 50 people was formed, it composed of 17 representatives of "Dashnaktsyutun" party.³⁹ It had quite big impact on the Armenian community, issued the newspaper "Arev", had its representatives in IKOO (Provisional Government Authority) and in the Baku Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

In 21 March, Jewish National Council was formed, which included several members of the "Bund", the Cadets and the Jewish community. In March 22, an organizational meeting of the Ukrainians was held, they decided to establish a national group called

³⁸ "Каспий". 1906, 21 янв., 8 сент.

³⁹ Ibid, 1917, 18 марта

"Ukrainian Gromada of Baku". The main provision had been made about the structure of Ukraine on the principles of providing the best form of political, cultural and national development. It was also decided to harmonize its activities with the Ukrainian Central Rada.⁴⁰

In March 26, a meeting of the workers - the Kazan Tatars, which decided to create a special organization, whose task would be to popularize among the Tatar proletariat ideas of democracy and was part of their preparation for the elections to the Constituent Assembly was held in Balakhani.⁴¹

A characteristic feature of all the national councils and organizations of that period was their loyalty to the new authorities and limiting the claims in the main requirements of cultural-national autonomy. The Committee of Muslim non-governmental organizations, which consisted of well-known Azerbaijani public figures⁴² played an important role in Azerbaijani society as one of the first agencies of the national government created in March.

Government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, formed in 1918 and overthrown by Soviet troops in 1920, continued to carry out the policy of tolerance and full support towards representatives of other cultures and ethnic groups. For instance, in spite of the bloody events of March 1918, when the Bolsheviks killed more than 10 thousand of Azerbaijanis in Baku with the support of Armenian Dashnak forces, all nationalities living in Azerbaijan, including Armenians were represented in a multinational parliament, which was formed in December 1918.

Kurban Said's novel "Ali and Nino" became an outstanding cultural phenomenon, which reflected all dramatic events of that time, and embodied the mutuality of East and West. In 1937, the novel was published in German language in Austria and told the story of Baku in early 20th century. The novel is set in the Caucasus and Iran and tells the story of love between two people: Azerbaijani-Muslim Ali Khan Shirvanshir and Georgian-Christian Nino Kipiani. The novel describes the life of different nationalities in Baku in details took place at the background of such events as the first world war, revolution, civil war and the bloody events of March 1918, arrival of the British army in Baku and their care, establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, occupation Baku by the Bolsheviks and suppression the centers of national resistance.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 24 марта

⁴¹ «Баку», 1917, 29 марта

⁴² Baghirova I.S. Ibid, p. 317

fate of the authorship of the novel, which was published more than 100 times and translated into 33 languages of the world, is more interesting. The author is still unknown, as Kurban Said is a pseudonym. Many researchers believe that the author of the famous novel is Azerbaijani writer and publicist Yusif Vazir Chamanzaminli, whose biography is similar to the biography of the main character of the novel. However, the view that the author was a German writer of Jewish origin, the son of the Baku oil magnate Lev Nussimbaum⁴³ is also quite common. Another version claims that the novel was written by Baroness von E. Erenfels Bodmerskhof, for whom there is fixed a pseudonym Kurban Said in German publishing catalog of 1935-1939.⁴⁴

In the novel, topic of the confrontation and interaction between the West and East, Asia and Europe, Islam and Christianity, two different and at the same time, similar cultures of the Caucasus particularly is presented.

Thus, all the troubles and disasters, incredibly eventful beginning of the 20th century, played a huge role in the formation of a multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan cultural image of Baku. The Industrial Revolution and the oil boom transformed Baku from a provincial town into the multiethnic megalopolis. The important role in this process was played by the mutual influence of cultures of the Muslim and Christian nations, stimulated an incredible leap of civilization providing to Baku a worthy place among the developed cities of the rich in political and socio-cultural processes of 20th and early 21st centuries.

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⁴³ Гусейнов Ч. Кто же автор «Али и Нино»? Роман о нации «Бакинцев полон тайн и загадок». «Эхо», 2004, 9 октября, N196.

⁴⁴ Ehrenfels L. "Ali & Nino". "Azerbaijan International", 2004, P.10,14-15; Наринская А. Роман одного неизвестного, журн.Коммерсант- N43 (89), 2008, 07.11.

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Summary

Baku as a crosscultural center in the 19th – early 20th centuries

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The article describes the process of cultural transformation that occurred in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, completely changing both the industrial and ethno-social image of Baku. The contact between the two civilizations - European, represented by Russia, and traditional Islamic, resulted in the formation of a new social stratum - the Azerbaijani intelligentsia. An accompanying factor of economic development was a kind of cultural renaissance that occurred in Baku in the early twentieth century, turning it into a center of different ethnicities.

Keywords: Russian Empire, Caucasus, Azerbaijani intelligentsia, the Baku oil industry, Baku-Batumi pipeline, the local and foreign business men, Christian's churches, Muslim mosques, Polish architects, Transcaucasian Gori Teachers Seminary, Azeri writers and composers, cultural phenomenon.