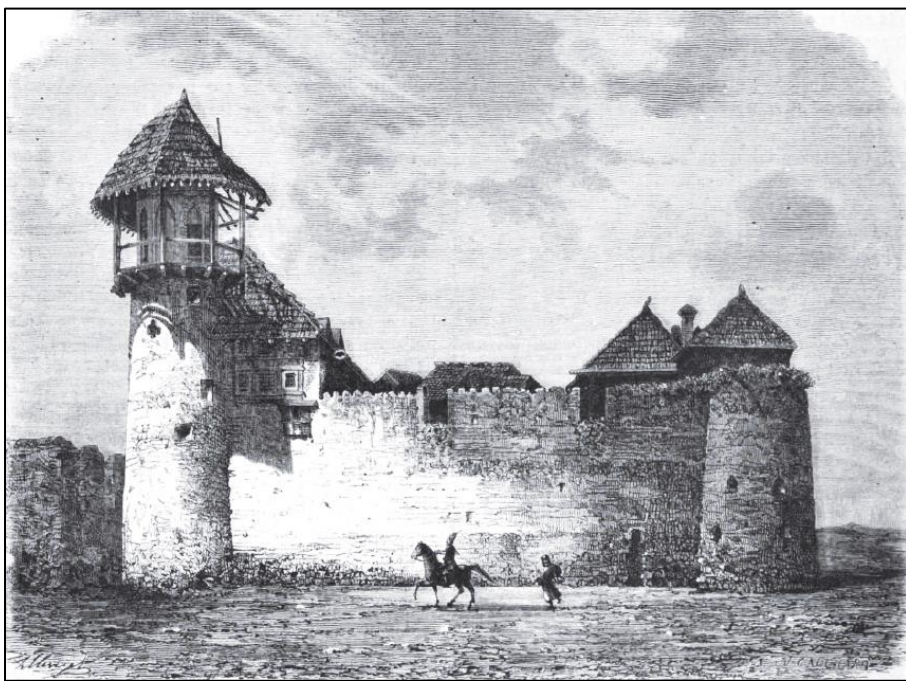


Architecture

Shusha, located in the mountains, is rich in architectural and cultural monuments that are relics of the centuries. Shusha itself is a living monument. The city of Shusha with an area of 5,5 square kilometers is a unique pearl of the world.

Shusha is also famous for its architectural monuments. Since its foundation, along with the city's fortifications, many houses, mansions, palaces, baths, caravanserais and mosques have been built in the city. Numerous engineers, architects, builders, bricklayers,



Castle of Garaboyuk khanim. Painter V. Vereshchagin. 1865

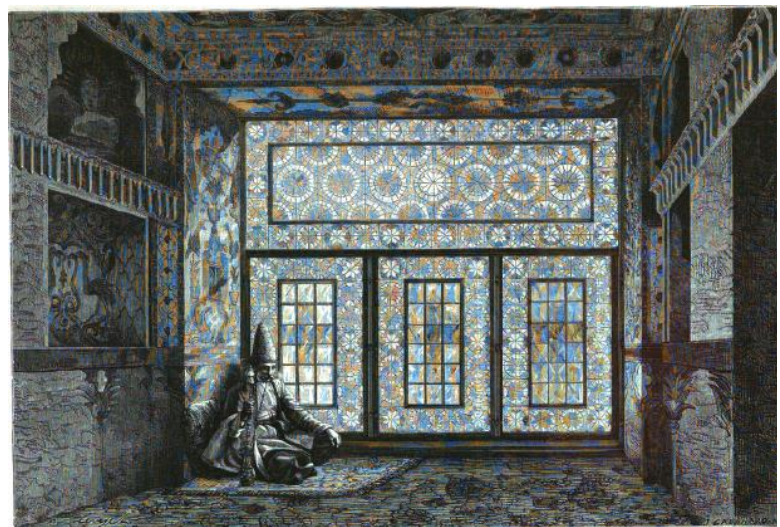
carpenters, engravers and other craftsmen who worked in Shusha masterfully used the achievements of Azerbaijani, Eastern and Western architecture in the construction of the city. As a result, Shusha was different from other cities of the South Caucasus with its overall appearance.

The Karabakh khans had placed great emphasis on construction of **palaces and mansions** in Shusha. Based on the information provided by the Karabakh historians, both Panah Ali Khan and Ibrahim Khalil Khan built six palaces and mansions in Shusha for themselves and their children. Two of these palaces - the palaces of Panah Ali Khan and Gara Boyuk Khanim have survived to this day. The inscription above the entrance door of the last palace indicates that this building was built in 1768, during the reign of Ibrahim Khalil Khan. Famous artists Gambar Karabakhi and his brother Safar were the authors of most of the interior decoration of the palace.

Rapid development of Shusha in the second half of the 19th century significantly increased the scale of construction and improvements here. The construction of luxurious houses and mansions belonging to the wealthy people of the city became widespread. The buildings of Karim

bey Mehmandarov, Haji Mammadov, Iskander Rustamov, Safibeyov and others built during this period attracted attention with their original architectural styles and wonderful wall paintings. The famous Russian artist V. Vereshchagin, who visited Shusha in 1864-1865, wrote: “The walls and ceilings of the houses of wealthy Shusha residents are decorated with ornamental compositions, battle scenes and portraits of heroes.”

The springs inside the architectural monuments of Shusha took an important place at that time. For a long time, the inhabitants of Shusha were self-sufficient for their drinking water needs due to wells that were built in every courtyard. Khan’s daughter Khurshidbanu Natavan made a significant



Azerbaijani house. Painter V. Vereshchagin. 1865

contribution to solve the water problem of the city. In 1871, she financed water injection through pottery pipes from Mount Khalfali, located 7 km from Shusha, to the city and the construction of



House of Mehmandarovs

two large springs. One of these springs, named “Khan gizi bulagy”, was built in front of the house of Khurshidbanu Natavan. The second spring, named “Shor Bulag”, was built at the Ganja city gates and adorned by national ornaments. In 1896, Shusha was supplied with the second running water.

This plumbing met the city’s needs for drinking water, created an environment for the construction of stone pools, springs, new baths on more than 20 streets and the further landscaping of the city.

The **baths** built in Shusha were famous for their original architectural style. Various types of tiles, colored glasses and marble were widely used in the decoration of the baths. The first bathhouse in Shusha was built by Ibrahim Khalil Khan's cousin Abdusamad bey. Later, there were



Spring of "Khan gizi"

also built the Ugurlu Bey bath, in a place called Ashagi Bazar, as well as Mirzali Bath and others. In total, about 20 baths were built and opened in Shusha during the 18th-19th centuries. Shusha baths are wonderful recreation areas, built on the basis of the architectural traditions of Azerbaijan.

Caravanserais occupied a special place among the architectural monuments of Shusha. The first caravanserai in Shusha was built in a mehella (quarter) called Tabrizli. Later, there were built and put into operation caravanserais in Ashagi bazar and Meidan (square). These caravanserais were considered some of the main buildings of the Shusha market facilities. By the end of the 19th century, there were 10 caravanserais in the city. Among them, the caravanserais of Haji Abbas, Gatyrychy Murad, Sheitan Bazar, Khanlyg Mukhtar, Mirsiyab oglu, Khan gizi stood out.

In the late 1970s - early 1980s, the mansions of the Zohrabbeyovs and Haji Gulu were renovated, the walls of the ancient fortress were restored, the house-museums of Vagif, Natavan, Navvab and other historical figures were



Caravanserai belonging to Khurshidbanu Natavan

opened. During this period, the house-museum of U. Hajibeyov was reconstructed and erected a monument at the house of poet Natavan. Shor Bulag, Meydan, springs in the Khamamgabagi

mehella, a mosque in Saatli mehella and the building of a former real school were also restored in Shusha over these years. Arriving in Shusha on January 14, 1982, Heydar Aliyev took part in the opening ceremony of the 20-meter mausoleum of M.P. Vagif, built of local marble.

After the capture of the city of Shusha in 1992, the Armenians, tried to conjure up an image of “martyr” and “humanist” in the eyes of world community and desecrated the historical and architectural monuments of the city. Many historical and architectural monuments of Shusha had been destroyed and burned down.

After the liberation of Shusha on November 8, 2020, it turned out, that the Armenians committed acts of vandalism against the material and cultural properties of the city belonging to Azerbaijanis. President Ilham Aliyev said this during his visit to Shusha on January 15, 2021, visiting architectural monuments of the city together with his family: ***“When I came to Shusha today, I brought the busts of our geniuses Khurshidbanu Natavan, Uzeyir Hajibayli and Bulbul, which were kept in the yard of the Art Museum in Baku for almost 30 years, At this place was the House of Culture, and it was here that the busts of Uzeyir bey and Bulbul were installed. The hated enemy destroyed the Shusha House of Culture and shot the busts of our genius personalities.”***



Monuments are being restored in their places.

On the same day, the busts of Natavan, Uzeyir Hajibeyli and Bulbul were returned to their former places in Shusha.

“After the liberation of Shusha on November 8, the process of restoring the city and all its historical buildings began. The attempts to Armenianize Shusha have been stopped. For 30 years, they tried to Armenianize Shusha, but they failed. This is an alien city to them. If they ever considered it their own,

they would not have brought it to this condition. The real owners of Shusha are back, we are back. Shusha is ours! Karabakh is Azerbaijan!” the head of state said.

Following the guidelines of the President Ilham Aliyev in the area of restoration of all architectural monuments in Shusha as soon as possible, all reconstruction works are being progressively implemented.

In Shusha, along with the historical and architectural



Mausoleum of Vagif is being restored

monuments belonging to Azerbaijanis, the Gazanchi Church, which was damaged during the 44-day Second Karabakh war, was also being restored in a Mehella inhabited by Armenians who moved here after the occupation of the city by Russian troops at the beginning of the 19th century from the village of Gazanchi of Nakhchivan. This is one vivid example of Azerbaijan’s tolerance to all religions, in contrast to Armenia, which committed an act of vandalism against the material and cultural heritage of Azerbaijanis trying to wipe them off the face of the earth.

During his second visit to Shusha on March 16, 2021, President Ilham Aliyev familiarized himself with the construction and restoration works and remarked that soon Shusha would become one of the most beautiful cities not only in Azerbaijan, but also in the whole world.