

The town, which is known as "Shusha" now, was first called "Panahabad" (city of Panah) after its founder. However, the city was always known simply as the "castle".

Shusha was one of the most Muslim-populated cities of Azerbaijan, till the beginning of the occupation, launched by the Republic of Armenia. Only according to the census, held in 1989, 92,5% out of the whole population of Shusha were Azerbaijanis.

On May 8, 1992 the city of Shusha was occupied by the Armenian forces and the Azerbaijani inhabitants of the town were forcibly expelled from their homelands. 198 historical and architectural monuments, 3 archeological monuments, 214 museums, memorial complexes and monuments, 62 cultural establishments were destroyed in the city.

Shusha, cradle of Azerbaijani literature and music, granted to the culture of Azerbaijan irreplaceable cultural and moral values through the history. Thus, Shusha, was also known as "Conservatoire of Caucasus". Natives of Shusha as poetess *Khurshidbanu Natavan*, daughter of Mehdigulu khan of Garabagh, the last khan of Garabagh khanate, *Uzeyir Hajibayov*, the founder of the musical comedy genre in the Muslim East, *Yusif Vazir Chamanzamanli*, writer, representative of critical-realistic literature, *Soltan Hajibayov*, composer and others, made an outstanding contribution to the literature and music heritage of Azerbaijan.

*Samadbay Mehmandarov*, a military officer, lieutenant general and commander of a division in the Russian-Japanese war was also from Shusha. He was the head of the Eastern front artillery in the defense of Port Arthur and awarded with the gold sword for its defense. Another valiant representative of Shusha is *Khalil Mammadov*, a military officer, major general, Hero of the USSR (1945). The tank battalion of Khalil Mammadov played epochal role in the final fate of the Second World War, especially during the battles in Romania, Ukraine and Moldova.



**Molla Panah Vagif** – (1717-1796) poet, Grand Vizier (one of the highest administrative positions) of Karabakh Khanate. He was a scholar and diplomat, taught Arabic and Persian. His works are various, from folk poems to classical ones (Fuzuli school). In his poems Vagif described the beauties of women and nature and therefore his works are easy to read and understand.



**Khurshidbanu Natavan** – (1832-1897) poetess, painter, the daughter of the last Khan of Karabakh. She organized a community of poets and musicians in Shusha and contributed very much to the rise of culture in the city. Furthermore, Natavan sponsored the construction of the water pipeline to the city and gained the great respect of the local people.



**Mir Mohsun Navvab** – (1833-1918) poet, painter, musicologist; Navvab established and headed the society of musicians and arts people in Shusha city. He had encyclopedic knowledge including astronomy, chemistry, Antique philosophy. Navvab was claiming that music is remedy as his predecessor Ibn Sina (Avisenna). His famous works are “Vuzuhul-Argam” (Explanation of digits – about the features and rules of the genre of mugham), “Tazkireyi-Navvab”.



# fames of Shusha



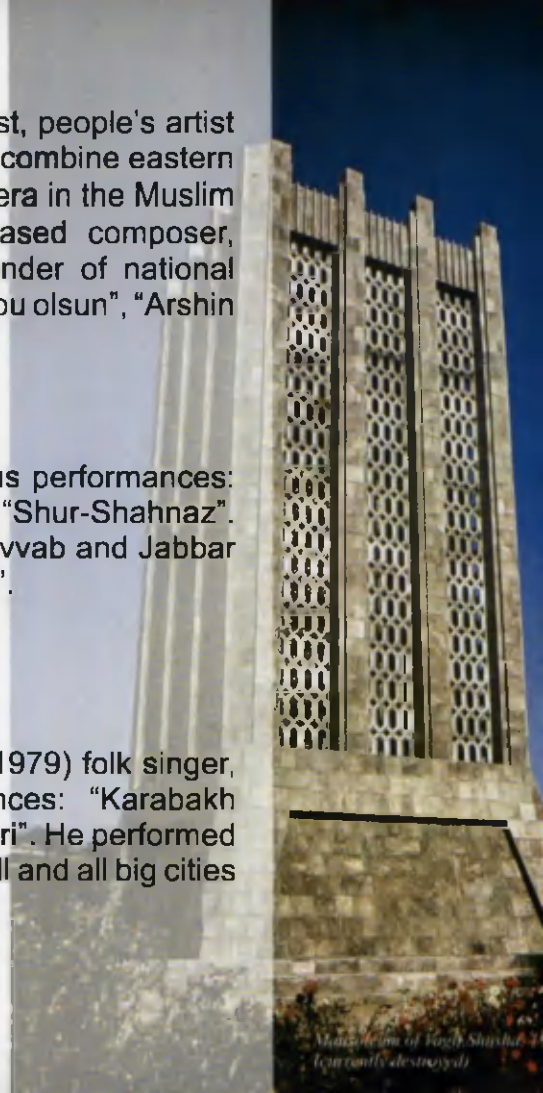
**Uzeyir Hajibayov** – (1885-1948) composer, dramatist, people's artist of the USSR, academician; He was one of the first to combine eastern and western music and was the author of the first opera in the Muslim East. U.Hajibayli is the first Azerbaijan folklore-based composer, creator of the theory of Azerbaijan music and founder of national composing school. His famous works are: "O olmasin bu olsun", "Arshin mal alan", operas: "Koroghlu", "Leyli and Majnun".



**Seyid Shushinski** – (1889-1965) folk singer; famous performances: "Chargah Mugam", "Rast-Humayun", "Qatar-Bayati", "Shur-Shahnaz". He learned the secrets of vocal from Mir Mohsun Navvab and Jabbar Garyaghdioглу. He was called "music pearl of the East".



**Khan Shushinski (Isfendiyar Javanshir)** – (1901-1979) folk singer, people's artist of Azerbaijan. Famous performances: "Karabakh shikastasi", "Mahur-Hindi", "Rast", "Shushanin daghlari". He performed on the stages of the Bolshoy Theatre, Tchaikovsky Hall and all big cities of the Soviet Union.



Martyrs' Memorial of First Shusha (currently destroyed)



**Mirza Sadig (Sadigjan)** – (1846-1902) tar (musical instrument) player, composer. He was very popular among Caucasian peoples. Sadigjan was first who played tar on chest and also added some strings to original tar. Furthermore, he introduced the “mute finger” performing style.



**Najaf bay Vazirov** – (1854-1926) dramatist, the founder of tragedy genre in Azerbaijan. He contributed very much to the establishment of Azerbaijani theatre and anti-patriarchal freedom movement during Russian empire. Vazirov had published many satiric articles in different newspapers and magazines criticizing those times' bourgeois society. His famous works are: “Musibati-Fakhraddin” (the tragedy of Fakhraddin), “Pahlavani-zamanah” (the hero of the time).



**Ceyhun Hajibayov** (brother of U.Hajibayov) – (1891-1962) writer, journalist; famous works are: “Haji Karim”, “Campaign against Islam and its methods in Azerbaijan”. He was a dissident during Soviet times and whole his life was struggling against the Soviet regime.



Cultural center,  
Shusha, currently destroyed

# fames of Shusha



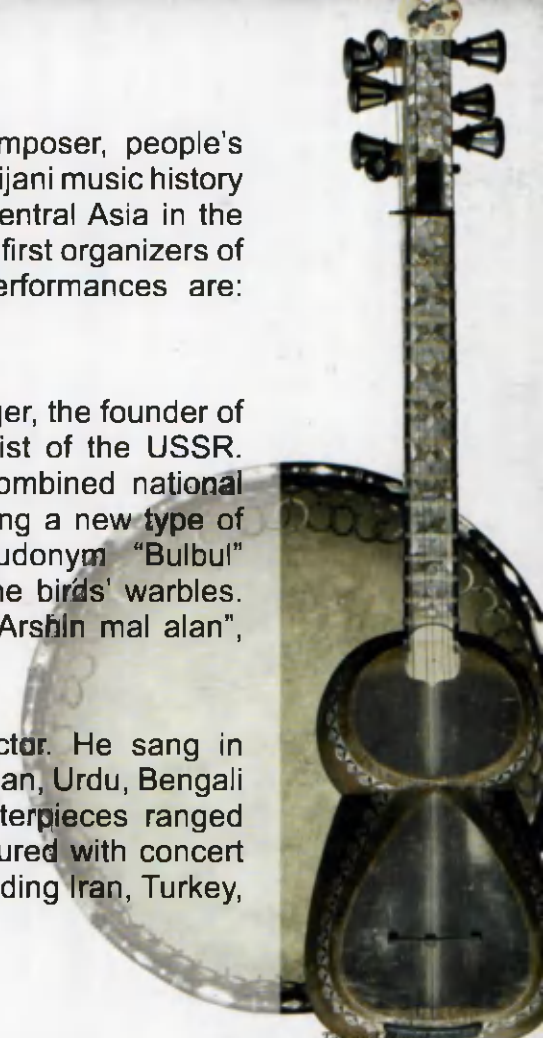
**Jabbar Garyaghdioğlu** – (1861-1944) singer, composer, people's artist of Azerbaijan. He opened a new stage in Azerbaijani music history and was very well-known in Caucasus, Iran and Central Asia in the beginning of the 20th century. Jabbar was one of the first organizers of the State Conservatory in Baku. His famous performances are: "Shahnaz", "Qatar", "Heyrati".



**Bulbul (Murtuz Mamedov)** – (1897-1961) opera singer, the founder of Azerbaijani professional vocal school, people's artist of the USSR. Bulbul studied European music techniques and combined national features with international music standards becoming a new type of singer and musician. He was given the pseudonym "Bulbul" (nightingale) for his amazing voice and imitating the birds' warbles. Famous performances in operas are: "Koroghlu", "Arshin mal alan", "Khosrov and Shirin".



**Rashid Behbudov** – (1915-1989) pop singer, actor. He sang in Azerbaijani, Russian, Persian, Turkish, Hindi, Armenian, Urdu, Bengali languages. Behbudov's combination of vocal masterpieces ranged from classical performances to lyrical songs. He toured with concert performances in several countries of the world, including Iran, Turkey, China, India, Japan, Argentine.



Tar and sazes  
National musical instruments

**Fikret Amirov** – (1922-1984) composer, people's artist of the USSR. He headed the State Philharmony and Opera and Ballet Theatre of Azerbaijan. His famous symphony "Nizami" was performed by the conductors such as G.Rozhdestvenski (Russia), K.Aabendrot (Germany), Sh.Munsh (France), L.Stokolovski (USA). F.Amirov was the founder of lyric-psychological opera in Azerbaijan by his famous "Sevil" opera. Moreover, he created the first examples of concert genre.



**Polad Bulbuloglu** (son of Bulbul) – (1945) composer, Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Russian Federation, people's artist of the Republic of Azerbaijan, former Minister of Culture, the person of the year in Azerbaijan in 2009. In his artistic career Bulbuloglu combined modern music style with national Azeri music to create a new musical stream in the Soviet Union. His songs are in modern genre and still are very famous in different countries.



**Farhad Badalbayli** – (1947) pianist, people's artist of Azerbaijan and the USSR, rector of Baku Music Academy. He is the laureate of various international music festivals and contests. At the moment he is actively engaged with concerts. F.Badalbayli's second area of engagement is musical enlightenment, as he's the founder of "Baku Arts Centre" and "Society of Azerbaijani Music Representatives". Furthermore, he is the member of the Azerbaijani community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.



*Kharibulbul,  
flower, symbol of Shusha*



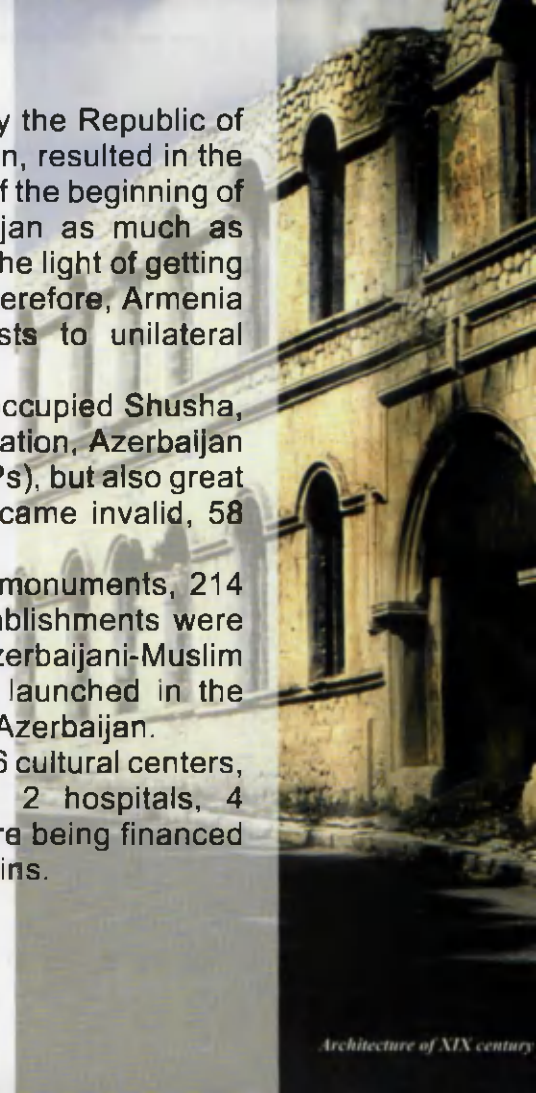
# Armenian aggression and the fate of the City

The occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan, commenced by the Republic of Armenia and based on the open territorial claims against Azerbaijan, resulted in the invasion of Shusha on 08 May, 1992. During the military campaign of the beginning of 1990s which aimed the acquisition of the territories of Azerbaijan as much as possible, Shusha was considered as the most strategic position in the light of getting direct link from Armenia to the Garabagh region of Azerbaijan. Therefore, Armenia intensively motivated and sponsored local Armenian separatists to unilateral secession from Azerbaijan.

Finally, the regular military forces of the Republic of Armenia occupied Shusha, one of the most Azerbaijani-populated cities. As a result of occupation, Azerbaijan faced not only with the wave of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), but also great number of human lost. So, 195 Azerbaijanis were killed, 165 became invalid, 58 persons got lost and remain unknown until nowadays.

198 historical and architectural monuments, 3 archeological monuments, 214 museums, memorial complexes and monuments, 62 cultural establishments were destroyed. Notwithstanding the large-scale destruction of the Azerbaijani-Muslim cultural heritage in Shusha, the illegal reconstruction activities, launched in the occupied territories, result in armenization of the cultural property of Azerbaijan.

However, during the Soviet period, there were 7 kindergartens, 6 cultural centers, 12 cultural clubs, 20 libraries, local radio, local newspaper, 2 hospitals, 4 ambulatories and a sanitation center in Shusha and all of them were being financed by the central government of Azerbaijan, today the city is almost in ruins.





Mausoleum of *Molla Panah Vagif* in Shusha, 1982



Currently destroyed



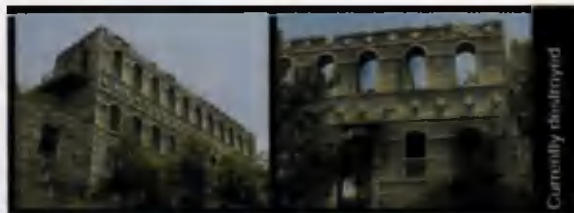
Madrasah (clerical school) of *Yukhary Govheragaha* mosque in Shusha, first half of the XIX century



Currently destroyed



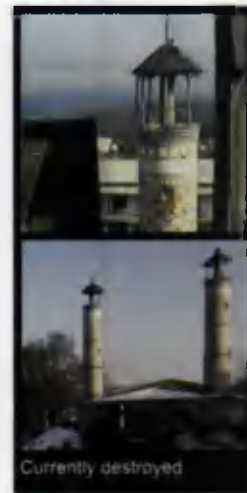
Residence of *Khurshidbanu Natavan*, poetess, the daughter of the last khan of Garabagh



Currently destroyed



*Yukhary Govheragaha* mosque in Shusha, XVIII-XIX centuries



Currently destroyed