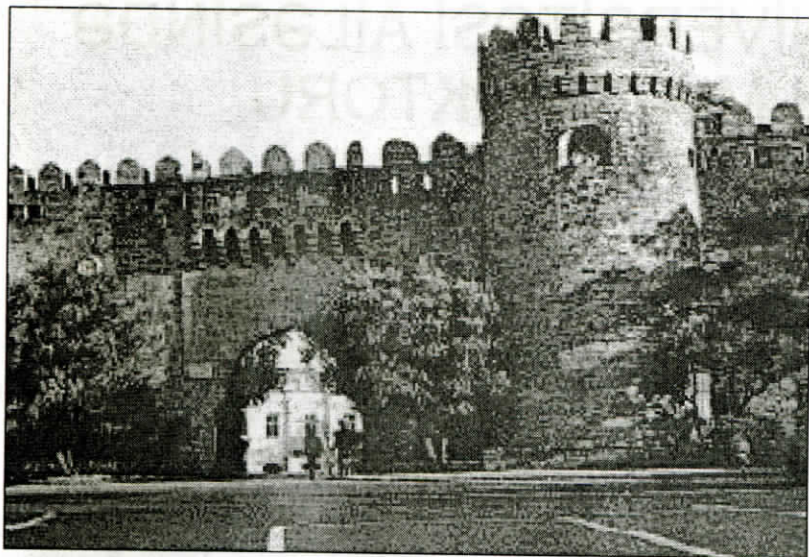


# BRIEF HISTORY OF BAKU



Baku was founded in the 6th century. In the beginning of 19th century there were 8,000 inhabitants in Baku. With the development of industry, significant growth of population took place: 1839 - 13,500, 1880 - 40,000, 1897 - 111,000, 1913 - 400,000. By 1913 Baku's territory reached 23.97 sq. km.

In the beginning of the 20's, there were 8 banks with the capital of 8.5 mln roubles, 6 higher educational establishments, 203 schools, 20 kindergartens, 15 hospitals, 8 museums, 15 libraries, 9 cinemas. Seventy years later the population of the capital of Azerbaijan reaches 1,733,000 people (plus 130,000 refugees), the area of the city was nearly 2129.2 sq. kms., and the number of big industrial enterprises became 288.

The map of the Azerbaijan Republic reminds one of a Caucasian eagle heading, and the capital of it, Baku, the head of this proud bird.

Baku is situated where the spurs of the Great Caucasian

Range are like "knocking" the Apsheron Peninsula out itself into the sea for 60 km.

The mountains cover this part of Caucasus, and historically there was a road lying along the seaside lowland in the middle of which Baku is situated even now. To add here the hills (up to 350-400 meters) creating plateau in several terraces - an amphitheater, as if specially created for the city: the vvey beautiful bay and convenient, for ships to stand by: the local construction material, limestone: and the riches of depths, of which Jules Verne said, "Do you want to get instantaneous lighting or heating? Nothing as simple, just make a hole in the soil where the gas will break out from": to add all of this here, you'll understand why man inhabited this place.

Millions of years ago the sea reached out over the territory of Baku. But also later when the faults of the earth crust brought the formation of dry here, its mysterious life caused people many

troubles. The sea now advanced on the land flooding the steppes and forests, houses, and roads, now it retreated uncovering the bottom. Maybe that's why the Caspian, the biggest lake on the globe, during its history received 70 names (a record of its kind). The sea on this latitude does not freeze, and Baku port functions all year round.

Being situated on the same latitude as Italy, Apsheron is distinguished with higher average annual temperature and lower amount of precipitation. By the way, average annual temperature of the air in Baku and on the earth agree - 14.4oC.

On the number of clear, less cloudy days (284) Apsheron holds the first position in Caucasus, and on the amount of precipitation (from 180 mm in the South to 322 mm in the North of it) the last position. The stormy winds, khazri, which, according to a medieval geographer, "chased sheep and horses into the sea" make the work of seamen, oil-workers, fishermen difficult, and make the weather unstable.

They tell that a ruler sent out people to the ends of the world in order to know what climate is where. First came back the one that was sent to Baku, "Do not be angry, oh kind, that I was so fast. The first day was cold, even with snow. The next morning blew a warm wind and scattered the clouds, spring streams started murmuring. The third day blew the cold autumn wind and I got cold. So four was enough to see there the four seasons of the year."

But on the whole khazri, for Baku, is not as bad as it is good. It serves as a gigantic natural fan which systematically cleans the air of the huge industrial city, pacifies the summer heat. Because of the hot summer, of the winders and of the lack of water the flora of Apsheron is poor. Among the trees, best of all grows a species of fir tree that doesn't demand great amount of humidity, Eldar tree. No rivers here, except the Sumgayit river that dries up in summer. That's why, especially lately, artificial irrigation got developed in Baku. The first thing you'll feel stepping on the Baku soil is a special, unique smell. About it, the air, with which "the breast couldn't get filled enough", Aleksey Pisemsky, a well-known 19th century Russian writer said, "Dry and mountain air, flows from the shore and here it gets a little humid and soft by the sea and it soaks in the natural grass". At present the city covers a huge square, not only the area of Baku bay, stretches out to the suburban hills and lowlands. Because the industries, plants, part of which appeared already in the time of the oil boom in the middle of the last century, are closely linked with each other forming a whole complex, and because the industrial zone and the zones of resort, suburban, and of the agriculture are inseparable from each other practically all of Apsheron got within boundaries of greater Baku. Moreover here included the settlements of oil-workers on a number of islands round the peninsula. So, steel island-amphibian Oil Rocks, which is 100 km from the sea coast, is also Baku.

Greater Baku occupies 220,000 hectares of land

(compare: the historic center of the city, the castle area, occupies 22 hectares.

Seals of cities apart from being visit cards of corresponding settlements, accumulate in themselves exclusive value of these historical monuments. Due to analyses, carried out by heraldic science, seals of cities suffer many years changes and thus accumulate rich histories. And Baku's seals are not exception. There were 3 seals of Baku city. The first seal of the city was approved in 1840 when Baku was included into the Russian Empire. Going back to Peter the 1st's reign, regular troops were accommodated in provinces and cities for supply of food. For distinguishing purposes these cities were given special seals. Baku was among those cities. The seal was a small plaque divided into 4 parts. At the right top corner of



the plaque, there were 3 gas sprits, symbolizing Baku natural gas resources, left top corner characterized by tiger, reminded about wild life of dense forests stretched out from Bina outskirts of Baku till Zira settlement. Bottom right corner was filled by picture of anchor. And this symbol hinted on navigation typical for its being a port city. Finally, left bottom corner was decorated by picture of loaded camel. And on top of load on the back of camel there was a flower of saffron, which meant



that among valuable goods carried by a single transport mean - camel, there was such an expensive good as saffron.

**The first seal lived till the end of the 19th century.**

Then there was a Decree of the Tzar about municipal powers and Duma's creation in Russian cities. As a result, Baku city municipal power invented a new seal. This seal-plaque consisted of 3 fire flames continuing the theme of 3 gas sprits from the 1st seal. 3 fire flames emerged from ancient Iranian legend. The founder of the first Azerbaijan Republic - Mammad Emin Rasoulzade wrote in "Azerbaijan" newspaper in December 3, 1918: "Ancient Iranians have got legend about 3 fire flames, which is connected with the Azerbaijan tradition". After that, on office buildings constructed by the city's municipal board, this seal was stamped. This seal is still met on the facades of the existing buildings of the city.

After Soviet Power established in Baku a new seal was approved, which in addition to 3 fire flames as a background contained 5 sea waves.

Up to the present day this last seal is considered to be an official seal of the city and one can observe it on the walls of the official building of Baku city Executive Power (Mayor's office).