

ИЗ ОПЫТА ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ЭПИГРАФИЧЕСКИХ ИСТОЧНИКОВ

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Study of Epigraphic Monuments of Nakhchivan in the 19th Century and the 1920s

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Inscriptions on architectural monuments contain information on their construction, the names of state and religious leaders, architects, etc. Most of the Arabic-Persian-language inscriptions of the Nakhchivan region that have come down to us are medieval epitaphs containing a number of interesting information on steles, chest-shaped monuments, stone statues of a ram. Nakhchivan monuments, starting from the 1920s of the 19th century, are reported in travel notes and works of Western travelers and orientalists. Reports on the historical monuments of Nakhchivan in the works of officials of the Russian Empire became one of the main arguments for the development of epigraphic research. The research of N. V. Khanykov is particularly noteworthy, which covers not only the reading and translation of monuments, analyzes the features of the handwriting of the inscriptions of the 12th century — the 1920s. The latter is an important stage in the registration and research of epigraphic monuments. During this period, the leading role belonged to those created in 1923 in Baku, Azerbaijan Investigation and Study Society and Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee. The scientific reports by V. M. Sysoyev and I. Azimbeyov are more valuable and informative.

Keywords: *Nakhchivan epigraphy Momina Khatun Mausoleum, Karabakhlar Tomb, Kharaba Gilan, Azerbaijan Research and Study Society.*

Introduction. The inscriptions engraved with different types of calligraphy of the Arabic alphabet on the historical monuments of Nakhchivan-Kufic, Naskh, Suls, Nasta'liq, etc. — have attracted the interest of individual travelers, amateur researchers and specialists. These studies were initially related to the visit of Western European and Russian experts and travelers to the region, as well as the organization of a number of scientific expeditions¹. The beginning of the scientific identification and publication of the monuments of the region and the epigraphic materials on them are dated mainly to the first half of the 19th century. Thus, J. Dieulafoy, R. Ker-Porter and Dubois de Montpereux in their works for the first time informed the readers of Western Europe about the monuments of Nakhchivan [Guluzade: 2015, p. 69—70]. The translation of Arabic and Persian inscriptions into French and German in the late 19th and early 20th centuries aroused great interest among European scholars. It can be said that since this period, the practice of preparing and publishing works covering the description of Nakhchivan's architectural monuments, copies of their inscriptions, reading and interpretation were spread in scientific publications in France², England and Germany. In 1822,

R. Ker-Porter wrote about “Jame” and “Zaviya” mosques and two tombs in Nakhchivan³. The structures, which Dubois de Montpereux called “Persian”, are located on the territory of the modern Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhichevan⁴. Although the Kufic inscriptions on the Momine Khatun sepulcher erected in Nakhchivan were observed by a number of travelers before Dubois de Montpereux, they did not copy them⁵. The architectural features, ornaments and inscriptions on the tombs of Yusif Kusayr oglu (1162) and Momine Khatun (1186) erected by the great 12th century architect Ajami Abubekr oglu in Nakhchivan are reflected in the works of German researchers Martin Hartmann⁶ and Eduard Jacobsthal⁷. In the first chapter of his work “Edifices of the Azerbaijani landscape” published

³ Ker Porter, Robert. Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, ancient Babylonia, &c. &c. during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820 / Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1822, pp.212—214.

⁴ Dubois de Montpereux, Frederik. Voyage around the Caucasus, among the Circassians and the Abkhazians, in Colchis, Georgia, Armenia and in the Crimea. T. IY. Paris, 1840, pp. 5—45.

⁵ Keppen, P. About the Black Sea and the Caucasus // Journal of the Ministry of National Education 1836, December, No. 12, C.20., pp. 7—20.

⁶ Hartmann Martin. Two inscriptions. Scientific Archive of Azerbaijan Institute of National History. Inv. № 1063a.

⁷ Jacobsthal, Eduard. Mittelalterliche Backsteinbauten zu Nachtschewan im Araxesthale, aufgenommen und dargestellt von — Mit einer Bearbeitung der Inschriften von Martin Hartmann. Berlin. 1899, pp.1—31.

¹ Review of Russian possessions in the Caucasus in statistical, ethnographic, topographic and financial terms. Part IV, SPb., 1836, pp. 331, 333.

² Dieulafoy, Jane. Persia, Chaldea and Susiana. Hachette Et C bookstore, Paris: 1887, P. 139, URL: // https://archive.org/details/ldpd_6885554_000

in Berlin in 1901, Friedrich Zarre used the information and descriptions of Tavernier, Jacobsthal and Hartmann when analyzing the construction features of the Yusif Kusayr and Momine Khatun sepulchers in Nakhchivan¹.

Discussion. Beginning from the 1820s and 1830s a number of Russian governmental officials and orientalists were sent for research to Azerbaijan, as well as to other areas of the Caucasus. Ordinary academician of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences Christian Frehn was the first who read the inscriptions copied by B. Dorn on the castle gates of Nakhchivan (double minaret portal) and the Momine Khatun sepulcher and defined their content in 1832². The book compiled by V. Grigoryev, who served in the military service in Nakhchivan in 1833³, reflected the brief history, economic and socio-cultural situation of the province, information was given about the glazed brick ornaments of the tomb in *Karabakhlar* and the double minaret portal (14th century). In 1851, although I. I. Chopin (1798—1870) noted that there was a fine tomb in Nakhchivan, built of bricks and decorated with inscriptions from the Koran, but mistakenly wrote that this monument belonged to Uzun Hassan's vizier Atabey⁴. On the commission from academician Christian Frehn the Russian orientalist N. V. Khanikoff studied a number of 12th-18th centuries' monuments of Nakhchivan and Ordubad on the basis of informative documents "Holy places worshiped by Caucasian Muslims" kept in the archives of Prince Vorontsov. The collection of epigraphic materials inveigled N. V. Khanikoff into the publication of a generalized research on the Arabic and Persian inscriptions of the South Caucasus. It would be unfair to assess these works only as the publication of epigraphic materials, because his meaningful interpretations of the inscriptions are of great value⁵.

¹ Monuments of Persian architecture: historical investigation and recording of Muslim brick buildings in the Middle East and Persia. Berlin, Verlag von Ernst Wasmuth, 1901, pp. 8—14.

² Frehn Ch. M. About two inscriptions in Nakhchivan. *Bullein de l'Academie des sciences*, n.I. Vol. II. St.P., 1837, pp. 14—16; Dorn B. A. Academician Frehn and his scientific activities / *Scientific notes of the Academy of Sciences on the 1st and 3rd branches*. SPb., 1855, v.3, issue. 2, pp. 431—465.

³ Statistical description of the Nakhichevan province, compiled by V. G. Grigoriev St. Petersburg, 1833, 264, P. 78. URL: <https://elibrigo.ru/handle/123456789/217267>.

⁴ Chopin I. Historical monument of the state of the Armenian region in the era of its annexation to the Russian Empire. S.-P. Printing house of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1852. URL: https://rusneb.ru/catalog/000199_000009_003542373/ (in Russian)

⁵ Khanikoff N. M. *Memore on Muslim inscriptions from the Caucasus* // *Asian Journal*, ser. 5, t. XX, 1862, № 81. p.146—147, P. 120; Khanikoff N. *Sur quel. inscr.musulm. du Caucase* (*Bullet. de Akad. Imp. Des sciences de St. Petersburg*, T. XIII (1851), P. 29; Khanikoff N. *Notes of Muslim Inscriptions in the Caucasus* Translated from fran. O. G. Spitnitskaya (Gunther) // *Asian Journal*, 1862. August, 1862. Translated from French by E. G. Spitnitskaya (Gunther). Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, F.1, desc.2, case.1076.

The ancient settlement of Kharaba Gilan in the Ordubad region of Nakhchivan also attracted the attention of researchers. Archaeological excavations here also revealed Arabic-Persian inscriptions.

German architect Hans Issel also described a brief description of the Momine Khatun sepulcher in his work⁶.

In 1913—1914, employees of the Caucasus branch of the Russian Archaeological Society discovered marble slabs with inscriptions and pieces of plaster cornices and delivered them to the Caucasus Museum (now the National Museum of Georgia). With the outbreak of the First World War, field research was suspended for a time. Beginning from the 1920s, field research was resumed. The teaching staffs of Azerbaijani universities and many amateurs had given impetus to this work. Thus, the main purpose of establishing the association uniting the departments of humanities, medicine and natural sciences at Baku State University (founded in 1919) in 1920—1922 was to study the problems of various fields of science and to train local scientists [Pashaev: 1976, p. 174].

In November 1923, on the initiative of the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Azerbaijan Nariman Narimanov, the first scientific center studying the economy, history, philosophy, art and linguistics of the republic — "Azerbaijan Exploration and Research Society" (ASRS) was established. The foundation meeting of the society elected S. Agamalioglu an honorary chairman, G. Musabeyov, D. Bunyadzadeh, prominent orientalists V. V. Bartold, N. Y. Marr, S. F. Oldenburg, I. I. Meshchaninov were elected members⁷. Local branches of the ASRS were established in Nakhchivan, Karabakh, Sheki and other regions. At that time, the Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee (AAC) was established to register, protect and study historical monuments. The results of the works were published in the "News" of ASRS and AAC⁸. Members of the Nakhchivan branch of the ASRS Mirbagir Mirheydarzadeh, Latif Huseynzadeh, Seyyid Sabri and Mahammad Raszizadeh conducted studies on Arabic-Persian epigraphy in the regions [Guluzade: 2010, p.116].

There is a need to study the documents kept in the archives, especially the protocols of the meeting reflecting the activities of the Nakhchivan branch of ASRS in 1925—1928, on the study of epigraphic monuments in the personal archives of the members of the branch [Guluzade: 2012, p.198].

⁶ Issel Hans. *The construction technician's manual*. XII volume. The architectural theory. Verlag von Bernh. Friedr. Voigt: Leipzig, 1904. P. 159.

⁷ *News of Azerbaijan Research and Study Society*. Baku, 1925, № 1; *Again there: issue III—IV*, Baku, 1927—1929.

⁸ *News of the Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee* (separate print from issue I). Baku, 1925. P. 32.

In October 1925, a scientific expedition was sent to the Nakhchivan branch of the ASRS in response to a letter from the central office to assist in the excavation of Kharaba Gilan. The expedition included the scientific secretary of the Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee Vasiliy Mikhailovich Sysoyev (1864—1933) and a member of the ASRS, archaeologist and epigrapher Isabey Azimbeyov (Maddah). The task of the expedition was to reveal, register and study historical monuments in the territory of Nakhchivan. According to the plan of the expedition V. M. Sysoyev, who led the research, together with Azimbeyov, registered historical monuments and copied the plates of Arabic and Persian inscriptions. In 1926, reports on the results of field work were published. V. Sysoyev translated the texts of inscriptions into Russian, read in Arabic by I. Azimbeyov and included them in his report. A number of scientific results were obtained during the first expedition. In his 3-part scientific report, V. M. Sysoyev, referring to the works of J. Chardin (17th century), R. Ker-Porter (19th century), Dubois de Montpereux (19th century) and I. Chopin, made a brief excursus into the history of Nakhchivan. The second part of the scientific report covers 10 sections. The report describes the structure and dimensions of the Atabey (Momine Khatun) and Atababa (Yusuf bin Kusayr) sepulchers (inside the mausoleum) and their vaults, the thickness of the walls and the dimensions of the bricks used in construction, the location of the inscriptions, the geometric and floral ornaments that make up the outer decorations of the sepulchers. In his report, the researcher analyzed the views of his predecessors, including Dubois de Montpereux, R. Ker-Porter, J. Dieulafoy, E. Jacobsthal and F. Zarre. V. M. Sysoyev noted that the frieze inscription of the Atabek tomb was preserved only on five surfaces on the south side: the length of the inscription, the size of the letters, and the size of the 2-meter-high inscriptions in Arabic inside the tomb, and on other surfaces it was not preserved. He noted that there was a ring-like inscription (internal frieze inscription) under the dome. The researcher divided the inscriptions on Atabey sepulcher into four groups according to their content and analyzed them. V. M. Sysoyev noted that the entrance to the Atababa sepulcher is actually on the west side and there is a 3-line inscription of Kufic script in Arabic. V. M. Sysoyev remarked that under the dome of the monument there was an inscription in capital letters in Kufic script in Arabic (a frieze inscription is meant), but none of the authors, even Dubois de Montpereux, were informed about the existence of this inscription. Only a table in F. Zarre's work mentions this. In his commentary, F. Zarre called monument the Yusuf ibn Kutayjir sepulcher and added that it had been built in 1162 during the reign of Atabey

Ildegiz. According to V. M. Sysoyev, F. Zarre repeated E. Jacobsthal in all issues. The report of V. M. Sysoyev noted that the inscription on the entrance of the sepulcher had the name of the sheikh as Yusuf ibn Ketir-Niyaz ('Close to God') in the translation by I. Azimbeyov.

Sections 1 and 2 of the report contain nine photos — the ancient domed bath, Atabey sepulcher, some ornaments of the tomb surfaces, the frieze inscription of the tomb, the view of the sepulcher from the east, the huge ancient mosque next to the sepulcher, the north-west view of Atababa sepulcher, Nakhchivan bazaar and descriptions of the mosque next to it. Sections 3—10 of the second part of the report inform about the Nakhchivan fortress, Noah's grave and buildings included in the Imamzadeh architectural complex being built in the southeastern part of the city, and gave their descriptions and dimensions: "*At the foot of the mountain, towards from the fortress to the plain the ancient Muslim cemetery is located. The stones and gravestone of ordinary Muslim tombs, a large shrine among small sacred places, that is, a rectangular, large, one-storey building, attract special attention here*". He noted that the high dome of the Imamzadeh complex, as in the Barda sepulcher, had the words "Allah" built with black tiles. V. M. Sysoyev mentioned that N. V. Khanikoff, based on the inscription on the large tomb inside the monument, had attributed the building to the period of Safavi Shah Tahmasib II (Hegira 1135—1144 / 1722—1732)¹.

The inscription on the north-western side of the dome was published by I. Azimbeyov in 1929. However, the author made some disregard in reading and translating the inscription. He added some words to the translation of the inscription text into Russian².

V. M. Sysoyev pointed out that the mausoleum of Nakhchivan khans was the third largest shrine in the complex, and from the contents of the inscription one of the graves belonged to Abbas Qulu khan's son Mustafa Qulu khan Nakhchivani. He assumed that R. Ker-Porter meant this great shrine when he said "Zaviya Mosque", i. e., "the mosque of the buried". In fact, V. M. Sysoyev made a mistake here. "Zaviya" is used in Arabic to mean asceticism, corner, angle, place of worship, small mosque. In the Middle Ages, the Zaviya, which was a religious entity, was the residence of ascetic dervishes, who devoted their lives to worship and belonged to a certain religious and philosophical sect. The "Zaviya" Mosque was erected in one of the ancient quarters of Nakhchivan, on the corner of two crossing streets, and

¹ Sysoyev V. M. Nakhichevan on the Araks and antiquities Nakh.S.S.R. (Report on a trip in the summer of 1926). Izvestia Azkomstaris, issue 4, notebook 2. Baku, 1929. Pp. 106—107.

² Azimbeyov Isabey (Meddah). Muslim inscriptions in Tiflis, Erivan and Nakhichevan. Izvestiya Azkomstaris. Iss. 4, notebook 2. Baku, 1929. P. 310.

belonged to members of the Bektashi sect. During the first years of Soviet rule, the minarets of the mosque were destroyed by Russian soldiers, and the inscription was lost. V. M. Sysoyev noted that there was another half-opened tomb near the big shrine. Research on the ruins of the ancient city of Nakhchivan, Yezidabad fortress, Khuda Divan cemetery, museum created by Balabey Alibeyov and Gizilveng temple are reflected in other sections of the scientific report and contains the picture of the Prophet Noah's tomb. The third part of the report is about the tomb located on the north-west side of *Karabakhlar* village and the Qosha minaret (Twin minarets) on the west side, 30 m away from it. V. M. Sysoyev noted that there were no trees and gardens where the tombs and minarets located. According to the information received by the author from the villagers, the area where the tombs and minarets and the so-called "Jame" mosque located was considered sacred, and they were called together the "Jame" mosque. V. M. Sysoyev considered it unreasonable for N. V. Khanikoff to call this place a mosque. Most likely, non-Muslims were not allowed into the area, so N. V. Khanikoff was satisfied with the oral information. In 1832, V. Grigoryev also incorrectly wrote that the tomb was used as a mosque. But later this custom was forgotten. For the first time, V. M. Sysoyev's report gave a plan of the tomb, consisting of twelve semicircular surfaces, a detailed description, internal diameter, dimensions of half-cylinders and walls. The opinions of Morier, V. Grigoryev and N. V. Khanikoff on the history of the building of the *Karabakhlar* tomb were criticized. Based on the architectural elements of the monument similar to those of the Barda sepulcher (the 14th century), the decoration of the exterior surface of the same color tile, the similarity of the style of placement of the inscriptions on the portals, he came to a conclusion that it was built in the same period, the 14th century. The third part of the report contains seven pictures reflecting the plan of the tomb, double minarets and the vault¹.

The eleven pages report by I. Azimbeyov, a member of the Nakhchivan expedition of 1926, consists of the following sections: "Nakhchivan", "*Karabakhlar*", "The Yukhari and Ashaghi Aza", "Kharaba Gilan" and one more "Nakhchivan". The researcher studied the name of the architect of the Atababa sepulcher as "en-Nakhchivani" but not "en-Nashavi". For the first time, I. Azimbeyov noted that monograms were placed on the inner wall of Atabey's sepulcher and wrote the Arabic inscriptions inside and their translation. Calling both monuments domes, I. Azimbeyov provided with infor-

mation about the two mosques on the way from Atababa to Atabey sepulcher. However, he made a number of mistakes in reading the inscriptions of Atababa and Atabey sepulchers. I. Azimbeyov was the first to publish the reading and translation of the inscriptions on *Karabakhlar* sepulcher and the double minaret portal in Sharur district. It appears from his information about the ancient mosque in the village of Der, Ordubad district, that during the research, several tombstones inscribed in Nasta'liq script in Arabic were found 500 m away from the mosque. I. Azimbeyov copied the prints (the stamps) of inscriptions in Ashaghi and Yukhari Aza villages, read the inscription on the minaret of Ashaghi Aza village (14th century) "Mosque is the house of God ..." written in semi-Kufic script that once was read by N. V. Khanikoff and the inscription of Shamsaddin Mohammad Piri, the 15th century monument located in that village, and published its translation for the first time. I. Azimbeyov and V. M. Sysoyev found 75 plaster fragments with ornaments and inscriptions in the ruins of the ancient town of Kharaba Gilan. The report contains descriptions and translations of Arabic inscriptions on 25 pieces of glazed tiles. These fragments were delivered to the Nakhchivan Museum (now the Nakhchivan State History Museum). I. Azimbeyov recorded some epitaphs in the ancient cemetery of Kharaba Gilan. I. Azimbeyov copied the prints of the inscriptions (copies on paper).

After Kharaba Gilan the members of the expedition studied the constructions of the Pir (Sufi temple; shrine) complex in the ancient cemetery of Nakhchivan. In the "Nakhchivan" section at the end of the report, I. Azimbeyov wrote that the word "Allah" was found in the dome of Imamzadeh sepulcher in Barda, in Peygambar (Mil plain), on many ancient monuments of Turkestan and Ulugh Beg's madrasah in Samarkand. He read the inscription of the sepulcher in Naskh script and together with its translation included it in the report. According to this inscription, the tomb was built by the order of Rufai bey bin Haji Fulad bey during the reign of Sultan Abu Muzaffar Shah Tahmasib Bahadir khan. I. Azimbeyov studied the 12th — 17th centuries epitaphs in Kharaba Gilan, Ashagi Aza and Der village cemeteries. His report had a number of epitaphs with the Nastaliq script from the ancient cemetery in the lower part of Kharaba Gilan dated to Hijrah 600 (1204—1205) and Hijrah 704 (1303—1304), Hijrah 631 (1234—1235), Hijrah 729 (1329—1330) and Hijrah 984 in the village of Der (1576—1577), Hijrah 802 (1400—1401), Hijrah 765 (1366—1367), Hijrah 753 (1352—1353), Hijrah 569 (1174—1175), Hijrah 1029 (1618—1619) in the village of Ashaghi Aza.

Although I. Azimbeyov read some epitaphs and showed their date, he did not give the translation of the

¹ Sysoyev V. M. Nakhichevan on the Araks and antiquities Nakh.S.S.R. (Report on a trip in the summer of 1926). *Izvestia Azkomstaris*, issue 4, notebook 2. Baku, 1929. P. 112.

text. The mistakes that he had made in reading of the inscriptions were corrected by other researchers afterwards. I. Azimbeyov studied the characteristic features of medieval epitaphs, and noted that all religious words in the books are written in Kufic, Naskh, Divani and Nasta'liq scripts, and there were examples of poetry in Persian in the inscriptions, and the words "Allah" and "Mohammed" were embossed in Kufic script. The text and translation of some inscriptions were included in I. Azimbeyov's report¹.

The expedition having ended and returned to Baku, the employees of the Nakhchivan branch of the ASRS continued to register and study the monuments. Extensive research of the scientific secretary of the department M. Mirheydarzadeh is preserved in the archives. The work was discussed at the meetings of the department, copies of protocols and reports were sent to the board of the central office. Due to the great interest in the research, in 1927 ASRS sent V. M. Sysoyev and painter I. P. Sheblikin for an official trip to Nakhchivan. The report of V. M. Sysoyev's second scientific expedition consists of four parts: 1) Nakhchivan uyezd; 2) Ordubad uyezd; 3) Duylun-Deste region; 4) Kharaba Gilan. The first part of the report is divided into three sections. V. M. Sysoyev first made a report on the Nakhchivan tombs studied by I. Azimbeyov in 1926 at the meeting of the local branch of the Society for the Study of Azerbaijan (SSA). Sections 2 and 3 of the report provide information about the *Karabakhlar* sepulcher, the portal with a double minaret, historical and archaeological finds in the village of *Karabakhlar* and the Deli Pir near the village of Aznabirt.

The second part of V. M. Sysoyev's report includes 11 sections. There is detailed information about the location of Ordubad city, its natural landscape, Ordubad fortress, quarters, caravanserais and mosques of the city. Along with the Persian text, it also includes a Russian translation of the decree of Shah Abbas I on the exemption of the Ordubad population engraved on the stone on the door of the Juma Mosque. It should be noted that this inscription was first published by N. V. Khanikoff. V. M. Sysoyev noted that N. V. Khanikoff had not read some words and made some erroneous. The author stated that there was an inscription in Arabic on the dome cornice and on the east side of the mosque — on the column near the entrance door and on the right side of the entrance door of the mosque, on the yellow marble stone near the steps²Besides, the report mentions:

¹ Azimbeyov Isabey (Meddah). Muslim inscriptions in Tiflis, Erivan and Nakhichevan. *Izvestiya Azkomstaris*. Iss. 4, notebook 2. Baku, 1929. P. 311.

² Sysoyev V. M. Nakhichevan on the Araks and antiquities Nakh.S.S.R. (Report on a trip in the summer of 1926). *Izvestiya Azkomstaris*, issue 4, notebook 2, Baku, 1929, P. 140.

- It was given information about the yellowish marble tombstone (?) placed at the entrance of the ancient mosque in Ambaras Street of Ordubad and the inscription engraved on it, and marble slabs with inscriptions on both sides of the entrance door, Ashaghi Ambaras, Kurdatal and Yukhari Ambaras mosques, also the two-storey mosque on the way to Ganza village and their inscriptions;
- It is noted that on the east side of Ordubad city, in the foothills of Garadagh, there is a large ancient cemetery, with a mosque with a high minaret, built of stone and two shrines. Although the dimensions of the Qara Pir were taken, the contents of the inscription on the door of the Pir were not given;
- The plate of the epitaph of Sheikh Abu Said al-Khorasani dated to the 14th century was copied and the text read by N. V. Khanikoff was corrected;
- He did not find the gravestone dated to 842 of the Christian AD, which was copied by M. Arkhangel'sky in 1851, but recorded epitaphs of recent times and stated that most of the tombstones were made of yellow marble and some of black marble;
- He gave information about the pillared and domed mosque resembling the big "Jame" mosque of Ordubad in Ganza village and the mosque in Yukhari Endemic village, and the stone with inscription in the old cemetery;
- The report by V. M. Sysoyev gave a plan of the ancient mosque in the center of Nus-Nus village, an altar, an entrance door and a plate with inscription on each of the four windows of the mosque, and stated that on another building where the school was located at that time there was an inscription of 1340.
- V. M. Sysoyev included in his report the text and translation of the inscription of Nus-nus (Nasmus) village mosque from the work of N. V. Khanikoff and made some corrections to the text read by N. V. Khanikoff. Since there was no other village with a similar name in these areas, he came to the conclusion that the inscription was taken from Nusnus. Furthermore, V. M. Sysoyev erroneously stated that such an inscription did not exist here then and no one knew anything about it:
- He gave the description and dimensions of an ancient mosque and bath complex with seven columns in Yukhari Aylis village, decoration of the altar and its wall with blue, black, green rectangular and hexagonal tiles, size of bricks, and stated that they had stylized pictures of birds with embossed patterns on the upper corners of the main door in the shape of a joint arch.

It should be noted that such patterns described by V. M. Sysoyev were found in 1926 in the site of ancient

city of Kharaba Gilan. Having completed its work in Ordubad district, the expedition examined a destroyed mosque in the village of Der, three Pirs in the south of Der, a Pir near the village of Ashaghi Aza, a cemetery, stone ram statues and a minaret in the village of Yukhari Aza. At the same time, the inscriptions on the marble slabs in the ancient cemetery of Yukhari Aylis, the inscriptions of Khoshkeshin and Veragird mosques were left out of V. M. Sysoyev's attention [Guliyeva: 1988, pp. 90—91].

The report provides information on individual settlements and historical monuments in the direction of Duylun-Deste. The third part of the report, consisting of 19 sections, contains the important results of the research conducted in the direction of Duylun-Deste:

- Information was given about the monuments in the ancient cemetery of Duylun village and the mosque-pir located here, the size of the tomb of the saint in the Pir and another Pir, the texts of the epitaphs dating to the 14th century were translated;
- The plan, description and dimensions of the ten-column mosque destroyed by Armenian vandals in Ustupu village and later restored, and the old and new mosques in Dirnis village were given. However, the ancient Pir in the village of Ustupu and the marble epitaphs in the cemetery of the village of Dirnis were not recorded;
- He gave a description and dimensions of the “Jame” mosque in Vanand village. Although the text of the mosque's inscription written in the 18th century from the work of N. V. Khanikoff was given as it had been, the inscription on the wall of the balcony for women above the arch was not recorded;
- The description and dimensions of the mosque in the village of Khanaga (Khanagah), the detailed description of the Pir located at the foot of the mountain near the village were given, and two inscriptions written in Arabic on the wall of the Pir were recorded. However, the report provides no contents of those inscriptions on the deceased with the title of Seyyid and Sheikh, who had lived in the 14th century;
- He gave the description of the external and internal view and dimensions of the mosques in the village of Deste. The remains of an inscription engraved in gold letters in the Arabic alphabet on a blue background were recorded on the wall of the later restored mosque;
- The description and dimensions of the ancient mosque in the village of Der were given, and an inscription in Arabic was registered near the mosque. Studying the structure of three tombs located 1 km

south of the settlement of Der, V. M. Sysoyev came to a conclusion that the remnants of green and black tiled bricks around confirmed that domes of the tombs had not been so high;

- Although V. M. Sysoyev noted that the cornice of Yukhari Aza village school was decorated in the form of two rows of belts consisting of 150 green and 70 black tiles taken from those tombs, he did not provide information about the inscriptions on the monuments;
- V. M. Sysoyev copied the Kufic and Naskh epitaphs of the Pir in the ancient cemetery of Ashaghi Aza village of Ordubad. He gave information about the stone ram statues, dimensions and Arabic inscriptions of the Pir and tombstone on the edge of the village, the inscriptions on the walls outside the tomb, as well as the stone ram statue near the gate of the Pir. He informed about the stone ram statues in Ashaghi Aza, the dimensions and Arabic inscriptions on the tomb and tombstone on the edge of the village, the inscriptions on the wall outside the tomb, as well as the stone ram statue near the gate of the tomb [Guluzade: 2010, p. 116].

V. M. Sysoyev, who first examined the minaret in Ashaghi Aza, reported by N. V. Khanikoff, wrote in his report that the monument “*was in the shape of a circular tower and was 16 m in diameter. The word “Allah” is read from the intersection of green and black tiles on the half-collapsed minaret, as in the Barda tomb*”. It should be noted that at that time the height of the minaret was 6 m. V. M. Sysoyev, taking into account the similarity of the minaret with both the *Karabakhtar* and Barda sepulchers, attributed the history of its construction to the 14th century. We consider that since the lower part of the minaret was covered with earth, the entrance gate was at the same level as the earth surface. According to the villagers, along with the minaret, the main mosque, — Jame Mosque, — was situated here. To that date, only one wall of the monument has survived.

During his second visit to Nakhchivan in 1927, V. M. Sysoyev recorded 25 stone ram statues, which are an example of folk sculpture. He noted in his report that these monuments, which were discussed at the meetings of the AAC and were the subject of scientific discussion, especially the example of the stone ram statue in the cemetery of Duylun village of Ordubad region, were connected with the beliefs of Turkic tribes. V. M. Sysoyev described a stone ram statue made of red stone (1.5 m long; 0.62 m high; 0.40 m wide) in the ancient cemetery of Nakhchivan and informed that the people here had a special respect for it; and there was a belief that if childless women passed under

its feet, they would surely have children. It is stated that the local people brought ram statues from ancient cemeteries and mountainous areas and placed them on the graves of their relatives believing that they would bring happiness, and similar statues were also brought to Cheneneb and Danagird villages. V. M. Sysoyev recorded a stone ram measuring 1 x 0.95 x 0.35 m in the Duylun village cemetery, showing that ayes (verses) 26 and 27 of Ar-Rahman Sura were traditionally engraved on both sides of the statues and in the inscriptions on the back. V. M. Sysoyev came to a conclusion that the date in these inscriptions (Hijrah 790—1188/1388—1775) written in Naskh script confirmed that the Turkic-speaking population were the settler of the area, and especially the inscription of the ram statue belonged to local Azerbaijanis. V. M. Sysoyev's information about the presence of 2—3 stone horse statues in addition to the stone ram statue in *Karabakhtar* village cemetery also draws attention. Part IV of the report, consisting of 5 sections, provides information about the monuments in the villages of Yukhari and Ashagi Aza, Der and samples of material culture found during excavations in Kharaba Gilan. Ancient coins found in the villages of *Karabakhtar*, Aznabirt, Kharaba Gilan and Ordubad districts were included in the numismatic fund. According to V. M. Sysoyev's report, there was a commission under the ASRS to read and analyze Muslim writings. The translation of inscriptions on the historical monuments of Nakhchivan was also carried out with the help of this commission. Some materials of the historical essays added to the report by V. M. Sysoyev during the analysis of monuments were translated from English by M. M. Abezguz. Activities of ASRS employees A. Alakbarov, V. Sysoyev and I. Azimbeyov, members of Nakhchivan branch M. Mirheydarzadeh, L. Huseynzadeh, A. Seyidov (Seyyid Sabri) and M. Rasizadeh in

the field of registration and investigation of historical monuments in 1920s attracted attention¹.

In 1928, with the consent of the Azerbaijan Archaeological Committee, S. V. Ter-Avetisyan, a member of the Caucasus branch of the Moscow Archaeological Society, studied the ancient mosque, tombstones in the center of the village of Der, as well as tombs 1 km from the village, the Kharaba Gilan. It is evident from the scientific reports of the Nakhchivan expedition that V. M. Sysoyev copied the prints of Arabic and Persian inscriptions on the boxes and gravestones found in different settlements, as well as 20 epitaphs in the Ashaghi Aza village cemetery. The translation from Arabic of two tombstones and fragments of plaster inscriptions found in the lower part of Kharaba Gilan, revealed by epigrapher I. Azimbeyov, who took part in the excavations, was published.

Conclusion. Despite a number of shortcomings and flaws of the reports by V. M. Sysoyev and I. Azimbeyov, they are important as a first step in the systematic registration and inclusion in the scientific circulation of historical and epigraphic monuments of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

The information provided by both researchers on the location, the description, size and plan of the monuments helped to restore them, search for written stones under the ground, restore and re-study the inscriptions damaged by natural causes. These reports are the first experience of including the results of field research of epigraphic monuments of Nakhchivan into a more comprehensive scientific use. Unfortunately, some of the monuments registered at that time have been destroyed, but some of them have survived to the present day.

¹Central State Archive of Nakhchivan AR, meeting minutes of the Nakhchivan branch of the Azerbaijan TTC for May 21, 1925, August 27, 1928, F.1, desc. 2, case 13. Pp. 19—28.

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Из истории изучения эпиграфических памятников Нахчывана в XIX в. и в 1920-х гг.

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Надписи на памятниках архитектуры содержат сведения об их возведении, именах государственных правителей и религиозных деятелей, архитекторов и др. Большинство дошедших до нашего времени надписей Нахчыванского региона на арабском и персидском языках представляют собой средневековые эпитафии на надгробных обелисках, бюстах, каменных изваяниях барана. О Нахчыванских памятниках начиная с 1820-х гг. есть сведения в путевых записках и работах западных путешественников и востоковедов. Упоминания об исторических памятниках Нахчывана в трудах чиновников Российской империи способствовали развитию эпиграфических изысканий. Особенно важны исследования Н. В. Ханькова, в которых освещены не только надписи на памятниках и их перевод, но и анализируются особенности написания начиная с XII в. по 1920-е гг., что является важной вехой в исследовании эпиграфических памятников. В этот период ведущую роль играли Общество исследований и изучения Азербайджана, а также Азербайджанский археологический комитет, созданные в 1923 г. в Баку. Наиболее ценными и содержательными работами того времени являются научные отчеты В. М. Сысова и И. Азимбекова.

Ключевые слова: *эпиграфика Нахчывана, Мавзолей Момина Хатун, Карабагларская гробница, Хараба-Гилян, Общество исследований и изучения Азербайджана.*

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