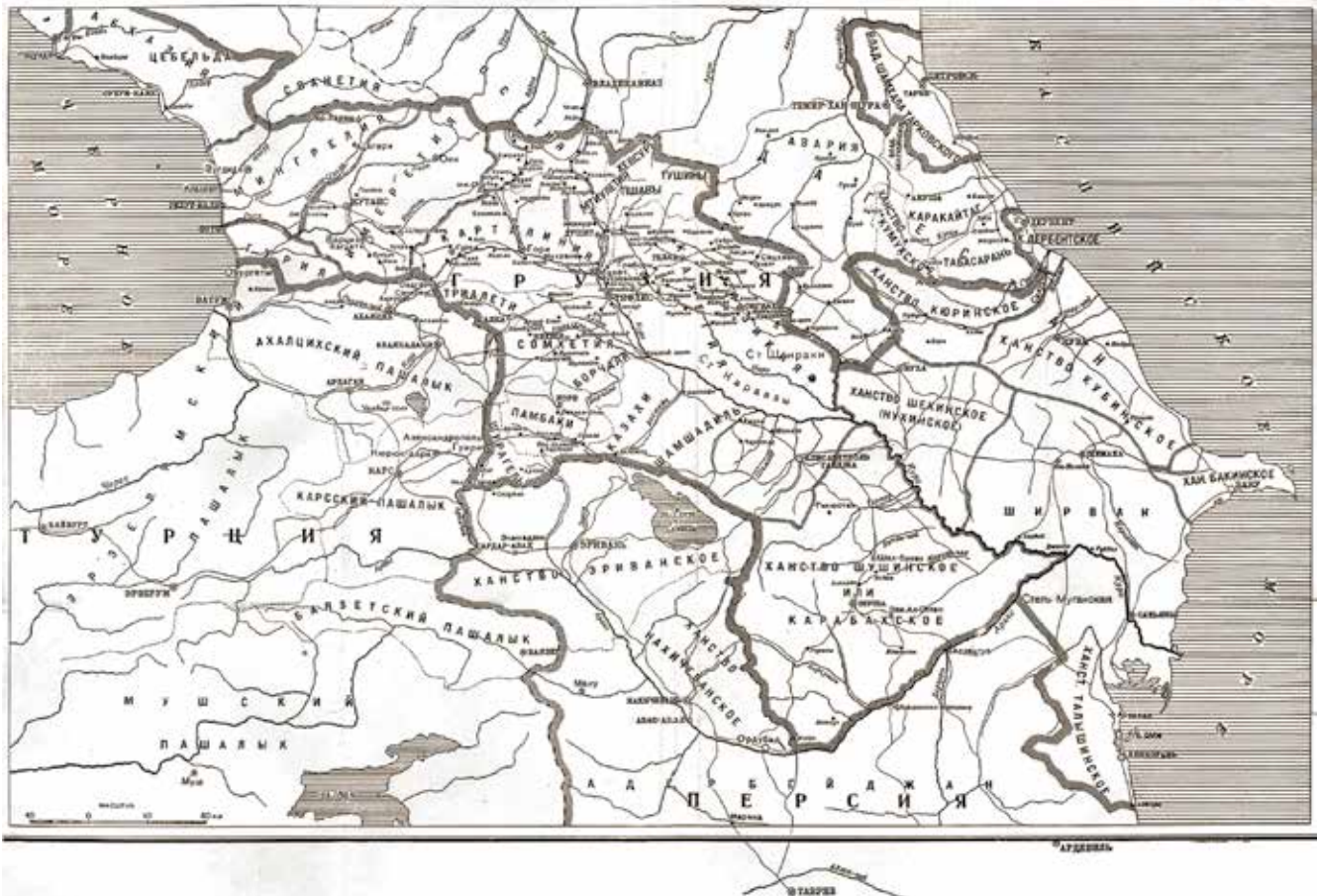


DISMEMBERMENT OF AZERBAIJANI LANDS: EMERGENCE OF SOUTHERN DAGESTAN ON RUSSIAN EMPIRE'S MAP

Map of the Transcaucasia in 1809-1817 (By N. S. Anosov, 1902)



Карта военных действий в Закавказском крае с 1809 по 1817 год, с границами по Гюльстенскому договору и Бухарестскому миру (Н. С. Аносов. Воен. Топограф. Ползунов и Ушаков, 1809—1817) глас. Тифли, 1902. Под ред. ген.-майора Петца)

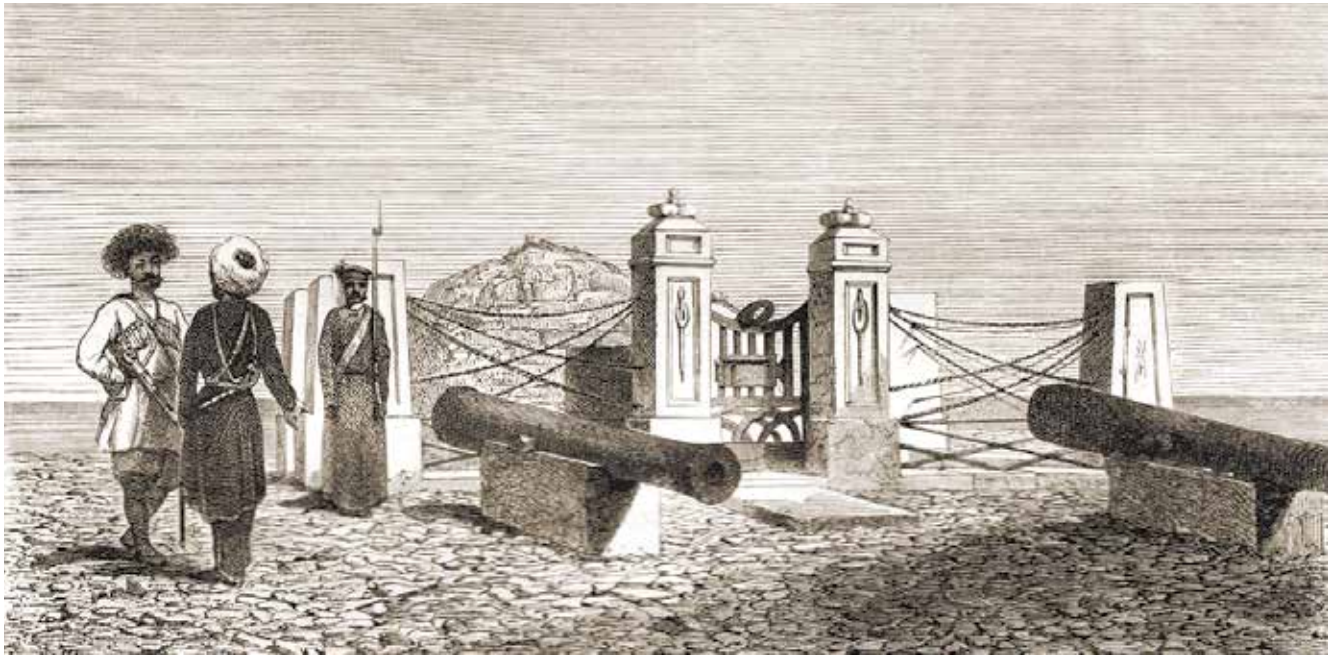


Derbent. Modern reproduction of a picture by G. Sergeyev (1796)

The geopolitical situation in the Caucasus in the first third of the 19th century was due to the desire of the Russian Empire for complete domination in the region. The global competition of the Russian Empire with the Ottoman Empire and Iran ended with the conquest and incorporation of the Caucasus into Russia and the spread of the administrative-legal and socioeconomic order of the Russian Empire to the region in the 1830-1840s.

Russian Emperor Alexander I, like Paul I, hoped to limit himself to the formation of "a union under the supreme patronage" of the Russian Empire from the lands of Northern Azerbaijan and Dagestan (Georgiyevsk, 26 December 1802). But it was an artificial entity, which was understandable only for its proponents, who anticipated the incorporation of Azerbaijan and its integral part, which went down in historiography under the term Southern Dagestan, into Russian possessions. In 1802, the Russian authorities announced the incorporation of Avaria to the Russian Empire and moved on to conquer North-Western Azerbaijan, Ossetia and Abkhazia, planning to enter the territory of Chechnya and Zakubanye from there. In retaliation for the resistance of Azerbaijani

and Dagestani rulers to the spread of Russian power in the South Caucasus, territories occupied by Russian troops were incorporated into Georgia step by step. In 1804, Russian troops occupied more Azerbaijani lands: the Ganja khanate in 1805, the Karabakh, Sheki and Shirvan khanates in 1806, and the Baku, Guba and Derbent khanates in 1806. In Derbent Province (Ulus, Karakaytag and Tabasaran mahals) most of the state-owned villagers were ruled by bays. The Ulus mahal, which consisted of nine villages (389 yards), was the property of Sheykhali Khan of Guba until 1806. The Russian government first recognized Sheykhali Khan as Khan of Derbent (he was Khan of Guba, and after the death of his brother Hassan Khan he took possession of Derbent and is now known as Sheykhali of Guba in historiography) with the outskirts on the River Samur belonging to the city of Derbent and with all the villages and uluses (10, 258-264.). After the anti-Russian uprising in the realm of Sheykhali Khan of Guba and the conquest of the Guba Khanate by Russian troops, a Council of the Four was formed from four bays under the chairmanship of a Russian officer. The tsarist government relied on loyal bays loyal to the Russian authorities, who would report the actions of



Outskirts of Derbent. Engraving, 1860

other bays, i.e., fulfill police functions. After the Derbent possession was incorporated into the Russian Empire in 1806, the title of khan was abolished. On 23 August (10 September) 1806, the Russian command handed over Azerbaijani khanates - Derbent (Ulus mahal), except for the city of Derbent, and Guba - to Tarkovskiy shamkhal Mehdi Khan for hereditary administration with the right to benefit from all revenues under previous customs. The shamkhal continued to live in his possession, but ran the new possessions through his close associates. The rule of the naib remained in the city of Derbent under the control of the commandant of the fortress. The fortress of Derbent was occupied by Russian troops. Supreme power in Dagestan after the Gulistan Peace (1812) belonged to the Russian military command. The newly-established Derbent and Guba provinces were headed by military district chiefs. The main administration of these provinces was carried out from Derbent. A local court (divan) of delegates elected by the population operated on the ground. It was chaired by the commandant (2, 231, 3, 93-96). Six villages of Derbent Province were ruled by bailiffs. It must be noted that in addition to the ancient Azerbaijani city of Derbent and its surroundings, Azerbaijanis also lived in Nizhniy Kaytag (Kara Kaytag) and Tabaristan from ancient times, and it was these possessions that were overwhelmed by anti-Russian uprisings, which is why they were subsequently reformed. In one of the documents compiled

by I. F. Paskevich, the Baku, Guba and Derbent provinces were united under one name "Dagestan". Paskevich justified this definition by the fact that he used this name for "lands already at the disposal and management of our superiors". That is to say with one stroke of the pen Azerbaijani lands were called Dagestan to distinguish them in this way from other Azerbaijani khanates that were beyond the control of Russia. (3, 250)

In the 1830s, the colonization of the Caucasus began, and the Russian government invested heavily in the financing of the army. Unions of rural societies were in fact placed under the control of the commandant of the city of Guba. And in 1839, the Samur district was created from the union of rural communities of the Samur valley (except for Rutul, which became part of the Ilisu sultanate). The construction of a fortified line on the Samur River aimed to end the traffic between the Muslim peoples of the two parts of the Caucasus and prevent mountain people from appearing in Northern Azerbaijan. In the same year, 94 maafs were sent from the Sheki region to watch this line. In 1840, the Samur district was merged with Guba. To help the district chief, the chief qadi and vakils of the divan were appointed, one from each mahal. Tsarist army officers were introduced to "assist" rulers, including from the local nobility. These representatives gradually took over all local administration. Elders and bays became subordinate to commanders of military

units. According to the statute on the administration of the Kara-Gazikumukh khanate and the Azerbaijani Ilisu sultanate in 1838, the Kura-Karakumyk possession was added to the Derbent district administration of the Caspian province called the Kura-Kazykumyk khanate (3, 397-399; 4, 247-248). Soon the position of ruler was abolished, and power was fully handed over to officials and military leaders.

In addition to changes in the supreme authority and local forms of governance, projects aimed at changing the ethnic and religious map of the region were implemented. After the end of the second Russian-Iranian war of 1826-1828, when the northern part of Azerbaijan was seized by the Russian Empire, the Russian administration started to relocate a large number of Christians to the territory of Northern Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus. This practice was also carried out in the North Caucasus following the spread of the colonial and colonialist domination of the Russian Empire in the region (18th-19th centuries). During the Russian-Iranian war of 1826-1828, feudal lords suspected of sympathy for Iran were deprived of their land possessions. However, after the war, Nicholas I changed his policy with respect to local feudal lords, ordering the return of the exiles and giving their previous estates back to them or their heirs. The Russian authorities began a thorough study of the situation and administration in the Caucasus in order to develop a common administrative, legal and financial governance system.

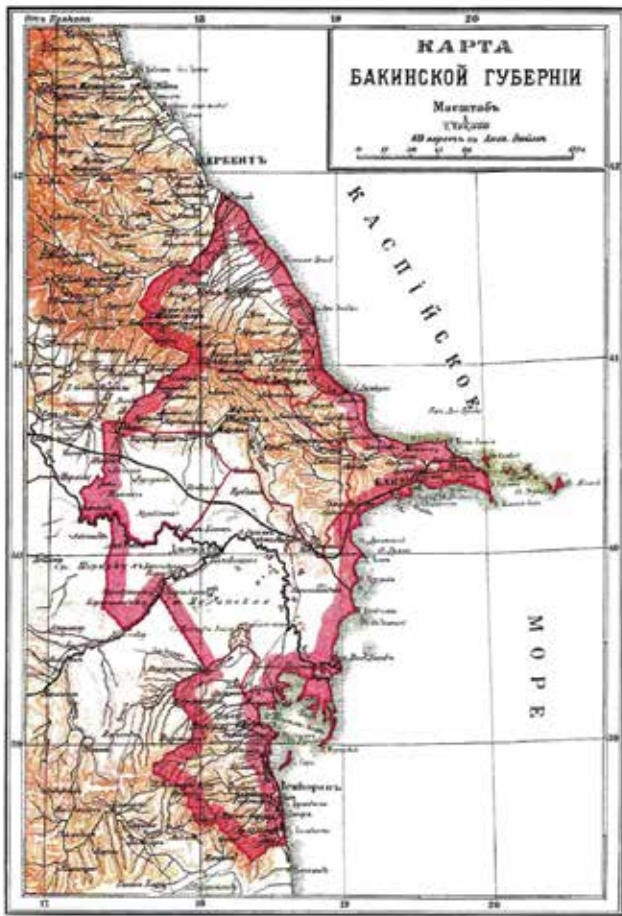
With the power of Russian weapons, the Russian possessions also included the Azerbaijani lands of North-Western Azerbaijan, including Tsakhur free societies and the Ilisu sultanate with compact territory in the upper reaches of the Samur River in the Mountain Mahal (15 villages) and the Gara-Alazan valley where the Suvahil, Mukhakh and Jinig societies were situated, as well as part of the Ilisu sultanate. The draft statute on the administration of the Transcaucasian region, compiled by the Russian administration under General Rozen in 1837, was of fateful importance. At that time, administrative and territorial borders were established in haste without considering historical realities. In 1840, by the decree of the Senate on the introduction in the Caucasus of "imperially approved projects of civil order", the Caspian region was created from seven counties. After endorsement by the Caucasian Committee and approval by the State Council in April 1840, the project of Senator Gan was named "The institution for the administration of the Transcaucasian region". The Caspian



Derbent. Engraving by O. Monet (1860)

region included Derbent and Guba provinces reorganized into counties of the Transcaucasian region. They were ruled by county chiefs from among Russian officials who replaced provincial commandants. The Derbent county (Kaytag, Ulus mahal) included Tabasaran, while the Guba country included the Samur district. Supreme power in these districts, in particular, police surveillance, was assigned (in addition to the Caspian regional leadership) to the Derbent military district chief (5, 254, 2, 232; 6, 237-240). It should be emphasized that the administration of the newly-formed counties was organized according to Russian traditions without considering local and national characteristics, although, of course, before the end of the Caucasian War, there was no talk about Russian administration, because a huge part of the North Caucasus was part of the Imamate of Shamil, where his power was still strong.

The Russian administration studied many decisions of commissions, projects and plans for the development of the Caucasus region. Finally, on 1 January



Map of the Baku province

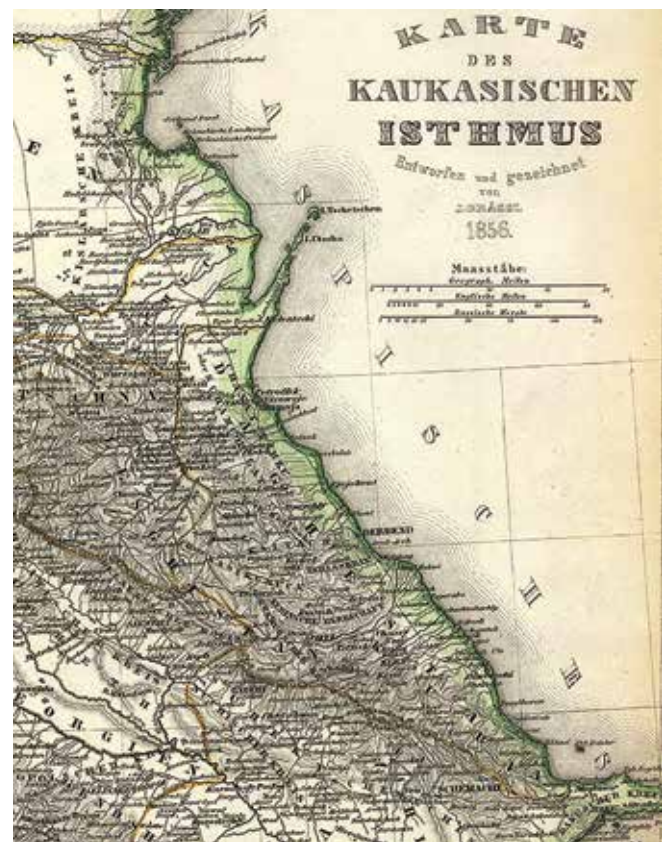
1841, a new administrative division was adopted in the whole Transcaucasian region. Under the project, the Transcaucasian region (apart from Abkhazia, Samegrelo and Svaneti, which were governed by their rulers) was divided into two parts: western – the Georgian-Imereti province and eastern - the Caspian region. The Caspian region included territories that were later attributed to the rest of the Yelisavetpol province, Baku province, as well as part of Dagestan. The Caspian region with the regional city of Shamakhi consisted of seven counties. The Derbent and Guba districts were merged under the leadership of the Derbent district military chief. All these and other events caused dissatisfaction among local rulers and the population. The dismemberment of the territory of the South Caucasus, administrative division and demarcation happened without taking into account local conditions, national and religious signs and the state interests of Azerbaijani and mountain rulers. In addition, measures in the socioeconomic sphere, military administration and others caused discontent

among the population. Whole families from Southern Dagestan and North Azerbaijan dissatisfied with the Russian authorities resettled to Iran. But soon the imperial administration realized that the Act of 1841 was a political mistake and reconsidered the issue of higher Muslim estates. The administration of Southern Dagestan, the command of troops in Southern Dagestan, Derbent and Guba districts, as well as in the Samur district was entrusted to Lieutenant-General Prince M. Z. Argutinskiy-Dolgorukiy in 1844 (7, 74-75; 2, 233 -234). In 1845, with the aim of centralizing the administration in the Caucasus, the Caucasian viceroyalty was established led by a governor, who single-handedly solved all issues of ministerial authority and could refer directly to the emperor. Ministries served as an advisory body to the governor. The first to take this position was Count M. S. Vorontsov. The administration of the governor of the Caucasus included the Caucasus region - the South and the North Caucasus. The viceroy was also commander of the Caucasus Military District. Unlike his predecessors, Vorontsov had a loyal attitude to the local nobility and its involvement in Russian (military and civilian) service. At the same time, according to the "Note on the structure of regions: Imereti and Dagestan. 1846", "taking into account the vastness of Dagestan and the difficulty of communication between the northern and southern parts of it, His Highness has decided to instruct the main administration of the Transcaucasian region to think: Will it be more convenient to arrange two regions there: North Dagestan and South Dagestan?" However, the Caucasian governor, referring to the military situation and the continuation of hostilities, recommended that the solution of this problem is postponed. The main administration of the Transcaucasian region offered to form a Dagestan region from the Derbent and Guba districts (of the Caspian region), the Samur and Dargin districts, Kyurinskiy and Kazikumyk possessions, as well as lands located south of Avar Koyusu. Such an adventurous decision would further aggravate the situation in the region. In 1846, the post of military governor with his residence in the city of Derbent was established for the administration of Dagestan. He was in charge of civil administration. The provincial court was subordinate to him. The Guba and Derbent county courts were reorganized into a regional court in Derbent. A regional prosecutor was appointed instead of two county prosecutors. The Azerbaijani Derbent and Guba counties were renamed districts. According to the rescript of 6 December 1846, khans, bays



Lands of southern Dagestan and northeastern regions of Shirvan. 1724

and others were granted the hereditary possession of the land which their families owned when the Muslim provinces were incorporated into Russia regardless of the fact that some of them were granted lands for special distinction. According to the 14 December 1846 decree, Vorontsov's project on the division of the entire South Caucasus into four provinces was approved: Tiflis, Kutaisi, Shamakhi and Derbent (the last two were formed from the Caspian region). The Derbent province included: Derbent county (the city of Derbent with the Ulus mahal, Kaytag and Tabasaran), the Guba county, the Samur and Dargin districts, the Kyurinskiy-Kazikumyk possession and other possessions to the south of Avar Koysu. Soon, the title of Derbent district chief was abolished and his functions were entrusted to the Derbent commandant. The Terekeme site and the Ulus mahal were governed by bailiffs. The treasuries in Guba and Derbent were subordinate to the Derbent military governor and remained under the jurisdiction of the Shamakhi exchequer. In 1847, the Derbent province, the Tarkovskiy shamkhalate and the Mehtuli khanate formed a new administrative unit - the Caspian region



Map of the Eastern Caucasus. 1856

under the administration of the commander of troops (5, 255-256; 2, 233-234; 8, 258-259).

The dismemberment of the territory of the South Caucasus, the administrative division and demarcation happened without considering local conditions, national signs and the state and national interests of Azerbaijani and North Caucasus rulers. In addition, measures in the socioeconomic sphere, military administration and others caused discontent among the population. As a result of the administrative-territorial reform on the part of the Russian authorities, Azerbaijani lands were divided and incorporated into various provinces. The fate of residents of the Samur district and the Kura khanate, which were incorporated into the Derbent province, was especially hard. The administrative-territorial redivision led to the dismemberment of Azerbaijani lands and the elimination of Azerbaijani khanates and political independence. The Caucasus region included the entire mountain population of the military mountain administration: part of the Kuban, Terek and Dagestan regions, Zagatala district (Azerbaijani lands of North-Western Azerbaijan) and the Sukhum section. In accordance with the new

territorial-administrative division, the North Caucasus or Ciscaucasia included the Stavropol province and the Kuban and Terek regions. The Dagestan region, along with the Black Sea, Kutaisi, Tiflis, Iravan, Yelisavetpol and Baku provinces, as well as the Zakatala district and the Kars region were part of the Transcaucasia. The Transcaucasian region finally included the following territories: Tiflis, Kutaisi, Yelisavetpol, Iravan and Baku provinces, the Dagestan region with the Derbent local authority attached thereto; the Zagatala and Black Sea districts, as well as the Sukhum section. The Dagestan region was reorganized from the Derbent province formed in 1848. It consisted of nine counties: Temir-Khan-Shurinskiy, Andiyskiy (Botlikh), Khunzakh, Gunib, Dargin, Kazi-Kumukh (Kumukh), Kaytag-Tabasarskiy (Derbent), Kurinskiy, Samur (Akhty), i.e. the whole of mountainous Dagestan and the former Caspian region without the Guba district (which was incorporated into the Baku province). The border between the Dagestan region and the Baku province was on the Samur River. The management and administrative division of the Dagestan region, Zagatala district, Sukhumi section and Black Sea district was carried out according to special provisions. The new administrative structure was introduced by the "Statute on the governance of the Dagestan region and Zagatala district" approved by the commander-in-chief of the Caucasian army on 5 April 1860.

The delineation of the historical territory of Azerbaijan into the Dagestan region and various districts and depriving the Azerbaijani people of their own ethnonyms and the right to statehood and territorial integrity led to the fact that the Azerbaijani people were dismembered by territorial barriers. All this caused popular indignation, which is why a so-called military and national administration was declared in the Dagestan region. The region was divided into four military sections: Northern Dagestan, Southern Dagestan, Middle Dagestan and Upper Dagestan. Southern Dagestan, inhabited mainly by the Azerbaijani population, was divided into three areas: the Kaytag-Tabasaran district (Upper and Lower Kaytag, North and South Tabasaran), the Kura khanate and the Samur district. Two civilian areas extended to the Derbent local authority (Derbent and Ulus mahals) and the city of Petrovsk with surrounding territories. The military and civil administration was subordinate to the chief of the Dagestan region from tsarist officers. In addition, the city of Derbent with the Ulus mahal formed a special administration in the form of a township. The remaining parts of the Derbent province

became part of uniform military departments. Thus, the Derbent province was abolished. The eastern limits of the Caucasus joined the Dagestan region and the Zagatala district (9, 17, 10, 1, 11, 243, 244-245, 254-256, 12, 1-2). According to the "Draft statute on the administration of the Dagestan region", districts were subdivided into naibdoms. The Kaytag-Tabasaran district was an exception. On 18 July 1860, War Minister Field Marshal Prince Baryatinskiy made some changes to the administration of the Caspian region. So, the Guba county of the Caspian region was separated from the Caspian region and incorporated into the Baku province. In 1883, "The establishment of the administration of the Caucasus region" entered into force. According to it, the Caucasus region was divided into the Northern Caucasus and Transcaucasia. The Transcaucasia included the Tiflis, Kutaisi, Yelisavetpol, Iravan and Baku provinces, the Dagestan and Kutaisi regions, and the Black Sea and Zagatala districts. Provinces were divided into counties, and regions into districts. (11, 254-256, 12, 1.5) In 1882, the Caucasus viceroyalty and the Caucasus Committee were abolished. In the 1880s, the authorities in the Dagestan region abolished the post of commander and heads of departments, the headquarters of the troops and the South Dagestan estate and land commission. The governance of the region was transferred to the military governor, while the Derbent local authority and the special department at it were abolished, and part of it, which was not included in Derbent, was merged with the Kura district. The finance minister proposed abolishing the Dagestan region and merging its southern districts (Kaytag-Tabasaran, Samur and Kyurinskiy) with the Baku Province, and the others – with the Terek region. But this proposal was not supported by the State Council. Unresolved administrative-territorial and land issues, relations of subordination between bays and peasants who refused to pay taxes and duties culminated in uprisings in the Dagestan region, mainly in its southern part in the 1880s (13, 37).

The administrative-territorial division dismembered Azerbaijani lands, and some Azerbaijanis ended up in newly-created administrative units. This issue exacerbated with the proclamation of independent states at the beginning and at the end of the 20th century. The delineation of the historical territory of Azerbaijan into the Dagestan region and various districts and depriving Azerbaijani people of their own ethnonyms and the right to statehood and territorial integrity led to the fact that the Azerbaijani people were divided. 🌟



Historical part of Derbent. Modern photo

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