

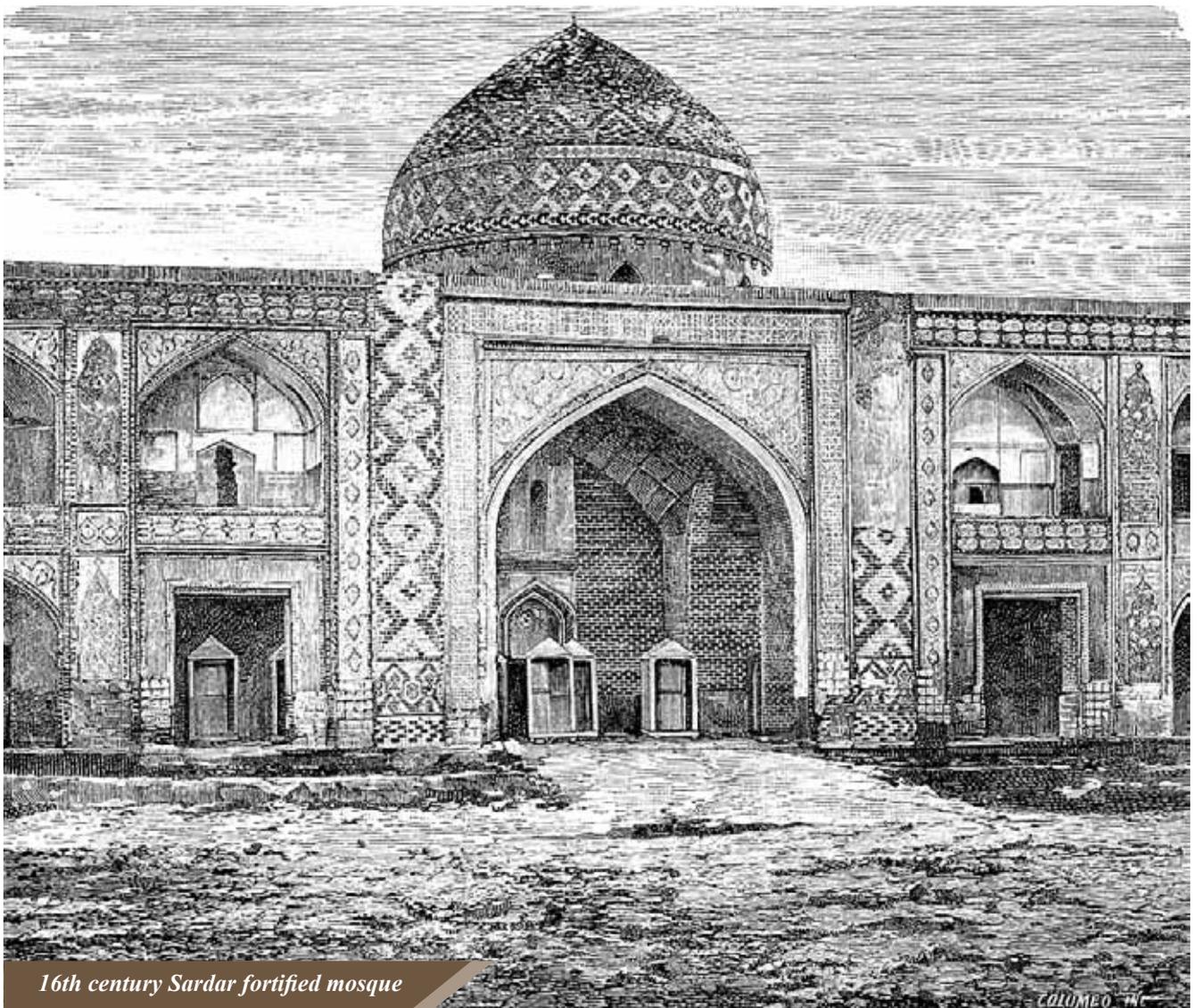
# ERIVAN CITY OF WESTERN AZERBAIJAN

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ERIVAN, ONE OF AZERBAIJAN'S BIGGEST MEDIEVAL CITIES, IS TURNING 600 THIS YEAR. ACCORDING TO ENCYCLOPEDIA SCHOLAR AND TRAVELER EVLIYA CELEBI, WEALTHY MERCHANT HAJI KHAN ESTABLISHED A LARGE SETTLEMENT ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER ZENGI IN 1407. ALMOST 100 YEARS LATER, ON THE ORDER OF SHAH ISMAIL SAFAWI, VIZIER RAVANGULU KHAN BUILT A MASSIVE FORTRESS WITH HIGH WALLS AND TOWERS HERE. IT TOOK SEVEN YEARS TO BUILD THE FORTRESS. THE REVAN FORTRESS WAS FURTHER STRENGTHENED BY TURKISH GENERAL FERHAD PASHA IN 1582-1583.



In accordance with Azerbaijani town-planning tradition, Erivan was established on a plateau between the Zengi and Girkhbulag rivers. Almost square-like in shape, the fortress was 850 meters long and 790 meters wide. It had double walls on three sides and a single wall in its west, facing a steep bank of the Zengi river. The total length of fortress walls was 4.5 kilometers. They were surrounded by trenches filled with river water. The fortress had three gates: Tabriz, Shirvan and Koprü. The Red Bridge, built in 1679,

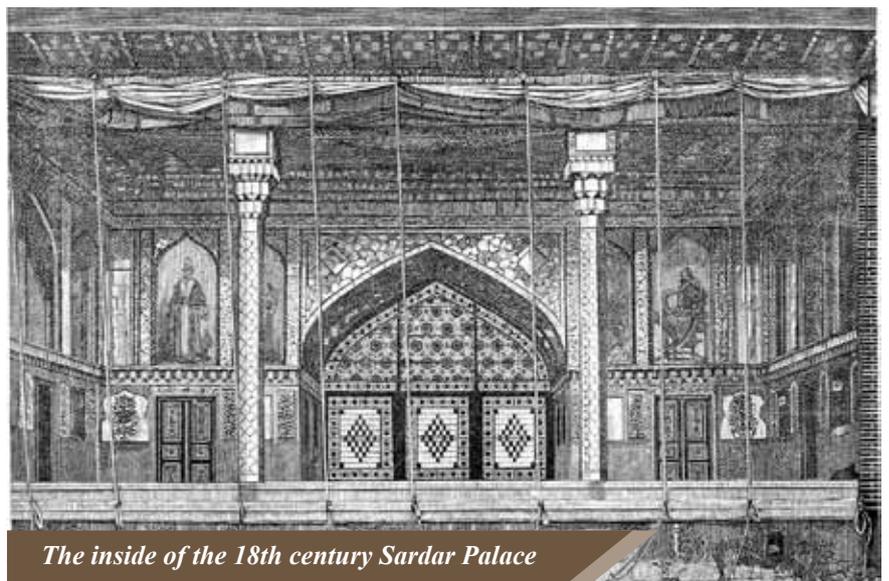


*16th century Sardar fortified mosque*

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linked the fortress with the opposite bank of the Zengi. The bridge was controlled from the Kechi tower built on a hill. Over time, the city expanded beyond the walls. It had three parts called Sheher, Tepebashi and Demirbulag.

**French traveler J. Tavernier, who visited Erivan in 1655, said the place was only inhabited by Muslims. Another French traveler, J. Shardenne, who visited Erivan shortly afterwards, said there were about 300 houses in the fortress where “only pure Safavids (Turks) live.”** The palace



*The inside of the 18th century Sardar Palace*



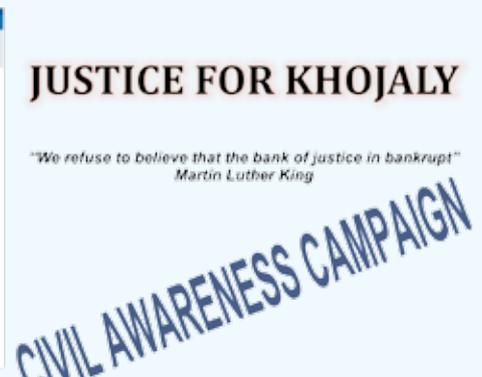
complex located in the north-eastern section of the fortress was a valuable example of palace architecture of the Safavid and Gajar epoch.

As a result of intense Armenianization of the city and its surroundings by the Russians, which started in 1828, there were only eight mosques left in Erivan by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest of these was the Serdar Mosque built on

Shah Ismail's order in 1510. It was at this mosque that Armenians locked up and burned several hundred Azerbaijanis in 1818. Armenians also destroyed the Juma Mosque built in 1606. The Rajab Pasha mosque built in 1725 was subsequently knocked down and an Orthodox church built in its place. Today, there is only the Hussein Ali Khan mosque, known as the Blue Mosque, in Erivan.

A busy trade center, Erivan had plenty of caravansaries and a large number of bridges, which were a wonderful example of medieval Azerbaijani architecture. Erivan's system of settlement in blocks and housing architecture were fully based on Azerbaijani tradition. Many of the current residential buildings were built and owned by wealthy Azerbaijanis. ■





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## JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The international awareness campaign Justice for Khojaly has been initiated by **Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva**, General Coordinator of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation on May 8th 2008, on the anniversary of the day of occupation of the town of Shusha in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, which is a symbol of our culture on this ancient Azerbaijani land. The Khojaly massacre is one of the most terrible and tragic pages of Azerbaijani history. As is known on the night of February 26<sup>th</sup> the Armenian armed forces supported by the ex-Soviet 366<sup>th</sup> regiment, completed the surrounding of the town already isolated because of ethnic cleansing of the Azerbaijani population neighboring regions. In a few hours of a single night 613 civilians were killed, including 106 women, 83 children; 56 of whom were killed with outrageous brutality and 8 families were totally exterminated.

The Justice for Khojaly campaign has been launched to raise international civil awareness through creative actions by young people not only to generate the solidarity of world with the victims of Khojaly massacre, and against general Armenian aggression in Karabakh, but also to attract the world's attention to in-admissible violence against civilians whenever and by whomever it is perpetrated. The campaign aims to disseminate out its message of justice globally via Media, Internet and live events. The ultimate aim of this campaign is to achieve moral and political-judicial recognition of this tragedy by the world community.

One of the directions of the Campaign is online campaigning through the website [www.justiceforkhojaly.org](http://www.justiceforkhojaly.org). Over 126 000 individuals have already supported it during the first year of implementation by signing the declaration to protest against this atrocity. In February 2010 an Online Petition addressing world leaders was launched, (leaders of the United States, UN, EU, OIC, Council of Europe and other major international organizations). The petition is calling upon world leaders to recognize the Khojaly massacre **as a crime against humanity**.

The campaign has been launched in social network groups that bring together a large audience consisting of more than 12,000 supporters from 72 countries. Through the Facebook webpage the campaign shares regular news and holds open discussions. (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Khojaly-town/Justice-for-Khojaly-Campaign/101823787520?ref=ts>)

Since 2008, the OIC institutes at the level of ministers, particularly at the level of ministers of education and culture, as well as OIC summits have adopted documents condemning this tragedy. **This January, on the proposal by ICYF-DC, the Parliamentary Union of the OIC adopted a resolution that recognized Khojaly as a crime against humanity.** Based on the proposal of ICYF-DC Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC countries adopted a resolution in 2009, which supported the campaign and called upon 57 Member States to contribute to its implementation until full recognition of the tragedy is achieved.

The campaign's international volunteer's team creates tools to effectively extend the campaign's voice to the international community. The music and video clip titled Justice for Khojaly was put together by American rap artist Tony Blackman and Dayirman group and was presented in more than 30 countries on the eve of 18<sup>th</sup> commemoration of Khojaly massacre. It has also been disseminated on the YouTube website. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qF51bBinjKA>)

Since 2009 the campaign has been held in more than 30 countries, a focus of which has been the capitals of European nations. In many of them the activities are being coordinated by host country nationals. The reach of the event is spread as wide as Mexico City, Jakarta, Ankara, Ottawa and Paris; to name just a few examples. Young people, who joined the campaign, are focusing on telling the story of Khojaly by creative means. In Moscow an important testimony on the Karabakh conflict – a book titled Karabakh Diary written by Russian academician and writer Yuri Pompeyev, was presented in the leading state library.

The Campaign is targeting active civil society stakeholders as well as human rights groups to commemorate the tragedy, and invites the world to draw lessons in order to prevent such tragedies in the future.