

# The Taghiyev-Behbudov Affair: Conflict Among Caucasian Muslim Elites in the Early XX Century

written by Robert Denis

On May 16, 1911, at about 3:15 in the afternoon, Lutfali bey Behbudov stepped out of a phaeton in the center of Baku and entered the stately home of the oil baron and philanthropist, Haji Zeynalabdin Taghiyev.

Behbudov was a young man who showed a lot of promise. He had been born into a noble Muslim family of *beys* with a sizeable estate in the village of Uchoghlan, in what was then the province of Shusha. At the St. Petersburg Technological Institute he had studied engineering, a profession very much in demand in Baku in the midst of the oil boom of the early 20th century.<sup>[1]</sup> Due to financial difficulties, however, Behbudov might not have graduated, had he not had the good fortune to be recommended for a scholarship by Alimardan bey Topchubashov.<sup>[2]</sup> At the time, Topchubashov, the future leader of the Muslim faction of the Russian State Duma, was the editor of Haji Taghiyev's newspaper, *Kaspiy*, and Taghiyev was known to support the education of exceptional Muslim students. On Topchubashov's recommendation, Taghiyev agreed to sponsor the young man, and after graduating in 1904, Behbudov returned to the Caucasus to work for his benefactor. He quickly rose through the ranks and was eventually entrusted with the management of a significant part of Taghiyev's business empire, including plants, fisheries, mills, factories, and even his employer's private homes.<sup>[3]</sup>

The historian Tadeusz Swietochowski has concisely summarized

Haji Zeynalabdin Taghiyev's extraordinary life and legend thus: "A quintessential self-made man, Taghiyev was reputed to be the richest man in Transcaucasia. Starting with a small oil-bearing plot of land, he multiplied his fortune by investments and stock market speculations. With time he extended his interests beyond the oil industry: he founded the first cotton mill in Azerbaijan and invested in tobacco and cotton plantations. Although barely literate, Taghiyev financially supported a wide range of educational and philanthropic ventures, among them schools, scholarships, newspapers, and theater, in Azerbaijan as well as in other Muslim centers of Russia."<sup>[4]</sup>

Behbudov was both one of the many beneficiaries of Taghiyev's largesse, and eventually an important assistant in his business affairs.

When Behbudov arrived at Taghiyev's Baku home on May 16, 1911, his host was not alone. With Taghiyev were six prominent members of Baku society, namely his son, Sadig; his nephew, Mammad Rza; another of Taghiyev's business managers, Mehdi Jafarov; the office manager of Taghiyev's newspaper *Kaspiy*, Hasan Hasanov, who was also a councillor in the Baku City Duma; Irza bey Mammadbeyov, a field captain in the Russian army; and finally, Prince Mansur Mirza Qajar, a member of the Persian royal family, a lieutenant-colonel in the Russian military, and a grandson of the famous writer and reformer Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh.<sup>[5]</sup>

Behbudov had returned to Baku the previous day, May 15, after a week-long trip to Tbilisi, where he had been negotiating a contract for Taghiyev with the management of the Transcaucasian railroad. Upon his return, Behbudov met with Taghiyev and presented a 2 ½ hour report about his audience with the tsar's viceroy in the Caucasus, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov. "Taghiyev was pleased," Behbudov would later testify.<sup>[6]</sup>

But on the following day at Taghiyev's home, Behbudov was not well received. In front of the six men listed above, Taghiyev confronted Behbudov with the accusation that the engineer had made advances toward the elderly Taghiyev's much younger wife, Sona khanum. Behbudov denied everything. About an hour after his arrival at Taghiyev's home, Behbudov was escorted out by Hasan Hasanov and Mammad Rza Taghiyev, but instead of putting Behbudov in his usual phaeton, which was owned by Taghiyev, they flagged down a horse-drawn cab-for-hire in which Behbudov then sped away to his apartment. The young man's promising career in Taghiyev's business empire had ended. His right eye was black and his chin was bleeding.<sup>[7]</sup>

News of the incident in the home of Haji Taghiyev electrified the city. Rumors "penetrated every corner of [Muslim] society; in homes, in clubs, and on the street, all one could hear was talk of that 'family affair.'"<sup>[8]</sup> The incident was embellished with wild speculation, and the Muslim community was divided along regional lines into two factions, with the Baku camp supporting Taghiyev, while the Shusha camp took Behbudov's side.<sup>[9]</sup>

The events of May 16 would eventually become the subject of a criminal trial, in which Taghiyev stood accused of orchestrating an attack on Behbudov with the help of the six alleged accomplices named above. The courtroom, which was open to the public, was filled to overflowing, and some newspapers devoted several pages to the trial every day. The story as embellished by the press was irresistible: an illicit love affair, an enraged husband, and a savage reprisal, all involving the local Muslim intelligentsia, Persian royalty, several millionaires, members of the Russian State Duma, and of course Taghiyev himself, a towering figure in the Caucasus. The affair would not soon be forgotten by the residents of Baku, even garnering a mention a quarter century later in the most famous novel about the period, *Ali and Nino*.

Despite the enormous attention this scandal received from contemporaries, and the lasting effect it had on Taghiyev's reputation, historians have largely ignored the incident. In resurrecting the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, the purpose of this article is not to determine what actually happened that day over a hundred years ago between Taghiyev and Behbudov. From the existing evidence, that would seem to be an impossible task. Still less is it an attempt to "expose" Taghiyev or to blot out the contributions he made to Azerbaijani culture. Rather, this article is an attempt to make a small contribution to the study of a topic that is often ignored: the internal conflicts within Caucasian Muslim society in the final years of the Russian Empire. The conflict between Taghiyev and Behbudov, often referred to as a "family affair," was of a personal nature, but the criminal trial, and particularly the polemics it instigated in the press, provide a wealth of fascinating information of more general interest.

The Taghiyev-Behbudov affair provides copious material for a sociological study of the codes of honor adhered to by Caucasian Muslim elites at the beginning of the 20th century. Although Behbudov would exaggerate in court the violence of the beating he received, he also admitted that his physical injuries were only of secondary concern to him. It was the injury to his honor that ultimately drove him to lodge an official complaint against Taghiyev. Before making that decision, Behbudov spent a month in consultation with trusted advisors discussing the exact extent to which his honor had been damaged and what socially acceptable and commensurate measures could be taken to restore it. We see the effects of Europeanization in the new forms of social status (Russian civil ranks, the intelligentsia) and new options for regulating conflicts (Russian legal system, dueling) which influenced the calculations of everyone involved.

A detailed study of the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair could also allow scholars to begin to reconstruct specific schisms and animosities among Muslim elites which altered the course of

Azerbaijan's political history. As will be seen, the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair invited comparisons in the press to other earlier scandals in Muslim society. Most significantly, journalists recalled a now forgotten conflict between Taghiyev and the politician and writer, Ahmet bey Ağaoğlu. The fraught relationship between Ağaoğlu and Taghiyev illustrates a broader schism between the intelligentsia and capital, and may have been complicated by regional loyalties (Ağaoğlu was from Karabakh, while Taghiyev was from Baku). Pressure from Taghiyev may have actually played a crucial role in Ağaoğlu's decision to emigrate from Baku to Turkey. Further research is required to confirm and explain the hints we find in the press, but if confirmed, this would be a significant discovery. Ağaoğlu was very active in local politics, even founding the first Muslim political organization in the Caucasus, the revolutionary *Difai*. He almost certainly would have continued to play a consequential role in Caucasian politics if he had stayed in Baku, just as he ended up playing an important role in the founding of modern Turkey.

In addition, the role played by Taghiyev's lead defense attorney, Russian State Duma member Vasily Maklakov, led to polemics in the Russian press around the ethnic conflicts and revolutionary movements in the Caucasus. Of particular interest, Maklakov was involved simultaneously in two of the most high-profile trials of the period—the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, and the so-called Dashnaktsutyun affair. On March 10, 1912, Maklakov made his closing arguments in defense of Taghiyev in Baku, and on March 14, in St. Petersburg, he gave his closing speech in defense of 158 members of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, commonly known as Dashnaktsutyun, who were on trial on charges of various acts of revolutionary terrorism. The press polemics about Maklakov's ethics highlight both ethno-religious (Armenians and Muslims) and socio-economic (capitalists and socialist revolutionaries) themes. Liberals and leftists criticized Maklakov for selling out his principles to the capitalist Taghiyev, while the

right-wing defended Taghiyev, portraying him as a bulwark against socialist revolution and Armenian separatism.

This article is based primarily on published sources, with a few references to one document from the National Archives of Georgia providing biographical details about Lutfali bey Behbudov. At the Georgian archives I was unable to find any documents related to Taghiyev's appeal, which was heard in Tbilisi in 1913. The press from across the Russian Empire covered the incident, which first became public in June 1911, as well as the subsequent trial in March 1912, particularly Taghiyev's own paper *Kaspiy*, the other local papers *Baku* and *Bakinets*, *Kavkaz* in Tbilisi, *Russkoye slovo* and *Vecherneye vremya* in St. Petersburg, and *Moskovskiye vedomosti* in Moscow. I would like to make special mention of the articles published in *Baku* by Rahim bey Malikov, nephew of the famous publisher and reformer, Hasan bey Zardabi, which were collected and published in book form in 1987 by Shamil Gurbanov,<sup>[10]</sup> and provide invaluable glimpses "behind the scenes."





*Muslim newspapers in Baku:*

*"A newspaper is a mirror for the nation, and looking into it one can see everything, except for the beating of the engineer Behbudov in the home of Mr. Taghiyev."*

*Proverb: "He who is clever doesn't offend a powerful man."*

**(Molla Nasreddin, August 11, 1911, № 29, illustration by Joseph Rotter)**

## **The Incident**

The details of the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair outlined above are uncontroversial, recognized by both Behbudov and Taghiyev. Behbudov really did come to see Taghiyev at the latter's home on the afternoon of May 16, 1911. Taghiyev was waiting for him

with the six men listed above. While inside Taghiyev's home, Behbudov was beaten. The controversy centered on three crucial questions: 1) why was Behbudov beaten, 2) by whom, and 3) how badly?

Behbudov's version of events first became public when his official complaint, submitted to the Baku prosecutor's office, was obtained and published by the newspaper *Russkoye slovo* on June 19, 1911:

"For the last eight years, ... I have been in the service of the local merchant, Active State Councilor<sup>[11]</sup> H. Z. A. Taghiyev, managing the technical side of his enterprises and simultaneously carrying out various tasks regarding the management of his estates, steamship line, and mill. For the duration of that time, Mr. Taghiyev and I maintained a perfectly normal working relationship, excluding the possibility of any mutual misunderstandings and complications. Beyond this [business] relationship, our households were acquainted and we visited each other. On May 16 of this year, Mr. Taghiyev summoned me several times from the office to his apartment, where he chatted with me about business affairs, and in the end invited me to appear at his home no later than 3:30 in the afternoon to inspect his apartment with him in view of a proposed renovation. At 3:15 in the afternoon, I arrived at Mr. Taghiyev's home and he and I headed off toward the inner rooms of his apartment. Giving me instructions along the way regarding the renovation of the floors, ceilings, etc., Mr. Taghiyev proceeded with me into his bedroom, whose windows were shuttered. As soon as I entered that room, the door slammed shut behind me and, upon Mr. Taghiyev's signal: "Beat him, kill him!" – I was suddenly attacked by six people, who had obviously been lying in wait for my arrival, among whom were: officer for special assignments under the mayor of Baku, lieutenant-colonel Mansur Mirza Qajar; field captain of the local border guard brigade, Irza bey Mammadbeyov; Taghiyev's son, Sadig; office manager of the newspaper Kaspiy,



Hasan agha Hasanov; manager of Taghiyev's factory, Mehti Jafarov, and Taghiyev's nephew, Mammad Rza Taghiyev. I noticed that Hasanov (a member of the Baku city council) was holding a revolver that he had aimed at me, obviously suspecting that I might resort to a weapon. The abovementioned persons, led by Mr. Taghiyev, threw me to the floor and began to beat me about the face, head, etc. Blindsided by this sudden attack, armed only with the measuring stick I had been using to take measurements for the renovation, I had no opportunity to defend myself, and, exhausted from the hail of blows raining down on me, I lost consciousness. When I came to, Sadig Taghiyev and Mansur Mirza were tying my arms with a rope which had obviously been prepared in advance. I tried to get up, but they threw me to the floor again and started to beat me. This was repeated several times, moreover they were spitting on me and showering me with the most terrible abuse. They beat me for a long time, mercilessly, excruciatingly. In vain I begged them to kill me, not to humiliate me, and to explain what I was guilty of. My pleas only hardened Mr. Taghiyev and his courtiers; the blows rained down even more ferociously, the humiliations intensified. Finally, blood began to gush from my chin, which was cut to the bone. This somewhat sobered Mr. Taghiyev and his retinue: the beating, which had lasted about an hour, ended, and Mr. Taghiyev announced that he would summon my wife by telephone so that she could admire my current state. Beaten, tormented, bloodied, with my arms tied, I nevertheless found enough strength in me to throw myself on my knees before Mr. Taghiyev and beg him to limit himself to that which had already transpired. But Mr. Taghiyev was implacable. Several minutes passed, during which Mr. Taghiyev never stopped threatening me with the most terrible torture, and on the threshold of the doorway leading to the bedroom from the boudoir, Mrs. Taghiyeva appeared, accompanied by my wife. Turning to the latter, Mr. Taghiyev invited her to admire the reprisal he had taken on me and to spit on me; then I was given an ultimatum—under the threat of death, to leave Baku forever, after which my hands were untied, and four of

those present (Mr. Taghiyev, Mansur Mirza, Hasanov, Mammad Rza) led me to the stairway. Two of the latter escorted me down and put me in a cab... "[\[12\]](#)

The fullest account of Taghiyev's version of events was provided by the court reporter of the newspaper *Baku*. At trial, Taghiyev denied taking part in the attack on Behbudov, which he said was not premeditated at all. He also explains that the reason for the confrontation with his business manager was Behbudov's alleged flirtations with Taghiyev's much younger wife (Taghiyev was approximately 73 at the time of the incident, while his wife, Sona khanum, was 30) – a charge which Behbudov avoided mentioning in his official complaint, but which he would deny in court. Taghiyev's testimony assigns a key role in the incident to his nephews, Mammad Rza and Mammad Baghir, although Behbudov claimed that Mammad Baghir was not present and was not involved in the beating. This account also moves the scene of the confrontation from the bedroom to the state room.

"Haji Zeynal Abdin Taghiyev testified that on May 16, at breakfast, during a conversation about Behbudov, his wife [Sona khanum] told him: "Your Behbudov is a scoundrel, dismiss him." She explained that Behbudov had recently begun to flirt with her. She had thought nothing of it, but Behbudov had recently grabbed her by the hand and tried to kiss her, and she had pushed him away and thrown him out. [Taghiyev] was shocked by this and asked his wife to invite [Leyli] Behbudova to come at 3 o'clock, while he himself ordered Eynulla [his servant] to summon Lutfali bey Behbudov from the office. He calmly told the latter that he should report to him on business at 3 o'clock. Meanwhile, he arranged to invite some close associates to come at 3 o'clock, while others, such as Prince Mansur, he called on the telephone himself. The invitees came to see him in his study and he directed them to the state room. Behbudov was the last to arrive. He led him into the state room; Prince Mansur, Sadig Taghiyev, Mammad Rza

and Mammad Baghir Taghiyev, Mammadbeyov, Jafarov, and Hasanov were there. He told the gathering about Behbudov's actions. When the latter began to deny his guilt, Taghiyev told him that [Sona khanum] would expose him in the presence of his wife. Behbudov asked Taghiyev not to bring his wife in, but Taghiyev did not fulfill his request and invited [Sona khanum] and [Leyli] Behbudova into the state room. Upon learning that Behbudov had denied everything, [Sona khanum] called him a liar and told everyone the same thing that she had told [Taghiyev] at breakfast. Upon hearing this, [Leyli] Behbudova grabbed her head and began sobbing. Taghiyev told her at once that he was throwing her husband out for his deceit, stamped his foot and ordered Behbudov to get out. Behbudov left [the state room], and both of [Taghiyev's] nephews, Mammad Rza and Mammad Baghir Taghiyev, followed him out. Taghiyev began to complain again about Behbudov to those present, when shouting and commotion were heard from the landing of the stairway. They all rushed out of the state room [to investigate] the noise and saw both of Taghiyev's nephews beating Behbudov. He ordered [them] to stop this disgraceful behavior, and Hasanov even went down and dragged Mammad Rza and Mammad Baghir off of Behbudov."<sup>[13]</sup>

We will probably never be able to convincingly determine exactly what happened that day at Taghiyev's home. In the absence of significant physical evidence, the trial hinged almost exclusively on witness testimony. The situation is further complicated by the fact that virtually all the witnesses were related to either the plaintiff or the defendant through social, familial, or business ties. One thing that seems clear, however, is that both sides are guilty of distorting the truth in their own favor. For the purposes of this article, I will point out just one instance of apparent dishonesty from each side.

Although Behbudov was certainly beaten, he seems to be guilty of exaggerating the intensity of the violence. The day after

the incident, Behbudov invited a group of friends and trusted advisors to his home to discuss with them how he should respond to the incident. Among this group there were two doctors, Khosrov bey Sultanov and Bahram bey Akhundov (both of them are well-known figures from Azerbaijan's history—Akhundov would later serve in the parliament of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, while Sultanov became the Minister of Defense in 1918 and the Governor General of Karabakh and Zangezur in 1919). They examined Behbudov and recorded the following injuries: a black eye, a cut on the chin, a cut on the cheek, a few bruises on the torso, and ring-shaped bruises around each arm just above the elbow.<sup>[14]</sup> If Behbudov had been beaten as mercilessly as he claimed for an entire hour by six men, it would seem that his injuries should have been more serious. Several witnesses who saw Behbudov in the days following the incident testified that they didn't notice any signs of injury. It seems equally unlikely that Behbudov could have disguised his injuries simply by powdering his face, as he asserted.<sup>[15]</sup>

Taghiyev's side, however, is also guilty of various distortions of the truth, and at the very least it seems likely that the confrontation with Behbudov was not the gentlemanly conversation that they claimed. For example, Prince Mansur was caught in a rather obvious lie in court. In a written explanation of the incident that Prince Mansur submitted to the mayor of Baku, in whose service he was employed at the time, he stated that Taghiyev had spat on Behbudov. When asked to explain why he then denied the spitting incident in court, Mansur claimed that he had merely added that detail to his written explanation "for vividness." The courtroom burst into laughter.<sup>[16]</sup>

The trial was held in Baku on March 6-11, 1912, during the Novruz holidays. 74-year-old Taghiyev was convicted and sentenced to two and a half years in prison, while his six alleged accomplices were sentenced to two years each, and all

of them were stripped of any rights and privileges they enjoyed thanks to their ranks.<sup>[17]</sup> However, on January 10-12, 1913, their appeal was heard in Tbilisi.<sup>[18]</sup> The appellate court overturned the original ruling, and Taghiyev and the other six men were acquitted. Taghiyev himself never served any time in prison for the incident.

## **Honor, Shame, and Justice**

The Taghiyev affair tangentially involved a wide array of some of the most prominent historical figures of the period. For instance, among the people that Taghiyev apparently invited to his home on May 16 were two other well-known Muslim millionaires—63-year-old Agha Musa Naghiyev and 54-year-old Murtuza Mukhtarov. Naghiyev happened to be abroad at the time, and did not receive Taghiyev's invitation, but Mukhtarov was in Baku and actually spoke to Taghiyev on the telephone. He gave the following testimony during the pre-trial investigation, which was read out in court at the request of Taghiyev's defense team: "On May 16, Taghiyev asked me on the telephone to come to his home at three o'clock in the afternoon for a family council. I had business to attend to and told Taghiyev that I probably would not be able to come. Taghiyev replied that the matter was very important and that Musa Naghiyev (a Baku millionaire) had also been invited. I replied that if I could put my affairs in order I would come. I couldn't manage to go see Taghiyev. A few days later I learned about the tormenting of Behbudov in Taghiyev's home. I was deeply offended that Taghiyev had invited me to witness such a thing and stopped visiting Taghiyev's home. A month and a half later, I met with Taghiyev in the countryside, and when I expressed bewilderment about the beating of Behbudov and my invitation to it, he replied that if I had come to his home that day along with Musa Naghiyev, then his nephews Baghir and Mammad Rza would not have dared to take revenge on Behbudov."<sup>[19]</sup>

In the public imagination, Mukhtarov is remembered as a man of great physical strength and bravado. According to legend, he once confronted the fearsome Chechen *abrek*<sup>[20]</sup> Zelimkhan, and on another occasion he is said to have mercilessly beaten a *gochu* (Az. “bandit”) who had come to him to collect “protection money.” In this testimony, however, Mukhtarov claims to have been offended by an invitation merely to be present at the beating of Behbudov, an accused adulterer. It is impossible to know whether or not Mukhtarov was expressing his true sentiments here, but his professed disdain for violence was clearly both the legally appropriate and the socially acceptable attitude to express. Despite the prevalence of violent encounters in the Caucasus at the time, including among elites, violence was almost universally condemned in public statements made about the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair.

Behbudov, however, always maintained that it was not the use of violence *per se* which was most remarkable about the attack. At the trial, after describing the physical injuries he had observed on Behbudov’s body, the witness for the prosecution, Dr. Khosrov bey Sultanov, told the court that Behbudov’s “moral sufferings drew more attention to themselves than the physical ones.”<sup>[21]</sup> Behbudov himself testified as follows: “I was stunned by this attack on me. It didn’t surprise me that I was beaten, after all I live in the Caucasus, where the customs are savage. I was struck by the fact that I was beaten in the home of Taghiyev, a man respected by all, who had achieved the highest honors and was favored by the government. If the vault of heaven had opened I would have been less astounded than by the fact of this savage reprisal in Taghiyev’s home.”<sup>[22]</sup>

The crucial role that rank and social position played in the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair is reiterated again and again in court testimony and the press. The editors of *Baku* also stressed Taghiyev’s social position as an important factor in the affair, arguing that it made the crime more grave than if



it had been committed by someone of a lower station in life. "The significance of this fact is especially compounded by the fact that Mr. Taghiyev is a leading Muslim who has received the high rank of an Active State Councillor and the title of Honorary Justice of the Peace precisely for his cultural public service. The beating of a defenseless and unarmed person in the home of such an individual, even if 'outside the state room, on the landing", even if by only 'two [attackers]', should be particularly loudly and forcefully called an act of outrageous willfulness and gross violence against an individual..."<sup>[23]</sup>

If Taghiyev's social position played a major role in the affair, Behbudov's own social position was perhaps equally important. We have already seen that Behbudov's social circle included people like Alimardan bey Topchubashov, Bahram bey Akhundov, Khosrov bey Sultanov, and Taghiyev himself. Unlike Taghiyev, Behbudov came from a prominent family of *beys*, whose privileges as Muslim nobility were recognized in Russian law. He had received a degree in engineering from a prestigious educational institution in the imperial capital, St. Petersburg. In 1911, when the incident occurred, Behbudov held the rank of Collegiate Assessor in the Russian table of ranks, and in 1907 he had been awarded the state honor, the Order of St. Stanislaus of the 3rd class.<sup>[24]</sup> As noted above, it was only a few days before the beating that Behbudov had had a private audience in Tbilisi with the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov. He had of course been representing Taghiyev's interests, but it was a role that he was uniquely suited to play thanks to his background and rank.

In a series of articles about the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair written for *Baku*, the journalist Rahim bey Malikov put particular emphasis on Behbudov's education. Malikov himself was a prominent member of the Muslim intelligentsia. He was born in 1886 in the provincial town of Zardab to Mehrali bey Malikov, a translator at the Office of the Management of State

Properties in Baku. His father died when he was seven, and Rahim bey was raised by his uncle, the celebrated writer, publisher, and reformer, Hasan bey Zardabi. Later, as a student at Kazan University in Tatarstan, Melikov became the correspondent there for the famous satirical journal, *Molla Nasreddin*, signing his articles with the pseudonym “Baygush” (“Owl”).<sup>[25]</sup>

In his writings about the Taghiyev-Behbudov incident, Malikov repeatedly stressed Behbudov’s status as an educated member of society, insisting that the use of violence is unacceptable particularly when directed against someone from the educated class. For example, on June 25, 1911, Malikov condemned Behbudov’s alleged attackers in the following terms: “Before them, with his hands tied, lay a man who had received a higher education and had an academic badge.”<sup>[26]</sup> Before the six ‘witnesses’ of the shameful act, abuse was inflicted on an educated man, in relation to whom other methods of influence could be applied, such as arbitration, ‘the court of the intelligentsia,’ etc. ... Even if the actions of one educated man or another deserve total condemnation, who can give [anyone] the right to such a violent reprisal against them?”<sup>[27]</sup>

Note that Malikov condemns the attack even though he assumes that Behbudov is indeed guilty of improper relations with Taghiyev’s wife. Malikov explicitly states that he is defending Behbudov on principle, while simultaneously condemning Behbudov’s own behavior and even hinting that he has additional, unrelated reasons for questioning Behbudov’s character. “I had no intention of defending Behbudov either, because Mr. Behbudov is for me no more and no less than a subject for the question that I raised ... Mr. Behbudov is no friend or relation of mine, and we are acquainted only in passing ... After our first acquaintance at a memorial gathering of Muslim students (in 1905 or 1906, it seems) I had to make an unflattering report about him in the press.”<sup>[28]</sup>

If Malikov upheld the principle of non-violent conflict resolution (at least among the educated elite) regardless of the motivation or other circumstances, there were those who took an opposite view, arguing that context is the deciding factor in determining guilt. After the original 1912 trial ended in Taghiyev's conviction, the right-wing Russian newspaper, *Moskovskiye vedomosti*, published an editorial disapproving of violence in general, but stressing the need to consider extenuating circumstances, such as Behbudov's alleged pursual of Sona khanum, Taghiyev's social status, and the customs of the Caucasus. In the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, the editors suggest, these circumstances demand leniency or even total exoneration for Taghiyev. "Recounting Taghiyev's political services, do we wish to defend him in this clash with his beneficiary Behbudov? Of course not. But not all transgressions are created equal, and every case has its own unique circumstances, which our sense of justice will not allow us to ignore... We must know for certain how well-founded Taghiyev's conviction was of the insult inflicted on his family honor and dignity by Mr. Behbudov. There are circumstances in which people not only fight duels, but even commit murder, at the same time, however, receiving an enormous amount of leniency, and sometimes even total acquittal, in court. Taghiyev and his co-defendants... did not fight a duel and did not kill in an ambush, which is so easy to do in the Caucasus. They publicly disgraced Behbudov, beating him in a way that the court considered torture, but the defense attorneys affirmed to be a fight. Of course there is nothing good in any of this, to say the least, and some crime was clearly committed. But one must not forget the customs of the Caucasus in general, and the Mohammedans in particular, and one must not forget that Taghiyev, who is an equal of the educated Behbudov according to Russian law, is something much more exalted, almost sacred, for the Muslims of Baku." <sup>[29]</sup>

There were several instances in the court testimony and press

polemics in which appeals were made specifically to Muslim traditions, or *adat*. One of those instances concerned the scene of the crime—Taghiyev’s home. In a letter to the newspaper *Baku* published on June 22, 1911, Sadig Taghiyev, Prince Mansur, Mammadbeyov, Hasanov, and Jafarov publicly denied Behbudov’s allegations, which had recently appeared in *Russkoye slovo*. Among other arguments used to cast doubt on Behbudov’s version of events, the five men wrote that Behbudov’s claim that the attack had occurred in Taghiyev’s bedroom was too far-fetched to be believable, because it contradicted Muslim customs. “Claiming that he was ushered into the bedroom, Mr. Behbudov, as a Muslim, should have known that a Muslim alcove is a place inaccessible to the eyes of a stranger. There are twenty or thirty rooms in Taghiyev’s apartment, and if he had to choose a place to deal with Behbudov, then why would he need the bedroom, and not some other room...”<sup>[30]</sup>

In his response, also published by *Baku*, Behbudov rejects his opponents argument and makes his own counter-appeal to Muslim tradition. “In their ‘explanation,’ they say that, apart from the state room, I was never in any other rooms, and that the Muslim alcove is a place inaccessible to the eyes of strangers. That is not true either. It was under the pretext of a renovation that I was led into the bedroom and it is not my fault if these gentlemen turned the bedroom, inaccessible to the eyes of others, into a place for an ambush. Let them recall with what cowardly haste they wiped up my blood which they had shed on the floor of that same bedroom. Furthermore, if Muslim *adat* has any meaning in their eyes, then they should know that, according to that same *adat*, in his home a Muslim cannot lay a finger even on the murderer of his own father. But then how can one explain the attack on me, which they themselves admit, in Taghiyev’s home by his nephews?”<sup>[31]</sup>

After the incident, according to the testimony of Behbudov and other witnesses for the prosecution, Behbudov began a month-

long process of consultation with various friends, family, and other advisors, to devise a strategy for restoring his besmirched honor. Behbudov's wife, Leyli, insisted that he lodge an official complaint.<sup>[32]</sup> Several of his friends, however, argued that this would be inappropriate for various reasons. Some of Behbudov's circle argued that an official complaint would be an injustice against Taghiyev himself, even though they all claimed to believe that Taghiyev had indeed orchestrated the attack. This position was expressed in court by Behbudov's friend, Behbud agha Javanshir. Like Behbudov, Javanshir was a member of the intelligentsia from Western Azerbaijan with a degree in engineering. In 1918, he would go on to become the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. In court, Javanshir testified: "When Behbudov returned [from Shusha],<sup>[33]</sup> I learned of his firm decision to initiate a legal process. I told him that for Mr. Taghiyev to sit in the dock would be a greater shame than the one that he, Behbudov, had suffered... From the day I was born, I've been told about Mr. Taghiyev's good deeds, and that was ingrained in me. Personally, I'm not dependent on Mr. Taghiyev, but I'm not unmoved by all his charitable works, especially the material support he provides to students."<sup>[34]</sup>

Admittedly, this hesitancy to lodge an official complaint may also have been due to fear of reprisal from Taghiyev's supporters. In some of the most colorful testimony of the entire trial, Javanshir stated that he had reason to fear for his life.

**Javanshir:** "Mammad Hasan Hajinski,<sup>[35]</sup> a member of the city council, let me know that a response was being prepared against those encouraging Behbudov to initiate a legal process. At that point, I wanted to appeal to the mayor with a request to protect me from attack. The whole Behbudov story was tied to regionalism. A clash started between the Baku camp and the Shusha camp."

**Judge:** “Who was it that inspired this fear in you?”

**Javanshir:** “Everyone and no one. Individually each person denied it, saying that everyone [else] was against us. Many openly stopped bowing. And you can’t take chances here: 50 rubles and a hired killer will finish you off.”

**Judge:** “And so you are affirming that in Baku people are killed for 50 rubles?”

**Javanshir:** “I don’t know the rate, but I’m aware of quite a few instances of murder by hired killers...”

**Makalinsky (defense attorney):** “Did you go about armed?”

**Javanshir:** “Yes, I feared excesses.”

**Makalinsky (defense attorney):** “What kind?”

**Javanshir:** “Don’t you know what kind? After all, you live in Baku!” [\[36\]](#)

Despite the apparent danger of reprisal, Behbudov never stopped looking for a commensurate response to the incident that would both meet the approval of his circle and restore his honor in the public’s eyes. One of the people that Behbudov consulted was yet another famous figure from Azeri history, Fatali Khan Khoyski, who appeared as a witness at the trial. Khan Khoyski was at this time a former member of the Russian State Duma, and would go on to become the first Prime Minister of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in 1918. In the days following the incident, Behbudov called Khan Khoyski on the telephone and invited him to his (Behbudov’s) apartment, but, unfortunately for Behbudov, Khan Khoyski was unable to suggest any solution to his dilemma. “I considered dueling impractical for rehabilitating [Behbudov’s] honor in this case, since it would be ridiculous to consider a duel with the elderly Taghiyev. I also considered a trial impractical, since it would widely publicize family secrets.” [\[37\]](#)



Khan Khoyski was not the only one of Behbudov's advisors who brought up the possibility of a duel. Behbud agha Javanshir testified that he recommended challenging the attackers (Javanshir did not specify which ones) to a duel as the best course of action, and Behbudov promised to consider it.<sup>[38]</sup> A duel is another form of violent retribution, but a particular kind of strictly regimented, ritualized violence that was still widely practiced and condoned among the upper classes in Europe and the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. I am unaware, however, of duels between Muslims in the Caucasus, and in this case Behbudov never took the step of "demanding satisfaction" from Taghiyev or any of the other alleged attackers.

The issue of the Taghiyevs' "family secrets," which Khan Khoyski identified in his testimony, was brought up repeatedly in Behbudov's consultations. Several of his advisors argued that it was impossible to lodge an official complaint, because in making the incident public, Behbudov would consequently bring attention to the alleged reason for the attack, i. e. Behbudov's alleged advances toward Sona khanum. This would inevitably call into question Sona khanum's own honor in the public mind. Behbudov himself testified that this was his primary reason for waiting for over a month to lodge his complaint: "I was stopped by the thought that the affair involved the honor of a Muslim woman."<sup>[39]</sup>



### Panel 1:

Mother: My daughter, which one would you like to marry?

Daughter: I consent to marry Haji.

### Panel 2:

Oh daughter, no one is at fault but you yourself. You wanted your husband to be rich, and for him to give you freedom, and for him to give you money, and to wear nice clothes to impress the young men. Now sit at home like a prisoner and don't blame

anyone.

**(Molla Nasreddin, August 11, 1911, № 29)**

Behbudov testified in court that this dilemma was ultimately resolved for him by his alleged attackers themselves. As *Kaspiy* reported, “according to Behbudov, at the end of May he learned that the prosecutor of the Baku district court had launched an investigation into the beating he, Behbudov, had received in Taghiyev’s home, and that the participants in the reprisal against him had begun to spread various rumors with the addition of details that had never actually occurred. At that point he decided that, since the case had been publicized and the perpetrators had not spared themselves, he was entitled to file a complaint.”<sup>[40]</sup>

In an article by Rahim bey Malikov, there is an intriguing if very vague reference to the public reaction to the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, specifically in regard to the issue of Muslim women’s honor. In response to a letter by one of Taghiyev’s defenders, the writer and publisher Abdulkhalg Akhundov, Malikov made several criticisms of Taghiyev’s role and influence in Muslim society. Specifically, he recalls an editorial that Taghiyev published in his newspaper, *Taza hayat*, under his own name, in which he apparently argued in favor of the veil for Muslim women. “Does Mr. Akhundov remember Mr. Taghiyev’s address three years ago in his own newspaper, *Taza hayat*, on women’s issues? What a reversal that “new contributor” made in the minds of Muslims then with his call not to part with the veil, serving to defend a woman’s honor.”

Malikov then claims that the incident in Taghiyev’s home had an impact on public attitudes toward “family honor,” resulting in the resurgence in popularity of Taghiyev’s own arguments in favor of the veil. “What could have convinced Mr. Taghiyev of the depravity of European women, I will leave it to Mr. Akhundov to judge. Now before two months have passed since the

[Taghiyev-Behbudov] incident, we hear among the general population the same calls for the cloistering of Muslim women. This is not my imagination, Mr. Akhundov! Stop by the Asian part of the city, the Tatar slums, and you will hear these reproaches aimed at Muslim women who lead an open lifestyle...”<sup>[41]</sup>

Taghiyev was celebrated in his day for his philanthropy, particularly for opening and funding the first school for Muslim girls in Baku.<sup>[42]</sup> It goes without saying that Malikov’s criticism cannot erase the contribution that Taghiyev made to women’s education, but it could serve as the starting point for further research into Taghiyev’s influence on gender issues in the Caucasus, which may be more complex than it is usually presented.

### **Taghiyev and the Intelligentsia**

In June 1911, the newspaper *Bakinets* published an article criticizing *Baku*’s coverage of the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair written by Dr. Gara bey Garabeyov. Educated at Dorpat University (now the University of Tartu in Estonia) on a Taghiyev scholarship, Garabeyov returned to Baku after graduating in 1899. Upon his return, he began practicing medicine and also became well-known as a journalist. Later he would serve as a member of the parliament of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic.

Recalling earlier incidents of physical assault that *Baku* had failed to write about, Garabeyov questioned the newspaper’s sincerity in its criticism of Taghiyev and his alleged accomplices, who had yet to be convicted of anything and whose trial would not begin for another nine months. “If it (the newspaper *Baku*)... is so sensitive to any outrageous instance of violence against someone’s person, and if it takes so close to heart the interests and improvement of Muslim life, then why wasn’t it outraged when Israfil Hajiyev beat the very same Behbudov three years ago at a meeting of steamship owners? Or

why didn't it utter a single word of protest when the most prominent Muslim public figure and political writer, Ahmet bey Agayev [Ağaoğlu], was beaten at the club in front of everyone, and was forced because of this to give up everything and leave for Turkey?... Were all these incidents really undeserving of any attention, when the still unconfirmed beating of Behbudov in Taghiyev's home has managed to so disturb the newspaper's peace of mind and provoke premature and so far unfounded moans of protest?"<sup>[43]</sup>

For the purposes of this article, I will not be investigating Garabeyov's arguments against *Baku*, or the defense that the editors of *Baku* presented in a series of editorials. Rather, I would like to briefly examine the incidents that Garabeyov has listed here as parallels of the Taghiyev-Behbudov incident. In particular, as will be shown, it appears that Taghiyev may have been involved in the attack on Ahmet Ağaoğlu as well, and this incident proves particularly revealing in regard to Taghiyev's relationship with the Muslim intelligentsia of his day.

The physical altercation between Israfil Hajiyev and Behbudov was also referenced by Sadig Taghiyev, Prince Mansur, Mammadbeyov, Hasanov, and Jafarov in their letter to *Baku* which was quoted above. Before responding to Behbudov's specific accusations, Sadig Taghiyev et al. referenced the incident involving Hajiyev in order to call into question Behbudov's character. "Regarding the moral character of the engineer Behbudov, we have our own definite opinion. Shortly before the event in Taghiyev's home, Behbudov was assaulted publicly at a meeting of steamship owners and did not respond at all to that insult."<sup>[44]</sup> In other words, Sadig Taghiyev et al. consider it dishonorable to fail to respond to physical violence in kind, which they accuse Behbudov of having done.

In Behbudov's response, he gives a very brief account of the event, claiming that it was not of the same gravity as the



incident at Taghiyev's home, and that it was ultimately resolved in a way that did neither Behbudov nor Hajiyeve any dishonor. "The authors of the 'explanation,' wishing to discredit me in the eyes of the public, point to an assault on me at a meeting of steamship owners. That incident took place in the office of the union not shortly before the incident of May 16, as the authors of the 'explanation' claim, but three years ago, and not at the meeting, but after it. It manifested itself not in a unilateral offense, but in a mutual one, and it was settled after a mutual explanation and apology through the intercession of people who have an entirely proper opinion of honor."

In their response to Dr. Garabeyov, the editors of *Baku* admit to being totally unaware of this prior incident involving Behbudov, which suggests that we are unlikely to find any fuller account of it in press reports.<sup>[45]</sup> However, if nothing else, this story suggests that, despite the condemnations of violence we have heard from virtually everyone who participated in or commented on the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, various forms of physical violence were nevertheless known to occur in Baku even among the nobility, the intelligentsia, and people of rank. Indeed, Rahim bey Malikov claimed that such incidents were characteristic of Muslim society in the Caucasus generally. "The very fact of a savage reprisal against someone's person unfolds before us one of those many scenes that accompany almost all of our public and cultural affairs and which, playing out behind the scenes of our public life, rarely end up in the pages of the newspapers. A violent reprisal at a meeting of a cultural and educational (!) society, a scuffle in a club, fights in editorial offices and other public places—this is the path which Muslim public life has taken. The Taghiyev-Behbudov incident, however, even though it concerned a family matter, is no exception."<sup>[46]</sup>

It is the incident involving Ahmet Ağaoğlu, however, that proves to be the most revealing. Ağaoğlu was one of the most



prominent figures in Muslim cultural life in the Caucasus in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Educated in Paris, Ağaoğlu was a prolific writer and journalist. He served in the Baku City Duma and, in the midst of the ethnic violence between Armenians and Muslims in 1905, he created the first Muslim political organization in the Caucasus, the revolutionary *Difai*. His career in Baku was cut short, however, by his emigration to Turkey in 1908, where he would become a prominent figure in the political life of the early Turkish Republic.

Explaining why they never wrote about the public beating of Ahmet Ağaoğlu, the editors of *Baku* made the following statement: "We only learned of the beating of one of the most talented Muslim writers, A. Agayev [Ağaoğlu], when the victim himself was already on his way to Constantinople. Moreover, if A. Agayev himself, by profession a political commentator, and one with a fiery temperament, did not think it necessary to say even a word about that incident, even far away and outside of 'Baku conditions,' then we must assume that there was nothing worthy of public attention in his incident."<sup>[47]</sup>

Rahim bey Malikov, on the other hand, clearly did believe that the beating of Ağaoğlu was worthy of comment in the press. Two years before the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair began, Malikov had brought up the incident in a polemical article criticizing the satirical journal *Zanbur*'s editorial position on, among other things, Muslim regionalism.<sup>[48]</sup> Malikov wrote: "The small family of educated Muslims has long been corroded by feuds and intrigues. Recently, a division has been created among intellectuals in Baku: 'Bakuvians' and 'newcomers.' Sordid people with squalid souls, seeking fame in the arena of public work and unable to tolerate the fruits reaped by others, have used every means to sling mud at those intellectuals whose work is a nuisance to them. And now *Zanbur*, with its latest clumsy caricatures and articles, has joined those gentlemen's camp."

Malikov then names three intellectuals from Western Azerbaijan who had recently been caricatured by *Zanbur*: the abovementioned Dr. Garabeyov, the famous composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov, and Ahmet Ağaoğlu. About the latter, Malikov wrote: "The campaign against Ahmet bey was launched long ago and has successfully driven him out of Baku. Ahmet bey was brazenly beaten on the premises of a public institution, and the management of *Zanbur* merely scoffed then and did not utter a single word... no, not in defense of Agayev (that would be too much from the 'Zanburists'), but against the beating of a person, against the use of brute physical force against him. Now Agayev moves in Young Turk circles and is everywhere received with respect and honor. Ahmet bey Agayev's laurels give no peace to the management of *Zanbur*."

Finally, in an addendum, Malikov comments on the latest issue of *Zanbur* (August 28, 1909), published after his article had been written. "If we still had any doubts about the decency of *Zanbur* prior to this issue, they have now vanished. In the lead article, the editorial staff clearly confess to belonging to the party with the motto 'down with the Karabakhi [intellectuals] and other newcomers.'"

In 1911, following the Taghiyev-Behbudov incident, Malikov brought up Ağaoğlu's beating again, but this time in a new context—in an article criticizing Haji Taghiyev's role and influence in Muslim society. This is the only source I have found that connects Taghiyev to the campaign against Ağaoğlu and his subsequent emigration, but Malikov writes about Taghiyev's involvement as if it were common knowledge. His article provides some evidence indicating that this was indeed the case.

In an article published on July 21, 1911 in *Baku*,<sup>[49]</sup> Malikov gave his own response to Dr. Garabeyov's already cited defense of Taghiyev. Malikov argues that Taghiyev's wealth and influence have given him an inordinate amount of power over Muslim society, and that in effect, despite Taghiyev's well-

known philanthropy, his influence has tended to have a suffocating effect on social and cultural life. "Is it really possible, under the present conditions of Muslim life, to have any courts, societies, or organizations, which are not dominated by the figure of Mr. Taghiyev? Is there any resolution on a particular social issue that Mr. Taghiyev himself has not pushed through personally by the power of his capital and influence? Has there ever been any gathering of Muslims in which Mr. Taghiyev participated that was held without the latter's usual manner of addressing an educated person who disagreed with his opinion, demanding 'kəs səsüvi!' ('shut up!')? Perhaps Dr. Garabeyov will demand facts from me? If you please: 1) the clash with Mr. Narimanov at the teacher's congress, 2) the clash with Mr. Agayev at the meeting of Muslims regarding Gasprinsky's anniversary celebrations..."

Later in the same article, Malikov returns to the Ağaoğlu incident and gives an account of his vain attempts to publish a statement of support for Ağaoğlu in the local press in Baku. The unwillingness of the Muslim intelligentsia to express any support for Ağaoğlu, however, is blamed by Malikov once again on Taghiyev's overwhelming influence. "I was indignant and remain indignant still at the disgraceful beating and expulsion from Baku of Ahmet bey Agayev and other cases of violence against the intelligentsia. But when Agayev was beaten, you could not find so many intellectuals in society (with very few exceptions) or the press who expressed sympathy for the *victim* as there are now expressing their condolences for Taghiyev in the Taghiyev-Behbudov incident. With a few friends, the author of these lines made the rounds of the '*intelligentsia*' and the youth in vain, inviting them to express their sympathy for Mr. Agayev in print. In vain we knocked at the door of the editorial office of a '*Muslim newspaper*' with a little article, but alas! Almost all doors closed before us. It turned out that, for certain individuals, the figure of Mr. Taghiyev stood incomparably higher than that

of Ağayev, who has given his best efforts and the best years of his life to serve the people.”

Ağaoğlu and Taghiyev had a long and complicated relationship. In his biography of Ağaoğlu, published in 2018, historian Aydın Balayev recounted an incident in which one of Ağaoğlu’s writings, a sort of Platonic dialogue criticizing Shia clerics called *İslam, Axund və Hatifülqeyb*, put his life in danger. According to Balayev, Taghiyev was instrumental in neutralizing the threat to Ağaoğlu’s safety. “Ağaoğlu’s public accusation of the Shiite clergy in perverting the essence of Islam and deliberately inciting hostility between Shiites and Sunnis provoked outrage and fury on the opposing side. They succeeded in having a fatwa published in which Ahmet bey was cursed and sentenced to death. At the same time, they declared his marriage annulled... It is no accident that for six months, according to his son Samet Ağaoğlu, Ahmet bey was forced to shut himself up in his home, which was guarded by the police for the duration. Only the intervention of H. Z. Taghiyev saved Ahmet bey from more serious consequences.”<sup>[50]</sup>

In 1905, Ağaoğlu, along with Alimardan bey Topchubashov and Ali bey Huseynzadeh, founded the newspaper *Hayat* with the financial support of Taghiyev. However, as noted by historians Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, by the end of that same year Ağaoğlu had already left the paper, explicitly because of Taghiyev’s involvement. “At the end of 1905, following frictions between Alimardan bey Topchubashov and Ahmet bey Ağaoğlu, the latter accusing [*Hayat*’s] financial backer Taghiyev of interfering in the editorial policy of the newspaper, Ahmet bey left the paper which nevertheless continued with Huseynzadeh as editor but, losing its influence, became unprofitable and disappeared in the autumn of 1906.”<sup>[51]</sup>

In a letter to Huseynzadeh, Ağaoğlu explained his conflict with Taghiyev at *Hayat*, expressing frustration with what he

felt was Taghiyev's interference and speaking of the duty of the intelligentsia to maintain independence of thought. The letter was one of only two that Ağaoğlu wrote to Huseynzadeh in French, and historian Yılmaz Özkaya hypothesizes that French was chosen to limit the possible readership of the letter, since Ağaoğlu's characterization of Taghiyev was rather unforgiving. "The whole problem is the gap between capital and sense or, in other words, between the vulgar person, who wants to achieve power with his money, and the capable and talented person, who wants to be free and independent. We must be free and independent! We cannot turn a blind eye when someone who was only yesterday engaged in trade, and who today has the soul of a banker, interferes in such a grandiose and sacred movement, requiring sense and prudence. We must not become for Muslims an example of intelligence being crushed by brute force; on the contrary, we must set an example showing that independence and freedom prevail even in hardship. This is only possible if we act together, in solidarity, and support each other. We have already won our first victory; I am sure we will win more if we can stand firm. Tomorrow the vulgar man will be here. We will have a fierce debate in front of Haji because I don't want that man to interfere in anything. At first, Haji opposed me but gave up when he saw that I was determined."<sup>[52]</sup>

As noted above, Ağaoğlu himself never wrote about the attack in Baku. In fact, in his memoirs, he cited a totally different reason for his emigration to Turkey, which was quoted by historian Holly Shissler in her biography of Ağaoğlu. "I was among those who were zealously followed. Matters came to such a point that not only my own peace of mind and repose, but that of my family as well, began to be compromised. In 1908 a revolution had taken place in Turkey; some individuals I knew had risen to its head. At the same time Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, who had been appointed Viceroy of the Caucasus, had decided to seize and banish me no matter what. As soon as I learned this I decided to escape and I fled to Istanbul

towards the close of 1908.”<sup>[53]</sup>

At first glance, this account given by Ağaoğlu himself would seem to disprove the version put forth by Malikov and the other journalists, i. e. that the attack on Ağaoğlu in 1908 was the deciding factor forcing him to emigrate. There are, however, a number of inaccuracies in Ağaoğlu's memoirs, including quite significant ones. He claimed, for example, to have “met and hosted the famous Iranian Islamist Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani while living in Paris,” but as Holly Shissler pointed out, “there is good evidence to show that in fact this could not have been so, since Afghani was not in France at this time.”<sup>[54]</sup> Ağaoğlu even once wrote about a personal audience he had supposedly been granted with Tsar Nicholas II. Historian F. R. Jabbarov, however, has stated that the meeting never took place. “It is hard to say today why Ahmet bey included this episode in his biography. However, the facts show that A. Ağaoğlu did not have a personal meeting with Nicholas II... If the meeting between Nicholas II and Ağaoğlu had actually taken place, it could not have gone unnoticed by the contemporary press. Since there is no mention of it in the press, the veracity of this incident in Ağaoğlu's biography raises serious doubts.”<sup>[55]</sup>

The account of Ağaoğlu's emigration in the recent biography by Aydin Balayev seems to support Malikov's version of events, but, unfortunately, Balayev does not name Ağaoğlu's “enemies” or cite any sources for his information. According to Balayev, Ağaoğlu “made quite a number of influential enemies among his fellow countrymen... including obscurantists from among the Muslim clergy and self-satisfied but narrow-minded representatives of the wealthy sections of Azerbaijani society... In 1908, in the building of the Public Assembly of Baku, Ahmet bey was beaten by paid hirelings of his enemies... For Ahmet bey it was quite natural and even expected to face hostility towards his person from Armenians and Russian chauvinists... It's another matter when such villainy is carried



out against you by representatives of your native people..."<sup>[56]</sup>

Considering Ağaoğlu's impact on the political life of the Caucasus prior to his emigration and the prominent role he played in Turkey afterward, his move from Baku to Istanbul is of historical significance and worthy of further study. The details are still unclear, but based on the information above, we can sketch the outlines of a hypothesis that remains to be proven or disproven by subsequent research. There is clear evidence that Ağaoğlu's relationship with Taghiyev soured in 1905—Taghiyev was apparently unhappy with Ağaoğlu's editorial line at *Hayat*, while Ağaoğlu was offended by what he perceived as Taghiyev's interference. This conflict seems to have intensified, perhaps complicated by more general regional animosities, leading to the incident in which Ağaoğlu was beaten in public, possibly by people who were somehow acting in Taghiyev's interests or directly on his orders. Finally, this may have been the direct cause of Ağaoğlu's emigration to Turkey, as seems to have been accepted by many contemporaries, although it was probably one among several serious concerns, including the threat of state repression for his political activities.

If Taghiyev's involvement in the Ağaoğlu incident can be confirmed, it would seem to establish a pattern of behavior of resorting to physical violence to punish and shame opponents in ideological disputes, as in Ağaoğlu's case, as well as those who had committed some personal offense or insult against him, as in Behbudov's case. This sort of behavior fits well into the picture of contemporary Caucasian Muslim society painted by Rahim bey Malikov, Behbud agha Javanshir, and others, in which conflicts among elites often led to violence, including everything from minor scuffles at public meetings to murder by hired assassins.

### **Maklakov's Ethics**

The Russian press in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and even

further afield, followed the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair as closely as the local press in Baku. After all, the first newspaper to break the story was the St. Petersburg-based *Russkoye slovo*. As might be expected, however, Russian newspapers tailored their coverage to their own readership and their own political agenda, and the aspects of the scandal that they focused on were often distinct from those that drew the most attention from the Baku press.

One of the elements of the case particularly emphasized in Russia was the role played by Taghiyev's lead defense attorney, Vasily Maklakov. A member of the landed gentry, Maklakov was elected to the Russian State Duma from the liberal Constitutional Democratic (Cadet) Party. He was widely considered one of the most effective orators of the liberal wing of the legislature, a talent which made him a much sought after defense attorney as well.<sup>[57]</sup>

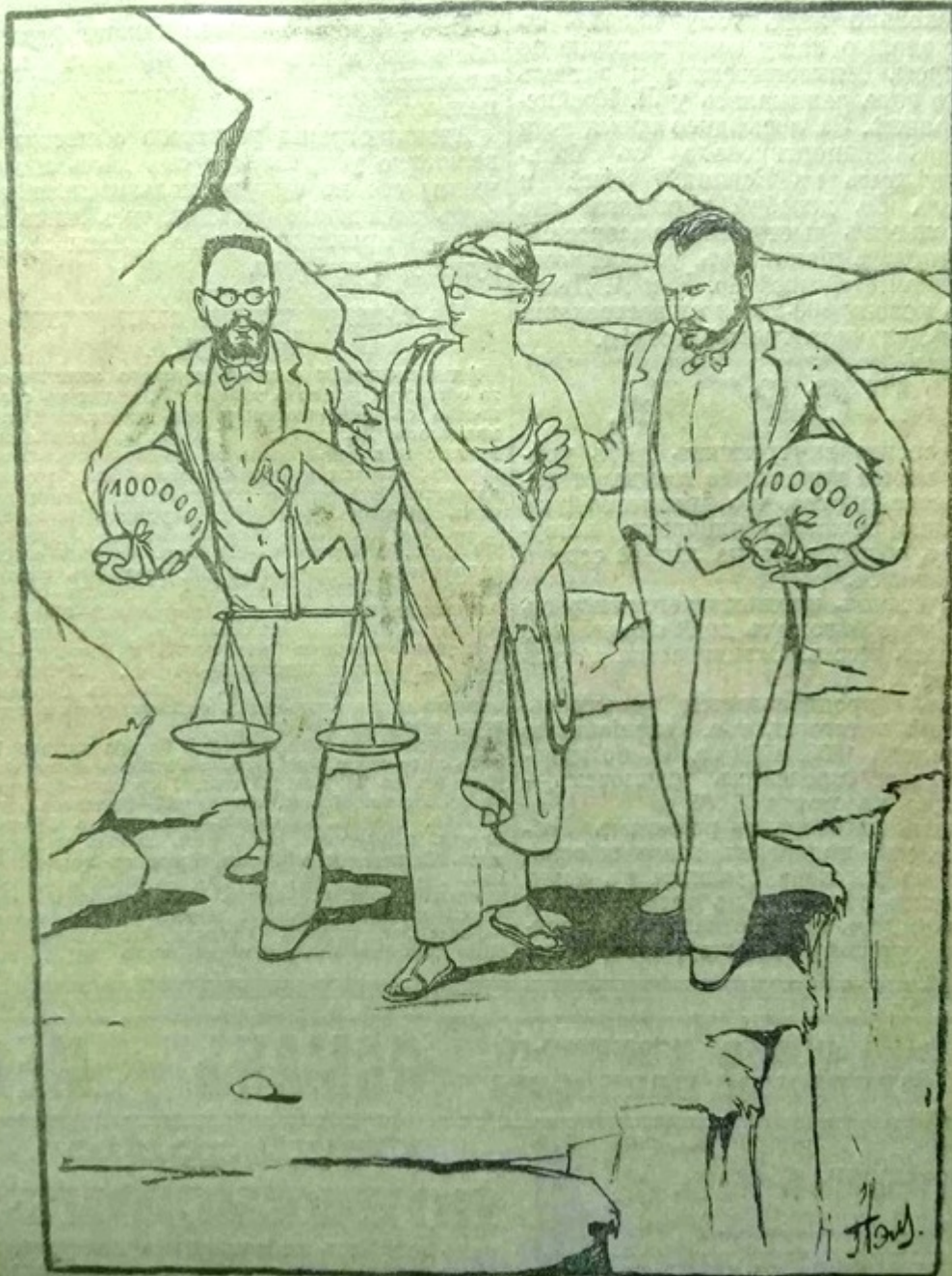
Just before leaving St. Petersburg for Baku, Maklakov made a speech in the Duma which is representative of his political views and his rhetoric. Having participated in student demonstrations in the 1890s, Maklakov's speech of March 1, 1912, was a criticism of the Russian government's repression of political organizing among students and the autonomy of universities more broadly. As reported by the newspaper *Kavkaz*, the speech ended with a rousing finale: "In the name of what has all this been done? In the name of the prestige of power? But there are two types of power: one is the power of the vanquished side, whose trophies are measured by the amount of evil it does, the burned villages, the destroyed homes, the number of corpses; the other is the power not of the victor, but of the steward, a power that does not destroy, but creates (*applause on the left*)."<sup>[58]</sup>

Considering Maklakov's political stances, however, he was criticized heavily in the left and liberal press for taking on Taghiyev's defense. There were several reasons for the

criticism, one of which was the fact that on Taghiyev's legal team Maklakov would be working with another member of the Russian State Duma, Georgy Zamyslovsky. While Maklakov was a liberal, Zamyslovsky was one of his most prominent political enemies, representing the far right wing. An active member of the infamous Black Hundreds movement, Zamyslovsky once summarized his political views thus: "I put the national question at the heart of my program... I am an anti-Semite and an opponent of the autonomy of Poland and, in addition, I insist on the necessity of a vigorous struggle against revolution."<sup>[59]</sup>

It was almost universally assumed, probably correctly, that the only thing that could make these two men travel to Baku to defend Taghiyev together was the promise of an enormous fee. Maklakov was rumored to have received 100,000 rubles for his participation, a fortune at the time.<sup>[60]</sup> The liberal politician always denied that figure, but to my knowledge he never publicly disclosed the true sum. One of Maklakov's biographers, Nikolai Dedkov, has written: "Vasily Alekseyevich [Maklakov] never made a secret of the fact that one of his reasons for choosing a career in law was acute financial need and he never pretended to be a disinterested person, handling the defense in criminal trials out of altruistic impulses."<sup>[61]</sup>

Дѣло Тагіева.



Махлаковъ—Замысловскому: Есть гонорары въ Баку.

*Maklakov (right) to Zamyslovsky: 'There are fees in Baku.'*

**(Vecherneye vremya, March 12, 1912, № 91)**

Maklakov's fee became a common theme in criticism of his character, particularly from the left. Trotsky once referred in passing to Maklakov's "gift for wholesale and retail sincerity (at Taghiyev's prices)," <sup>[62]</sup> and in July 1912, Lenin made reference to Maklakov's earnings in an article

criticizing the corrupting influence of capital on the young Russian legislature: "When Maklakov was gobbling up Taghiyev's fees, didn't his position as a member of the Duma make it easier for him to receive such 'advantageous' cases?"<sup>[63]</sup>

Maklakov's payment, however, was not the only factor that caused the press to call his ethics into question. There were also those who saw a conflict of interests in Maklakov's simultaneous participation in the Taghiyev trial and another high-profile case that was known as the Dashnaktsutyun affair.

Over a period of several years, the Russian police had carried out mass arrests of Armenians accused of various acts of political terrorism as members of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, commonly known as Dashnaktsutyun (Arm. "The Federation"). The affair culminated in a trial in January-March 1912 in St. Petersburg (Taghiyev's trial occurred in March 1912 in Baku) which turned into a major embarrassment for the Russian state. An overwhelming majority of those arrested were never brought to trial, and of the 158 accused who were tried, 94 were acquitted and 13 more were convicted on minor charges and immediately released, having already served their sentences in pre-trial detention.<sup>[64]</sup> In his final report to the tsar before retiring from the position of Viceroy of the Caucasus, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov summarized the affair as follows: "Planned in poorly informed St. Petersburg against my recommendations, the grandiose trial of the Dashnaktsutyun Party, which was intended to prove the revolutionary character of an entire nation and began with the spectacular, simultaneous arrest of almost a thousand Armenians across the Caucasus, starting with prominent capitalists and public figures, has ended with a poof—with the Special Tribunal of the Senate sentencing a group of about thirty Armenians to different types of punishments, which, obviously, would have been achieved, as I proposed, with the usual prosecution of cases of this sort, rather than heaping them together into unmanageable trials."<sup>[65]</sup>



When Maklakov was hired by Taghiyev, he was also one of approximately 40 lawyers defending the 158 accused in the Dashnaktsutyun affair (the lead defense attorney was Alexander Kerensky, who would go on to lead the Provisional Government of Russia in July-October 1917). On March 10, 1912, Maklakov gave his closing speech in defense of Taghiyev in Baku, and he managed to rush back to St. Petersburg in time to give his final arguments in defense of the members of Dashnaktsutyun on March 14. This was first pointed out by a certain Ark. Parfenov in *Vecherneye vremya*, in an article written in the days after Taghiyev was convicted but before the Dashnaktsutyun case had been decided. "Maklakov is a defense attorney for the notorious dashnaktsutyuns [sic.], whose trial in St. Petersburg is now in its second month, it seems. It is clear why Maklakov took on this case: every political party, even a terrorist one, deserves the support of progressive legal professionals; Maklakov would betray his Cadet Party and ruin his political reputation if he refused to defend those destitute Armenians, sitting in court in the dock. *Defending the dashnaktsutyuns*, Maklakov left St. Petersburg for Baku. And so the question arises: is that right from a lawyer's perspective? Maklakov left the Dashnaktsutyun trial at the most critical moment, missing the days when the prosecutor's closing arguments were made and when the defense's arguments began. If we are not mistaken, Maklakov should deliver his arguments for the defense today or tomorrow. The question is, can he do it properly if he has not heard the prosecutor's summation? Is it good faith for a lawyer, who voluntarily undertook to defend destitute revolutionaries, to leave them to their fate only to go defend a millionaire? Is that compatible with legal ethics?"<sup>[66]</sup>

Parfenov directs his primary criticism of Maklakov at his professional ethics. In Parfenov's view, Maklakov has abandoned poor clients with whom he broadly shares some political convictions in order to make a large amount of money. At no point does Parfenov bring up Taghiyev's religion



or ethnicity. In an editorial published the following week, however, the right-wing *Moskovskiye vedomosti* responded to Parfenov's article, putting a new spin on the issue and situating the entire Taghiyev-Behbudov affair in the context of the ethnic conflict between Armenians and Muslims. Taghiyev is presented as a leader and protector of the Muslim community, as well as a patriot of the Russian Empire, who played a key role in preventing a revolution in the Caucasus and thereby earned the animosity of the left. "We do not deny, of course, that even impoverished Armenian expropriators should not be deprived in court of the defense which the left press would like to deprive Taghiyev of. But the thing is that the reason for the persecution of Taghiyev undoubtedly comes down to these *dashnaks*. Everyone knows that Taghiyev, now punished so harshly by the court, is not just a 'millionaire' or an 'arch-millionaire,' but also a man of position, a sort of patriarch of the Transcaucasian Mohammedans, their defender against revolutionaries and a ferocious enemy of the Armenian dashnaks. An advocate of order and an impeccable Russian patriot, Taghiyev has earned the burning hatred of the Armenian dashnaks and generally every sort of revolutionary bedeviling Russia, precisely because, as they have accused him, the Tatars got ahold of weapons with Taghiyev's aid and, thus standing on their feet, were able to undermine the Dashnaktsutyun revolution. The forgetful public, which can be driven in any direction by the screeching of the press, apparently does not remember anymore that the poor Armenian dashnaks—those 'impoverished revolutionaries'—were desperate expropriators and on threat of death levied a tribute for 'our cause' on the Armenians themselves, who were groaning under their yoke. The public, apparently, has already forgotten that the dashnaks had a properly organized army equipped with all kinds of weapons, which seized many areas of Transcaucasia and, among other things, deprived the Tatars of their lands and their freedom. And so Taghiyev, now crushed like a worm by a Russian court, was the man who stood in the way of the Armenian dashnaks and dealt a harsh blow to their revolution,

rendering a great service to his countrymen and to Russia. That is the reason for the hatred felt towards him by revolutionaries, both Armenian and Muslim, and, of course, the reason for his persecution in the revolutionary press..."<sup>[67]</sup>

There was at least one earlier attempt to present the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair in the context of ethnic conflict. Another right-wing Russian newspaper, *Zemshchina*, had published an article by a certain Oksanin, who mistakenly believed that Behbudov himself was an Armenian. The author may have been misled by Behbudov's surname, which is common among Armenians as well as Muslims. Oksanin wrote that the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair had been orchestrated by "Behbudov's compatriots and allies, the Armenians and the 'dashnaktsakans' [sic.], and all their left-wing stooges... They brought out weighty arguments about the stranglehold of the Mohammedans on the unfortunate Armenians. The affair attracted special attention and now the Armenians and the 'dashnaktsakans' are preparing to celebrate a new victory over a Mohammedan turned to ashes." *Baku* published an article mocking *Zemshchina*'s mistake, noting ironically: "But *Zemshchina* still has not lost faith in the triumph of truth, and hopes that at least this time the 'champions of revolution' will be put to shame..."<sup>[68]</sup>

## Conclusions

Despite this misguided attempt to turn the incident into an ethnic conflict, the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair is in fact a particularly striking instance of internal conflict within Caucasian Muslim society. Thanks to the trial and the press coverage, it is unusually well-documented, providing a unique window onto the personal and social schisms between Muslim elites. The affair occurred at a time of rapid change, when new classes of people had risen to the top of Azerbaijani society (oil millionaires, the intelligentsia) and there had appeared new battlefields in which conflicts could play out (Russian courts, the press itself). Hopefully, the discussion

above has demonstrated that research on the topic of such internal conflicts can make significant contributions to our understanding of the history of Azerbaijan.

First of all, these conflicts played important roles in the biographies of prominent figures in Azerbaijan's history. The example of Ahmet Ağaoğlu is an instance when such an episode took on true historical significance. Far more than a personal matter, his conflict with Taghiyev led to the demise of the influential newspaper *Hayat*. Even more crucially, it seems to have led to Ağaoğlu's emigration to Turkey, cutting short his political activities in the Caucasus and opening up a new career to him in Turkey, where he became a significant player in the creation of the Turkish Republic. The conflict even proves revealing in relation to Ağaoğlu's political philosophy. It was Taghiyev's influence over *Hayat* that provoked Ağaoğlu to pen the letter to Huseynzadeh in which he outlines his belief that it is the right and the duty of the intelligentsia to lead the political awakening of Muslim society, and that they must stand firm against outside influences such as capital.

Furthermore, if researchers continue to collect information about the internal conflicts in Muslim society, that data will allow us to develop a much more sophisticated sociological understanding of Azerbaijan's past. The newspaper reports about the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair provide a wealth of material for the sociological study of such topics as codes of honor, masculinity, and the resolution of personal conflicts among elites in Baku in the early 20th century, and the role that was played by factors such as social status, wealth, and regional identity.

As shown above, many of the participants, as well as observers, of the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair stated that the violence that occurred in Taghiyev's home on May 16, 1911, was not shocking in itself. According to their own testimony, the primary concerns of most of those involved were issues of

honor, shame, and status. Many claimed that Taghiyev's status and wealth exacerbated the severity of the crime, regardless of whether Taghiyev had organized the attack or whether it spontaneously occurred in his home. Others claimed that it was precisely Taghiyev's status and wealth that demanded leniency, even assuming Behbudov's worst accusations were true.

Following the incident, Behbudov began a month-long search for an appropriate response, not so much to the beating as to the attack on his honor. He consulted with numerous third parties looking for a way to restore his honor that was exactly commensurate to the damage that had been inflicted on it. He was also forced to take into account demands of honor that conflicted with his own need to erase his shame, particularly the need to consider Taghiyev's age, or the necessity of protecting the honor of a Muslim woman, i.e. Sona khanum. Along the way, we witness these complicated calculations as Behbudov considered such options as arbitration, a legal process, or even challenging Taghiyev to a duel. Taghiyev always maintained that the men with whom he confronted Behbudov were actually there as a family council, i. e. a group of third-party arbiters with whom Taghiyev hoped to resolve his conflict with Behbudov. Believing Taghiyev to be guilty of organizing the attack, Rahim bey Malikov decried violence as a means of conflict resolution and called precisely for referring conflicts to such third-party arbitration, one form of which he called "the court of the intelligentsia." At this point in the history of the Caucasus, specifically European forms of dispute resolution are also important options, such as lodging an official complaint in the Russian courts, or demanding "satisfaction" in a duel, an informal and illegal method of conflict resolution that was nevertheless socially acceptable among the European upper classes.

In the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, regionalism seemed to play a secondary, but nevertheless important, role. If we believe *Russkoye slovo's* correspondent in Baku, or the testimony of

Behbud agha Javanshir, public support for Taghiyev (from Baku) or Behbudov (from Karabakh) was split along regional lines. That regionalism was a significant factor more generally in relations between the intelligentsia and other elites is confirmed in the writings of Rahim bey Malikov.

## Postscript

To return for a moment, however, to the personal dimensions of the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, I will conclude with a comment on the repercussions of the incident in the lives of the two primary participants.

Taghiyev and his six alleged accomplices were convicted and sentenced on March 11, 1912. According to Behbudov's official record of service,<sup>[69]</sup> four days later, on March 15, he received a new state honor, the Order of St. Anna of the third class. Two months later, on May 28, he was promoted from the civil rank of Collegiate Assessor to Court Councillor. Behbudov had not been working since the incident and there is no indication of any other activity at this time in his record of service. We can only speculate as to why he received these honors, but it seems likely that they are related to Taghiyev's conviction and the swell of support for Behbudov in certain sections of the public.

The following entry in his record of service also invites speculation. On October 1, 1912, Behbudov was appointed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry as an engineer at the port in Archangelsk, 3,500 km from Baku! Although he studied in St. Petersburg, Behbudov had never before worked outside of the Caucasus. It is very tempting to suppose that, after Taghiyev's conviction, Behbudov left out of concerns for his own safety, although going to Arkhangelsk seems like a serious excess of caution. This question will have to remain open unless other sources comes to light.

On October 29, 1913, however, Behbudov returned to the

Caucasus, although not to Baku, but to Ganja (Yelizavetpol), with an appointment as a technician at the Construction Department of the Yelizavetpol Office of Provincial Administration. By that time, of course, Taghiyev had already been acquitted at his appeal in Tbilisi on January 10-12, 1913. Behbudov's name is later found in 1918 on the list of members of the Transcaucasian Sejm as part of the bloc including Musavat and independent democrats, alongside such figures as the abovementioned Tobchubashov and Khan Khoyski.<sup>[70]</sup>

After his acquittal on appeal, Taghiyev's previous status was restored and he continued to be one of the most influential men in the Caucasus. The Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, however, left its mark on Taghiyev's reputation in the public consciousness. In fact, a quarter of a century after the incident, it would be brought up again in Kurban Said's classic novel, *Ali and Nino*, published in Germany in 1937. There is a character in the novel called Seinal aga (Said's German spelling of "Zeynal agha") who is clearly a fictionalized version of Zeynalabdin Taghiyev. Introducing Seinal aga to readers, Said provides what reads more or less like a biographical sketch of Taghiyev. In particular, he describes, albeit vaguely and in sensationalized terms, an incident that is clearly a reference to the Taghiyev-Behbudov affair, depicting it as a tragic turning point in Seinal aga's life.

"Seinal Aga was a simple peasant from the village of Binijady near Baku. He owned a plot of dusty dry desert land, which he farmed until a little, everyday earthquake tore a cleft in his poor farm, and from this cleft rivers of oil gushed forth. From then on Seinal Aga had no need to be crafty or clever. He simply could not run away from his money. He spent it, generously and lavishly, but more and more money accumulated, and was a burden to him till it crushed him. He felt that sooner or later punishment was bound to follow all this good luck, and he lived his life waiting for this punishment like a



convict waiting for his execution. He built mosques, hospitals, jails. He made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and founded children's asylums. but fate takes no bribes. His eighteen-year-old wife, whom he had married at the age of seventy, dishonoured him. He avenged his honour as he should, cruelly and severely, and became a tired man. His family fell apart, one son left him, another brought unspeakable dishonour on him by committing the sin of suicide. Now he lived in the forty rooms of his palace in Baku, grey, sad and stooped."<sup>[71]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> *Формулярный список о службе Сверхштатного техника, Строительного Отделения Елизаветпольского Губернского Правления Надворного Советника Лютфали-бека-Рагим-Ага-Оглы-Бебутова*, National Archives of Georgia, ф. 13, оп. 25Б, п. 160.

<sup>[2]</sup> "Дело об истязании", *Каспий*, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54.

<sup>[3]</sup> "Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым", *Кавказ*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 56.

<sup>[4]</sup> Swietochowski, Tadeusz. *Russia and Azerbaijan: A Borderland in Transition*. NY: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 23.

<sup>[5]</sup> "Дело об истязании", *Каспий*, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54; Исмаилов, Эльдар Эльхан оглы. *Персидские принцы из дома Каджаров в Российской империи*. М.: Старая Басманная, 2009, с. 161.

<sup>[6]</sup> "Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым", *Кавказ*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 56.

<sup>[7]</sup> "Дело об истязании", *Каспий*, № 54, 7 марта 1912 г.

<sup>[8]</sup> Меликов, Рагим бек. "К инциденту «Тагиев–Бебутов»", *Баку*, 25 июня 1911 г., № 140 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 132.

[9] “Семейное дело”, Баку, 23 июня 1911 г., № 138; “Дело об истязании”, Каспий, 8 марта 1912 г., № 55.

[10] Меликов, Рагим бек. *Память будет почтена...* (Избранные статьи и рецензии). Б.: Язычы, 1987.

[11] A rather high civil rank in the Russian Empire – действительный статский советник.

[12] The article from *Russkoye slovo* was reprinted as “Семейное дело”, Баку, 23 июня 1911 г., № 138.

[13] “Дело Г. З. А. Тагиева и инж. Л.-б. Бебутова”, Баку, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54.

[14] Г. Г. Замысловский. “Дело Тагиева”, *Земщина*, 29-30 марта 1912 г., № 945, 946. / Замысловский, Г. Г. *Дело Тагиева*. СПб: Типография А. С. Суворина, 1912, с. 12.

[15] “Дело об истязании”, Каспий, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54.

[16] “Дело об истязании”, Каспий, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54; “Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым”, Кавказ, 9 марта 1912 г., № 57; “Дело Тагиева и инженера Бебутова”, *Вечернее время*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 88.

[17] “Окружный суд. Резолюция”, Каспий, 13 марта 1912 г., № 59.

[18] Казаринов, М. Г. *Речь присяжного поверенного М. Г. Казаринова в защиту Действ. Ст. Сов. Гаджи Зейнал-Аддин Тагиева*. СПб: Тип. Е. М. Малаховского, 1913.

[19] “Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым”, Кавказ, 10 марта 1912 г., № 58.

[20] *Abrek*: a sort of noble bandit or Robin Hood-like figure in the Caucasus.

[\[21\]](#) “Дело об истязании”, *Каспий*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 55.

[\[22\]](#) “Дело Тагиева и инженера Бебутова”, *Вечернее время*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 88.

[\[23\]](#) “Баку. 23-го июня”, *Баку*, 23 июня 1911 г., № 138.

[\[24\]](#) *Формулярный список о службе Сверхштатного техника, Строительного Отделения Елизаветпольского Губернского Правления Надворного Советника Лютфали-бека-Рагим-Ага-Оглы-Бебутова*, National Archives of Georgia, ф. 13, оп. 25Б, п. 160. The document does not indicate the reason why Behbudov received the Order of St. Stanislaus.

[\[25\]](#) Курбанов, Шамиль. “Рагим бек Меликов (1886-1936)” / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 5.

[\[26\]](#) Since the late 19th century, university graduates in Russia typically receive a badge along with their degree.

[\[27\]](#) Меликов, Рагим бек. “К инциденту «Тагиев-Бебутов»”, *Баку*, 25 июня 1911, № 140 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 133-134.

[\[28\]](#) Меликов, Рагим бек. “Еще об инциденте «Тагиев-Бебутов»”, *Баку*, 21 июля 1911, № 162 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 138.

[\[29\]](#) “Дело Тагиева”, *Московские ведомости*, 23 марта 1912 г., № 69 / Замысловский, Г. Г. *Дело Тагиева*. СПб: Типография А. С. Суворина, 1912, с. 26-27.

[\[30\]](#) Тагиев, Садыг и др. “Письмо в редакцию”, *Баку*, 22 июня 1911 г., № 137.

[31] “Вынужденный ответ (Письмо в редакцию)”. Баку, 9 июля 1911 г., № 152.

[32] “Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым”, *Кавказ*, 6 марта 1912 г., №54.

[33] A few days after the incident, Behbudov left Baku for his family estate in Shusha Uyezd, returning to Baku in June 1911.

[34] “Дело об истязании”, *Каспий*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 55.

[35] In the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920), Mammad Hasan Hajinski would go on to serve as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Internal Affairs.

[36] “Дело об истязании”, *Каспий*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 55.

[37] “Дело Г. З. А. Тагиева и инженера Л.-б. Бебутова”, Баку, 8 марта 1912, № 55.

[38] “Дело об истязании”, *Каспий*, 8 марта 1912 г., № 55.

[39] “Дело об истязании инженера Бебутова Тагиевым”, *Кавказ*, 9 марта 1912 г., № 57.

[40] “Дело об истязании”, *Каспий*, 7 марта 1912 г., № 54.

[41] Меликов, Рагим бек. “Письмо в редакцию”, Баку, 10 июля 1911, № 150 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена...* (Избранные статьи и рецензии). Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 136.

[42] *Hacı Zeynalabdin Tağıyev haqqında xatirələr*. Bakı: XAN nəşriyyatı, 2017, s. 113.

[43] Excerpts from Garabeyov’s article were reprinted in “Маленький фельетон. Ответ д-ру К.-б. Карабекову”, Баку, 13

июля 1911 г., № 155. Garabeyov also brings up the murder of an engineer named Talishkhanov, but I have yet to find sufficient information about this incident to comment on it.

[44] Тагиев, Садыг и др. “Письмо в редакцию”, Баку, 22 июня 1911 г., № 137.

[45] “Маленький фельетон. Ответ д-ру К.-б. Карабекову”, Баку, 13 июля 1911 г., № 155.

[46] Меликов, Рагим бек. “К инциденту «Тагиев-Бебутов»”, Баку, 25 июня 1911, № 140 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 133-134.

[47] “Ответ д-ру Карабекову (Окончание)”, Баку, 16 июля 1911 г., № 158.

[48] Меликов, Рагим бек. “О мусульманской прессе», Бакинец, 31 августа 1909, № 38 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 89-94.

[49] Меликов, Рагим бек. “Еще об инциденте «Тагиев-Бебутов»”, Баку, 21 июля 1911, № 162 / Рагим бек Меликов. *Память будет почтена... (Избранные статьи и рецензии)*. Б.: Язычы, 1987, с. 137-143.

[50] Балаев, Айдын. *Патриарх туркизма: Ахмед бек Агаоглу (1869-1939)*. Баку: TEAS Press, 2018, с. 106.

[51] Bennigsen, Alexandre et Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay, *La presse et le mouvement national chez les musulmans de Russie avant 1920*. Paris: Mouton & Co., 1964, p. 107.

[52] Özkaya, Yılmaz. “Ahmet Ağaoğlu’nun Hüseyinzade Ali Bey’e Mektupları.” *Türk Yurdu*, nisan 2011, sayı: 284, s. 24-25; see also Айдын Балаев. *Патриарх туркизма: Ахмед бек Агаоглу (1869-1939)*. Баку: TEAS Press, 2018, с. 157-158.

[53] Shissler, A. Holly. *Between Two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the New Turkey*. London: I. B. Taurus, 2003, p. 157. Shissler cites Ağaoğlu's unpublished memoirs in Yusuf Akçura, 'Türkçülük' [Turkism], in *Türk Yılı* (İstanbul: Türk Ocağı Yayınevi, 1928) pp. 433-434.

[54] Shissler, A. Holly. *Between Two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the New Turkey*. London: I. B. Taurus, 2003, p. 237. Shissler cites Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Aghayev), 'Türk Alemi 3' ['The Turkish World 2'], *Türk Yurdu* 1, 3 (1327-1911/12).

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