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**Parvana Ibrahimova**  
*Institute of Architecture and Art of ANAS*  
*(Azerbaijan)*

*parvanaibrahimova81@gmail.com*

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## NATIONAL WEALTH OF THE COUNTRY – KARABAKH HORSE AND SHAHBULAG FORTRESS IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

**Abstract.** This article talks about the life of Karabakh horses during the refugee period, the preservation of the Karabakh breeds, their appearance and character, their return to their homeland, the destruction of the Shahbulag fortress by the Armenians. Not only our people, but also the cultural heritage of our people lived a refugee life for a longtime.

**Key words:** Karabakh horses, character, appearance, return, Shahbulag castle.

**Introduction.** Karabakh is famous in the world not only for its charming nature, historical monuments and valuable musical figures, but also for Karabakh horses. The Karabakh horse factory was established in 1949 in Eyvazkhanbeyli village of Aghdam region. After the occupation of Aghdam by the Armenians on June 23, 1993, they wanted to capture the Karabakh horses. Therefore, the Karabakh horses were brought to the winter quarters of Agjabedi region. Akbarov Abbas, Qadirov Kamil, Ahmadov Sabir were the people who suffered the most when the Karabagh horses were taken out of their homes. After the horses were held, they blew up the bridge because the horses wanted to return to where they were. Armenians couldn't make the horses their own, so they tried to cut off the roots of Karabagh horses, but they did not succeed.

**The interpretation of the main material.** Not only our people, but also the cultural heritage of our people have long lived a life of forced

displacement. Pure Karabakh horses are bred in the center, which once operated as the Aghdam horse breeding plant, and today is the Karabakh equestrian complex.

In 2014, by the decree of Ilham Aliyev, the construction of the Karabakh Equestrian Plant complex was started, handed over in 2018, and a very good infrastructure has been created there, horse care, proper selection and distribution of horses are being carried out. These horses develop better in their homeland, their color is different, their character is completely different.

Every year, the Karabakh horses went to the Chicheyli pasture, the Lachin pasture, the Kalbajar heel pasture. In that pasture they ate green grass, drank clean water and received pure oxygen. After returning from there, each of the horses became different.

Unlike about 260 known breeds of horses in the world, Karabakh horses are tolerant of both hot and cold climates. They have the ability to reproduce beautifully, beautiful colors, good body size, the ability to make friends with people.

R.Kh.Sattarzadeh wrote in the book “Azerbaijani horse riding” published in 1960: “Azerbaijani horse breeds were formed as a result of people’s selection since ancient times, and later by mixing the blood of some Eastern-blooded horses. This includes the Karabakh horse, Dilboz horse, Guba yorga and Shirvan horse.” Currently, two of the 260 breeds of horses in the world belong to Azerbaijan, which are “Dilboz” and “Karabagh” horses.

Europeans used the example of saying that it is difficult to dismount when riding an English horse, when riding, you think you are somewhere in the sky. The Karabakh horse is very convenient for us to ride, dismount, make friends. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, D. Dubensky, a horse specialist, writes that although there are a number of horse breeds in the South Caucasus, in fact, all of them are descendants of the Karabakh horse.

The history of these horses dates back to the time of Manna and Midia. It is no coincidence that Karabakh horses were depicted on the coat of arms of Shusha in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1832, there were 11 horse-breeding factories in Karabakh province. Chovgan, which is many years old, is still played with great enthusiasm in Azerbaijan. Chovgan is an ancient version of the game of polo. In late 2013, the historical significance of this game was recognized by UNESCO, and this traditional game of Azerbaijan was declared a cultural heritage.

The value of Karabakh horses is deeply rooted in the heart of Azerbaijan. This can be felt especially in the workshop of Faig Hacıyev. As an artist and sculptor, he was interested in golden horses throughout his life. The difference between those horses is that they give their lives for their offspring, they are very loyal to their owners, they do not even run away from a wounded soldier. They are horses that eat little, they do not like to stay in closed places, they like to walk, play, gallop outdoors, they have very strong muscles.

Shusha khan gave the queen of Great Britain a saddle which is Karabakh breed called Zaman. The meaning behind the name of Khankendi village is that, in that village the khan had flocks of sheep, cattle, and horses. There were 2000 horses in the village in order to use them in battles.

Karabakh horses also took part in the traditional Royal Windsor Horse Show and Windsor Royal Equestrian Show in London on July 1-4. The event was attended by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and members of the royal family. The Azerbaijani delegation participated in this show with the composition “Khari Bulbul”. Karabakh horses stole the hearts of the British with their skills.

In 2019, they took part in the fourth ethnosport “culture” festival held in Istanbul in 2004 under the name “Karabakh horses and the “Kalaghai” of Azerbaijan” and surprised everyone.

This war showed us that the righteous will always win. We have waited and we have seen these days. Divine justice has found its place. The most difficult longing is the longing of motherland. Karabakh horses are a symbol of heroism and endurance.

The year of 2022 wrote its name in golden letters to our history. In 2022, we celebrated Novruz in Karabakh. It is an ancient tradition of Karabakh to give a horse to an honorable guest. At the event, İlham Aliyev presented a horse named Zafar to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Karabakh horses which were kept in Ağjabadi region were brought to their homeland Ağdam. Karabakh horses returned to their valleys, hills and mountains. Karabakh equestrian tradition has developed in Karabakh since ancient times and today Karabakh horses put an end to his longing in the Şahbulagh mountains and other areas of Ağdam. Karabakh horses which are one of our national and moral values, have lived far from the motherland for 30 years. Today, Karabakh horses and Karabakh people return to our liberated lands. Recently, we celebrated

Novruz holiday in the liberated Shahbulag Fortress, where the Armenian occupiers have been celebrating the New Year every year for the last 28 years. They wanted to introduce these places as the first habitat of the Tigranoids. In every corner of the Shahbulag Fortress, there is a trace and the breath of Azerbaijan. İlham Aliyev and our warriors spoke, true justice was restored. Karabakh is ours. Karabakh is Azerbaijan. The Karabakh horse is the morality of Azerbaijan. The Karabakh horse is the hope, spirit and faith of the Azerbaijani people.

The Karabakh khanate was established in the north of Azerbaijan in the middle of the 18th century. The founder of the khanate was Panahali khan. He fought in Nadir khan's army and took part in the liberation of Azerbaijani lands.

After the death of Nadir Shah, Panahali became the Khan of Karabakh. He built fortresses to strengthen the defense of his state. He built Bayat fortress (1748), Shahbulag fortress (1750-52) and then Shusha fortress (1757). After the battle of Bayat, Panahali khan thought that a more reliable fortress was needed for defense, because Bayat fortress had a strategically weak position and he built Shahbulag fortress. After building this fortress, he moved his people and village to this area. The perimeter of the complex is surrounded by protective walls, circular and semi-cylindrical control towers. The height of the walls of the tower is 7 m, and the height of the tower is 8.5 m. The castle has not survived to our time, it has been destroyed. But the castle was restored during the Soviet era. This castle-type palace complex was built of limestone and mountain stones, which are local building materials. The complex was called a "lock" because of its strong protection. It was operated as an administrative center for some time. One of the main reasons for Panahali Khan's construction of the fortress in this village was the presence of a water source here. Probably, the name of the castle was taken from the name of the rich water spring located here - Shah spring.

**Conclusion.** Aghdam is the gate of Karabakh. Earlier, people would go to the Aghdam who wanted to see "paradise" Karabakh. There was a Bread museum in Aghdam. Breads from different parts of the world and years were stored in this museum. "Sumbul" cafe was built next to this museum. People who came to the museum both visited the museum and rested in this "Sumbul" cafe. Aghdam, which was occupied by the Armenian military in 1993, was demolished and destroyed street by street.

Now there is no historical or residential building in this city, except for the Juma Mosque and Shahbulag Fortress. The reason why the Armenian vandals did not destroy the Shahbulag fortress was not their respect for our history. During these years, Armenians used Shahbulag fortress for their insidious politics. They held many events there and tried to gain a profit. They organized tourist trips here. This is confirmed by the tickets at the entrance. They used it as a museum, a trade object. The ornaments and inscriptions on the walls were removed, replaced with Armenian crosses, only the protective walls of the fortress complex were preserved and used as a church. They presented their findings to foreign journalists as examples of “Armenian” history. This fortress, which has a special place among the historical and architectural monuments of Azerbaijan, was liberated from enemy occupation in November 2020, and is now in safe hands in free Aghdam, and some restoration work has begun in the fortress.

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#### *Pərvanə İbrahimova (Azərbaycan)*

#### **ÖLKƏMİZİN MİLLİ SƏRVƏTLƏRİ – QARABAĞ ATI VƏ ŞAHBULAQ QALASI MƏDƏNİ İRS KONTEKSTİNDƏ**

Bu məqalədə Qarabağ atlarının qaçqınlıq dövründə yaşayışından, Qarabağ cinslərinin qorunub saxlanılmasından, onların xarici görünüşündən, xasiyyətindən öz vətənlərinə qayıdışından, Şahbulaq qalasının ermənilər tərəfindən dağıdılmasından bəhs olunub. Təkcə insanlarımız yox, eyni zamanda xalqımızın mədəni irsi də uzun müddət məcbur köçkünlük həyatı yaşamışdı.

**Açar sözlər:** Qarabağ atları, xasiyyəti, görünüşü, qayıdışı, Şahbulaq qalası.

*Пярвана Ибрагимова (Азербайджан)*

**НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЕ БОГАТСТВО СТРАНЫ – КАРАБАХСКИЙ  
СКАКУН И КРЕПОСТЬ ШАХБУЛАГ В КОНТЕКСТЕ  
КУЛЬТУРНОГО НАСЛЕДИЯ**

В статье говорится о Карабахских скакунах, разделивших судьбу беженцев, о сохранении породы лошадей, их внешнем виде, характере и возвращении на Родину, о разрушении армянами крепости Шахбулаг. Не только наш народ, но и культурное наследие нашего народа долгое время жили жизнью вынужденного переселения.

**Ключевые слова:** Карабахские скакуны, характер, внешний вид, возвращение, крепость Шахбулаг.