

**MIRAS's activities within the "Pilot Courses in Practice Enterprise to Implement the University-Enterprise Cooperation for the Development of Caspian Area, PICASP"  
PROJECT Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union**

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MIRAS Public Association for the Support of Studying of Cultural Heritage was established in 2010. Basic purpose of the organization is to study, protect and promote local and international cultural heritage, to assist in fulfillment of scientific-research work on study of cultural heritage, to research and popularize national-moral values, to repair and restore historical monuments and other objects, to study forgotten traditions passed from one generation to other and to deliver them to the next generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values, to focus on the similarities between the various heritage sectors, along with their differences. MIRAS arranges various courses and seminars, round tables and meetings, exhibitions and tours, holds local and international conferences, symposiums, charitable marathons and other cultural mass events in the line of study, protection and promotion of tangible and intangible heritage. MIRAS also realizes projects on local and international level. It supports and coordinates collaborations of educational institutions, scientific institutions, museums, cultural heritage foundations of different countries like Turkey, Russia, Italy, Spain, Romania, Macedonia, etc. It shares experience of educational institutions in Azerbaijan and Europe introducing European standards creates integrated projects.

MIRAS PA as an NGO has an especial role in the project relevant to its activity direction. The main function of MIRAS is to give expert support to the project partners, also to give education for teachers and students of different educational institutes about promotion and protection of cultural heritage, to strengthen the potential in this sphere, to create basis for university-enterprise cooperation in the cultural heritage, archeology, museums and tourism spheres in the Caspian area and etc. MIRAS organizes seminars, familiarization tours, trainings and expeditions with the participation of teachers and students of interested higher education institutions according to the Action Plan of the Project. The Action Plan for realization of Pilot Courses was prepared by Dr. Fariz Khalilli and Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova. The content of these activities was prepared by Mr. Fariz Khalilli, Mrs. Shahla Khalilli, Mrs. Gunel Seyidahmadli, Ms. Gulshan Huseynova and Ms. Aida Malikova as MIRAS experts accordingly. Accreditation and coordination of the Project were provided by Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova.

The activities are realized in the following directions:

## 1. Seminars on 13 themes

- Archaeological Heritage Management
- Archaeological Heritage Examination
- Organization of Archaeological Heritage Protection
- Museumization of Archaeological Heritage
- Financing of Reserves
- Accounting of Reserves
- Development of the Projects of Expedition
- Museum Marketing
- Reserve Marketing
- Cultural Heritage and Business
- Development of Touristic Routes
- Organization of Tours
- Cultural Heritage Industry

## 2. Familiarization tours in 5 directions

- Baku City Tours (Icheri Sheher State Historical-Architectural Reserve, Shirvanshah's Palace, Yanardagh State Historical, Cultural and Natural Reserve, Ateshgah Temple State Historical-Architectural Reserve, Gala State Historical Ethnographic Reserve)
- Absheron Tours (Gobustan State Historical and Cultural Reserve, Mud volcanoes of Baku)
- "The Routes Taking to the Shirvan Treasure" Tour (Diri Baba tomb, Shamkhy city, Avakhyl, Kalakhana, Aghsu Reserve, Basgal Reserve, Lahyc Reserve, Damirchy village)
- Sufi Belief Tour (Pir Huseyn Khanagah, suphy places in Kurdamir, Aghsu and Shamakhy regions)
- Archaeological Heritage Tours (archaeological excavation areas in Kalakhana, Avakhyl, Basgal and Aghsu)

## 3. Trainings on 2 themes

- Protection of the Cultural Heritage during the Emergency Cases
- Start your Business in Cultural Heritage

## 4. Expeditions in 4 directions

- Archaeological Expedition (Nargizava, Aghsu Reserve)
- Ethnographic Expedition (Basgal, Lahyc, Damirchy, Shaki workshops, Baki museums)
- Epigraphic Expedition (Baki city, Shamkhy city, Aghsu city)
- Paleographic Expedition (Basgal reserve, Lahic reserve, Institute of Manuscripts)

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During the project implementation period 3 seminars, 1 archaeological expedition and 1 training for Khazar University, 8 seminars, 1 archaeological and 1 paleographic expedition, as well as 1 training for ATMU, 2 archaeological expeditions and a familiarization trip for the students, teachers and parents of Humanitarian Gymnasium named after S.C. Pishevari as a secondary school were organized by MIRAS.

The seminar on "Organization of archaeological heritage protection" which was organized for the Khazar University on April 27, 2023 was attended by more than 30 students and teachers. Mr. Fariz Khalilli (the Doctor of Philosophy in History and administrative head of the project by the MIRAS Public Association as the national partner of the Project) provided a comprehensive information about an archaeological research process, preservation of the portable and immovable archaeological finds, archaeological exhibitions organized in and abroad, archaeological museumization, measurement procedures and conservation works, international practice on this matters and etc. Besides, different aspects of the protection of archaeological heritage was discussed in the example of "The Medieval Aghsu Town" archaeological tourism complex, as well as different informative projects on archaeological heritage protection (familiarization tours, summer schools, archaeological camps etc.) realized by the MIRAS. Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova, administrative staff of the Project, member of the MIRAS Board gave detailed information about the PICASP project, its purposes, the main goals, the activities, which will be organized within the project, the outcomes that will be reached etc.

The seminar on "Organization of the tours" organized for the Khazar University on May 23, 2023 and for the ATMU on May 26, 2023 was attended by more than 40 students and the teachers from each university. The participants were informed about the project purposes, the main goals, the activities, which will be organized within the project, the outcomes that will be reached etc. Ms. Aida Malikova, the executive director of the Ginza Travel Company made a presentation on organizing the tours, definition of the tourism, bodies operating in the tourism sphere, their classification, the functions realized during the tourism activity, the problems in this sphere and their solution methods, the existing legislation both in the national and international level regulating tourism activity etc.

At the seminar on "Archaeological heritage management" organized for the ATMU students on March 27, 2023 Dr. Fariz Khalilli gave extensive information on the basics of archaeological heritage discovery and protection, works done in this field, state regulatory mechanisms, national and international experience etc. After the speech in the interactive questioning process, the students' knowledge and skills related to the topic, ways of solving problems related to the development of this field, and opportunities to eliminate the gaps faced by them in the process of personnel training in the future were discussed.

More than 30 students of ATMU attended the seminar on "Archaeological heritage examination" organized by MIRAS on April 03, 2023. Dr. Fariz Khalilli, provided a comprehensive information on the discovering ways of archaeological heritage, the necessary procedures to be

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provided after the discovery, archaeological excavation procedures, determination of archaeological heritage date and authenticity, the existing legislation and Azerbaijani experience in this sphere, as well as his own practice as an archaeologist and cultural heritage specialist. Also, the questioning was provided for determination of the students' awareness level in this sphere before and after the seminar.

At the seminar on "Cultural heritage and business" which was organized on April 07, 2023, at the ATMU Dr. Fariz Khalilli, made an interesting presentation for the students and teachers. The seminar was held in an interactive form and a wide information was given on business opportunities, business environment, financial resources, the existing legislation and state regulatory methods, as well as private sector role in this sphere, business effect on the protection and development of the cultural heritage, practise and examples concerning the cultural heritage business, especially the practice of the MIRAS. The students showed a great interest in the seminar and expressed their willingness to develop their knowledge in this sphere.

The seminar on "Organization of archaeological heritage protection" organized on April 10, 2023 by MIRAS was attended by more than 20 students of ATMU. Dr. Fariz Khalilli provided comprehensive information about an archaeological research process, preservation of the portable and immovable archaeological finds, archaeological exhibitions organized in and abroad, archaeological museumization, measurement procedures and conservation work, international practice on this matter, etc. Besides, different aspects of the protection of archaeological heritage was discussed in the example of "The Medieval Aghsu Town" archaeological tourism complex, as well as different informative projects on archaeological heritage protection (familiarization tours, summer schools, archaeological camps etc.) realized by the MIRAS.

At another seminar which was organized on May 19, 2023, at the ATMU on "Development of tourism routes" more than 20 students participated. Aida Malikova, the executive director of the Ginza Travel Company made a presentation on the development of tourism routes, its definition, types of tourism routes, classification measures, the existing tourism routes in Azerbaijan, cultural tourism routes developed by the MIRAS etc. Besides the wide information was given on the international tourism routes which Azerbaijan has joined, such as "Olive tree", "Wine Routes", "Jewish Heritage", "Prehistoric Rock Art Trails", "Thermal Towns", "Creative Towns".

The next seminar on "Museumization of Archaeological heritage" with the participation of 20 students and the teachers was organized on November 27, 2024, at the ATMU. Dr. Fariz Khalilli made a presentation about the museumization of archaeological heritage on the example of "Medieval Agsu City" State Historical-Cultural Reserve. The books about "Municipalities and the cultural heritage" were presented to the students.

On December 04, 2024 the seminar on "Digitization of Ornaments along the Northwest Tourist Route" was organized at ATMU. The deputy chair of the MIRAS Board, Doctor of Philosophy in Art Studies, Associate Professor Gunel Seyidahmedli delivered a presentation on the relevant topic, covering the historical monuments along the northwest route, from the city of Baku to the Balakan



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region. The presentation included detailed information about these monuments, as well as the handicraft examples such as carpets, kilims, kelagai, household items, etc., and the ornaments applied to them. It also discussed the history, characteristics, meanings, and other related aspects of these ornaments. During the presentation, information was provided about the relevant project of the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan on the digitization of ornaments and the website [www.ornament.org.az](http://www.ornament.org.az) created within the framework of this project.

On December 13, 2024 a seminar on “Cultural heritage and business” was held for the teachers and students of the Xazar University. Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova, administrative staff of the Project, member of the MIRAS Board provided information about the project's objectives, its purposes, the main goals, the measures implemented within the project, the results to be achieved, etc. Then, Dr. Fariz Khalilli made a presentation on the relevant topic. During the seminar, extensive information was provided on the formation of a business environment in the field of culture, the creation of business facilities based on the experience of cultural heritage sites, existing legislation in this field, and public and private sector cooperation. There was also an exchange of views on the impact of cultural heritage business on increasing employment in the regions, existing problems in this field in Azerbaijan, their solutions and prospects, and the production, marketing, promotion and sale of handicrafts as a means of cultural heritage business.

On November 4, 2023, an archaeological expedition was organized to the "Medieval Agsu City" State Historical and Cultural Reserve for students, members of the "History Clube", teachers and parents of the Republican Humanitarian Gymnasium named after S.C. Pishevari as a secondary school. After providing the participants with general information about the Reserve, Dr. Fariz Khalilli informed them about the conduct of archaeological research, the protection and storage of discovered movable and immovable archaeological finds, conservation issues, etc. Under the leadership of Fariz Khalilli, the students directly participated in the archaeological excavation, learned the rules for conducting archaeological excavations, conducted archaeological excavations in groups in areas allocated for them according to the instructions of experts, documented the exhibits they found, and handed them over as appropriate. Later, an extensive excursion was organized for the participants around Medieval Agsu City, where detailed information was provided about the history of the ancient city, as well as the sites discovered in the reserve, mosque, ancient bathhouse, ice house, water reservoir, city square, etc.

On the same day, a familiarization tour to the "Terekeme Yurdu" (Nomadic settlement) folklore tourism site in the Gegeli village of Agsu district was organized for the participants. They got acquainted with the Terekeme (nomadic) lifestyle, and even played one of our ancient national games, "Çilingagaj", in teams with their peers who are residents of the village. Extensive information was provided about the lifestyle of the Terekemes, as well as traditional folk games and other folklore traditions that are on the verge of being forgotten. The event made a pleasant impression on the participants, especially on the little "archaeologists", and aroused great interest in the field of archaeology and national historical heritage. They noted the great importance of holding such

educational excursions and events, and organizing different thematic trips for schoolchildren in addition to traditional tourist trips.

During the Project Period MIRAS has started archaeological research and conservation work at the Zargarpalan Hamam (Bathhouse), built in 1899, located in Baku. On November 29, 2024, under the leadership of Dr. Fariz Khalilli, 2 archaeological expeditions to the research area at the Zargarpalan Hamam (bath) in Baku were organized for the students and teachers of the Khazar University and ATMU. 15 participants from each university took part at the expedition. The same expedition was organized for the team of 25 students, teachers and parents of the Humanitarian Gymnasium named after S.C. Pishevari as a secondary school on December 14, 2024. During the expedition, the participants were first given a tour of the hamam, where they were given extensive information about the history of the bathhouse, the architectural style in which it was built, the path it has taken over the years, the work carried out there, the results and findings obtained. Then, the participants were given training on the conservation work carried out in the bathhouse, the materials used during conservation, their types and composition, the rules for preparation and use, the points that must be followed during the conservation and restoration of archaeological monuments, etc. In the third part of the expedition, the participants took part in the conservation of the monument based on the knowledge they had acquired and under the supervision of experts working in the field of research, and personally experienced the stages of the conservation process. During the last expedition, Italian historian and archaeologist Professor Luigi Scrinzi also conducted an interactive survey and informed participants about history, archaeology, restoration, and conservation work.

A palaeographic expedition was organised on December 10, 2024, at the Institute of Manuscripts named after Muhammad Fuzuli of ANAS for a team of 18 students and teachers of ATMU. Ms. Shahla Khalilli, a senior researcher at the Research of Turkic-language Manuscripts Department of the Institute, Doctor of Philosophy in Philology, made a presentation and provided extensive information about the Institute's areas of activity, the manuscripts preserved at the Institute, their origin, history, types, etc. Later, Zaur Orujov, Head of the Hygiene and Restoration Department of the Institute, also made a presentation, provided information about the art of manuscripts and its subtleties, and conducted a live practical lesson in the restoration laboratory on the types of paper and processing techniques, book binding, restoration methods, calligraphy, etc. As part of the event, a familiarization tour over the Institute of Manuscripts building was held, and participants were provided with information about the history of the building, the exhibits kept there, etc. The Institute is located in the historic building of the Girls' School built by millionaire Haji Zeynalabidin Tagiyev in 1901.

Two-days trainings of “Start and Improve your Cultural Heritage Business” were organized for the students of both the Khazar University (30-31 May, 2023) and ATMU (02-03 november, 2024). 15 students from each University participated at the trainings. The trainer Mr. Fariz Khalilli carried out the training with the approval of the Master Trainer Mr. Azad Rahimov. The training is based on the "Start and Improve Your Own Business Program" which includes the management

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principles developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This training aims to make students realize a real business idea for creating their own small enterprise. The training helps to develop a detailed business plan and start the actual business, as well as allows participants to test required entrepreneurial skills and business plans in a simulated safe environment. Another important aspect of the training is that it will serve as a base for the Practice Enterprises planned to be established under the PICASP project. The students who participated in the training showed great interest and activity, the training reached its goal, and served to form the extensive knowledge and skills of the students in this field.

MIRAS also actively participates in all activities within the frameworks of the PICASP project. MIRAS gives its support to the Project both at national and international level.

MIRAS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Khazar University which covers all aspects of cooperation. The same will be signed with ATMU.

MIRAS has organized PICASP Consortium meeting on «Europe experience in the restoration and conservation of cultural heritage in Azerbaijan – MIRAS&YOCOCU practice» on 09 July, 2021. The main purpose of the meeting was to give information about experience of European experts in the restoration and conservation of cultural heritage in Azerbaijan, as well as national practice in this sphere. During the meeting Prof. Luigi Scrinzi made a speech on his experience and impressions about Azerbaijani cultural heritage. After a short Q&A session Laura Rivaroli, the vice-president of YOCOCU broadcasted a live feed from the archaeological site in Villa Lanoche near to Rome. Mr. Aghacavid Ramazanov, the representative of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage made a presentation about the cultural heritage destroyed during the Garabagh War by the Armenian militaries and the results of occupation and its damages. He also gave information about the results of monitoring carried out in these territories after liberation and future plans for restoration and protection of the cultural heritage. Dr. Andrea Macchia made a speech about his experience and YOCOCU practice in restoration and conservation of cultural heritage in Azerbaijan and the collaboration between MIRAS and YOCOCU. Dr. Fariz Khalilli presented the “Medieval Agsu city” State Historical and Cultural Reserve and talked about the plans to be realized within the framework of PICASP project by MIRAS at the territory of the Reserve.

MIRAS has also organized one webinar on the topic of “Comparative review of petroglyphs in Caspian Area”

During the Project period Dr. Fariz Khalilli visited the MOOC studio created within the framework of the PICASP project at Yessenov University in Aktau. He got acquainted with the equipment there. He was informed about their working principles. In the future, open lessons of MIRAS courses are planned to be recorded in such studios.

Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova as a project staff has completed Harvard University’s open online courses on “Pyramids of Giza: Ancient Egyptian Art and Archaeology” of 3 months in order to study cultural heritage, archaeology and MOOC experience.

MIRAS attended the meeting held at the Khazar University with the participation of foreign representatives of the PICASP project. Dr. Fariz Khalilli made a presentation on "Management of archaeological sites in Azerbaijan".

MIRAS took part at the meetings in presence or online with the national partners (ATMU and Khazar University) during the whole project implementation period. Issues concerning the project's implementation and its development, activities to be realized during the current year and all other aspects of the cooperation, the current status of the Project, future plans related to the implementation of MOOCs and Practice Enterprises, directions of mutual cooperation and support in this field between national partners were discussed during these meeting. Opinions were exchanged on the future benefits and the advantages of MOOCs and Practice Enterprises for the development of personnel potential in relevant fields were also discussed at the meeting.

Dr. Fariz Khalilli and Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova From MIRAS Public Association have joined the meeting held at Warsaw, on April 19, 2023 online. All activities realized under the project since 2021, also achieved results, different ways for developing the cooperation, activities to be realized during the next project period and etc. were discussed during the meeting. Dr. Fariz Khalilli made a presentation concerning the activities realized by MIRAS PA during the relevant period.

Next meeting of the partners (Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan) was held on September 25-27, 2023, at Vilnius. Dr. Fariz Khalilli the project manager, Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova, the project coordinator, Mrs. Shahla Khalilli and Mrs. Gunel Seyidahmadli, the members of the "MIRAS" Management Board, represented "MIRAS" Public Association at the meeting. Participants discussed project management issues, budget, planning, implemented activities, achieved results, planned activities, sustainability of the project, reports of countries. Dr. Fariz Khalilli presented a report covering the activities carried out by "MIRAS" within the framework of the project in 2023 and planned activities for the next project period.

MIRAS also took part at the 9th International YOCOCU (YOUTH in CONSERVATION of CULTURAL heritage) Conference held in Istanbul, in October, 2024 where Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova made a presentation and speech about the project. Also, an article was published in the conference's final book.

MIRAS also attended the next meeting of the PICASP Project partners held in November, 2024 in Kazakhstan. Mrs. Maleyka Huseynova, the project staff, represented MIRAS at the meeting. The meeting was organised for discussing the outcomes and results of Project implementation during the period, especially for the Kazakhstan side.

The last meeting of the Project Partners was held in Baku, in December, 2024 which was dedicated to the finalization of the project activities. MIRAS PA attended the meeting and presented a final presentation which covered all its activities during the whole project implementation period.



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MIRAS is realizing its activities in cooperation with Mass Media. Press releases and informative materials concerning the project and realized activities are regularly published in different mass media, social networks and web sites.

MIRAS also keeps bilateral relations with the different educational institutions and international organizations within the framework of the project.



The seminar on "Organization of archaeological heritage protection", Khazar University





The seminar on "Organization of the tours", Khazar University



The seminar on "Organization of the tours", ATMU



The seminar on "Archaeological heritage management", ATMU





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The seminar on "Archaeological heritage examination"



The seminar on "Cultural heritage and business", ATMU



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The seminar on "Organization of archaeological heritage protection", ATMU



The seminar on "Development of tourism routes", ATMU



The seminar on “Museumization of Archaeological heritage”, ATMU



The seminar on “Digitization of Ornaments along the Northwest Tourist Route”, ATMU





The seminar on “Cultural heritage and business”, Khazar University



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Archaeological expedition to the "Medieval Agsu City" State Historical and Cultural Reserve, S.C.Pishevari  
RHG



Archaeological expedition was organized to the "Medieval Agsu City" State Historical and Cultural Reserve,  
S.C.Pishevari RHG





Familiarization tour to the "Terekeme Yurdu" (Nomadic settlement) folklore tourism site, S.C.Pishevari RHG



Familiarization tour to the "Terekeme Yurdu" (Nomadic settlement) folklore tourism site, S.C.Pishevari RHG





Familiarization tour to the "Terekeme Yurdu" (Nomadic settlement) folklore tourism site, S.C.Pishevari RHG



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Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), Khazar University



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Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), ATMU





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Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), ATMU



Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), ATMU





Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), S.C.Pishevari RHG



Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), S.C.Pishevari RHG





Archaeological expedition to the Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), S.C.Pishevari RHG



Palaeographic expedition to the Institute of Manuscripts named after M.Fuzuli of ANAS, ATMU





Palaeographic expedition to the Institute of Manuscripts named after M.Fuzuli of ANAS, ATMU





Palaeographic expedition to the Institute of Manuscripts named after M.Fuzuli of ANAS, ATMU



Training of “Start and Improve your Cultural Heritage Business”, Khazar University



Training of “Start and Improve your Cultural Heritage Business”, ATMU



The signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding with Khazar University





Visit to the Yessenov University, Aktau



PICASP meeting, Baku



PICASP meeting, Vilnius





PICASP meeting, Aktau



PICASP meeting, Almaty



PICASP Project presentation at YOCOCU conference, Istanbul



PICASP Project presentation at YOCOCU conference, Istanbul



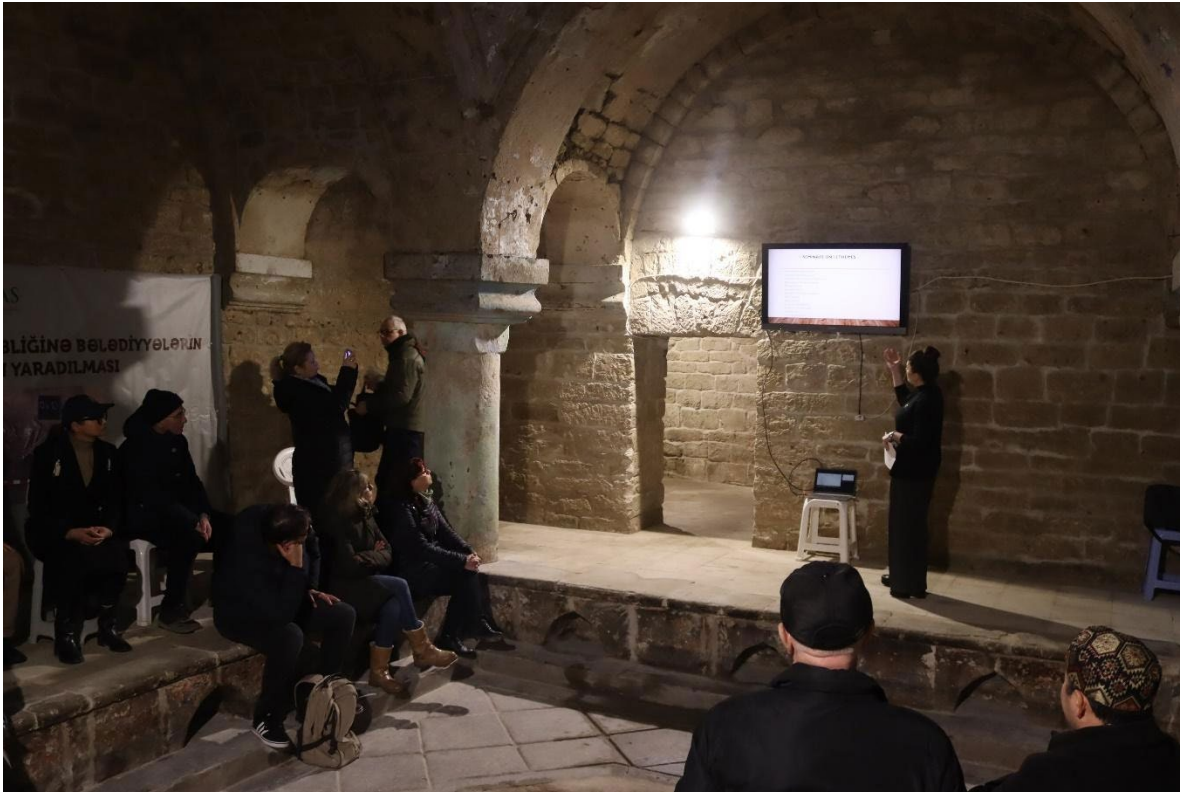


PICASP meeting at Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), Baku





PICASP meeting at Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), Baku



PICASP meeting at Zargarpalan Hamam (bathhouse), Baku