

Thanks to delving into the course of Grigory G. Gagarin's professional career and didactic and scientific activity, his figure appeared as a multifaceted and complex figure – architect, artist, and academic, but also a member of the Tsarist aristocracy. Furthermore, his presence in the Caucasus coincides with significant regional political and social changes. Gagarin came to the Caucasus for the first time in the early 1840s, which was associated with his military service in the Tsarist army. He took part in the ongoing battles of the Caucasian War, as well as in the genocide of the Circassians. At that time, Gagarin created his first works presenting the everyday life of the region's inhabitants and their portraits, vedutas, and landscapes.

Gagarin's next stay in the Caucasus was related to his commencement of service in the tsarist administration of the Caucasus Viceroyalty in Tbilisi (1848-1855), which at that time was managed by Vorontsov. On the order of the Viceroy, Grigory Grigorievich designed not only the interior of the first Tbilisi opera house (1848-1851) but also the neo-Byzantine Ascension Cathedral in Alagir (1850-1853), as well as the new decoration of the medieval Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi (1851-1855). With the end of his service in the tsarist administration of the Viceroyalty of the Caucasus in Tbilisi, Gagarin returned to St. Petersburg in 1855, where he began his work at the Tsar's Academy of Arts (where in 1859, he took the position of its vice-president). There, as part of his academic research and didactic activity, he organizes classes in icon painting and, with the support of Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna, opens the Museum of Christian Antiquities. In addition, he imported Western European studies discussing the Byzantine heritage and promoted its thorough study among students and the search for inspiration for their projects in it. All the indicated facts show how professionally active Gagarin was. A fascinating theme is his promotion of the Caucasus in Western European countries and Tsarist Russia through his publications such as *Le Caucase pittoresque* (1847) or *Scènes, paysages, moeurs et costumes du Caucase* (first issue, 1845). Grigory G. Gagarin is a fascinating member of 19th-century academic and architectural society. Presented facts from his life, archival materials, and stylistic analyses of his art and architectural works will allow a better understanding of this art theoretician and amateur architect.