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## NIZAMI GANJAVI 880: HERITAGE OF GANJA BASED ON ARCHITECTURAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP FEATURES OF SEBZIKAR GRAVEYARD

**Abstract:** *Sebzikar cemetery, located in the ancient quarter Sebzevad in Ganja city, as an important medieval monument was investigated from the historical and ethnographic point of view. Significance of this monument as an important example of pan-Islamic spiritual and material culture, an open-air museum, its significance as a material source in the study of tolerance traditions in Ganja, as well as in the development of architectural and local craft traditions, which are the important indicators of urban culture, were also investigated in scientific article based on academic sources.*

*This grave-yard has preserved many material and cultural samples, historical sources - tombstones, epitaphs, ancient tombstones. Sebzikar cemetery has a rich history of more than five centuries. There are more than one hundred tombs and graves here. Among these monuments, tombs and graves of the descendants of the city's outstanding clans have the main importance. Along with the ancient tombs preserved in this unique historical and architectural complex to this day, the characteristic features of the gradually destroyed tombs were studied on the basis of various written sources, scientific works, archival documents and historical sources. For the first time in this research, significance of Sebzikar monument as sample of local traditional architecture and craftsmanship.*

*This scientific paper dedicated to the 880th anniversary of the great Azerbaijani poet and thinker Nizami Ganjavi. Because of this genius personality enormous contribution to the cultural heritage of the world, by the order of President of Azerbaijan has been announced 2021 - the 880th anniversary of his birth - as the year of Nizami Ganjavi.*

**Key words:** *Ganja, Sebzikar grave-yard, architecture, multidisciplinary research, handicraft traditions, urban culture, tolerance.*

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*Without the skill every work is hard,  
First acquire skill, then do the work.  
One honey making bee is better,  
Than hundreds of the stones.  
Sheikh Nizami Ganjavi*

### Introduction

Ganja, one of the centers of science and culture with an ancient history of Azerbaijan, has been distinguished for centuries by its national and spiritual

values that characterize the culture of coexistence. Here, regardless of national or religious affiliation, people have always lived in peace and tranquility.

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The ancient center of tolerance and multiculturalism, Ganja is the second city of the East, where to this day hundreds of Muslim, Christian, Lutheran and pre-Islamic tombs, tombstones, mausoleums in the ancient sanctuary "Imamzada" and the cemetery "Sebzikar" are preserved. One of the main historic-architectural monuments of Ganja - Imamzada tomb-complex attracts the attention of a number of features from the point of multiculturalism view. Ganja Imamzada is an important pilgrimage shrine. This place is visited by thousands of people every year. It should be noted that the number of visitors is increasing every year as well as foreign countries.

Undoubtedly, along with about twenty ancient mosques, numerous tombs, two mausoleums, Imamzade monument, genealogical tombs, such as local architectural gems of Islamic culture, preserved in Ganja, Albanian temples, churches, as well as in the XIX century. There are also monuments of Christianity and Judaism [5, p. 16-17].

One of the oldest Orthodox churches in the western part of the country is located in the Dabbaglar neighborhood of Ganja named after Alexander Nevsky, and to this day Christian believers perform religious rites, celebrate important historical dates and holidays. This ancient temple is preserved as an important historical and architectural monument, and the residents of the city treat Orthodox believers with respect and dignity. All necessary conditions have been created here for the organization of religious, social and socio-cultural activities of the representatives of the largest Orthodox community in the Western region of our country [1, p. 24-28].

Thanks to the consistent and uninterrupted transmission of traditions and values from generation to generation, our national and religious values, based on ancient historical roots, were revived not only in the Middle Ages, where feudal relations existed, but also in the new era - the XIX century and beyond. It is noteworthy that although many historical neighborhoods of Ganja are gradually disappearing as urban units, the residents living here today do not forget the centuries-old traditions of coexistence, multicultural values, traditions of tolerance, and live them with dignity.

By the way, research of architectural and craftsmanship traditions as the sample of tolerance and multicultural values is an innovative approach. That is why teaching of these issues is necessary; also it is the part of process of humanization of education. In the modern world, which is characterized by complex processes, independent Azerbaijan stands out as a stable and secure state. Multiculturalism plays a huge role in modern Azerbaijan, for it ensures sustainable economic, political, social, cultural development of the country. The multicultural model of modern society is being formed in line with the main vectors of state policy.

In the modern world, it is necessary and in demand, first of all, innovative parameters in the educational system. At the same time, we emphasize that the important regulating factors of life in a particular society are determined by national values. It is cultural values that determine the basis of choice in the educational process and stimulate its improvement, since they have the functions of socially significant "prescriptions".

Humanities education forms a certain attitude towards cultural and national values. So, let us note, first, the individuality of the individual and the corresponding value preferences. Secondly, the needs and abilities of the members of the social community and, thirdly, the importance of cultural values proclaimed in a particular state system.

There is no doubt that education, viewed as a holistic, organized and integrated system, is open to innovation. The functioning of this kind of system will inevitably use the ideas and knowledge of the social collective, both accumulated during the long history of the people and dictated by the modern needs of society [7, p. 15].

One of the priorities of innovative processes in modern education is the search for a universal scientific basis. The indisputable advantages of generalization and the breadth of humanitarian educational models lie in the integrity, interdisciplinary approaches.

The wide range of the integration approach makes it possible to develop common principles and criteria of modern spirituality, which is necessary in modern interdisciplinary dialogue.

### Materials and methods

Elements of craftsmanship observed in the construction of arches, which are valued as a valuable construction and architectural method, as well as the presence of features that are typical for samples representing different types of pottery in Ganja, which has thousands of years of history and rich artistic traditions. It is necessary to pay special attention to the fact that urbanization in Ganja is one of the most important indicators of the urban planning process; many fields related to the production of clay products have been formed and developed over the centuries.

Examples of epigraphy also show that architecture and craftsmanship in Ganja have been formed since ancient times, enriched with new features over time, thus relying on previous traditions, and thus the elements of urban culture are based on very ancient historical periods. Among the most important historical features of Ganja Imamzada and Sebzikar epitaphs, ancient tombs, tombstones are the creation of conditions for the study of ancient religious views and ideas of Ganja, our people as a whole, beliefs and convictions about the hereafter [2; 4-6].

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In Sebzikar complex one of the important features of both the sarcophagus and tombstones and tombstones, along with their structure, was the epitaph in the Arabic alphabet, as well as the carving and embossing of floral and geometric patterns. Graves and tombstones, which are distinguished by their originality, especially by their bulge (or, more precisely, by their reliefs, reliefs and patterned elements) and are considered new for the first medieval period under consideration, are very important in the study of urban culture in Islam [6-10].

Despite the widespread use in the geographical region, religious and national values that have developed on the basis of centuries-old traditions in the territory of Azerbaijan, especially in the city of Ganja, which has always maintained its position as a cultural center, have not passed over funeral customs. As a result, our centuries-old craft and architectural traditions have enriched Muslim funeral customs and rituals from the medieval period, creating the conditions for the erection of tombstones, provided that the new functions relate to ancient traditions [5; 8-10].

The architectural traditions of Ganja city, both for the ancient and antiquity periods, as well as for the early Middle Ages and later, were gradually assimilated by the Arabs who ruled in the territory of Azerbaijan in the VII-VIII centuries. In later historical periods, Azerbaijan was founded by most of the other peoples included in the Arab Caliphate, which included a very large geographical area - the Atlantic Ocean from the west, the Iberian Peninsula, as well as North Africa, as well as from East to Central Asia and China. Erected in ancient cultural centers such as Ganja, mastered the art methods of construction traditions and successfully applied in the construction of magnificent monuments.

Respect for the spirits of ancestors in the Ganja Sebzikar cemetery is considered to be a sign of respect for the tombs, where they slept forever, and in most cases belongs to the first millennium BC (V-IV centuries BC) and the first medieval stages of our era. The main features of Albanian cemeteries are obvious. In this regard, it is necessary to pay attention to several valuable historical and ethnographic points:

- Preservation of important features of pre-Islamic national customs and traditions related to funerals [1; 6-8];

- Coincidence of some stable features of the tomb structure typical of the Albanian necropolises (this type of our ancient tombs, which existed in pre-Islamic historical periods);

- to observe the regularity of the arrangement of the graves, which our ancestors protected from generation to generation as an important trust, as it has been for thousands of years;

- In Ganja, as it was many centuries ago, far from the notion of familiar and foreign graves, no distinction is made in the grave where each deceased

person is buried, preserving the tradition of treating all graves with equal respect;

- Performing funeral rites, provided that they do not contradict the most important rules and instructions of Islam, and pass on the foundation of our very ancient religious ideas, including a number of traditions and ideas related to Zoroastrianism and fire-worship, as important values to future generations;

- Ganja Sebzikar cemetery has not only the oldest preserved tombstones, but also many tombs built in later historical periods, as well as tombstones with special mastery by Ganja artists of different floral (vegetative) or geometric elements of local Arran architectural school traditions engraving;

- In tombstones of Ganja Sebzikar cemetery, which have unique construction features, separate cosmogony, astral images, embodying the ancient religious-mythological worldview and imagination of our people, as well as the ancient history of urbanization culture of Ganja people. both tombs and tombs - visual application in tombs;

- In Ganja Sebzikar cemetery, various swastika, as well as abstract, as well as anthropomorphic (having a human image) preserved and preserved in the folklore of many Turkic peoples and ethnic groups associated with fire worship, Zoroastrianism, on the one hand, and pre-Islamic Albanian culture on the other. ) and zoomorphic (in the form of animal depictions) to one degree or another during the construction of the above-mentioned tombstones.

The creation and existence of Libra has been determined, and as a result, in the city of Ganja, where justice and integrity have been persistently protected for millennia, as a visual proof of respect for our religious and moral values and, most importantly, practical devotion, regardless of social affiliation, religion As in the past, the memory of the eternal inhabitants of this sacred shrine must be respected.

### Applied features of investigation

Ancient city Ganja is one of the first centers of urban civilization (urbanization) not only of the Muslim East, but whole of the World. Ganja has a history of at least 4000 years of the Muslim Orient and here are old monuments, tomb of Aposlels, a valuable sanctuary. Sebizkar tomb is considered to be the most important symbol of the city. Important historical source of the yearbook was revealed from this monument. On the territory of the ancient, historical and architectural complex of modern times to save more than 100 ancient and unique tombstones. These tombstones are mausoleums Serdabe (local sarcophag). Ganja Sebizkar tomb was for centuries the sanctuary of the Muslims, who had come not only from Azerbaijan, but also from other countries [1, p. 220-222; 11-13].

Here you can follow the development of the craft and architecture based on the study of the grave. The

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architectural monuments of this ancient city preserve the traditions of multiculturalism and tolerant values. This cemetery is included in the list of protected cultural and historical monuments in the country. The decorative art applied mainly relates to everyday life. The field is divided into two parts in terms of raw materials: metal, ceramics, textiles and wood and technology: carving, casting, embossing and weaving [1, p. 117-121; 10-12; 17, p. 344-345].

Working in applied arts reflects the perspective of society, daily life, customs, traditions and aesthetic vision. The various areas of applied decorative art in Ganja include ceramics, copper work, carpet knotting, jewel weaving, carving and stonework [3; 5; 9-11].

This ancient cultural and scientific center – Ganja city has a rich history and here there is one of the main and ancient historical-architectural monuments of Muslim East civilization - Sebzikar. This grave-yard is recognized as one of the basic symbols of city.

At this monument were found some important historical sources – epitaphs. Sebzikar was completely built in the end of XVII century – the beginning of XIX century.

This main historic-cultural complex has more than 500 years old. But in XVII-XVIII centuries there were built a mosque, some temples and other constructions. On the territory of the ancient historical and architectural complex of modern times to store more than 100 ancient and unique tombstones. These tombstones are mausoleums Serdabe (local sarcophags) [3-7].

During the centuries many visitors, guests from different parts of Azerbaijan, also from the other Muslim countries visit Ganja Sebzikar monument (grave-yard).

Teaching of these values, traditional architecture and handicrafts features is so important in our country. Educational processes, carried out on the basis of a systemic interpretation of the material, make it possible to develop correct guidelines in the huge information flow of the modern cultural space. The continuous changes that are so characteristic of the modern world require adequate educational correction. Thus, it is possible to understand and change human consciousness, without which its vital activity is inconceivable [3; 6-8].

The modern educational process consists of a number of important vectors, among which the priority ones are:

1. Control system;
2. The nature of training, implying not only deepening in one's specialization, but also expanding the interdisciplinary horizon;
3. A significant change in the administration policy based on the strategy of global thinking.

The emergence of information culture is a person's response to the challenges of the new time, responding to certain challenges, a person develops,

since challenges force us to strain, put forward new ideas, form new structures to cope with challenges. The uniqueness of a number of modern challenges, - the so-called global problems of our time, - in the fact that, firstly, they are of a planetary nature, and secondly, they are systemic, interact with each other, enhancing the synergistic effect of the impact on modern civilization [2, p. 119-120].

### Comparative approach to the research of architectural heritage of Ganja based on construction characteristics

Sebzikar grave-yard as one of the historical symbol of Ganja city, also sample of the ancient material-cultural source in research of tolerance culture in our country has a great importance. The historical heritage, rich past of this city has similar features with Sebzikar monuments. Because in the territory of this ancient grave-yard have been preserved so many samples, monuments of multicultural heritage, urban culture characteristics of Ganja city for centuries.

Examples of Ganja Sebzikar cemetery, which is part of this sacred place - a place of constant pilgrimage of city dwellers for centuries and is considered the oldest tombs in the history of the cemetery, are not limited to the construction of Islamic-Muslim cultural traditions, including tombstones.

These examples of valuable epitaphs - depictions on ancient tombs and tombs, as well as writing elements, as well as local and national architectural and artistic traditions that existed and developed in the pre-Islamic period in Azerbaijan, referring to millennia in the form and technology of tomb monuments should not be overlooked. Because these relatively older examples of the tombs of the Sabzikar complex clearly reflect the centuries-old valuable artistic features of the local Aran school of architecture in Ganja.

For centuries, there have been fertile conditions for the formation of a culture of coexistence in the traditional neighborhoods of Ganja, such as Imamli, Sabzavad, Attarlar, Zarrabi. These urban planning units include monuments that have survived to the present day, the Imamzade Mausoleum, the Sebzikar cemetery, the Alley of Martyrs, as well as the Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Jewish, and even Spanish civil wars in the late 1930s. The preservation of the graves of aviators of Spanish, Hungarian, Russian and other nationalities who studied at the pilot school operating in Ganja city secondary school number 30 during the first half of the XX century. Like many historical and architectural monuments of Ganja, the Imamzada tomb provides a basis for the establishment of a culture of high religious tolerance and tolerance of our people.

This positive human quality, which has a special place among our ethnic, spiritual and ideological

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features and can be shown as a real example for the peoples of the world, has been preserved in Imamzada, as well as in other shrines of our country. In a broad sense, it can be noted that the Ganja Imamzada mausoleum complex has a significant impact on strengthening the attitude, loyalty and bigotry of our people to the traditions of national statehood. Thus, the Imamzada shrine, first of all, as a national treasure of our people, a historical monument, as a carrier of our material and cultural heritage, transmits our ethnicity from generation to generation and lives it [6, p. 49-57; 9, p. 359-360].

One of the most important qualities of our people is kindness, generosity and generosity. In this regard, the Imamzada shrine is a real source of example. Thus, both during important public holidays and religious ceremonies, as well as on ordinary days, people from many different social groups and classes organize ehsan tables for pilgrims. In addition, it is especially commendable that during the important religious ceremonies and holidays, many believers and residents of the city voluntarily participate in blood donation campaigns without any distinction.

### Conclusion

Sabzavad was one of the neighborhoods that proved that Ganja is one of the cities where historical coexistence and cultural traditions are preserved. The ancient Sebzikar cemetery, which continues to exist here to this day, is of special importance.

Sebzikar cemetery, which was included in the list of real historical and architectural monuments of local importance in 1968, is an example of material culture of special importance in this regard, as an open-air museum. The tombstones of Ganja Sebzikar grave-yard, despite the similarities with each other, no tomb or mausoleum replicates the architectural style of the other.

It should be noted that many of the graves and grave monuments in the territory of Ganja Sebzikar cemetery are not found not only in some regions of Azerbaijan, but also in most parts of the world.

Study of architectural and craftsmanship traditions as the sample of tolerance and multicultural values is an innovative approach. That is why teaching of these issues is necessary; also it is the part of process of humanization of education. Relying on the possibilities of universalization and humanization of knowledge, it is necessary to form such paradigms of education that will contribute to the improvement of spiritual culture [2, p. 119-120].

In the context of modern Azerbaijan, the solution to the problems posed to culture presupposes the implementation of a new educational policy. Let us emphasize the significant activation and creative flourishing of the culture of Azerbaijan. In these conditions, the active dynamics of development of all its levels testifies to the support of the state and giving a special status to culture in modern Azerbaijan.

A rich history, vast cultural experience, progressive cultural policy - all this gives impetus to the development of modern, new approaches to liberal arts education.

Research and study of local architecture, craftsmanship traditions in very important as national-moral values. In contrast to the primitive, simple systems of religious thought, such as fetishism, totemism, and animism, which generally include the worship of ancestral spirits, animals, and plants, as well as individual natural monuments, They were based on religious beliefs such as divinity (or the religion of the heavenly gods), Zoroastrianism, and fire-worship, which embodied monotheism.

For this reason, in the historical stages after the adoption of Islam, as in our time, our pre-Islamic national and spiritual values have developed in unity with our Islamic and religious traditions and have been preserved and passed down from generation to generation. At the same time, graves and tombstones, which embody the organic connection between Islamic values and national and spiritual traditions in our places of ancient history, such as Ganja Sebzikar cemetery, highlight another very important historical fact [2, p. 119-120].

Thus, the Arabs, who created a powerful empire in the VII-VIII centuries and subjugated a very large territory and came to the territory of Azerbaijan, for the first time faced the issues that amazed them. So, for the first time, they were confronted with the stubborn resistance of very patriotic and brave people. In addition, the Arabs were amazed by the monuments created by our ancestors, who have many times higher cultural values than themselves. Our people, who have a history of at least five thousand years of statehood, have long benefited from this rich experience of governance.

The study of the art of pottery and its various fields is important as a source in the study of the rich parts of underground Ganja with the above-mentioned unique examples of craftsmanship of particular interest in the construction of material culture is the use of baked red bricks as a building material (as a local building material), which is typical for Ganja. Many tombstones in the Sebzikar cemetery, as well as the materials used in the preparation of the graves, are based on local raw materials, as well as through various chemicals, turned into appropriate additives.

Thanks to the scientific study of the centuries-old tombs of Ganja Sebzikar cemetery, it is possible to study in more detail the multicultural values and traditions of tolerance in the city with reference to new sources.

For the first time in this research, significance of Sebzikar monument was studied in investigation of multicultural values in Ganja city, which has an ancient and rich historical past, as well as in the formation and preservation of the traditions of a culture of peaceful coexistence - tolerance.

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The main characteristic features of the formation and development of multiculturalism, tolerant values over the centuries in such ancient quarters of the city as Imamly, Sebzevad, Ettarlar, Zerrabi, Ozan, etc. were also investigated.

The construction and preservation of such important material and cultural monuments as mosques, an Orthodox church, the German Lutheran church, Albanian temples - monuments of the pre-Islamic period in Ganja have been studied as the main indicators of the traditions of a culture of peaceful coexistence - tolerance in this ancient city. In article have been noted some statistics on the ethnic composition of the city population based on scientific documents.

In addition, on the basis of undeniable arguments and facts, scientific sources, the importance of the existence for centuries of such residential quarters as the quarter (corner) of Jews, a separate residential area of Lezghins, Lahijes, etc. along with the local historical quarters of Ganja is proved [1, p. 220-222; 5; 6, p. 17-24, 100-105].

By the way, in the territory of Sebzikar graveyard, also in Imamzada cemetery have been preserved ancient graves, tombs and other monuments of the

representatives of generations of such famous historical personalities as thinker and poet Nizami Ganjavi, first female philosopher and poet Mahsati Ganjavi, writers and educators - Mirza Mehdi Naji, Mirza Shafi Vazeh and etc.

### Acknowledgements

This scientific paper dedicated to the 880th anniversary of the great Azerbaijani poet and thinker Nizami Ganjavi. Because of this genius personality enormous contribution to the cultural heritage of the world, by the order of President of Azerbaijan has been announced 2021 - the 880th anniversary of his birth - as the year of Nizami Ganjavi.

The works of Nizami Ganjavi were translated into many languages. The rare manuscript copies of his works are kept and preserved like precious pearls in famous libraries, museums and literary foundations in cities such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Baku, Tashkent, Tabriz, Tehran, Cairo, Istanbul, Delhi, London, Paris and others. Monuments to Nizami Ganjavi are found in many cities of Azerbaijan, as well as in Moscow, Rome, St.Peterburg, Kyiv, Beijing, Tashkent and etc.

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