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## GANJA SEBZIKAR GRAVE-YARD AS THE HISTORICAL-ETHNOGRAPHIC SOURCE

**Abstract:** *Scientific paper deals with the research of ancient Sebzikar grave-yard as an important medieval monument of Ganja city in study of historical past of this old cultural center of Azerbaijan. Also this sacred place was investigated from the historical and ethnographic point of view based on investigation of various academic lists, literary materials, ancient 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 tolerance. 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.*

**Key words:** Azerbaijan, historical-ethnographic research, Ganja, Sebzikar cemetery, architecture, multidisciplinary research, innovative methods, urban culture.

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### Introduction

Sebzikar cemetery, located in the ancient quarter Sebzevad, is a historical and architectural complex of local importance. Grave-yard has preserved many material and cultural samples, historical sources - tombstones, epitaphs, ancient tombstones - epigraphic sources. This important monument has a rich history of more than five centuries. There are more than one hundred tombs and graves in Sebzikar grave-yard. Among these monuments, tombs and graves of the descendants of the city's outstanding clans have the main importance. Significance of Sebzikar monument as an important example of pan-Islamic spiritual and material culture, an open-air museum, its importance 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 [3, 110-117; 4, 120].

This ancient monument is one the basic symbols of Ganja city. Initially, Ganja was located on the left bank of the Ganjachay (fortress - Gala Yeri) in the territory near the village of Gedemish, located 5 km from the village of Zurnabad. From the historical sources it is known that in VI BC of the Akhemenides II Cyrus was defeated near the fortress of Ganja by the brave woman-commander Tomris. Ancient Ganja from the VI century BC to the V century AD was located in the specified territory. As a result of the earthquake in 427 and the Sassanid wars with the Huns, the ancient Ganja was destroyed. The second time the city changed its location 8-9 miles from the place called Gizil Gaya (Golden Rock), that is, 10-11 km to the north of the present Ganja. In the VII century, Arab troops invaded the territory of our homeland. During this period, the city was again

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destroyed by the Arab conquerors. Then, for the third time, Ganja was inhabited in the territory of "Sheherburnu", located on the left bank of the Kur River. Natural disaster in 1139 for the fourth time destroyed Ganja. As noted in his works, an outstanding scientist, Orientalist, academician E. Bertels, as a result of the earthquake in Ganja, more than 300 thousand people died. This fact confirms that Ganja in the XII century was a magnificent city on the cultural heritage and in terms of population, also larger than such large cities as London, Paris, etc. After this disaster, the city settled in the present sanctuary of Imamzadeh, that is, Shikh Plain [1, 16-21; 24].

Finally, for the fifth time the city of Ganja during the Safavid-Ottoman wars in the late XVI - early XVII centuries were moved to the territory of the present Ganja. Here in 1588 the Ottoman commander Farhad Pasha built a fortress that has survived to our days. It should be noted that after the resettlement of the city by Shah Abbas I, by his order, Ganja was completely landscaped by the project of the outstanding scientist, architect Sheikh Bakhaaddin Mohammed Amuli, unique pearl of Ganja architecture like Juma mosque, Chekek-hamam (Ancient bathhouse), Karavansaray etc.

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 "Imamzadeh" and the cemetery "Sebzikar" are preserved. One of the main historical monuments of Ganja - Imamzadeh tomb-complex attracts the attention of a number of features from the point of multiculturalism view. Ganja Imamzadeh 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.

The above facts prove that, since ancient times Ganja was famous for its high development of trade, crafts, was considered one of the main centers of science, education, culture and was noted for its intellectual potential. Starting from the VII-VIII centuries there were such prominent scientific and educational centers as Ganja's Houses, "Centers of Healing" in Ganja, in addition there were quite a few madrasah schools in mosques. It was in such centers of science that numerous teacher-pedagogues, outstanding figures of science of their time, were taught.

Thanks to such personalities, the geniuses of all times lived and created geniuses of all times-the great philosopher of Oriental poetry Nizami Ganjavi, the first woman philosopher, the poetess Mehseti Ganjavi, the first women representatives of medieval poetry of the East-the poetess Siti Ganjavi, Raziya Ganjavi, Dokhtari Ganjavi, the head of the Council of Arran poets XII century Abul Ula Ganjavi, the outstanding

poet of the XIX century Mirza Shafi Vazeh, whose verses were written by world famous composers of the world - Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Bach. Also in the city there were many libraries, the most famous of which was the "Dar El Kutub", which existed already in the X-XI centuries. It is important to note that even today in the city there is a centralized library system, a children's central library, the only branch of the Miniature Museum in the region [15, 11-14].

### Materials and Methods

As a natural result of the historical process of the development of urban culture in Ganja in the early Middle Ages, along with Muslim burial rituals, a new type of tombs and especially tombstones gradually spread. These gravestones can be classified as follows:

- tombs of the sarcophagus type;
- gravestones;
- tombstones.

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. 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 [13, 45-51; 22, 344].

Ganja is one of the oldest corners of our country's culture. Azerbaijan is located between Europe and Asia and has a favorable natural-geographic economy, mild climate, fertile soil, rich mineral resources. This territory is actually famous as the first shelter of human civilization. Two million years ago there were every condition for the habitation, life, creation, development and advancement of primitive people. The ancient city of Ganja is one of the first centers of urban civilization (urbanization) is not only the Muslim East and the world [1, s. 42, 51-58].

Ganja has a history of at least 4000 years of the Muslim Orient and here are old monuments, tomb of Aposlels, a valuable sanctuary. Sebzikar tomb is considered to be the most important symbol of the

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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 sarcophagi). Ganja Sebizkar tomb was for centuries the sanctuary of the Muslims, who had come not only from Azerbaijan, but also from other countries.

Here you can follow the development of the craft and architecture based on the study of the grave. The 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 [3, 119-124, 189-192; 15, 12-16].

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 [2, 11; 3, 42; 5, 45].

Ganja is one of the few cities in which residential areas such as "Jewish Street", "Lezgy Quarter", "Lagich (Lahydzh)" district etc. existed, in which representatives of other nations lived in peace and tranquility [12, 11-14].

Our country, in which our largest leader Heydar Aliyev founded the State Policy Priority, has deepest multicultural tribe, tolerance traditions and preservation of various religious, cultural and historical monuments. President of the Sovereigns of Azerbaijan Republic Ilham Aliyev, the successor of big eyelids, successfully continues smart, national politics.

Azerbaijan is one of the rare countries in the world where multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue are one of the priorities of state policy, and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev is one of rare heads of state who contribute to the development of dialogue and cooperation between different cultures and campaign more intensively for this process.

### Multidisciplinary significance of research

Ganja is one of the most ancient cultural centers of our country. Azerbaijan is located on the border of Europe and Asia and has good natural geographical conditions – a mild climate, fertile lands, natural underground and over ground resources.

This land is recognized to be one of the most ancient centers of civilizations. Two million years ago there were necessary conditions on these lands for the primitive man's living, creation, evolution and progress.

The ancient city – Ganja is one of the first centers of urban civilization (urbanization) not only of the Muslim East, but whole of the World.

This ancient cultural and scientific center – Ganja city has more than 4000 years old and here there is one of the main and ancient historical-architectural monuments of Muslim East civilization – Sebizkar. Sebizkar grave-yard is recognized as one of the basic symbols of city.

At this monument were found some important historical sources – epitaphs. Sebizkar 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) [1, 23-29; 3, 7-11].

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

This monument is one the main samples of multiculturalism and tolerance. The modern functioning of multicultural categories is directed towards socially adapted multicultural landmarks. The concept of multiculturalism is based on an important methodological paradigm in Azerbaijani science, according to which the binary concept of multiculturalism is primary. Thus, the ideas of multiculturalism in Azerbaijan appeal to the ethnogenetic ability of the people to integrate cultural ethnocodes, on the one hand, and to preserve their national identity, on the other hand. We emphasize that the internal consistency of the multicultural model has significant potential.

Modern society of Azerbaijan is a society of open dialogue with representatives of other nations and religions, for multiculturalism in Azerbaijan is both a state policy and a way of life. Thus, a close relationship is born between society and the priorities of socio-political development. In the light of the foregoing, we emphasize that multiculturalism in Azerbaijan has deep historical roots and is closely connected with the mentality. The tolerance of the Azerbaijani people was formed over a long historical time [3, 18-19; 11, 56-59, 78-82].

At different stages of the history of the capital city of Ganja status while maintaining the traditions of the ancient statehood and independence was of great importance. The city is in the province of the Caliphate of the seventh century, the X century and Shaddadis capital of Arran, in the eleventh century Seljuk, was the twelfth and thirteenth centuries' residence in Atabaylar state. The famous Ganja Gate manufactured by renowned local blacksmith

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Osmanoghlu Ibrahim in 1063 and taken away by invaders in the aftermath of the earthquake in 1139, was thoroughly restored to its original view by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in 2008.

Adorned by the national ornaments, the Gate was re-installed at the city's entrance. The city reached prosperity in the XII-XIII centuries as it became the second capital of the Atabay state and one of the outposts of Persian civilization. An exclusive fabric called "Ganja silk" was manufactured here. It was highly valued in the neighboring countries and in the Middle East.

In spite of numerous destructions suffered through the history, Ganja remains a beautiful city with many ancient sites. Among them are the Big and Small Bridges (XII century), the Palace of Darus Sultan (XII century), towers, the Friday Mosque, the madrasah, hamams and caravanserais, as well as Imamzadeh complex (XVI century) – a picturesque building with blue domes, constructed as a Mausoleum of Imam Bagir ibn Ibrahim.

The historical and architectural complex, built in the XVII century by the famous scientist and architect Sheikh Bahaaddin (Sheikh Muhammad Bahaaddin Amuli), is also worth mentioning. It includes Juma Mosque (called Shah Abbas Mosque), Chekak-Hamam (medieval bath) and a caravanserai [3, 18-19; 6, 27; 11, 78-82, 115-121].

### Conclusion

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.

Summarize some of the systemic components of multiculturalism:

1. State policy as the basis of multicultural processes in Azerbaijan;
2. Multiculturalism as a synthesis of national and universal;
3. Multiculturalism is a product of a democratic society;
4. Multicultural significant openness to the world community;
5. Multiculturalism determines the willingness to engage in dialogue within the framework of public policy;
6. Multiculturalism defines new processes of Azerbaijan's integration into the modern world;
7. Parity of civil rights;
8. Ensuring the security of a democratic state.

The importance of multiculturalism in Azerbaijani society is high.

Multiculturalism creates the prerequisites for successful intercultural dialogue in modern Azerbaijan, allow you to rely on the positive trends of intercultural dialogue. Moreover, it is the guarantor of the unity and cohesion of society, for it ensures the equal rights of all citizens of Azerbaijan regardless of religious and ethnicity [4, 120; 7, 377].

Thanks to the scientific study of centuries-old tombs of the Sebzikar Ganja cemetery, you can study in more detail the multicultural values and traditions of tolerance in this ancient city based on new material, cultural, scientific sources.

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