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## HEYDAR ALIYEV AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN AZERBAIJAN

**Abstract.** The article examines the conservation and restoration works carried out in Azerbaijan during the years of H. Aliyev's leadership. When the great leader came to power, some decrees were signed on the protection of historical heritage in Azerbaijan, 814 mosques were built in the republic from 1990 to now, 306 mosques are protected as architectural monuments. During these years, in Bibiheybat, Ajdar and Juma mosques, Muhammad mosque in Icherishehar, as well as Sumu gala, "Allah-Allah", Sheikh Babi tombs, Pir Huseyn khanaghah, Shakikhanov's house, Shah Abbas caravanserai, etc. restoration or conservation works have been carried out. The creation of the first historical and cultural reserves in the country has been evaluated since 1968 as the value given to our cultural heritage during the reign of Great Leader H. Aliyev. The Great Leader's care for our cultural heritage can be evaluated as a deep respect for our history, ancestry, and identity, and he can be evaluated as a mediator in the integration of the culture of the Azerbaijani people into the world.

**Keys words:** Heydar Aliyev, protection of monuments, restoration, cultural heritage, reserves.

**Introduction.** From the first days of Heydar Aliyev's coming to political power in Azerbaijan (1969–1982), the issues of studying the history and culture of Azerbaijan, researching and promoting various problems were in the foreground in his large-scale activities. A number of measures were carried out, first of all, discussions were held that determined the directions of work to be done at the highest level, laws

and decisions were adopted under the Great Leader's direct leadership, who paid great attention and care to our history and historical-cultural monuments when he came to power. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the agenda of the session of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR, which was held in September 1973, included and discussed the issue of the state of cultural monuments in the area and measures to protect them. After that, the decision "On improving the protection and restoration of historical and cultural monuments in the Azerbaijan SSR", which was adopted by the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev as the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party on September 10, 1976, opened wide horizons in order to carry out important work in this direction. Heydar Aliyev, who showed deep interest in the history of his people, achieved the adoption of the "Law of the Azerbaijan SSR on the Protection and Use of Historical and Cultural Monuments" at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR dated July 21, 1978, and to approve the Charter of the Society for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Azerbaijan in the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR on January 27, 1982 in order to ensure that large-scale works in this field were carried out within the framework of the law. So, the issue of restoration, research and protection of historical and cultural monuments on the territory of the country was formalized by laws and decisions, and the duties of responsible organizations in this field were defined. As stated in the law, the expression "protection of monuments is the duty of every citizen" increased the responsibility of not only those working in this field, but also the local population [1].

**The interpretation of the main material.** After Heydar Aliyev's return to power in 1993 (1993-2003), important steps were taken to restore historical-architectural monuments in Azerbaijan, including Baku and implement a number of important measures to transmit them to future generations. The head of state Heydar Aliyev's decrees "On Culture" in April 1998 and "On Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments" in June of the same year were among the most important steps taken in the direction of protecting our historical heritage. These decrees regulated relations associated with the protection, research and use of historical and cultural monuments.

The creation of the first historical and cultural reserves in the country has been evaluated as the value given to our cultural heritage during

Great Leader H. Aliyev's leadership since 1968. These historical places, such as the Yukhari Bash of Sheki (1968), the Icheri Sheher (Old City) of Baku (1977), the historical part of Ordubad (1977) and Shusha (1988) were the first preserved cities. Each preserved medieval town attracts attention with its urban planning system, which was created by the public center and neighborhood system, consisting of a ribbon-shaped, street-length trade. The Old City, which became a historical-architectural reserve, was included in the "World Heritage List" of UNESCO in 1977, but, in the 1990s, the Old City was included in the "List of World Heritage in Danger" due to a number of serious mistakes in the preserving work, which were made by the responsible authorities. In February 2003, our National Leader signed a decree "On some measures related to the protection and restoration of the Old City historical-architectural reserve in Baku" in order to protect the Old City, which is an invaluable monument of our material culture. After this decree, the demolition of historical monuments and illegal construction works were stopped in the ancient Old City.

The first list of historical and cultural monuments in Azerbaijan was compiled in 1957, and the second in 1968. New changes were made to the list in 1981 and reflected in the 1988 list. In order to improve the cultural and historical heritage protection works by independent Azerbaijan, the monuments were classified as world, state and nationally important monuments according to their value, and reflected in the catalog approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in 2000-2001.

The Great Leader paid special attention to the restoration of Islamic monuments, mosques, protection of religious temples and their restoration. About 200 mosques were repaired and 16 mosques were rebuilt during 1993-2003 under Heydar Aliyev's instructions. Reconstruction of the Bibiheybat mosque complex was started in 1998 at the expense of state funds, and it was officially opened in 1999. In 1994, Heydar Aliyev signed an order to build a new mosque where the old mosque was destroyed in 1936. The plan and measure of the complex were restored based on photographs taken shortly before the explosion in 1980. The notes of famous travelers played an important role in the restoration of the mosque. Heydar Aliyev attended personally the opening ceremony held on July 12, 1999 [4].

Major repairs, restoration and reconstruction works were carried out in the Tezepir Mosque, Icherisheher Juma and Muhammad Mosques, Ajdar Bey

Mosque and Shamakhi Juma Mosque in accordance with the relevant Orders and instructions of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev. According to the relevant Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, repair and restoration works were also carried out in the Imamzadeh Mausoleum in Ganja. The “Imamzadeh” tomb, which is currently protected by the state as a monument of state importance, faced the threat of demolition in the 1970s because it hindered the propagation of atheism. After President Heydar Aliyev was informed about this, his intervention saved the monument from destruction [6].

Measures to protect our national cultural heritage were in the focus of special attention when Great Leader Heydar Aliyev was in power (1993–2003) during the years of independence. H. Aliyev’s participation in Novruz celebrations in 1998 in Icherisheher, which he always focused on, breathed new life into the Shirvanshahs’ Palace, which is the “ring stone” of the ancient city. After getting acquainted with the ongoing restoration works in the Shirvanshahs’ Palace complex, the Great Leader gave the necessary instructions regarding the restoration of the monument. As a result of these tasks, according to the loan agreement signed between the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the International Development Association on May 31, 1999, the World Bank allocated a loan for the restoration of four architectural monuments – “Momine Khatun”, “Karabaghlar” mausoleums, Sheki Khan Palace and Shirvanshahs’ Palace.

When Heydar Aliyev was in Shusha in 1967, he visited Vagif’s dilapidated and destroyed grave and said that the grave was not worthy of Vagif. Under the Great Leader’s instructions, a mausoleum was built on the poet’s grave in 1980-1981, and the National Leader opened the poet’s mausoleum with great ceremony in Shusha under heavy snow on January 14, 1982. The construction was started in 1977 based on the project of A. V. Salamzade, Full member of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Dc. Sc. (Art Study), professor and Honored architect E. I. Kanukov.

The National Leader, who was going to Shusha on January 12, 1979, on the day of the opening of the Aghdam-Khankendi railway line, gave a special instruction to pay special attention to the protection of the historical monuments of the Azerbaijani people in the city: “Shusha is a city of monuments. It is necessary to protect everything related to the rich history of the city, to restore ancient buildings”. The Great Leader’s attention and concern for Karabakh increased even more, and extensive construction works

developed in those years. Besides these, he got acquainted with the exhibits in the house-museums of Uzeyir Bey Hajibeyli, Bulbul and Natava in Shusha and gave recommendations on their preservation. Meetings of the National Leader with the city community in Shusha left an unforgettable mark in the memory of every Shusha resident and still lives in memories today. The monument to poetess Khurshidbanu Nateva was inaugurated in Shusha with the direct participation of Heydar Aliyev, who visited Karabakh for the second time in a year from July 29 to August 2, 1982 [5].

Heydar Aliyev paid special attention to perpetuating the memory of historical figures and intellectuals. The bad condition of the Nizami mausoleum did not escape the attention of the Great Leader, who was the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party at that time, during the 840<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of Nizami in 1981, and he made a proposal to build a more magnificent mausoleum over Nizami's grave. Although the project was approved, the construction of the new mausoleum was postponed due to the appointment of Heydar Aliyev to a high position in Moscow. It was decided to start the construction of the mausoleum on the eve of Nizami's 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1990, but this process was not without losses. The mausoleum complex was overhauled on the basis of the project developed under the leadership of Jafar Giyasi, correspondent member of ANAS at the Scientific Research Project Institute of Restoration of Monuments, only in 2011, and the Nizami Ganjavi Museum was built in front of the mausoleum with the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

As a result of Heydar Aliyev's personal initiative and great effort, Huseyn Javid was physically returned from distant Siberia to his native Nakhchivan in 1996, which can be considered as one of his exceptional services to Javid studies. This event was the only one in the Soviet Union at that time. The mausoleum over Huseyn Javid's grave was built based on the traditions of Ajami Nakhchivani, Nakhchivan school of architecture and the modern transcription of these traditions. The light of the star-shaped shabaka ornaments of the mausoleum illuminates the tomb on the stylobate fully from the inside. The mausoleum was built of white marble. The author of the monument project is Rasim Aliyev, the Honored architect of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the sculptor is Omar Eldarov, the People's artist.

When H. Aliyev led independent Azerbaijan, the historical and cultural monuments located in the territory of the republic were re-inspected and a new list of cultural heritage samples taken under state protection was approved,

and many monuments (Sumu Castle, Allah-Allah and Sheikh Babi Tombs, Pir-Huseyn Khanaghah, Shekikhanov House, “Shah Abbas” Caravanserai, Philharmonic Building, Sheki Khan Palace) were repaired and restored, historical areas of special importance (Chiraggala Historical Reserve, Shabran Historical-Cultural Reserve) were declared protected by the decision No. 132 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated August 2, 2001. The restoration of the “Sheki Khan Palace” was completed, and restoration and conservation works were completed in the Abu-Muslim and Khidir Nabi mosques of the Khinalig State Historical-Architectural and Ethnographic Reserve in 2002.

**Conclusion.** Today, Great Leader Heydar Aliyev’s care for the architectural heritage is carried out by his successor, Ilham Aliyev. The liberation of Karabakh and restoration of a number of monuments in Shusha, Aghdam are clear examples of this. The Great Leader’s care for our cultural heritage was evaluated as a deep respect for our history, ancestry and identity, and he became a mediator in the integration of the culture of the Azerbaijani people into the world.

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## HEYDƏR ƏLİYEV VƏ AZƏRBAYCANDA MƏDƏNİ İRSİN QORUNMASI

Məqalədə H. Əliyevin rəhbərliyi illərində Azərbaycanda aparılan konservasiya və bərpa işləri araşdırılır. Ulu öndərin hakimiyyətə gəlişi ilə Azərbaycanda tarixi irsin qorunması ilə bağlı bəzi fərmanlar imzalanıb,

1990-cı ildən indiyədək respublikada 814 məscid tikilmiş, 306 məscid memarlıq abidəsi kimi qorunur. Bu illərdə Bibiheybət, Əjdər və Cümə məscidlərində, İçərişəhərdə Məhəmməd məscidində, eləcə də Sumu qala, “Allah-Allah”, Şeyx Babı türbələrində, Pir Hüseyn xanəgahında, Şəkiyanovların evində, Şah Abbas karvansarasında və s. bərpa və ya konservasiya işləri aparılmışdır. Ölkə ərazisində ilk tarix-mədəniyyət qoruqlarının yaradılması məhz Ulu Öndər H.Əliyevin hakimiyyəti illərində mədəni irsimizə verilən dəyər kimi 1968-ci ildən qiymətləndirilir. Ulu Öndərin mədəni irsimizə göstərdiyi qayğı tariximizə, soy kökümüzə, kimliyimizə olan dərin hörmət kimi qiymətləndirilərək, onu Azərbaycan xalqının mədəniyyətinin dünyaya inteqrasiyasında vasitəçi kimi qiymətləndirmək olar.

*Açar sözlər:* Heydər Əliyev, abidələrin mühafizəsi, bərpası, mədəni irs, qoruqlar.

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#### **ГЕЙДАР АЛИЕВ И ЗАЩИТА КУЛЬТУРНОГО НАСЛЕДИЯ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНЕ**

В статье рассматриваются консервационные и реставрационные работы, проведенные в Азербайджане в годы правления Г. Алиева. Когда великий лидер пришел к власти, в Азербайджане были подписаны указы об охране исторического наследия, с 1990 года по настоящее время в республике построено 814 мечетей, 306 мечетей охраняются как памятники архитектуры. В эти годы в мечетях Бибиэйбат, Аждар и Джума, мечети Мухаммеда в Ичеришехере, а также Суму гала, «Аллах-Аллах», усыпальницах Шейха Баби, ханаге Пир Гусейн, доме Шахиханова, караван-сарая Шах Аббаса и др. были проведены реставрационные или консервационные работы. Создание первых в стране историко-культурных заповедников с 1968 года оценивается как ценность, приданная нашему культурному наследию в годы правления Великого лидера Г.Алиева. Забота Великого Лидера о нашем культурном наследии может быть оценена как глубокое уважение к нашей истории, происхождению и самобытности, и его можно оценить как посредника в интеграции культуры азербайджанского народа в мир.

*Ключевые слова:* Гейдар Алиев, охрана памятников, реставрация, культурное наследие, заповедники.