

ACADEMIC ISSUES OF RESEARCH OF WRITTEN SOURCES IN STUDY OF HISTORIC-ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF GANJA BASED ON MATERIALS OF THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

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Abstract. In this paper various documents for the Late Middle Ages have been investigated as the important springs in study of historic-cultural and architectural heritage of Ganja city. The official military documents of the former Russian Empire contain detailed historical information about the economy, culture, demography and political history of the city of Ganja and the Khanate. The materials in the funds of different archives, together with other sources of the researched period, allow us to objectively study of the history, also cultural heritage of the Ganja Khanate and this ancient city. Based on various materials also have been investigated the main features of handicrafts during the late Middle Ages.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, history, Ganja, architecture, archive, written sources, handicrafts.

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Received: 30 September 2024; **Accepted:** 12 December 2024; **Published:** 11 February 2025.

1. Introduction

Ganja Khanate was one of the independent khanates that emerged in the territory of Azerbaijan in the second in the Late Middle Ages. During this period, due to its political and economic importance, Ganja was the center of attention of both internal and external powers. The khanate constantly fought against external and internal forces. For this reason, its political history during its existence is rich with various events. This period have to be researched based on archival materials. Among these archives, the Russian State Archive of Military History occupies one of the main places. The documents of the archive play an important role in the study of the history of Azerbaijan during the Khanate period and the Russian military expansion into Azerbaijan. Among the important documents reflecting the history of Azerbaijan, there are also materials on the Ganja Khanate and city in the RSMHA². Rich information about Ganja Khanate and its city can be found among these materials.

How to cite (APA):

Hasanov, E. (2025). Academic issues of research of written sources in study of historic-architectural heritage of Ganja based on materials of the Late Middle ages. *Islamic History and Literature*, 3(1), 56-61
<https://doi.org/10.62476/ihl3.156>

² Review of the Political State of the Georgian-Imereti Province, the Caspian Region and the Derbent Military District Administration. Institute of History. Scientific Archive, f.1795. d. No. 3, p. 478. (In Russian).

2. Materials and research methods

In the funds of the Russian State Military-Historical Archive, drawings of the city-fortress plans of Baku, Ganja, Shamakhi, Shusha, Sheki, Guba, Lankaran, Nakhchivan for different years are preserved³. The plan of Ganja city and fortress is among the documents preserved in the archive. The plan of the fortress was drawn by military cartographers during the military campaign. Thus, in 1796, under the leadership of Count Valerian Zubov, Russia's military expansion to Azerbaijan began. In addition to soldiers and officers, the Russian army included a large number of engineers-cartographers during the military campaign⁴.

Their goal was to prepare schemes and drawings of Azerbaijani cities, fortresses, fortifications, bridges and roads.

In the 18th century, a large number of defensive buildings existed in Azerbaijan. One of the cities distinguished by its strong fortress walls was Ganja⁵.

The plan of Ganja city kept in the archive was drawn for the first time in 1797. The purpose of Zubov's military expedition was invasion and as a result of the campaign, Derbent, Baku, Guba, Shamakhi and Mugan were occupied (Mustafazada, 2013a; 20).

The information contained in the RSMHA funds starts from the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. Since the city of Ganja was part of the Ganja Khanate at that time, these materials are mainly related to the economic, political and military life of the Khanate. Official diplomatic correspondence between the Ganja Khanate and the Russian Empire, military letters, spy reports, requests to the emperor, trade agreements, summaries and military campaigns, military documents during the war are preserved in the archive's funds (Agayan, 1972).

Also, the materials related to the march of Russian troops to Azerbaijan in 1796 are especially valuable in the archive⁶.

All kinds of comprehensive preparations were made. So, to ensure the military success of the campaign, navigation, supply great attention was paid to the issues and the study of local conditions. According to Zubov's instructions, an accurate drawing of all buildings of military interest was being prepared. The drawing of Ganja Castle was one of these documents (Salamzada, 1964).

From the plan in the archive, it is clear that the city of Ganja covers a large area. It is also clear that the defensive fortress surrounding the city of Ganja is a fortified military fortification. In the plan, it was mentioned that the Ganja fortress was built in the shape of a 6-pointed angle and had three main entrance gates. The name of the entrance doors is also reflected on the drawing. These are written as Iravan, Shusha and Kura, Tiflis gates. Most likely, the doors were named according to the direction they opened.

From the drawing, it is clear that Ganja Castle consisted of two layers of walls during this period. Sometimes the distance between them reached 70-80 meters. But the

³ Plans and descriptions of cities, fortresses, villages and other populated areas of the former Russian Empire. RSMHA, f. 349, op. 3, d. 3329, d. 3334, d. 3338, d. 3339, d. 3345. (In Russian).

⁴ From the time of Empress Catherine II to the reign of Pavel Petrovich from 1763 to 1890 (30 years). Institute of History. Scientific Archive, f. 1795, d. No. 2, p. 463. (In Russian).

⁵ Report to the Most Excellent and Most Excellent Mr. Lieutenant General and Actual Kemerger, Saratov and Caucasus Governor General Pavel Sergeevich Potomkin. Institute of History. Scientific Archive, f. 1795, d. No. 1, p. 420. (In Russian).

⁶ Letter sent to His Serene Highness King Irakli on November 11, 1783. RSMHA, collection 52, op. 1, d. 286, p. 49-51. (In Russian).

main wall was the second wall with 6 towers. The suburbs were called Naringala (Hasanov, 2023).

The khan's palace was located in the central part of the city surrounded by the walls of the Ganja fortress. The Khan's palace included large building complexes (Hasanov, 2023).

The Ganja city plan also has features that allow us to study its economic life. Thus, the plan reflects the presence of many orchards in and around Ganja. This feature allows you to get information about the occupation of the city population and its food supply⁷.

During Zubov's military campaign to Azerbaijan, Ganja city and fortress were studied in detail. After the occupation of the city in 1804, attention was not paid to the drawing of the fortress as before. This is confirmed by two plans of the city drawn up in the later years when Ganja was already called Yelizavetpol. Although the exact date is not indicated on any of the plans, they are marked with the words "Yelizavetpol city plan"⁸.

Both plans are incomplete. However, they are also reflected in the central Friday mosque and Madrasa bath.

In addition to the city of Ganja, the archive funds also contain documents reflecting the political situation in the region. The documents allow us to assess the political importance of the Ganja Khanate in the Caucasus at that time. In addition to the official state correspondence in the archive, summaries and descriptions can also be considered as valuable historical sources (Mustafazada, 2020).

In addition to the city being the settlement of large merchants, Tbilisi's trade with Iran and India was carried out through Ganja. Ganja used to be the capital of the Karabakh Beylarbey and that Gazakh, Shamshadil and Shamkir were subordinate to it (Mustafazada, 2020).

Comparing S. Burnashev's notes with other documents of the archive, it can be seen that Ganja Khanate had a developed economic life as well as trade. Thus, it is stated in Russian sources that Javad Khan had 10 artificial canals in Ganja Khanate (Mustafayev, 1989).

It is also mentioned from the documents that Ganja Khanate is administratively divided into 5 districts (Mustafayev, 1989). The fact that Ganja is one of the major trade centers of the South Caucasus was the fact that Russian merchants were regularly found in its markets. The city of Kizlyar in the North Caucasus was considered the busiest trade center of the Caucasus region with Russia. Russian, Azerbaijani, Georgian and Dagestani merchants engaged in mutual trade here. Goods from Russia were sent to Shamakhi, Sheki, Guba, Ganja, Karabakh and Georgia through Kizlyar and Derbent (Mustafayev, 1989).

For this reason, along with goods from Eastern countries, Russian goods could also be found in Ganja markets. Russian goods such as fur, honey, wax, fabric, velvet, etc. are sold in Ganja markets. Also, Ganja goods were transported to Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod fairs through Kizlyar (Mustafayev, 1989).

Ganja city's special place in Russia's South Caucasus policy was not only related to commercial interests. Due to the desire to occupy the South Caucasus, the khanate was constantly in the center of attention of the Russian authorities. Thus, the city of Ganja was one of the main trade and production centers of the economically reviving region,

⁷ Plan of the Ganja fortress // RSMHA, f. 349, op. 12, d. 6055, l. 78-83. (In Russian).

⁸ Plan of the Ganja fortress // RSMHA, f. 1105, op. 80, l. 1-2, 14-15. (In Russian).

starting from the middle of the 18th century. During the Khanate, the production of silk and other handicrafts increased significantly (Ahmadov, 2007).

The location of Ganja at the intersection of the main land trade routes, the roads connecting neighboring countries also contributed to the development of trade. Most of the caravan routes from Azerbaijan to Iran passed through Ganja. For this reason, this road was sometimes called “Ganja road”.

It should be noted that detailed information about the road is given in sheet 353 of document No. 416 of the 52nd fund of RSMHA. There, the length of the distance from Tbilisi to Ganja is shown as 110 versts, 225 versts to Karabakh, 265 versts to Shusha and 265 versts from Ganja to Darband. The document also mentions that the road from Ganja to Tbilisi branched from the Red Bridge to Yerevan. It is reported that another road leads to Shusha 22 km from Ganja⁹. Thus, it is clear from the documents in the archive that Ganja is an important trade junction connecting Tbilisi with Iran and passing through it with other Eastern countries¹⁰.

The main sources of income of the Ganja Khanate were the daily tribute collected from the bridges on these roads, along with the trade routes. Thus, only the Red Bridge under the control of Ganja Khan brought a large amount of income. There were wooden and brick bridges in several parts of Kur (Babazade, 2012).

The attack of the Ganja Khanate seriously affected his economic life. In his letters to Georgy Pyotomkin II of Iraq, he complained to Karabakh Khan Ibrahim Khalil Khan and stated that the struggle for Ganja aggravated the economic situation of the Kartli-Kakheti Kingdom. He complains that Ganja and Shamkir are out of their control and that the sultanates of Gazakh and Shamseddin are not subject to him as before¹¹.

In 1786, the “allies” again marched on Ganja. Both Irakli II and Ibrahim Khan intended to take over the Khanate alone. However, seeing the support of S. Burnashev, the representative of the Russians in Tbilisi, Ibrahim Khan proposed to the Georgian Tsar to rule Ganja together again¹².

Ibrahim Khalil Khan and Irakli II, who did not intend to accept joint management over Ganja, accepted that Karabakh Khan was stronger and agreed with this proposal. He agrees to recognize Rahim Khan as Ganja Khan.

In 1787, a military detachment under the leadership of Colonel Burnashev marched to the Karabakh Khanate in order to make Ibrahim Khalil Khan compromise with the Georgian Tsar. The military detachment was stopped near Ganja (Mustafazada, 2018). It should be noted that in addition to the external struggle, there was also a struggle for power within the Ganja Khanate. So, the people of Ganja did not want to accept direct dependence again. For this reason, the struggle for power within Ganja intensified. As a result, Rahim Khan's rule in Ganja lasted for one year. A year later, he was overthrown by his brother Javad Khan. Javad Khan's independent policy after coming to power and his unwillingness to submit to the Kartli-Kakheti Kingdom became the excuse for Irakli II to march on Ganja again. This time Irakli II started looking for new allies in the east.

⁹Letter from Tsar Irakli to the general and cavalier Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin. RGSVIA, collection 52, op. 1, d. 331, part 6, l. 17. (In Russian).

¹⁰To His Excellency the Commander of the Troops in the Crimea and Southern Provinces and the Fleets on the Black and Caspian Seas, General and Cavalier Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin, Report. RSMHA, fond. 52, op. 366, part 2, l. 224. (In Russian).

¹¹Letter from Tsar Irakli to General and Cavalier Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin. RSMHA, f. 52, op. 1, d. 286, part 1, l. 34, d. 366, part GU, l. 155, l. 251-252. (In Russian).

¹²To the highly-born and most excellent Mr. Lieutenant General, Actual Kemerger and Knight of Flattering Orders, Pavel Sergeevich Potomkin, report. Received on November 21, 1783 // RSMHA, collection 52, op. 366, p. 2, l. 252-253, p. 4, l. 5-7. (In Russian).

This time he found these allies in the form of Guba Khan Fatali Khan and Shaki Khan Muhammad Hasan Khan¹³. In December 1788, II Irakli Fatali Khan and Mohammad Hasan Khan marched on Ganja and surrounded it. At the beginning of 1789, Georgian troops led by Prince Vakhtang, son of Irakli, defeated Javad Khan. The Tsar of Kartli-Kakheti planned to remove Javad Khan, who disobeyed him, from power and establish his own power in Ganja¹⁴.

But his allies Fatali Khan and Muhammad Hasan Khan opposed it. As a result of the negotiations, Javad Khan was able to protect the independence of Ganja Khanate. But in return, he agreed to pay annual tribute to Irakli II and his allies. But with the weakening of the Guba and the Sheki khanates, he stopped paying tribute. On the eve of Agha Muhammad Shah's campaign, he did not pay the annual payments to Irakli II (Zaitsev, 2014).

The study of documents in the 41st fund, as well as their comparison with other historical sources, allows for a more detailed and accurate description of Zubov's military expansion against Azerbaijan, including the Ganja Khanate. These documents make it possible to study the number of the army during the march of the Russian troops on the Ganja Khanate, the course of military expansion and the issues that led to its collapse^{15 16 17}.

Archiv documents reveal the facts of the attitude and resistance of the population of Ganja Khanate to Russian aggression. It is known from pages 331 and 332 of document 614a stored in the list No.200 of the 41st fund of the archive that Zubov's military expedition was supposed to enter Azerbaijan from Darband through the Daryal pass, occupy Baku, Shamakhi and Mugan and march on Ganja¹⁸. At this time, the Caucasian Corps from the Georgian side should have started the march and the parties should have occupied Ganja and united here. From here, the Russian army had to march on Karabakh (Hasanov, 2023; Mamedova, 2003).

As can be seen from the military plan, Ganja occupied an important place in the occupation of Azerbaijan. Russia could not invade Azerbaijan without capturing it. However, this cunning plan was not fully implemented due to organizational issues¹⁹.

Zubov, who entered Azerbaijan through Derbent, received additional forces on October 7, 1796 and sent a 1,000-man detachment headed by General Rimsky-Korsakov to Ganja (Mamedova, 2003).

On December 13, 1796, the Caucasian Corps reached Ganja. The Ganja Khanate, weakened by feudal interwars, could not resist the Russian army armed with the latest

¹³ Report of the Armenian Kaprel Garakhanov, who returned from Karabakh, about the circumstances occurring there. RSMHA, collection 52, op. 1, d. 366, part 1, p. 248-251. (In Russian).

¹⁴ To the highly-born and most excellent Mr. Lieutenant General, Actual Kemerger and Knight of Flattering Orders, Pavel Sergeevich Potomkin, report. Received on July 28, 1783. RSMHA, collection 52, op. 1, d. 286, part 1, l. 212. (In Russian).

¹⁵ Report of General, Count Valerian Zubov to His Excellency the Commander of the Troops in Crimea and the Southern Provinces and the Fleets on the Black and Caspian Seas, General and Knight Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin. RSMHA, collection 41, op. 200, d. 628, l. 1. (In Russian).

¹⁶ Note submitted by the envoy of Derbent Fath-Ali Khan, Aji Yuzbashi Bek. RSMHA, f. 52, op. 1, d. 286, part I, l. 32. (In Russian).

¹⁷ Letter from Tsar Irakli to the general and cavalier Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin. RGSVIA, collection 52, op. 1, d. 331, part 6, l. 17. (In Russian).

¹⁸ Order from Empress Catherine II to General and Count Valerian Zubov. RSMHA, collection 41, op. 200, d. 614a, l. 331-332. (In Russian).

¹⁹ Warrant to Mr. Major General and Cavalier Pasvetaev. Institute of History. Scientific Archive, f. 1796, d. No. 3, p. 444. (In Russian).

modern weapons. Ganja Khan Javad Khan left the city and met Rimsky-Korsakov outside the city (Mustafazada, 2013b).

After the Caucasian Corps marched to Ganja, the main forces of the Russian troops left Yeni Shamakhi and decided to spend the winter here, settling at the confluence of the Araz and Kura rivers on November 21 (Mustafazada, 2013b).

Apparently, Russia gave Ganja an important place in the occupation of Azerbaijan. It is for this reason that in 1804, the Russian army led by Sisianov invaded Azerbaijan and made its first attack on Ganja. After capturing Ganja, he began the invasion of Azerbaijan. The documents of the Russian state military history archive are one of the important sources in the study of the history of the Ganja Khanate and its city in the 18th-19th century. The archive contains a rich database of information about the historical appearance, architecture and economic life of the city of Ganja. Especially at the end of the 18th century, research and study of documents reflecting information about the city allows us to get information about Ganja. These documents allow for a wider study of the situation of Ganja city and fortress in the 18th and 19th centuries. However, it should be noted that as a result of the drawing up of the city's plan by military experts, the city's defensive character was enhanced. This makes it difficult to study the economic and cultural history of the city. Other documents in the archive come to the aid of researchers, help to study the history of the Ganja Khanate and complete the general results.

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