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The roots of Nakhchivan Ashiq poetry: Folklore and national-spiritual values

Nahçıvan âşık şiirinin kökleri: Folklor ve millî-manevi değerler

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Abstract

Nakhchivan is one of the cultural centers that has played an important role in the development of ashig art in Azerbaijan. The ashig creativity that emerged here reflects rich folklore traditions. The Nakhchivan ashig school was formed especially on the basis of local ethnographic features and national-spiritual values. This article examines the traditional elements in Nakhchivan ashig creativity, its distinctive features, and the role this art plays in people's lives. Primarily, genres such as poems, gerayli, tajnis, and bayati have been prominent in the works of Nakhchivan enthusiasts. Through these genres, the region's amateur ashigs have historically created works reflecting national identity, socio-political events, and moral values. Nakhchivan ashig creativity has always been rich with depictions of nature, themes of love, and a heroic spirit. In addition, the article shows that musical traditions occupy a special place. The saz instrument is presented as an inseparable part of this tradition, and its influence on ashig art is analyzed in terms of both content and form. Nakhchivan ashigs have preserved the harmony of music and poetry in their creativity and have demonstrated the presence of an original style and the uniqueness of their art. The article also notes how Nakhchivan ashig creativity is continued in the modern era and transmitted to younger generations. The preservation and renewal of traditional elements are crucial in keeping this art alive. As a result, Nakhchivan ashig creativity is an embodiment of national and cultural heritage and an example of the survival of folklore traditions.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ashig, art, tradition, element, environment, spiritual value

Öz

Nahçıvan, Azerbaycan'ın aşık sanatının gelişiminde önemli rol oynayan kültür merkezlerinden biridir. Burada ortaya çıkan aşık yaratıcılığı zengin folklor geleneklerini yansıtır. Nahçıvan aşık okulu özellikle yerel etnografik özellikler ve milli-manevi değerler temelinde oluşmuştur. Makalede Nahçıvan aşık yaratıcılığındaki geleneksel unsurlar, kendine özgü özellikler ve bu sanatın insanların hayatındaki rolü incelenmektedir. Özellikle şiir, geraylı, tecnis ve bayatı gibi türler Nahçıvanlı amatörlerin yaratıcılığında ön planda olmuştur. Bu türler aracılığıyla bölgenin amatör aşıkları tarih boyunca milli kimliği, toplumsal-siyasal olayları ve manevi değerleri yansıtan eserler yaratmışlardır. Nahçıvan aşık yaratıcılığı her zaman doğa tasvirleri, aşk temaları ve kahramanlık ruhu ile zengin olmuştur. Ayrıca makalede müzik geleneklerinin özel bir yere sahip olduğu belirtilmektedir. Saz çalgısı bu geleneğin ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak sunulmakta ve aşık sanatına etkisi hem içerik hem de biçim açısından incelenmektedir. Nahçıvan aşıkları yaratıcılıklarında müzik ve şiirin uyumunu korumuş, özgün üslubun varlığını ve sanatlarının benzersizliğini göstermişlerdir. Makalede ayrıca Nahçıvan aşık yaratıcılığının modern dönemde nasıl sürdürüldüğü ve genç nesillere nasıl aktarıldığı da vurgulanmaktadır. Geleneksel unsurların korunması ve yenilenmesi bu sanatı canlı tutmada önemlidir. Sonuç olarak, Nahçıvan aşık yaratıcılığı milli ve kültürel mirasın bir yansıması ve folklor geleneklerinin yaşamasının bir örneğidir.

Keywords: âşık, sanat, gelenek, unsur, çevre, manevi değer

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Introduction

Ashig art is one of the oldest and richest forms of oral folk literature in Azerbaijani culture. For centuries, this art form has reflected the worldview, culture, and aesthetic values of the people, creating unique traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Its international significance was recognized in 2009, when it was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity under the title *Art of Azerbaijani Ashiq* (UNESCO, 2009). The UNESCO description presents it as a traditional performance art that combines poetry, storytelling, dance, and vocal and instrumental music, accompanied by the saz. From the perspective of its genesis and typology, Azerbaijani ashig art emerged within the context of analogous artistic phenomena of the Oghuz and Turkic historical-cultural stages. This classification takes into account factors such as ethnic-national and cultural spheres, the characteristics of historical socio-political development, and certain differential features of cultural components. Thus, ashig art is regarded as a continuation of these traditions (Ismayilov, 2002, p. 51).

Ashig literature has long been studied as part of the wider body of Azerbaijani folk art. Rustamov (1974) examined ashig literature and its place within folk creativity, and Əfəndiyev (1983) treated the art of Azerbaijani ashigs as a distinct field of study. Outside Azerbaijan, comparative research on Turkic oral epic traditions has examined how words and music work together in performance, providing a useful framework for understanding the ashig as both poet and musician (Reichl, 1992). These studies form the background against which the regional features of Nakhchivan ashig creativity can be assessed.

Traditional elements in ashig creativity manifest themselves in the fields of poetry, music, and performance. In addition, poetics and traditional motifs, that is, traditional themes, genres, and stylistic features, hold a significant place in ashig poetry. Heroic epics, love songs, and lyrical *qoshma*s are considered the main genres in this field. Ashigs often created new works inspired by epics, myths, and religious themes existing among the people. For example, heroic motifs such as bravery, devotion to the homeland, and respect for traditions, as found in *The Book of Dede Qorqud* (Lewis, 1974), are an inseparable part of ashig creativity. Love is another central motif: in ashig poetry, love is presented as a pure, sacred, and ideal feeling.

This theme is especially reflected in *qoshma*s and *geraylı*s. Through symbols and images, ashigs express human emotions and feelings with depictions of nature and images such as the moon, sun, mountains, and rivers. Musical and performance traditions are as important as poetry in ashig art. The *saz*, being the principal musical instrument of ashig art, plays a crucial role in preserving traditional elements through its performance style and melody. Traditional melodies such as *"Yanıq Kərəmi"* and *"Qaraca Çoban"* are widely known among ashigs. These tunes reflect both the spirit of the people and the ashig's individual performance style. Improvisation holds an important place in musical performance. Each ashig, while displaying a personal style in performance, also preserves tradition.

The master-apprentice tradition is one of the main protective mechanisms of ashig creativity. Young ashigs would receive training from masters to develop their artistry, learning their performance styles and poetic rules. Through this process, tradition was transmitted from generation to generation. Ashigs also played an important social role among the people, performing at gatherings and ceremonies. By performing at weddings, funerals, and various ceremonies, they fulfilled both entertaining and educational functions. Through their performances, folk traditions, moral values, and the philosophy of life were conveyed to broad audiences. Thus, traditional elements in ashig creativity are among the main reasons for its longevity and popularity among the people. Through these elements, ashig art

serves as a bridge that sustains the spirit and culture of the people. The preservation and transmission of traditional motifs from generation to generation create a foundation for the continuous development of this art. The continued relevance of ashig art today shows that it remains an important part of Azerbaijani culture: “Ashig art is closer to the people and the masses; it reflects the emotions and desires of the people more vividly than other forms of folk music. In terms of social position, the ashig is close to the peasant, to the working people. Ashig art is the people’s own creation.” (Anthology of Azerbaijani Folklore, 2006, p. 152).

Turkish-language scholarship on minstrel (*âşık*) culture offers comparative references for the study of such traditions. Doykun (2021) evaluates the life, art, and poems of the minstrel Aydın Yeşil, showing how an individual minstrel’s biography, artistic formation and poetry can be documented together. Doykun (2023a) examines the perception of nature among visually impaired minstrels, and Doykun (2023b) considers Âşık Veysel from the perspective of visually impaired minstrels. These studies do not directly address the Nakhchivan ashig environment; they are cited here as Turkish-language reference points for the study of minstrel tradition, individual performers and nature imagery.

The social role of the ashig tradition has also been examined in recent work from Azerbaijan and Turkey. Beşirli (2026) approaches the minstrel tradition as a carrier of collective memory and cultural identity, tracing it from its ancient *ozan-baksı* roots to contemporary digital performance culture, with the Azerbaijani case as a central example. Erden et al. (2024) study the âşık tradition in Turkey in relation to Alevi-Bektaşi belief and argue that âşıks preserve moral and social values through their compositions and teachings; as this work is a student project, it is used here as a supporting rather than a primary source. For the Nakhchivan setting, Halilov (2017) documents the region’s ancient artistic production, identifying bone carving and ceramics as among its oldest art forms. This places the ashig tradition within a longer regional history of artistic creativity.

Ashig communities have developed in accordance with various customs and traditions. As a result of the influence of these traditions, ashig environments have remained interconnected and capable of sustaining these customs. Among these communities, the Nakhchivan ashig environment has always stood out for its distinctive customs and traditions, and it has also influenced other ashig regions.

The Nakhchivan ashig environment holds a unique place in the creative heritage of the Azerbaijani people and possesses a rich tradition. Its features have been studied as those of a distinct school (Guliyev, 1999), and the region’s folklore material has been collected in the three-volume *Anthology of Nakhchivan Folklore* (2010, 2011, 2012). In this region, which is rooted in the ancient history of ashig art, ashigs have, for centuries, expressed the people’s history, heroism, love, and life philosophy through their *saz*. In Nakhchivan, a distinctive style and repertoire of ashig creativity has formed. The melodies performed here, the poems and epics, as well as the symbols used by the ashigs, constitute the characteristic features of the Nakhchivan ashig environment.

The Nakhchivan ashig environment is primarily recognized through its representatives. The creativity of its ashigs reflects the richness and uniqueness of this tradition. Nakhchivan ashigs perform both classical ashig melodies and new compositions, thereby keeping the art alive and contributing to its development. In the Nakhchivan ashig environment, various poetic forms such as *tacnis*, *gerayli*, *qoshma*, and *divani* are widely practiced. The language used by the ashigs, their vocal style, melodies, and unique performance techniques distinguish the Nakhchivan ashig environment from others. In this region, ashig art has preserved its traditions over the centuries and continues to be sustained and transmitted to future generations.

The Nakhchivan ashig environment is one of the key regions contributing to the development of Azerbaijani ashig art, and its connections with other regional ashig communities are notable from

historical, cultural, and stylistic perspectives. By preserving the distinctive traditions formed in this region, Nakhchivan ashigs have both been influenced by other ashig environments and, in turn, have influenced those traditions as well.

With a history of over five thousand years, ancient Nakhchivan stands out for its rich folklore heritage. “Nakhchivan folklore is, without a doubt, an integral part of Azerbaijani, pan-Turkic, and world folklore” (Imanov, 2015, p. 192). The Nakhchivan ashig environment possesses distinctive styles, yet it has also absorbed certain influences from other ashig traditions such as those of Karabakh, Shirvan, and Goycha. For example, the influence of *mugham* from the Karabakh ashig tradition has been reflected in the performance style and musical repertoire of Nakhchivan ashigs.

Nakhchivan ashigs have incorporated classical poetic examples originating from other regions of Azerbaijan into their own creative output, thereby contributing to the formation of shared poetic traditions across different ashig environments. In this regard, one can observe the influence of both local folklore and general Azerbaijani ashig poetry within the Nakhchivan tradition. Through various ashig festivals, concerts, and cultural events, the Nakhchivan ashig environment has maintained dynamic interactions with other regions. In particular, international events organized in recent years have contributed to the recognition of Nakhchivan ashigs and facilitated their interaction with musicians from other countries. As a result of these connections, the Nakhchivan ashig environment has become more enriched and diversified, making a unique contribution to Azerbaijani ashig art. These ongoing relationships have consistently influenced the development of the ashig tradition.

From this perspective, Nakhchivan ashig creativity is an integral part of Azerbaijani ashig art and is distinguished by rich folklore examples reflecting the region’s ancient culture, history, and customs. Folklore is a rich cultural treasury that embodies the past, traditions, beliefs, and worldview of a people. Every nation has its own folklore, through which it is possible to understand its history, daily life, and national identity. Azerbaijani folklore is also rich with diverse examples reflecting the traditions preserved by the people since ancient times. Field research in the region confirms that this heritage is still traceable in living memory: Arık’s (2018) interviews in five Nakhchivan districts documented rain-calling beliefs and ceremonies, some of which are now largely forgotten.

The aim of this article is to examine the traditional elements of Nakhchivan ashig creativity, their distinctive characteristics, and the role this art form plays in the life of the people. Genres such as dastans (epic tales), qoshmas, geraylis, tajnis (wordplays), and bayatis (traditional quatrains) take a central place in the works of Nakhchivan ashigs. Through these genres, the ashigs of the region have historically conveyed national identity, socio-political events, and spiritual values. The article addresses three questions: which traditional elements shape Nakhchivan ashig creativity; how these elements relate to the wider Azerbaijani and Turkic traditions; and how strongly each element is supported by available evidence.

The study uses a descriptive-analytical method based on literature review and document analysis. Its sources fall into three groups: Azerbaijani folklore anthologies and monographs on ashig art; field research on Nakhchivan folklore, in particular the interview data published by Arık (2018); and the repertoire description in the UNESCO inscription. Turkish-language studies on the âşık tradition are used for comparison. Each finding is evaluated according to the strength of the evidence supporting it, distinguishing claims that rest on independent documented sources from those that remain observational.

Findings

The findings are based on reading three groups of data together: the Azerbaijani folklore literature on ashig art, quantitative field data from the Nakhchivan region, and the quantitative description of the Azerbaijani ashig repertoire in the UNESCO inscription. Each source addresses a different question. Read together, they show which layers of Nakhchivan ashig tradition are supported by documented evidence and which still rest on observation.

The most direct field evidence for the region comes from Türkan Arık's (2018) study of rain-calling beliefs in Nakhchivan. Arık's fieldwork draws on 14 informants interviewed between 2005 and 2008 in the districts of Culfa, Şahbuz, Babek, Ordubat and Çalhankala, and her bibliography lists 34 sources. According to Arık, rain-calling ceremonies are performed to end drought and bring the rain that sustains abundance, rainwater is considered sacred in the region, and some of these ceremonies are now largely forgotten. The author argues that the beliefs may be around a thousand years old and that similar ceremonies appear among other Turkic peoples. Although the study concerns folk belief rather than ashig poetry, its geographical coverage of five districts makes it a useful reference point for the belief world in which Nakhchivan ashigs worked.

The UNESCO inscription describes the classical repertoire of Azerbaijani ashig art as about 200 songs, 150 dastans and nearly 2,000 poems (UNESCO, 2009). These figures refer to Azerbaijani ashig art as a whole rather than to Nakhchivan specifically. Dividing the number of poems by the number of dastans gives roughly 13 poems per dastan, and the number of poems is about ten times the number of songs. This suggests that lyrical poetry is considerably more common than narrative epic in the repertoire, and that the poetic text outnumbers the stock of melodies to which it is performed. Whether the same proportions hold for Nakhchivan would need to be tested separately, but the figures are consistent with the prominence of qoshma, gerayli and tacnis in the region's ashig creativity.

Religious and mythological layer. In Nakhchivan ashig art, ancient Turkic beliefs, mythological figures, and elements related to Islam converge. These are reflected in epics, qoshmas, and geraylis. For example, poems about prayers to God, sacred places, and persons hold a special place in the culture of this region. Arık's rain-calling data support this in an independent domain: a ceremony that calls rain and treats rainwater as sacred is consistent with an older belief layer in the region's worldview. However, Arık does not examine ashig poetry directly, so how this layer enters the poetry is not yet demonstrated by the evidence used here. The finding is therefore supported at the level of the belief system's existence, and remains untested at the level of its direct reflection in ashig verse.

The comparative dimension strengthens this reading. Arık reports that similar rain-calling ceremonies appear among other Turkic peoples and attributes their spread to migration and resettlement (Arık, 2018). If this account is correct, the mythological layer of Nakhchivan ashig poetry belongs to a wider Turkic belief system carried by the movement of populations, rather than being a purely local invention. The heroic and moral world of *The Book of Dede Qorqud* (Lewis, 1974) points in the same direction, since it shows that Oghuz narrative tradition already joined heroic action with religious and moral values. For the present article, this means that references to sacred places and prayers in ashig verse should be read against a longer Turkic background as well as against Islamic practice.

Genres and forms. In ashig poetry, genres such as qoshma, gerayli, tacnis, muxammas, and divani are widely used. Nakhchivan ashigs compose their poems in accordance with the structure and rhythm of these traditional forms. Epics hold a special place; for instance, the Nakhchivan variants of the Koroglu epic create a distinctive style in the region's ashig creativity. Comparative work on Turkic oral epic traditions, which examines how words and music work together, offers a useful framework for

understanding why these forms carry such structural weight (Reichl, 1992). The UNESCO repertoire figures, in which poems far outnumber dastans, are consistent with the central role of short lyrical forms.

The formal repertoire also raises a methodological point. The article uses qoshma, gerayli and tacnis as genre labels. A fuller analysis would need to specify whether each term refers to a metrical form, a musical setting or a performance context. The present data do not allow this distinction to be made, and it is therefore left as a question for further work on the Nakhchivan corpus, for which the three volumes of the *Anthology of Nakhchivan Folklore* (2010, 2011, 2012) offer a natural starting point.

Saz and melody. The saz is the main musical instrument of Nakhchivan ashig creativity, and ashigs of this region have mastered various playing styles, producing original performance techniques. Traditional melody fragments and tunes preserve the region's musical heritage. This is consistent with the general view that ashig art carries poetry and music together. The UNESCO description likewise presents the saz as the instrument that accompanies the whole art, joining poetry, storytelling and music in a single performance (UNESCO, 2009). Nakhchivan-specific differences, such as the variety of melody fragments and playing techniques, are described here observationally and are not yet supported by measurable data.

Read alongside the social-memory perspective, the saz becomes more than a technical element. Beşirli (2026) frames the ashig tradition as a carrier of collective memory and cultural identity. Within that framework, the instrument works as a material marker of the tradition, linking each performance to a shared repertoire that listeners recognize. The influence of Karabakh *mugham* on the performance style of Nakhchivan ashigs, noted in the introduction, shows that this shared repertoire is not closed but absorbs elements from neighboring traditions. This interpretation is consistent with the article's claim that the saz is inseparable from the tradition, although it is drawn from a general framework rather than from Nakhchivan data.

Dialect and accent. The dialect and accent features specific to the region are prominent in Nakhchivan ashig poetry. This imparts a local character and distinctive color to the creativity, reflecting the daily life and household realities of the people. No numerical or linguistic data are used in this study for this finding, which therefore remains a hypothesis. Because regional features are most visible in the language of the verse itself, a text corpus compiled from the Nakhchivan ashig environment would be the natural basis for testing it. Until such a corpus is assembled, the finding should be treated as a research direction rather than a result.

Customs and ceremonies. Weddings, engagements, funerals, and other cultural events are extensively depicted in ashig creativity. Nakhchivan ashigs participate in these ceremonies, enlightening, inspiring, and entertaining people with their poems. This points to the social function of the ashig, which the UNESCO description also emphasizes by noting that ashigs perform at weddings and celebrations as well as on concert stages, radio and television (UNESCO, 2009). Arık's data add an important counter-finding: some rain-calling ceremonies are now largely forgotten. This qualifies the article's conclusion about preservation. Traditions should be assessed by what survives as well as by what is still practiced.

Taken together, Beşirli's account of collective memory and Arık's documentation of forgotten ceremonies suggest a possible tension between memory and practice. The tradition may persist in its narrative and repertoire even when specific rituals fade from use. The shift of performance from village ceremonies to concert stages and broadcast media, which UNESCO records, may be one form of this change. Distinguishing these forms of survival would be necessary before the article's preservation claim can be fully assessed.

Master-apprentice tradition. The master-apprentice relationship constitutes the foundation of the traditional school in ashig art. Nakhchivan ashigs remain faithful to this tradition, passing their knowledge to younger generations. Erden et al. (2024) argue that the Turkish âşık tradition preserves moral and social values through its compositions and teachings, which supports the view that master-apprentice transmission is moral as well as technical. However, because that work is a student project and not a peer-reviewed journal article, it is weak evidence for this claim.

Individual minstrel biographies illustrate how transmission operates at the level of single careers. Doykun's (2021) evaluation of the life, art and poems of the minstrel Aydın Yeşil is an example of this approach, as it treats the minstrel's life story, artistic formation and poetry as connected parts of a single subject. Comparable studies of individual Nakhchivan ashigs are not cited in the sources used here, and the transmission claim would be strengthened by documenting specific master-apprentice pairs, the repertoire passed between them and the changes each generation introduced.

Depictions of nature and love. The enchanting nature of Nakhchivan, including the Aras River, mountains, and forests, is among the main themes glorified in ashig creativity. Additionally, love poems occupy a significant place in the works of the region's ashigs. The presentation of love as a pure, sacred and ideal feeling suggests a long continuity in Turkish poetic tradition. Yanardağ and Bati (2023) examine how the theme of love appears in Divan poetry and in folk narratives connected with women, which places the love motif in Nakhchivan ashig poetry within a broader Turkish poetic continuity. Yanardağ and Bati do not discuss Nakhchivan ashigs directly, so the link here is comparative.

Depictions of nature in ashig poetry may also depend on how the performer perceives the landscape. Doykun (2023a) examines the perception of nature among visually impaired minstrels, and Doykun (2023b) considers how visually impaired minstrels view Âşık Veysel, one of the best-known figures of the Turkish tradition. Read in this light, the nature imagery of the Nakhchivan ashigs may be shaped as much by the performer's sensory relation to the landscape and by inherited poetic models as by the landscape itself. This is an interpretive suggestion that the present article does not test, but it points to a route for comparing nature imagery across performers with different experiences.

Relations between the elements. The seven elements described above do not operate separately. The saz joins music to the poetic forms, so that the formal and musical findings describe two sides of the same performance. The ceremonies in which ashigs perform are also the settings in which apprentices hear and learn the repertoire, which links the social function of the ashig to the master-apprentice tradition. The religious-mythological layer and the depictions of nature and love supply much of the content carried by these forms. Dialect gives the whole a local color. Seen in this way, the distinctiveness of the Nakhchivan ashig environment lies less in any single element than in the particular way these elements are combined, and in its openness to neighboring traditions such as those of Karabakh, Shirvan and Goycha.

These elements both incorporate the ashig art of Nakhchivan into the broader context of the Azerbaijani ashig tradition and enrich it with distinctive features. Thus, the ashig art of Nakhchivan has made a significant contribution to the preservation and continuation of national and spiritual heritage.

Limitations of the data. Three limitations apply. First, the study has no field data of its own and relies on published sources. Second, several quantitative sources (UNESCO, Arık) concern the wider Azerbaijani context or neighboring topics rather than Nakhchivan ashig poetry directly. Third, Erden et al. (2024) is a student project and has not been published as a peer-reviewed article. The findings therefore differ in strength. The religious-mythological and form-based findings rest on the most documented support, while the master-apprentice and dialect findings rest on weaker evidence.

Implications for further research. The findings point to three directions. First, a corpus of Nakhchivan ashig texts, compiled with attention to form, performance context and dialect, would allow the formal and linguistic claims to be tested directly. Second, documenting individual Nakhchivan ashigs through biographical and performance studies, in the manner of Doykun (2021), would test the master-apprentice and transmission findings at the level of single careers. Third, systematic comparison with Turkish âşık traditions, including the studies by Doykun (2023a, 2023b) and Erden et al. (2024), would clarify which features of Nakhchivan ashig poetry are regional and which are shared across the wider Turkic minstrel tradition.

Summary of findings. The religious-mythological base, formal structure and musical character of the Nakhchivan ashig tradition receive the strongest support from independent sources. The social function, master-apprentice transmission and dialect findings require further fieldwork before they can be confirmed. The distinctiveness of the tradition lies chiefly in the way these elements are combined.

Conclusion

This article has examined the traditional elements of Nakhchivan ashig creativity, their distinctive features and the role of this art in the life of the people. Nakhchivan ashig creativity is rich in depictions of nature, themes of love, and a spirit of heroism, and musical and performance traditions hold a special place within it. The saz is an inseparable part of this tradition, and its influence on ashig art can be seen in both content and form. The preservation of harmony between music and poetry in the performance of Nakhchivan ashigs, along with the existence of an original melodic style, demonstrates the uniqueness of their art.

The findings show that the elements of the tradition are supported by evidence of different strength. The religious-mythological layer is supported by field data from five Nakhchivan districts, which document beliefs and ceremonies that the researcher considers very old and shared with other Turkic peoples. The formal and musical character of the tradition is consistent with the Azerbaijani folklore literature and with the repertoire described in the UNESCO inscription, in which lyrical poems far outnumber dastans. By contrast, the master-apprentice and dialect findings still rest mainly on observation and require systematic fieldwork. The study also showed that the tradition's distinctiveness lies in the way its elements are combined and in its openness to neighboring ashig environments.

The study also highlights a tension between memory and practice. Some ceremonies documented in the region are now largely forgotten, while the ashig repertoire continues on concert stages, in broadcasts and in festivals. Nakhchivan ashig creativity therefore continues in the present day and is being passed on to younger generations, but in changing settings. The preservation and renewal of traditional elements play a crucial role in keeping this art alive.

Further research should compile a corpus of Nakhchivan ashig texts, document the lives and teaching lineages of individual ashigs, and compare the Nakhchivan tradition systematically with Turkish âşık traditions. Such work would allow the regional features of Nakhchivan ashig poetry to be distinguished from those shared across the wider Turkic world.

In conclusion, the ashig creativity of Nakhchivan is both an embodiment of national and cultural heritage and a living example of the vitality of folklore traditions.

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Yazar(lar), bu makalenin araştırma, yazarlık ve/veya yayın süreci ile ilgili herhangi bir potansiyel çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan eder.

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