

NIZAMI GANJAVI'S "KHAMSA" TRADITION AND KHAJU KIRMANI

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ABSTRACT

The great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi (1141-1209) played a significant role in the development of epic poetry in the Near and Middle East in the 12th century, and with his famous poems "Khamisa" he played an important role in creating the foundation for the further development of epic poetry in the region.

The themes of Nizami's "Khamisa" are widely regarded as the catalyst for a new literary era and a significant contribution to human culture.

To date, the scientific and theoretical aspects of the subject "Nizami Ganjavi and Eastern literature" have been the focus of research in world and Azerbaijani literary criticism by Sh.Rye, P.Hammer, F.Erdman, Schaefer, Bacher, E.Braun, A.Krymsky, Y.I.Krachkovsky, Y.E.Bertels, H.Arasli, M.A.Rasulzade, M.Mubariz, M.Rafili, A.S.Levand, Y.Ripka, V.Destgirdi, Z.Safa, M.Moin, A.S.Khansari, S.Nafisi, B.Servetian, B. Zenzani, K.Ayni, F.Koprulu, A.S.Levand, G.Begdeli, G.Aliyev, M.C. Mahbub, S.N.Kirmanli, N.Sayfiyev, H.Ayan, R.Azade, R.Aliyev, Kh.Yusifli, N.Arasli, A.Abbasov, Ch.Sasani, M.Mahmudov, I.Hamidov, A.B.Kudelin, I.Habibbayli, T.Karimli, M.Kazimov, F.Azizova, B.Guliyeva, A.V.Mikhaylov, M.Y.Borev and others have made important scientific and theoretical contributions in this field.

Literary influence at various stages ensures the enrichment of this or that theme, as well as the formation of new creative figures. In this regard, Nizami's "Khamisa" had a significant impact on works written on the theme of love and heroism for many centuries after his time. The promotion of the idea of divine love in medieval literature, the inclusion of mythical-symbolic images in plots are of particular importance. In Eastern poetry, the works of the 14th-century Iranian poet Khaju Kirmani "Humay and Humayun", "Gul and Novruz", as well as the philosophical-didactic poem "Rovzat-ul-envar" attract attention as the original continuation of Nizami's traditions.

This article identifies the theoretical foundations of the "Khamisa" tradition in Eastern literature and studies the sphere of influence of Nizami Ganjavi's poems.

Keywords: Nizami Ganjavi, Khamisa, Khaju Kirmani, tradition, literary influence

Introduction

The study of the mutual influence and relations of the culture and literature of the peoples of the Near and Middle East is an important problem that is constantly in the centre of attention of world, as well as Azerbaijani literary studies. During the XX century, the theoretical aspects of the problem were determined, and a significant number of studies were conducted in various directions based on the historical-comparative method. A.B.Kudelin, in his study of the mutual influence of Western and Eastern literature in the context of world culture, and in his evaluation of the role of artists influenced by this process, writes: “The historical service of Goethe and other intellectual European thinkers was that the heritage of the East again became an active component of world culture. The foresight of Eastern thinkers, the literature of the Near and Middle East gave impetus to the establishment of interregional relations along with intraregional development” [Kudelin 2012,118].

The development of the “Khamisa” tradition based on innovation has been in the focus of literary criticism. This tradition involves the application of elements of the artistic system, such as theme, idea, plot, style, character of heroes, composition and other aspects, to another masnavi. In addition, literary criticism has historically examined various aspects of a new work in relation to its source.

The continuation of the traditions of Nizami Ganjavi within the framework of the development and regularities of Eastern literature attracts attention in the themes of “Khamisa” by the outstanding Persian poet of the 14th century, Khaju Kirmani.

Theoretical principles of Nizami Ganjavi's “Khamisa” tradition

In the modern era, it is imperative to examine the historical and social regularities of literary influence in global cultures, adhering to the principles of the two predominant methods of literary criticism: historical-comparative and hermeneutic. From this standpoint, it is judicious to analyse the issues of literary influence on artistic creativity, guided by the following principles:

1. Tracing the criteria of the conceptual and culturological tradition based on the classical basis in the texts of “Khamisa” in each historical period;
2. Approaching the problem of literary influence in a broad sense - at the level of dialogues of the cultures of the peoples of the world;
3. Determining the issues of innovation in the literary tradition; The study of the numerous works that appeared in Eastern literature under the influence of the themes of Nizami Ganjavi's “Khamisa” on the basis of the aforementioned principles remains one of the urgent problems of literary criticism.

In the XX century, Hamid Arasli examined the impact of Nizami's themes and style on the evolution of native Azerbaijani-Turkic literature, concluding that “the inclination to compose in the Nizami style in Azerbaijani, the endeavour to craft works on Nizami themes, strengthened from the XV century and attained a higher level in the XVI century. This phenomenon was not an isolated occurrence

within the context of Azerbaijani literature; rather, it was a consequence of the heightened attention and significance accorded to the Azerbaijani language and culture during the Aghgoyunlu and Safavid periods. This period witnessed a particular surge in the utilisation of the Nizami style, which can be attributed to the patronage of the patriotic ruler Shah Ismail Khatayi, the founder of the Safavid state” [Arasli 1998,109].

V.M.Zhirmunsky, who conducted important research on the mechanism of determining the romantic characteristics and typological points of works created on the basis of literary relations, noted that analogous manifestations in the literature of the peoples of the Near and Middle East are socio-historical regularities, that ancient folk epics have given way to psychological themes, love novels, and that for this reason the literature of the peoples of the world is rich in typological features, and wrote: “The magnificent “romantic” character of the feeling of love that unites the chosen heroes, the understanding of love in the sense of “service”, the description of these feelings, the feelings experienced by the lover when he sees his beloved, and finally, these stereotypical emotional excitements (usually in the form of introspective monologues, dialogues, lyrical messages) created the need to create a completely new type of art. From this perspective, the poetic novels of the Frenchman Chrétien are typologically so close to the poems of Nizami (c. 1140-1203), who was originally Azerbaijani and wrote in Persian, as a genre and a work of the same historical period, that one can even speak of mutual literary influence”. [Zhirmunsky 1971, 190].

Literary theorists approach the issue of literary influence in a complex way at the level of cultural dialogues of the peoples of the world. Theorist-scientist M.Y.Borev, who calls literary relations “cultural dialogues that do not recognize borders and time periods in different periods” indicates 16 types of this tradition. However, in accordance with the topic under study, it is enough to pay attention to only a few types of literary influence: 1) Continuation of tradition based on innovation; 2) Contradictory position in the principles of creativity despite the feeling of proximity to the predecessor's creativity; 3) Application of elements of the artistic system of one work (plot, style, character of heroes and composition) in another work, simultaneously with the presence of features that differ from the source in the new work; 4) Type of proximity. The author adopts certain aspects of the creative experience of the predecessor who influenced him; in this case, the stylistic features of the original are not expected, and the resulting work is regarded as a new phenomenon; 5) Imitation – however, there are also different degrees of imitation. The new text is regarded as being in complete similarity to the original. The creation of an exact copy of the predecessor's worldview system, main stylistic features, and creative manner; 6) Epigonism - repeating the original not with creative imitation, but with insignificant changes, etc. [Borev 1989,11].

It is acknowledged that following the significant artistic contributions of Nizami Ganjavi's “Khamasa”, it was challenging to introduce new perspectives on related subjects. Many artists acknowledged the distinctiveness of Nizami's poetry and their inability to produce a work that could rival the grandeur of his “Khamasa” art.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Nizami's successors endeavoured to distinguish their own work from that of their predecessors. A notable example of this is Khaju Kirmani, who, as the second to follow Nizami after Amir Khosrov, sought to innovate in terms of content, style, and structure.

Continuation of Nizami traditions in Khaju Kirmani's creativity

In Khaju Kirmani's poem "Rovzat-ul-anwar", the reconstruction of fragments, episodes, artistic images, motifs and plots, which echo the work of his predecessor Nizami "Makhzan-ul-asrar", and the structural similarity of them, attract attention. The poet also did not avoid the influence of poets who wrote and created in his literary environment.

A. Krymsky wrote: "Khaju's Khamsa ('Five Treasures') as in Nizami and Khosrov (and since then in general in the "Five Treasures", commences and concludes with admonitory works; the initial part is "Rovzat-ul-anwar" – "Garden of Lights" (1342), and the final part is "Kamal-name" – "Perfection" (1345), approximately in the spirit of Saadi's "Bustan". According to the chronological order of its composition, in the "Beshlik" neither the first poem was the first nor the last one was the last [Krymsky 1914-1917, 102].

In the initial three compositions of his "Khamsa" – specifically, the poems "Humay and Humayun", "Gul and Novruz" and "Rovzat-ul-anwar" – Khaju Kirmani responded to Nizami Ganjavi's poems by adhering meticulously to his themes, metre and style. In his final two poems, "Kamal-name", he once again adopted the meter of Nizami's "Seven Beauties" and utilised the Sufi-symbolic style of his predecessor. In the final poem, "Govharnama", he persisted in the social-moral content and ideas established in the poem "Makhzan-ul-asrar".

However, it is evident that Khaju Kirmani sought to distinguish himself by introducing new content to each topic, thereby renewing the tradition and striving for originality. He achieved this by incorporating the prevailing Sufi ideas of his time, namely stories about the life and activities of Sufi sheikhs, into literature through the use of symbolic generalisations. As Mehdi Kazimov rightly noted, "In Khaju's "Khamsa" only one condition of the verse – the meter – has been preserved to a greater or lesser extent. He emulates Nizami exclusively in the poem entitled "Rovzat-ul-anwar" ("Garden of Lights"), as evidenced by the preservation of the title and the composition [Kazimov 2012, 311].

At the beginning of "Rovzat-ul-anwar", the poet proudly stated that he was a follower of Nizami in the section "The reason for writing this poem and the description of basil":

گرچه سخن پرور نامی توئی
معتقد نظم نظامی توئی
در گزر از مخزن اسرار او
بر گذر از جدول پر گار او
خازن مخزن دل دانای تست
محرم اسرار خرد رای تست
خیز و از ان پرده نوائی بساز
بر خط آن خطبه سرائی بساز
مخزن اسرار حقیقیش دان

روضة انوار آلهيش خوان

[Khaju 1370/1991, 49]

(You believe in Nizami's poetry, transcending his "The treasury of mysteries" and compass. Your heart knows the secrets, and your intelligent opinion is intimate. Play a song on that string, create a palace, recognize truth, and read divine light.)

Khaju Kirmani was influenced by the philosophical ideas of his master. It is known that the philosophical concept of the supremacy of man and the flourishing of society has been a recurring theme in the annals of philosophy from antiquity to the present. Philosophers have sought to improve society, to transform it into a more just and higher civilization that serves the collective interests of humanity. "If it is possible to govern any society on the principle of equality, this is the greatest achievement for the benefit of humanity" [Aristotle 1983, 528].

Islamic philosophers also approached the issue with the concept of "what is equality in society and how can it be achieved?" and considered Man in the sense of "the unity of the entire universe" and his perfect ascent towards the supreme Truth as the right path of human society. According to Ibn Arabi, who came up with a perfect Sufi-philosophical theory regarding the concept of "perfect man" in the 11th century: "Man is not only an individual, but also, as "truth", he has absorbed the entire world. Being a microcosm, man is the image of the universe. Being God, the universe is the image of man in the macrocosm. It provides a mutual transition between the hidden and visible sides of the Absolute Being – God and the world" [Ibn-Arabi, 2013, 37].

The concept of ahi, with the lexical meaning of "brotherhood", began to spread in Ganja in the middle of the 11th century through the disciples of Ahi Faraj Zanjani. This idea, which served the concept of the supremacy of man, had a serious impact on the city's population. According to the prominent Azerbaijani researcher and writer Mammad Said Ordubadi, "Some historians have not been able to correctly explain the essence of the ahi movement. In fact, the Ahi Faraj Zanjani organization was one of the political movements among Azerbaijani and Iranian thinkers and was considered harmful to the government" [Ordubadi 1941,16-17].

The humanistic ideas propagated by the Ahis movement undoubtedly attracted progressive individuals during this period. The Ahis worldview was predicated on the inculcation of elevated moral standards and strict ethical principles within society, with the objective of preserving brotherhood and equality. The concept of the youth and generosity of the Ahis emerged as a novel form of propaganda concerning "humanity", promoting the principles of etiquette within Islamic society. These principles encompass the transient nature of the material world, the avoidance of worldly attachments, frugality, and the cultivation of moral qualities such as skill, zeal, and the provision of service. The term "etiquette" was a collection of the main attributes of a perfect person, that is, a generous person. This pedagogical approach is consistently evident in the oeuvre of Nizami Ganjavi. In the third article of the poet's poem "Makhzan-ul-asrar", dedicated to the contradictions of the world, and in the story "Suleiman and the farmer", given in accordance with this article, we observe the influence of the Ahis ideas and the poet's use of these terms:

تخم ادب چیست وفا کاشتن
حق وفا چیست نگه داشتن
برزگر آن دانه که می پرورد
آید روزی که ازو برخورد
[Nizami 1960,104]

(The seed of decency is to sow loyalty, with the price being to protect it, as the farmer nourishes its fruit, which one day will eat.)

Nizami Ganjavi advanced his humanistic views on man with the idea of "generosity" of the Ahi people. The story of the farmer who took the last grain from the house and sowed seeds with his nails on the dry, thirsty soil, and every seed he sowed sprouted and turned into a spike attracts attention. This secret seemed like a miracle even to the Prophet Solomon, who knew the language of birds. The seed sown by the farmer is the seed of knowledge that sprouts even in the thirsty soil.

Nizami Ganjavi's oeuvre is characterised by a resolute advocacy for the preservation of egalitarianism and fraternity among humankind, emphasising the imperative to maintain the equilibrium of justice on a global scale, and to refrain from any act that might disrupt this delicate balance, as if to affirm that opposition to divine truth is itself a form of heresy. In his own words, "Man is the pearl of this world. To the poet, every diligent individual is held in high esteem. Though devoid of affluence or influence, these individuals are the true pearls of this world" [Nizami 1960, 132].

It is necessary to mention the seventh article of the poet in the "Makhzan-ul-asrar" entitled "The superiority of man over other beings" and the story "The saga of Firudin and the gazelle" given in accordance with this article. With this story, Nizami teaches all mankind a lesson of wisdom, reminds of man's supreme duty to man and society. The brief content of the story is as follows: "Firudin Shah went hunting in the meadow early in the morning with his closest companions and saw a young gazelle. The gazelle seemed to be begging the king for mercy with its eyes. The king was moving quickly towards the hunt. But he could not catch up with the gazelle. The king scolded the arrow he had shot and his own horse. The arrow replied: "O hunter! That weak creature has taken refuge in your protection. How can you shoot an arrow at the weak one who has taken refuge in you?"

The embodiment of this image demonstrates the philosophical thinking of the prominent philosopher-poet Nizami. The figure of Ahu acts as a symbolic image of the oppressed who trusts the ruler. Nizami with great courage called on the rulers to rise to the peak of spiritual perfection, persistently inviting them to social justice, saying:

صورت خدمت صفت مردمیست
خدمت کردن شرف آدمیست
نیست بر مردم صاحب نظر
خدمتی از عهد پسندیده تر¹

[Nizami 1960, 138]

(Service represents humanity's face and honor, and in the presence of knowledge-seeking individuals, there is no better covenant than service.)

Khaju Kirmani's work "Rovzat-ul-anwar" (Garden of Lights) was written in response to Nizami Ganjavi's first poem "Makhzan-ul-asrar", and this work constitutes the third link in Khaju's "Khamasa" creation after the "Humay and Humayun" and "Gul and Novruz" masnavis. Khaju Kirmani wrote this poem in 1342 (Hijri 743). The work consists of 2040 verses. Khaju built the theme, idea, and structure of the poem in accordance with Nizami's "Makhzan-ul-asrar". He also preserved the rhythmic dimension of Nizami's poem, preserving the essence of the poem.

It is also important to note that, although the poet followed the tradition of Nizami Ganjavi in terms of content and form, he worked on the poem with a unique innovation, creating a work whose articles and short stories are proportional and original. The structure of the work "Rovzat-ul-anwar" comprises the following sections: an introduction, a prayer, a na't dedicated to the Prophet, praise of the poet's patron Sultan Ala-azim Shamsaddin bin Mahmud Sain Ghazi, a section on the poetry of the book, the reason for the composition of this poetry, and a descriptive section of the basil. The work is based on 20 parts of philosophical-didactic articles and stories with original plots related to them. The conclusion of the work is marked by a section dedicated by the poet to his mentor, Sheikh Abu Ishaq Ibrahim Qaziruni. From the outset, it is evident that the poet's connection to the art of Nizami is profound and unbreakable.

In his work "Rovzat-ul-anwar", Khaju Kirmani, who tried to continue the fundamental ideas put forward by Nizami Ganjavi, in the article titled "The height of human perfection and the virtue of the human species among other creatures", shows that man is a supreme creation, worthy of great honor from the Creator with his superiority of mind and intelligence, and in the poetic mood typical of his predecessor, he says, "Until you were created in this garden (in the world), the flower of existence had no water and color, all the beauties in the world were created for you," and extols the greatness, virtue, and unique beauty of man.

Nizami utilises the philosophical concepts embedded within his oeuvre to articulate his stance on the prominent sources in the historical trajectory of Sufism in the East. Furthermore, he adapts numerous theoretical concepts proposed in his artistic oeuvre to align with the prevailing trends in medieval Sufism. He portrays the personalities of Sufi views with profound affection, exemplifying the pinnacle of human excellence. The poet employs a sophisticated literary style to articulate the quintessential qualities of the enlightened individuals, their arduous journey towards divine love and supreme humanity.

The question of their advantages is posed. Khaju provides encyclopedic information about the personality, character and social activities of people who "have no property under these azure skies, but live with a magnificent spiritual and moral richness, are people of passion and pleasure; who establish a royal crown on the divine balcony; who kill their souls and live freely in the world" with a rich Sufi-philosophical content and artistic style typical of the medieval period. The poet, in demonstrating the multifaceted aspects and moral virtues of their way of life, captures the essence of their worldview in the following words:

دیده نه و کون و مکان در نظر

بال نه و ملک جهان زیر پر

[Khaju 1370/1991, 23]

(The entity lacks eyes but its soul is visible in space, while its wings hold the world's possessions.)

The poet, who shows the spiritual beauty, sacrifice, and struggle of Sufi personalities for the happiness of the “pearl of man” in the world, promotes his philosophical and poetic thoughts in an original way:

باده پرستند و ز می بی خبر

گوش بر آواز و ز نی بی خبر

بحر محیطند و ز گوهر ملول

چرخ بسیطند و ز اختر ملول

هم ره و هم رهرو و هم رهبرند

هم می و هم ساقی و هم ساغرند

[Khaju 1370/1991, 22]

(The poem describes individuals who are passionate about pleasure but ignorant of wine, lute, pearl, sky, road, traveler, and wine, and who are also wine and cupbearer.)

In the masnavi “Rovzat-ul-anwar”, the poet, in a manner similar to his predecessor Nizami, considers the “path of justice” to be the path leading to the purification of society, and writes with heartache about the suffering of the oppressed (Article 13, The story of the old woman who wanted justice and Sultan Malik Shah).

Conclusion

This study is based on a brief analysis of only one part of Khaju Kirmani's “Khamsa”, namely the work “Rovzat-ul-anwar”. It is evident that Khaju Kirmani's literary heritage is abundant and multifaceted. The collection of his poetry, written on the themes of Nizami Ganjavi's “Khamsa”, is notable for its attempts to distinguish itself through new content and stylistic features. In addition, it is worthy of note that Khaju Kirmani gave the history of Eastern literature original works that are characterised by high philosophical, artistic and aesthetic values.

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