



## Literary school and poetic traditions of Nizami Ganjavi in Eastern and Western cultures

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Genius Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi (1141-1209) is among the rare personalities of both his own nation, Eastern and world literature and this exception has abundant undeniable proofs. Pursuing just one of these features, the influence of Nizami to the development of literary thinking after him obviously indicates that the sage from Ganja owns unconditional right of superiority regarding the number of his followers, the spaciousness of geography of their belonging, the duration of the effect and the variety of their spheres. Even common depiction of this panorama of superiority generates an impression of the vivid evidence of the genius of Nizami. Undoubtedly, the depiction of such panorama immediately engenders further questions that what is the reason of such power of influence, such spaciousness and spread of the wave of Nizami and the speediness regarding time? Certainly, being more specific questions they make necessary to investigate the inner power of Nizami heritage, to analyze and present the basic elements of influence and attraction of Nizami from different angles of vision. Nevertheless, another significant question emerges that besides his individual talent and capabilities, which moral sources, school, reading, education and atmosphere facilitated Nizami's turning to phenomena of such level?

Each of these questions requires independent research and actually, significant activities have been implemented regarding each of these directions. However at that time the number of sources relating to Nizami and his sphere of influence that existed in scientific circulation, was not considerable and only due to the secrecy of the sources which became known afterwards, incomplete or incorrect suppositions had been put forward. For correctness of conclusions one requires above all the opportunity to view the panorama of the initial sources within possibly broad scope.

The most convenient condition in this respect has emerged within 300 years since the formation of the investigation of Nizami's literary heritage as a sphere of science. When comparing with the passed times of more closed borders, more limited relations and less developed technologies it becomes obvious that researching Nizami's literary heritage has currently gained considerable achievements. Moreover, during recent 60-70 years the sources relating directly to Nizami or specifying the views regarding his personality and literary activities, have been discovered with further publication and these generate reliable grounds for making more correct and firm conclusions. Namely the current level of

knowledge and views about Nizami makes necessary to present and perceive him as a poet not only of Azerbaijan and Moslem East, but also as an event of world literature and culture. For that reason let us initially try to point out major parameters relating to the spread and influence geography as well as chronology of Nizami poetry. Canonization of Nizami heritage occurs less than hundred years following his death.

Since 13th century "Khamsa" of Nizami has been perceived as a pattern and the replies have been written to it in most various countries in most various languages (6, 22-27). However from very beginning one should take one moment into consideration. Writing replies to Nizami, creating the poems resembling the ones of Nizami is merely one direction of being influenced from Nizami. Nazira has been a direction fairly wide-spread in literature of the nations of Moslem East and tradition of writing poems resembling to the works of the most distinct poets in most different periods has continued. But the influences of Nizami was not concluded with just writing naziras to the topics and plots of "Khamsa", as well as poet's system of characters, his mode of thinking and expression has been learned and continued by his followers.

The indicated influence has not touched upon solely those reading Nizami in original but also those reading works of Nizami in translation. In 18th century hundreds of Oriental poets got amazed at the words of Nizami having read them in original and wrote them replies in various languages – Persian, Turkic, Arabic thus talking of themselves with proud as disciples of Nizami literary school. In 1697 French orientalist d'Erbilau in his encyclopedia "Oriental library" dedicated two articles to Nizami thus presenting him to France and whole Europe (4).

In 1785 Nizami through English orientalist V. Johns starts to speak directly to Europe. Further to V. Johns who translates 20 short stories composing the basis of "Treasure of secrets", the first poem in the chain "Khamsa" into English (7, 49-50), in 1836 J. Atkinson translates "Leyli and Majnun" and W. Klerk "Iskandarnama" into English (7, 50). In 1809 in Leipzig J.F. Von Hammer-Purgstall translates the selections from "Khosrov and Shirin" into German and publishes them (5; 7, 78-79).

All of these translations had been made in prose and certainly, it was out of question to preserve the mode of expression reflected in verse of Nizami in the indicated translations. Nevertheless, due

to the power of poetic thinking of Nizami which was so obvious in spite of its translation, great German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) in his "West-East divan" written in 1814-1815 entitled him "wisdom of sensible and high talent" and his works "breathing with delicacy and beauty" (8, 182).

With his poetic intellect he felt the genuine might of the word of Nizami even behind the thick curtain of translation thus writing "Saginama" under the influence of the word-master from Ganja. "Saginamas" written by over 30 Persian poets under the direct influence of Nizami have been collected in "Tazkire-yimeykhane" prepared by Fakhr az-Zamani, literary critic of 16th-17th centuries (6,4).

Genre of saginama has been initiated by Nizami in the literature of the nations of Near and Middle East and therefore, pursuing Nizami by Eastern followers namely in that rhythm and style through their works appears natural. This is a vivid example of direct influence. However generation of "Saginama" by Goethe due to the impulses coming from Nizami already is other level of literary impact (8, 98-110). Not the external beauty of Nizami verse noted in the translation, but the energy of thinking and feelings inside the hemistiches attracts the German poet thus instigating him to write in such mode on the indicated theme. Expression of literary benefitting marked as nazira, respond, tatabbo, imitation and other stable terms only through a few words in Western languages (for instance, a through "imitation" in English) is not accidental. Imitations exist in Western literatures as well. It has existed in all phases of history but it has never carried a character of trend and particular tradition. However, in the East it appears approximately in the level of one streamline with various assortments, therefore a lot of terms have been created in order to concretize its entitlement.

Alishir Navai, genius Uzbek poet of 15th century in his poem "Farhad and Shirin" written as a respond to Nizami's "Khosrov and Shirin" (in which he repeated the plot of Nizami, his many episodes and all major characters) stated that "galloping the horse on the trampled road is not a decent act" (2, 105). In other word, he clearly noted his opposition to the reiteration. A person unaware of the essence of the tradition of nazira writing in the East can find strange the indicated conclusion of Navai in his work namely seeming as a one repeating Nizami. More skillful expression within the background of the same topic, same plot, same events and same heroes was assessed as a capability of originality and high professionalism by the pattern of Oriental literary sense. Even translation of one poetic sample into other language through verses is considered by Oriental literary sense not as a simple translation, but as an original and independent work.

Nizami has also written "Divan" comprising his lyrical and philosophical verses and no doubt that after acknowledgement of Nizami as aliterary school, numerous responds have been written to that collection. However, unfortunately, due to the absence of the complete version of "Divan" by Nizami, one can not pursue precisely and in detail its influences to the literary environment of late 12th century. Nonetheless, the responds written to separate verses included in "Divan" of Nizami also affirms the existence of such pursue. Nevertheless, not the responds written to separate verses

of Nizami but his 5 poems united under the title "Khamasa" has turned the poetic activities of Nizami to the literary school.

Nizami has written each of these works in various years for various reasons and their unification under single title is an initiative undertaken by literary critics of the period when the poet was not alive. Those doing that have accepted the existence of the close ideological and topical relation among 5 poems of Nizami as well as their making up components of the single entirety. Nizami never states his intention of his obligation of writing 5 poems or creating a complete epopee consisting of the chain of poems. Had his lifetime been longer, he might have been written more poems by number. As the poet completed his last poem "Iskandarnama" at the end of his life. Therefore, we perceive unacceptable the opinion of Turkish scholar Agah Sirri Lavand and others that Nizami constructed his "Khamasa", the chain composed of 5 poems as if in the manner of "Panchtantra", unprecedented sample of Indian literature (3, 226).

Or it is not correct to accept the opinion of Iranian scholar Agha Bozorg Tehrani saying that Nizami created his "Khamasa" in honor of the famous five treasures (called "khamsat kunuz") of Sasanid ruler Khosrov Parviz or in honor of five planets – Utarid, Zohra, Mushtari, Zuhal (Mercury, Venera, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn) called by the Middle Age astrologers "khamsat al-mutahayyira" (6, 17). We reiterate that transformation of these poems to a single entity is an assumption emerged fairly long after the death of Nizami. As all of these works are the products of the pen of Nizami, irrespective of their possession of distinct themes they certainly enjoy logical, esthetical and literary linkage between each other. However, most likely, had the author even intended to present these separately written poems afterwards as chapters of single entity, he would have added definite linking elements to masnavi. Nevertheless, these elements are absent. The truth is that Nizami actually created in his each work the modules, formulas and the ways to be continued after him and as a result his literary activities on the whole turned to the entire principle.

There were both such complete "Khamasa" writers as Amir Khosrov Dahlavi, Abdurrahman Jami, Ashraf Maraghayi, Alishir Navai, Sarfi Kashmiri who wrote responds to all poems of Nizami and the ones who wrote naziras to Nizami's separate poems or his just single masnavi. However, despite the distinct writing manners and peculiar styles of each of them, the accurate observation of the common esthetic principles deriving from Nizami is the factor uniting all of these persons. In Middle Age Nizami was comprehended in the region as an etalon of perception as good poet and the canonized dimensions of the heritage of Nizami was accepted as a programme of becoming a true poet. The final peak of "the gold age" of Persian classical poetry was Hatifi, a nephew of Abdurrahman Jami and this person was also among those who had written respond to "Khamasa". According to sayings, when Hatifi shares with his uncle the desire to join the row of the acknowledged poets through writing respond to Nizami, Jami gives him an advice. Jami tells him to pass easier phase through writing respond to Firdovsi, Sadi, Anvari and then to transmit to Nizami. And Jami discloses the philosophy of his advice saying that each of the indicated genius poets is a prophet of the world of poetry, but Nizami is God of verse. The figurative expressions of this story once more affirms the obvious truth that Nizami used to be perceived

as beacon, the major criteria and dimension of the highest skill in so-called poetry legislation of the Middle Age.

“Leyli and Majnun” is a poem of Nizami which has been written responds most of all. Besides nearly 100 “Leyli and Majnun” masnavis, numerous valuable works have been created quite in different forms and in other areas of art such as cinema, theater, music under the influence of the indicated poem of Nizami (1, 8-11). Majnun, who had been selected by Nizami as the main character of this poem, had historical prototype. Geys ibn Mulavvah was a poet, had lived the legendary love and those stories had been reflected in certain sources. As he did in his other works, Nizami had lead separate research prior to starting to write thus attentively investigating sources existing in various languages.

Possibly, some of the poets who had addressed the theme “Leyli and Majnun” after Nizami faced other sources relating to this love story and they got familiarized with completely different and new details about life of Majnun. This assumption is also manifested by the facts regarding the reflection by some post-Nizami “Leyli and Majnun”s the episodes absent in Nizami. Even certain followers of Nizami made initiatives towards supplementing gazals, rubais and other forms of verse to poem after its certain chapters thus overstepping the structure of masnavi. However such kind of innovative efforts have not got the massive character and abiding the original of Nizami has been perceived as the superior quality.

Even there were found some people among the respondents who intended to make addition and changes to the entire structure of “Khamasa”. “Khamasa” written by Khaju Kirmani as a respond to Nizami was not so far “quintet” thus turning to “Sitta” comprising six elements, as the new one had been added to the row of traditional masnavis.

Or the respond of Abdurrahman Jami to “Khamasa” became “Sabe” consisting of seven elements and the author added two more masnavis to the chain calling it “Haft ourang” (6, 19). Nonetheless, these certain formal changes, increases and decreases had not changed the essence. Even those who put forward such other love stories as “Yusif and Zuleykha”, “Salman and Absal” in their “Khamasa”s as the alternatives to “Leyli and Majnun” and “Khosrov and Shirin” included in “Khamasa” of Nizami, could not got rid of the enchantment of Nizami thus remaining under his inevitable attraction. Because what was coming from Nizami used to be the way itself. According to the language of the post-Nizami inventions, the rails and the trains on them were as in Nizami. The passengers were distinct and this did not change the essence thus merely having the illustrative character. Furthermore, non-continuation of the experience of those trying to be distinguished with separate improvisations and the continuation of the literary activities on writing canonic “Khamasa”s once more proves that the major grounded criteria is namely the basic esthetic principles existing in Nizami and their preservation is enhanced by the spirit of the literary progress in Near and Middle East.

From its foundation, Nizami and his literary world used to lean on international strongholds and this can by no means be considered as purely national heritage. Nizami spoke languages and had learned quite fairly well not only the cultural and literary history of the East but also the keepsake works of the antic hellenic world. His deep

knowledge about antic hellenic philosophers and his sympathy with their scientific heritage manifested not only in his including the images of those sages into his works but also in his quoting them as well as in his sharing his views about the various ideas of these sages.

Nizami supported the idea of the spread and intellectual domination of that heritage among his nation and this was actually among the formulas of morality proposed by the poet for his own nation and region. In Azerbaijan and other countries of the Moslem East the names of Platon and Aristotel were easternized being transformed to Aflatun and Arastun and applied within centuries. And if these names have been up to know being given to new-borners as national names, we have to confess the influence of Nizami herewith.

That is to say Nizami and his “Khamasa” has generated “Khamasa”s written under the influence of Nizami which lead to the existence of the Western mode of thinking in the East besides the moral and behaviour criteria as well as mode of thinking rooted in “Koran” and these two trends of sense, taste and spirit should have joined organically thus making Azerbaijani and Eastern people more perfect and richer with respect to morality.

Nizami wrote his “Khamasa” in Persian, the common poetic language of the Middle Asia in Middle Age, in line with the literary tradition of that period. Nevertheless, the responds to his “Khamasa” were written in Persian, Turkic, Arabic, Sanskrit, Georgian, Urdu and so on. The revival of the patterns of Nizami in other languages was the tool of penetration of this pattern of thinking into the living of the nations speaking those languages and encoding in their genetical memories. Nizami who perceived himself to be a descendant not only of several relative nations, the region and the Moslem East where he belonged to, but also of the civil world of that period, had destructed the frame of limitations through his themes thus creating genuine internationalist panorama in his “Khamasa”. He also through the ongoing impact of his poetic school directed to the senses of the future generations the message about the importance of transforming this panorama - this common atmosphere into the joint space of life and communication thus desiring the commonalization of this principle.

Within last three centuries Nizami has been among the Oriental poets mostly translated into world languages. And when sounded in the translated languages, the works of Nizami were admitted not only like the keepsake of the past and the sweet Oriental tale, but also like the pearls closer to the Western human with its essence, spirit, modernist mode of expression. Therefore, these works had impact both in the East and the West, rendered its positive effect on the literary activities of the various great poets thus leaving after itself its significant traces. From one hand, this was partially acknowledged by the literary men themselves, from other hand, it was partially defined by the Western literary critics investigating the development path of the literary process.

Prominent Azerbaijani artist Ogtay Sadigzada in one board within his work entitled “Nizami and world culture” and composed of 5 boards dedicated to the literary activities of Nizami Ganjavi (which clearly indicates the essence of this phenomena) revitalized the Eastern followers, in other one the Western followers and in other two boards the Eastern and Western followers of Nizami.

Furthermore, it is not the product of the illusion of the artist, but the correct description grounded on the precise scientific researches.

Among the western followers of Nizami and the great personalities who have benefitted from his creations we see considerable number of literary persons whose names and works have been eternally engraved in the history of literary sense of the world. Barthélmyd'Herbelotin his work "Bibliothèqueorientale" affirmed that several adventures reflected in French literature had been taken from such poems of Nizami as "Seven beauties" and "Khosrov and Shirin". Namely in that century French poet and playwright Alain Rone Lesaj (1668-1747) having benefitted from the various episodes of Nizami's "Seven beauties", wrote such librettos as "Good and Evil", "Chinese prince" and these works of opera which were staged in 1721 at "Comedie Fransaiz" within 15 years (from 1721 to 1735) preserved its position in repertory thus guarding its popularity (9,30; 9,53-54).

Due to the interest generated by Nizami's "Seven beauties" in French cultural atmosphere, the celebrated composer of his period Luis Nicolas Clerambol (1676-1749) translated that masnavi of Nizami into French. It is assumed that the objective of the French composer was to write opera on this theme. Because that translation was not published by composer as a separate book which he had been keeping in his personal archive and at present the indicated translation is being preserved in Paris National Library (9, 34).

Italian playwright Carlo Gotsi who like the French Lesaj used to take interest in plots of tale and adventure, established "Theater of tale" and in order to be performed in that stage wrote "Tales collection for theater" in 1761 and "Turandot" one year later. Gotsi also did not neglect the story "Good and Evil" which was repeatedly performed at stage thus benefitting from this plot taken from Nizami's "Seven beauties" in interpretation different from Lesaj (9, 54).

The early 16th century is noteworthy with respect to the development of the multilateral relations between Italy and Azerbaijani state of Safavids. Namely within that period we observe closer mutual investigation and benefitting between Azerbaijan and Italy through the bearers of the most distinct cultures. Within 1516-1532 the work "Furious Orlando" (Orlando furioso) which had been considerably enlarged and then published, was a great success thus awarding his author – poet and playwright Ludovico Ariosto with unprecedented fame in the literary world. The indicated work which is considered to be among the biggest poems of Europe with its 38736 hemistichs trepasses the national borders thus being accepted with sympathy in the literature of other nations as well as positively effecting the literary activities of such mighty pen-owners as Lope de Vega, Servantes, Bayron, Volter and Pushkin. That work itself was influenced by "Leyli and Majnun" poem of Nizami.

The literary activities of such prominent representatives of German literature Wolfgang Goethe and Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1796) and Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) reflect the positive echo of the heritage of Nizami and this circle can be much more enlarged. However, our examples belongs to the early period when the heritage of Nizami newly started to be translated into European languages and the related preliminary researches were made. In the second half of 19th century and in 20th century Nizami

Ganjavi conquered Europe and the world in the genuine sense of the word. His works came to birth not like initially in fragments with abbreviations, but as a whole with translation into many languages, moreover, hundreds of valuable research works about his life and literary activities emerged, Nizami begun to dominate more and more in hearts and brains in Europe.

Certainly, while new and new translations into English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Polish, Czech and other languages emerged, Nizami became closer to the literary and cultural figures of those nations thus giving them a gift from his light in order to write new monumental works. Therefore, today fully to determine the precise panorama of the useful influence of Nizami to the European and global culture and literature appears incredible. Only the overall investigation of the traces of Nizami in the literature and culture of every nation and country can generate the opportunity to reply these questions more or less profoundly.

Genius Uzbek poet Alishir Navai, one of the most brilliant followers of Nizami literary school wrote that if even the Earth overflows and the heavens turn to scales, it is powerless to carry the weight of Nizami. The unexaggerated and well-aimed truth in these words told with poetic comparisons and hyperboles is that the grandeur of Nizami Ganjavi cannot be confined within dimensions and time-frames known to us, the complete discovery of Nizami is beyond the possibilities.

With his personality and creations Nizami Ganjavi is an endless and vast space and the mankind will constantly be disclosing its new and new beauties and will continue to learn, to benefit and take pleasures from it.

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