

SECTION 29. Literature. Folklore. Translation Studies.

MYSTERY OF THE CREATION OF MIRZA SHAFI VAZEH

Abstract: *Scientific article deals with the research of the basic features of activities of the famous poet of Ganja Mirza Shafi Vazeh.*

Key words: Azerbaijan, poet, XIX century, Mirza Shafi Vazeh, creation, Ganja

Language: English

Citation: Gulieva RZ (2015) MYSTERY OF THE CREATION OF MIRZA SHAFI VAZEH. ISJ Theoretical & Applied Science 04 (24): 57-59.

Soi: [http://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS*04\(24\)10](http://s-o-i.org/1.1/TAS*04(24)10) **Doi:**  <http://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2015.04.24.10>

Ganja city during centuries considered as one of the main urban cultures and located on the ancient Mirza Shafi Vazeh gained reputation and fame with his lyrical and philosophical poems in Western Europe and Russia. His lyric which was written in the style of O.Khayyam prepossessed and included him into the range of Eastern classics. In order not to be found the originals of his Azerbaijani and Persian verses, his lyrics could not spread out in the Near East and his homeland Azerbaijan, though he gained glory in Europe and Russia. Mirza Shafi Vazeh was assigned as the clerk (mirza) due to manage the possession and villages belonging to Javad Khan's daughter with the help of Haji Abdullah. That is why, he was called Mirza Shafi.

During the war between Russia and Persia in 1826 Pusta Khanum had to get away with her brother Ugurlu Khan. Mirza Shafi became unemployed. Haji Abdullah died then. Though Mirza Shafi was in trouble, he didn't lose his courage and began to practise calligraphy and teaching. He taught children to write Nasta'liq script (one of the main calligraphic hands used in writing the Perso-Arabic script, and traditionally the predominant style in Persian calligraphy) in madrassa near Shah Abbas mosque in Ganja.

One of his students was M.F.Akhundov. In 1840 Vazeh moved from Ganja to Tiflis. In November with the help of his former student M.F.Akhundov, he secured the position of Azerbaijani and Persian language teacher at a boys' school (school № 73 in Tiflis now).

He lived in Tiflis till the end of 1846. After leaving Tiflis he wrote "A Farewell to Tiflis" in Persian. In 1844 Mirza Shafi Vazeh established a literary society "Divani Hikmet". First, verses were read and then discussion began in "Divani-Hikmet". A.Bakikhanov, M.F.Akhundov, poets Nejmi, Shole, Mirza Hasan, Haji Abdulla, Mirza Yusif, Vidadi, Haji Yusif participated in this society.

Due to the activity of this society Mirza Shafi got to know many famous scholars. Among the members of this society was Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt who was born at Peine, in the Kingdom of Hanover in 1819. His origin was Jewish. He studied at the best universities of Gottingen, Munich and Berlin.

He came to Moscow in 1841 and took care of Prince Gallitzin's children. In 1844 he came to Tiflis as a teacher with General Neidtgart's invitation - the Governor-general of Caucasus. He was also Vazeh's student, studying Azerbaijani and Persian.

Mirza Shafi himself became acquainted with Western Europe Literature. Bodenstedt returned to Germany in 1846.

From 1889 to 1890 Bodenstedt travelled through the US. He died and was buried in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1892. Mirza Shafi returned to Ganja in 1846 and began to work as a teacher. At the same time, he versified. He got back to Tiflis in January, 1890 and taught Azerbaijani in the gymnasium of baronage, lived there till his death. He died and was buried in Tiflis, November 28. His grave is behind the Botanical Gardens. The original forms of his lyrics in Azerbaijani and Persian which

had been printed in Russian and Western European languages have not been found yet. Bodenstedt had brought the handwritings of his verses to Germany. Mirza Shafi caused Bodenstedt to write his verses after their acquaintance in 1844, Tiflis. Moreover, Mirza Shafi presented his Magazine consisting of lyrics to Bodenstedt. Bodenstedt himself wrote: 'He presented me 'The Key of Wisdom'. In the preface of the magazine Mirza Shafi: 'I, Mirza Shafi, present my magazine consisting of gasidehs, gazals, murabbaats and masnavis'. Bodenstedt was one of the scribes and translated Vazeh's poetry into Germany.

In his book 'A thousand and one day in the East', most part of which is devoted to Mirza Shafi and translation of his poems. After 'A thousand and one day in the East' F. Bodenstedt published the translations in 1851 as a book named 'The songs of Mirza Shafi'. The book brought fame to his author. Soon his poetry spread out all Western Europe and was translated into English, French, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch, Danish, Polish and even the Hebrew language. These verses aroused interest in Russia. N.G.Chernyshevsky's friend poet Mikhail Larionovitch Mikhailov translated 'The songs' into Russian. Later Mikhailov, V.M.Marcov, M.Ramsh, N.Eyfert also translated M.Shafi's poems. After reading these poems, Leo Tolstoy transvalued, overestimated them. M.Shafi's poems were published 6 times in 1868, 12 times in 1876 and 169 times till 1922. The book became popular, was published and translated into other European languages.

The unprecedented success infatuated F. Bodenstedt, who after Vazeh's death, denied Vazeh's authorship and claiming that it was his own verses and presented them as belonging to Vazeh in order to add an exotic air to the book in order to enhance its popularity, and Europe believed him.

To give more information about Vazeh's heritage, it is needed to find his verses in Azerbaijani and Persian. Without these poems, researchers can only express their opinions according to the translations.

M.Shafi's 'The Songs' include complaining poems, poems about Zuleykha, praising of wine and wealth, poems about Tiflis, Mirza Yusif, Hafiz, nightingale, cypress tree, Yusif and Zuleykha, love poems and so on. Though Mirza Shafi considered Hafiz his teacher, we can notice the soul of Fuzuli his creativeness, his art. That is why; M.Shafi must be considered the heir of Fuzuli in Literature. There are some satirical examples in Vazeh's poetry. Religious figures are criticised in some of his poems.

That is why they did not like Mirza Shafi. The clericals did not like him, because Mirza Shafi often used these words in his poems: flower, tulip, wine, lover, face, sweetheart, love, amorous. But they were not able to understand that these words are representatives of Irfani Literature.

Till 1840, Mirza Shafi worked as a teacher in Tiflis gymnasium. The lessons were conducted in Azerbaijani and Persian in Caucasus. That's why the students needed books and manuals written in these languages. A.Bakikhanov composed 'Ganuni-Gudsi' for teaching Persian. There weren't any manuals for learning Azerbaijani. For this reason, Mirza Shafi compiled a potpourri with the help of Ivan Grigoriyev who was the student of Mirz Kazim bey.

The dictionary of potpourri was ready in January, 1851 and the potpourri itself in April. The whole form of the first variant was published in 1856 and was sent to the Ministry of Education. Some professors made negative references.

The potpourri was divided into three parts. The first part consists of the articles translated from Persian and Arabian sources. The second part consists of patterns from different books, such as 'Darbandname', 'Karabakname'.

There are many poems in the third part. This potpourri was the first manual written in Azerbaijani. After Vazeh, M.A.Vazirov, S.A.Shirvani, R.Afandiyev continued this tradition. In 1964 Orientalist Hamid Mammadzadeh investigated Mirza Shafi's handwriting while working in the Academy of Sciences in Georgia.

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Impact Factor ISRA (India) = 1.344
Impact Factor ISI (Dubai, UAE) = 0.829
based on International Citation Report (ICR)
Impact Factor GIF (Australia) = 0.356

Impact Factor JIF = 1.500
Impact Factor SIS (USA) = 0.912
Impact Factor PIIH (Russia) = 0.179
Impact Factor ESJI (KZ) = 1.042

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