



RESEARCH OF MEDIEVAL HERITAGE OF GANJA CITY BASED ON HISTORICAL SOURCES

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Keywords

Ganja, Azerbaijan,
written sources,
national moral
values, historical-
cultural research.

Abstract

Scientific work deals with the research the cultural heritage of Ganja city on the basis of various manuscripts, different historical documents as the sources in research of the cultural and sociological development during the medieval period. The life and creation of such genius persons as Nizami Ganjavi have been studied based on archival materials, various written sources, historical documents, literary samples for the medieval period on the basis of comparative scientific approach. The purpose of the study is 1) to analyze the role of women in the Akhilik ideology in the works of Nizami Ganjavi, and 2) to analyze the influence of Nizami Ganjavi on Sufi and Akhilik traditions in Ganja. The methods used for this study included historical and comparative research method, chronological, source method. The research findings show that 1) Nizami Ganjavi portrays women as symbols of strength, wisdom, and love within the Akhilik ideology, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in da'wah management. 2) Nizami's contributions to Sufi and Akhilik traditions emphasize courage, justice, and wisdom, providing a framework for da'wah that integrates moral and social values, promotes spiritual growth and social welfare, and addresses contemporary societal challenges.

Introduction

Based on different historical and written scientific sources, archival documents have been studied the various moral values in rich heritage of this genius poet and thinker as the samples of national wisdom of the Azerbaijani people. Scientific work deals with the research of the exceptional significance of examples of Islamic values, national-moral traditions contained in the works of Sheikh Nizami in the study of our national and spiritual values on the basis of numerous artistic examples. This article examines the significance of the works and scientific-literary heritage of Nizami Ganjavi as the source in the study of the environment of the Renaissance, as well as in the research of the multicultural values of our people, the traditions of coexistence, on the basis of examples from poems of this great thinker.¹ Along with rich libraries, madrassas, scientific and cultural environment of Ganja, which is considered one of the important scientific and cultural centers of the Renaissance period, the article contains such important spiritual values as national memory, moral values, historical and ethnographic heritage of our people, which have traditions with millennial past, traditions of tolerance are studied as significant

¹ F.M. Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja* (Ganja: Elm, 2007).





indicators of the worldwide heritage of Nizami Ganjavi. Also, on the basis of a scientific study of the appeal to the national memory, historical roots and religious values of our people, the great poet, who has repeatedly stated in his works the national identity and heritage of glorious ancestors, undeniable indicators of oriental wisdom, humanity, and devotion to universal values are clearly demonstrated.²

In general, the main feature that distinguishes Nizami Ganjavi from other Eastern thinkers is his wide range of images of women. It is important to remember that the great poet who valued a woman collected the finest qualities of women in the image of Turkish lady Shirin and created a positive woman image for the first time in Middle Eastern literature. The image of Shirin, written by Nizami's genius, was chosen for its high morality, courage, and devotion. Nizami Ganjavi, who was not afraid of the prestige of the clergy among the masses and the disloyal attitude towards women in general at that time, made Shirin the main hero of the century and valued her as a beauty lover, sympathizer of science, knowledge, and perfection. In the image of Shirin, the poet glorified the advantages that an akhiliq gave to a woman. For example, Shirin plays a horse, strikes a sword, and shoots arrows.³

The ideal woman's paintings are characterized by high moral characteristics, such as courage, pride, esteem, moral height, and courage. According to Akhili, a woman has always been valued as a fully worthy member of society. The genius thinker, in turn, remained faithful to this tradition and, in terms of humanist ideas, assessed the woman as a person of pure morality and pride:

*I am a jewel should I decrease,
Shall I go uninvited, shall I?*

Prominent Persian poet Abulgasim Firdovsi, the predecessor of Nizami Ganjavi, presented Shirin as sinful, immoral, and murderous. However, Nizami Ganjavi, unlike his predecessor, presented Shirin as a person loyal to her love, selfless, with high moral qualities, similar to his akhi leaders.

Describing Shirin's suicide at the grave of her lover, the poet praised her self-sacrifice as follows:

*Applause for this death, especially Shirin,
Killing Shirin, dying Shirin.
This is death in the way of love, behold,
This is how to give your life to love
There is a beautiful wife who is as brave as a lion
Lions hide in a lot of silk.*

Undoubtedly, this begs the question: if Islam forbade suicide, how could Nizami, who had risen to the rank of Sheikh, applaud and praise Shirin, who committed suicide?.

² E.L. Hasanov, "Innovative Study of Historical Heritage of Ganja City Based on Cultural-Literary Materials," *Manuscript and Book Heritage of Ukraine* 31 (2023): 271–86, <https://doi.org/10.15407/rksu.31.271>.

³ F. Bodenstedt, *Mirza Schaffy Im Liede Und in Der Wirklichkeit*, ed. Jg. Daheim (Eds.) (Leipzig: Verlag, 1872).



Of course, the death that Nizami Ganjavi intended is the killing of the self for the sake of truth. We must not forget that Shirin has two meanings in Persian: the first means sweet in taste, and the second means like a lion.⁴

Research Methods

The research methodology used in this study combines historical, comparative, and source-based approaches to analyze the medieval heritage of Ganja city. This approach allows the researcher to delve into the cultural, literary, and intellectual values present in the works of prominent figures such as Nizami Ganjavi and others, providing a deep understanding of the social and cultural developments during the medieval period. The method also focuses on the analysis of manuscripts, archival documents, and historical literature related to the lives and works of these figures, in order to understand their contributions to Ganja's civilization and its relevance to the current social context. The use of this methodology aims to identify the values contained within Ganja's intellectual and cultural heritage, which can be used as a foundation for the development of da'wah strategies that are relevant to the cultural context of the community.

In relation to da'wah management, the approach used in this research can be adapted to explore local cultural values within communities, making the delivered da'wah more relevant and acceptable to the audience. By using a comparative and historical approach, da'wah managers can analyze the cultural and social background of the community and design messages that respect and integrate local traditions. Furthermore, the source-based approach in this study can also be applied to investigate the history and challenges of da'wah within specific communities, allowing for the development of more focused and effective da'wah strategies. Thus, integrating this research methodology into da'wah management can result in da'wah messages that are more inclusive, contextual, and impactful on the community.

Results and Discussion

The person who killed him who triumphed over his soul is compared to a lion. Because, according to the ideology of akhilik, the one who rules over others is strong, and the one who rules himself is powerful. Shirin not only kills herself but also diverts Khosrow, who spends his day in pleasure, from his desires and directs him to the wisdom of humanity. Nizami Ganjavi, through the image of a perfect woman Shirin, changes his lover Khosrov's worthless and enjoyable life and directs him to science and philosophy. It is an undeniable fact that among the Sufi sheikhs, only Nizami Ganjavi, a member of the Akhilik, could present a woman as a symbol of truth and an embodiment of love. Nizami Ganjavi does not consider it right to follow men and imitates them in the development of women.⁵

⁴ E.L. Hasanov, "Innovative Significance of Research of Traditional Architectural Features of Ganja," *TSU-TI — The International Scientific Journal of Humanities* 1(1) (2022): 71–74, <https://doi.org/10.55804/TSU-ti-1/Hasanov>.

⁵ E.L. Hasanov, "About Research of Features of Legal Culture on the Basis of Historical-Literary Heritage," *Information* 20, no. 4 (2017): 2289–96.



On the contrary, he states that a woman can develop independently without following a man.

*It is not appropriate to follow men
This should't be done by any women.*

Nizami Ganjavi, in the image of Nushaba, the ruler of Barda, expressed his views on the "just ruler" of Akhilik. Iskander is unable to conquer Nushaba's country because he is helpless in the face of the power of her mind. At the same time, Nushaba called for justice for the great conqueror and said that it was useless to shed blood for the sake of wealth:

*This jewel in your tray is overflowing,
Who deserves this rebuke, this reproach?
Why spread jewels on the table ?!
To teach me to escape from the depths ?!
Well done to this healthy minded woman,
For teaching me the ways to courage.
O foolish girl, come and listen to me,
Upon your advice
I can throw a gold coin to the ground,
The land is a natural mineral for the gold.
Although I am a woman, I am as brave as a man,
I know everything about the world.
I'm a lion as well, if you think a little,
A lion is not only female too.*

In Nizami's work, a woman's courage and common sense are expressed in the language of men.

*Glory to a woman whose thoughts are healthy
She shows me the way of courage.*

Undoubtedly, the reason for all this should be sought in the ideology of akhilik, which created ample opportunities for women to organize in material and spiritual matters.⁶

Ashiq Pashazadeh (886/1481) in his work "History of Ali Osman" "Gaziyan-i Rum" (Anatolian Veterans) of the social groups among the Turkmens during the Anatolian Seljuks. He mentioned that it was divided into four parts: "Akhiyan-i Rum" (Anatolian Axis), "Abdalan-i Rum" (Anatolian Abdals), and "Baciyani Rum" (Anatolian Sisters). In the time of the Anatolian Seljuks, the female members of the Ahi organization, to which Turkmen men belonged and which Ashig Pashazadeh called "Akhiyan-i Rum," united under the name "Baciyani Rum." For the first time, German Franz Taschner conducted research on this group, which Ashig Pashazadeh called "Baciyani Rum." The mentioned researcher doubted that women could form such a perfect organization in the society of that time and noted that it was invented by Ashig Pashazadeh.

Taschner concluded that such an organization did not exist, claiming that the term "Hajj Rum" (Anatolian Pilgrims) or "Bahshiyani Rum" (Anatolian Wizards or

⁶ Ganjavi Nizami, *Seven Beauties* (Moscow: Shiraz, 1491).



Priests) was misspelled as "Sister Rum." However, all the sources describing that period did not give any information about the existence of organizations called "Hajiyani Rum" (Anatolian Pilgrims) or "Bahshiyani Rum" (Anatolian Wizards or Clergy) in Anatolia. It is clear from this that the researcher tried to cover up the fact of the political and social organization of women in Turkish society in the Middle Ages.⁷

For the first time, Fuad Korpulu researched Bektashi legends and other reliable sources about the group that Ashig Pashazade called "Baciyani Rum" and dismissed F. Taeschner's claims that Turkmen women belonged to the Islamic organization during the Anatolian Seljuk period and the Ottoman state. It should be noted, that Fuad Korpulu did not conduct extensive research on the nature and mission of this organization..

Referring to the possibility that this name could be the name of a group of women (a sect belonging to women), he said: "I wonder if Ashig Pashazade meant the pure and knightly women of the Turkmen tribes, under the name" Baciyani Rum "?

Undoubtedly, this meeting is the most correct.

Although more than 70 years have passed since the late Fuad Koprulu's research, no serious and consistent research has been conducted on Baciyani Rum to date, and no new facts have been added to the researcher's writings on the subject. Ottoman chroniclers provided sufficient information on the political and social organization of Turkmen women during the newly established state. However, according to Fuad Koprulu, a researcher who has collected the most information on the organization of Turkmen women in Anatolia, the Western traveler Ibn Battuta witnessed various activities of Turkmen women in many parts of Anatolia during the time of Orhan Gazi.⁸ Also, Nijдали Gazi Ahmad, in his work "Al-Waldush-Shafiq", completed in 1340, gave information about the activities of the wives of the Taptuk Turkmen dervishes around Nijde.

Several sources reported that after the Mongol conquest of Anatolia, they were persecuted in the "sister" organization, along with the Axis organization, which strongly resisted them, and this organization was completely destroyed in the 14th century. Therefore, neither Ibn Battuta, Ottoman historians, nor other sources refer to the activities of Turkmen women in Anatolia, nor do they mention the existence of an organization for Turkmen women.

According to Ashiq Pashazade, during the time of Haji Bektas (1271) ie during the Anatolian Seljuks, there was a perfect organization of Turkmen women. Nizami's high intellect is evident from the nickname "Doctor" (great, knowledgeable, wise).

The thinker with this encyclopedic knowledge, along with Islamic sciences, became closely acquainted with Zoroastrian, Chinese, Greek, Roman philosophies and was fluent in several dead languages. "At the same time, the great thinker had

⁷ Ibid.; Ganjavi Nizami, *Iskandernama* (Moscow: Shiraz, 1543).

⁸ E.L. Hasanov, "Academic issues of research of historic-cultural heritage of medieval Ganja," *Vestnik Sankt-Petersburgskogo Universiteta. Vostokovedenie i Afrikanistika* 15, no. 4 (2023): 731–40; Ganjavi Nizami, *The Treasury of Mysteries* (London: British Library, 1543).



extensive knowledge in the fields of history, theology, science, geometry, mathematics, astronomy, and mythology.⁹

Nizami Ganjavi lived by the wisdom of the religion, avoiding the struggles between the Shiites and Sunnis, the disputes between the Sufis and the Shari'a, and was known as a believer in God, a believer in the Prophet. Thus, this great personality overcame the blind struggle of the sects and sects that divided the spiritual unity of society and possessed a perfect nature and morals.

Although he was a Sufi thinker who showed this balance in the field of religion the field of thought, he did not attach himself to the dervishes who wanted to leave the world. The reason for this can be explained, by Nizami Ganjavi's adherence to the Akhilik ideology.

Although he did not explicitly state in his writings from, which murshid received his education in Sufism, he pointed to this issue in his profound wisdom. According to many sources, Sheikh Nizami belongs to the Sufi and Akhi sects Sources say that Nizami Ganjavi took lessons from Sheikh Ahi Farrukh Reyhani or Ahi Faraj Zanjani.

Very little information has arrived about Sheikh Ahi Faraj Zanjani. However, Ibn Battuta, a well-known traveler, told about the history of the boar given to him by the sheikh of Isfahan and the head of the zawiya, Gutbaddin Hussein, and said that it was worn by Ahi Faraj Zanjani, who was once considered the spiritual heir of Hadrat Ali and later Nizami Ganjavi.¹⁰

The traveler noted that Ahi Faraj also met with Abu Abbaya-Nahavandi. Undoubtedly, all this proves, once again that Sheikh Ahi Faraj Zanjani is a great thinker and a holy person. Lutfalibey Azer (XVIII) writes about Nizami Ganjavi in his work "Ateshkada": "In the world of Suluk, he is equal to Faraj Zanjani. Looking at the text, it is clear that the author did not evaluate Nizami Ganjavi as a disciple of Faraj Zanjani, but as a Sufi sheikh standing at the same time as him.¹¹

A. Bakikhanov stated in his work, "Gulustani-Iram," that Nizami Ganjavi was one of the Sufi sheikhs: "The doctor-spiritualist is powerless to say the greatness of Sheikh Nizami Ganjavi." Prominent scholar Bertels connects Nizami's affiliation with the akhilik ideology with the following lines from the given Saginame.

*I wonder how long to stand like ice
Are dead mice asleep alone in the water ?!
Loosening, not being as soft as a flower,
Violet is not a one-sided face.
There is a place to be daring
You have to be boldly crazy.
Be sharp as a thorn, be harsh,
Rose wreaths of roses on his head.*

⁹ Hasanov, "Innovative Study of Historical Heritage of Ganja City Based on Cultural-Literary Materials"; Hasanov, "About Research of Features of Legal Culture on the Basis of Historical-Literary Heritage."

¹⁰ Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja*; E.L. Hasanov, "About Study of Medieval Historic-Architectural Heritage of Ganja City," *Revista Arheologica* 20, no. 2 (2024): 16–24.

¹¹ Hasanov, "Innovative Significance of Research of Traditional Architectural Features of Ganja"; Ganjavi Nizami, *Khosrov and Shirin* (Moscow: Bukhara, 1648).



Bertels concluded that the expression "thorn" in this poem was a "dagger" carried on the backs of the axis. M.A.Rasulzadeh shows that Nizami Ganjavi belongs to Akhili with the following verses of the poet.

*A village with beds for the unconscious
It is easy for the wrongdoers
The lion does not work without a heart,
There is no courage in bull-hearted people.
Why do you bow to every accident,
What do you agree with every suffering?
Stand like a mountain, let your back be a rock,
Swell your face, don't bow your head!*

Regarding Nizami Ganjavi's Akhilik, M.A. Rasulzadeh writes: Among the literary analogies of "Khamsa" we find not only ideas reminiscent of "Akhilik", but also ideas in accordance with Nizami's ideas in the ideology of "Ahi" spread among artisan societies and uniting them. "If we compare the moral norms in the Futuvvatnama with the moral verses in Nizami, we can come to instructive conclusions."¹²

Researchers, who said that Nizami had nothing to do with the ideology of the Achaemenids, agreed that he lived a Sufi life.¹³ Studies show that, unlike other Sufi sects, the Akhilis are not hermetic, on the contrary they use the blessings of the world to help others in this activity. Indeed, only a generous and courageous man could say these words. The "Akhis" organization, which European orientalists call a "sect", was not really a religious-ascetic sect, but an association of people who defended the city artisans, the poor, and the fighters against the violence of oppressors.

The militant alliance had to have people who were appropriate in terms of age and physical capabilities. It is no coincidence that the main slogan of the Akhis, who preached unity, equality and brotherhood among the people, was to curb the oppressors and distribute the wealth of the usurpers equally among the hungry masses.¹⁴ In addition, along with secular sciences, Nizami Ganjavi was a skilled connoisseur of religious (jurisprudence) sciences, and most importantly, he was recognized as a true saint-sheikh and a ulema whom people respected. Much of the evidence for this fact is contained in separate sources. Even today a clear indicator of the sanctity of Sheikh Nizami's personality is reflected in the tradition of endless respect and love of the people of Ganja for him. The tradition of newlyweds visiting the mausoleum of Nizami Ganjavi for the first time shows that despite the fact that centuries have passed since the death of this genius, he lives in the memory of people as a valuable poet and thinker. This is undeniable fact that the belief in the purity of Sheikh Nizami's personality and the place where he rests eternally. Because the custom of giving a successful and pure beginning to a new family, hearth, and receiving a blessing from Sheikh Nizami is also a visual proof of devotion to ancient, rich, true spiritual values in Ganja. One of the most important reasons that

¹² Hasanov, "About Study of Medieval Historic-Architectural Heritage of Ganja City"; Nizami, *Khosrov and Shirin*.

¹³ Hasanov, "About Research of Features of Legal Culture on the Basis of Historical-Literary Heritage."

¹⁴ Nizami, *Seven Beauties*; Ganja branch of Azerbaijan Republic National Archive, n.d.



connected the genius of Nizami Ganjavi with the Ganja Imamzadeh shrine with unbreakable spiritual cords was the eternal historical connection of his genealogy with this sacred place. More precisely, as noted in a number of historical sources, the Imamzadeh shrine and the surrounding areas belonged to Nizami Ganjavi.¹⁵

Medieval sources do not contain any information about the date of birth of the great poet. Authors who usually lived in the Middle Ages gave the date of the poet's death. It should be noted that there is no common ground between them. For example, a respected commentator such as Dovletshah Samarkand stated the date of his death as 1180, but Taqiaddin Kashani wrote that he died in 1209. This last date is also present in the stamp of the poet's tombstone. Today, however, researchers are still relying on contradictory opinions. This is because various facts in the poet's works are interpreted by scholars in different ways. On the one hand, the passage depicting Nizami's death at the end of the *Iqbalnameh*, on the other hand, at the end of the same work, the signs that it was presented to the Mosul ruler Izzeddin Masud, who came to power in 1211, confuse scholars.¹⁶ At the end of *Iqbalname*, after describing the deaths of Alexander and seven Greek scholars, Nizami writes that he joins them after 63 years and six months later. Taking into account the importance of this passage in determining the date of the poet's death, it is essential to analyse its original and translated versions.

*Nizami, as if this saga is over,
set out to go.*

*It wasn't long before the page of
life history was written.*

it is time to leave after 63 years and a little over six months.

He said about the situation of previous doctors (philosophers).

The doctors slept, and he slept.

*When it was time to leave, sometimes he told his comrades about the way,
sometimes from the guide.*

*He laughed and said that the forgiver had given me hope that he would mercy
me.*

Take your trouble away from me.

You and this palace, we and that house of joy!

When he said this, he fell asleep.

as if he had never been awake.

It is clear from this note that Nizami Ganjavi died in the sixty-three years and six months of his life with the lunar calendar, just before the age of 62 in the Gregorian calendar. But when did this happen? When was "*Iqbalname*" completed? What is meant by "a little more time" between the writing of the work and the death of the poet?

¹⁵ Hasanov, "Academic issues of research of historic-cultural heritage of medieval Ganja"; M. Ellman, *The Nest of Modernism: Henry James, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and Sigmund Freud* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁶ J. Mammadguluzadeh, *Works* (Baku: Onder, 2004); E.L. Hasanov, "Innovative Research of National Wisdom in Works of Nizami Ganjavi," *International Scientific Journal Theoretical & Applied Science* 105, no. 1 (2022): 475–81, <https://doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2022.01.105.36>; Letters of James Joyce, *Vol.1* (New York: Viking Press, 1957).



We still have difficulty in determining the year of the poet's birth, as we do not know the exact date of Nizami's death and the date of completion of *Iqbalname*.¹⁷ Sources indicate the date of the poet's death between 1180-1218. Undoubtedly, if we take into account that the poem "Seven Beauties" was written in 1197, and "Sharafnameh" and "Iqbalnameh" poems after this date, we can not say that the poet died earlier than 1200. Although Nizami does not mention the date of completion of "Iqbalnameh", he writes at the end of the work that he is sixty years old:

*I am already sixty years old,
But nothing has changed.
I feel like ten years old,
The monster is still dealing with me.*

It is clear that Nizami was sixty years old when he was working on "Iqbalname". If we convert these sixty years into the solar calendar, we can say that at that time the poet was 59 years old. In addition, according to the Indian scholar J. Modi, one of the manuscripts of "Khamasa" in his library contains the following addition: May he always be happy for us like a living cypress in the king's assembly. In 597, at the beginning of the year, on the fourth of Muharram month, at four o'clock, let the reader not be sad while reading.¹⁸ According to this record, *Iqbalnameh* was completed on the fourth of Muharram in 597 (October 15, 1200). If, according to the above record, the poet was 60 years old (59 according to the solar calendar) at that time, then the date of 1141, which is considered to be Nizami's date of birth, should be postponed. Because if the poet was 60 years old in 597, in this regard he was born in 537 AH. So how do we analyse the passage about the poet's death mentioned above? It seems to us that there is no contradiction here. It can be concluded that on the eve of the completion of the "Iskendernameh", the poet was sixty years old according to the lunar calendar, meanwhile 59 years old according to the solar calendar and he died three years and six months later.¹⁹

Significance of manuscripts as the historical-cultural sources.

The great Azerbaijani poet and thinker Nizami Ganjavi (1141-1209) is considered one of the most famous representatives of culture and literature worldwide. This great scientist, the author of the greatest literary works - "Khamasa" (Five), who received his inspiration from heaven and relying on the wisdom of the people, decorated his works with pearls of folklore and gave them spiritual patterns that will exist forever. Against the background of these patterns, the moral values of the Azerbaijani people were presented as a whole at the level of the laws of the universe. It should be especially noted that in the works of Nizami Ganjavi, folk wisdom is combined with the miraculous power of the artistic word. In Nizami's poems, everything that seems ordinary and simple turns into wisdom.

¹⁷ E. L. Hasanov, *Applied Significance of Investigation of Handicrafts Branches in Ganja City Based on Innovative Technologies: (Historical-Ethnographic Research): Monograph* (Prague: Vědecko vydavatelské centrum "Sociosféra - CZ," 2018).

¹⁸ J. Joyce, *Dubliners, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Moscow: High school, 1982).

¹⁹ Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja*; E.L. Hasanov, "To the Question on Research of Craftsmanship Traditions of Ganja of XIX – First Half of XX Centuries," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 6, no. 1 (2015): 433–37, <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n1s1p433>.



It should also be noted that there is no particular need to use sources or scientific arguments to prove the national (ethnic) identity of Nizami Ganjavi. Because the spirituality of Nizami's heritage and personality mixed with the wisdom of the Azerbaijani people and became a single system, penetrated the hearts and struck the mind. The works of the brilliant poet are decorated with stories, proverbs and parables in such a way that denying his Turkic roots is as illogical as denying the Sun.

By the way, there is no doubt that this conversation is about the earthquake that took place on September 30, 1139. It is also said that the earthquake occurred forty years before these words were written. At the same time, at the beginning of the poem, it is said that the poet was forty years old in the 40th year of the earthquake. Again it is possible to think that Nizami was born on the eve of the Ganja earthquake that happened on September 30, 1139. If the earthquake happened on September 30, Nizami also writes that he was born in Leo. The sign of Leo falls in July-August, which is a close time period with the month of September, when the earthquake occurred. Thus, according to these notes of the poet in "Khosrov and Shirin", it seems reasonable and allurable to think that Nizami was born in July-August 1139 and perhaps in September.²⁰

In some manuscripts of the poem "Khosrov and Shirin", as well as in the translation of the poem into Azerbaijani, the incident that happened to Anharaq (Kapaz) is given not as a 40 years story, but as a story with a history of four hundred years, which is also wrong. Nizami clearly describes the 1139 earthquake while talking about what happened to Anharaq. Apparently, this four-hundred-year-old conversation is derived by the idea of the time period from the events described in Khosrov and Shirin till the Nizami period. However, the period between the enthronement of Khosrow Parviz and the beginning of Nizami's creative activities is about 600 years.

In trying to determine Nizami's date of birth, scholars sometimes point out another note from the poet's poem Khosrov and Shirin. This note is at the beginning of the poem "A few words about the composition of this book and love." His friend amazed after listening to a piece of the poet's work. He couldn't say anything for a while. When Nizami asked him "why are you silent, don't you want to say something?", his friend, who apologized for his previous words, started to speak differently:

*Only you can remind this kind of magic,
You will build the Kaaba for the idol ...
That's the way you start, don't turn back, keep going,
Lay the foundation of the building, complete it.
if this valuable Iraqi cash is In your hands
What is captivity in the hands of giants?
Ride a horse, don't be a prisoner, run away from Ganja,
You are a lion's paw, open your paw!
... You are the Sun, a world full of light,*

²⁰ Hasanov, "Innovative Significance of Research of Traditional Architectural Features of Ganja"; M. Norris, *Suspicious Reading's of Joyces "Dubliners"* (Philadelphia: University Pennsylvania Press, 2003).



You blaze lights to the East and to the West.

The poet, who did not accept his friend's words, even a little annoyed, said that these conversations were meaningless and expressed the following opinion:

Fortune has shown a lion in my destiny,

What is the benefit, if the mane gave to the lion a lion heart.

I am not that lion to fight the enemy,

I have so much on my plate to fight with myself.

Some scholars suppose that the poet wanted to indicate that he was born in Leo with the words "Fortune has shown a lion in my destiny". If Y.E.Bertels assumes that this verse refers to the poet's birth in Leo zodiac. Meanwhile, Rustam Aliyev not only considers it as an accurate and definite expression of the poet's birth in Leo, but he also considers it is the only correct opinion to accept the idea that Nizami was born in Leo. However, Bertels writes in the monograph "Nizami": "It can be assumed that Nizami was born in July of one of these years (more precisely July-August). In any case, the following verse in the poem "Khosrov and Shirin" can be explained in this sense. "

Fortune has shown a lion in my destiny,

What is the benefit, if the mane gave to the lion a lion heart.

It is a sign of being born in Leo. Y.E.Bertels does not take this nuance seriously to determine Nizami's date of birth with noting that: "Although, the word 'lion' here could indicate 'courage', 'heroism', but it is also possible to identify it as a zodiac sign of Leo." Rustam Aliyev wrote in the preface to the Russian poetic translation of Nizami's lyrical poems that the poet was born in 1141 in Ganja. On the other hand, in a preface to Nizami's monograph, published in 1981 by the "Sovetskiy Pisatel" publishing house in Leningrad, he concludes that Nizami's date of birth in 1141, was incorrect according to a clue in Khosrov and Shirin. The author writes with citing the verse of poem "Falak der taleem shiri namudest" ("Fortune has shown a lion in my destiny"): "It is clear from this line that the poet was born under the sign of Leo." Elsewhere, he points out that he was forty years old at the beginning of the writing process on the poem, which means that the poem began in 575 AH. If Nizami's birth date is 535 AH, the sun was in Leo on August 17-22 in referred year. Converting this information into the current calendar, it can be accurately determined that Nizami was born on August 17-22.

R.Aliyev made two serious mistakes here. The first mistake is that he assumed that the poem "Khosrov and Shirin" had began to be written in the year 575 AH. However, Nizami himself pointed out, the poem began to be written in 573 AH, when Sultan Togrul III ascended the throne, in July 1177 AD. The second mistake is that each sign takes about 30 days, not 6 days, including Leo. His words of August 17-22 are therefore wrong. At that time, the sun was in Leo from late July till late August. In the works written during and after this period, R. Aliyev states that the poet was born on August 17-22, 1140 (if it were not for July 17-August 22, perhaps it would be reasonable). At the same time, the author states in the preface that Nizami began to write the poem "Khosrov and Shirin" in 1180. It is as if the author forgets what he wrote in advance. It is possible that in Nizami's time, the sun was in the sign of Leo on the last days of July. It is also well known from the calendars that the sun in Leo lasts 30-31 days. Therefore, it should be underlined that there is little indication that



Nizami was born under the sign of Leo. His friend told to Nizami that you have a lion's paw (enane shir dari), open the paw. Get out of Ganja and show the world who you are. But, the poet does not agree with this. Although, fortune created him as a poet, he answers that it is just lion's mane, I am just a wordsmith. The paw is not a sword glaze.²¹

R. Aliyev's views become more incomprehensible in his other works. Thus, in many of his writings, the scientist does not explain why the poet's date of birth 1141 becomes to 1140. In his preface to the one-volume Leningrad edition of Nizami's poems, he links this action with the fact that Nizami's poem "Khosrov and Shirin" was supposedly written in 575. In other writings, this "fact" was forgotten, and he insisted on that in Nizami's verse "Fortune has shown a lion in my destiny" is indicated that he was born under the sign of Leo. For example, in the introduction to the poetic translation of "The Treasure of Secrets", we read: "It has been claimed by various scholars that the poet was born between 1138 and 1148". However, the analysis of a sign made by the poet in "Khosrow and Shirin" clearly shows that he was born in 535 AH in the sign of Leo. That date converts to August 17-22, 1140 AD. However, the period of the Sun's stay in Leo is only six days, and the fact that the date of 1141 has changed is not mentioned. In short, even though the verse states that Nizami was born in the sign of Leo, the idea that Nizami was born in 1140, between August 17-22 (it would be more accurate) is another incomprehensible fictitious idea. However, we assume it correct to considering that Nizami was indeed born in August or September 1139, given that in "Khosrov and Shirin" the poet's friend reminded him that he was forty years old. Additionally, Nizami himself spoke at the beginning of the poem about forty years passage after the Ganja earthquake. At the same time, all these assumptions do not provide sufficient grounds to change the date of 1141, which is considered a conventional date. Therefore, as M. Rafili once said, "we also reflect on that Nizami was born no later than 1141, and there is not an essential reason to change this date."²²

B. Zanjani first of all takes the passage devoted to the description of the Ganja earthquake in the "Iqbalnameh" part of the "Iskendername". He indicates this part as a poetic description of the earthquake that took place in Ganja in 534, and he supposes that Nizami wrote it as a person who saw this earthquake with his own eyes, when he was approximately 10-12 years old. Additionally, the verses from the poem "Treasure of Mysteries" which about the eulogy of prophet has been referred in the following. Nizami writes:

Five hundred and seventy periods' sleeping cycle is enough,

²¹ Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja*; E.L. Hasanov, "Research of Historic-Cultural Heritage of Medieval Ganja Based on Information about the Nizami Ganjavi Family," *Pravnehistoricke Studie* 54, no. 1 (2024): 19-29; N.M. Guliyeva & Häsänov, E.L., "Die Traditionelle Gändschänischen Teppiche von Zeitraum Der Aserbaidtschanischen Gelehrten Und Dichter Mirsä Schäfi Waseh Als Ethnoanthropologische Quelle (XIX Jahrhundert)," *European Applied Sciences* 2 (2014): 3-5.

²² E.L. Hasanov, "About Comparative Research of Poems 'Treasury of Mysteries' and 'Iskendername' on the Basis of Manuscript Sources as the Multiculturalism Samples," *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education* 16, no. 11 (2016): 9136-43; E. K. Tabeikyna Kamalova, G. T., Hasanov, E. L., Dzhumagaliyeva, K. V., & Demeuova, N. K., "The Place of Intelligentsia in Socio-Economic Development of Society: The Creative Perspective," *Creativity Studies* 14, no. 1 (2021): 235-50, <https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2021.13639>.



The sun rose, you better hurry to the assembly.

The underlined number 570 is also noted in his various manuscripts as 550, 580, 59 and so on. Zanjani believes that 550 is more accurate variant among these numbers. It is true that 550 are written in a number of his manuscripts. At the same time, the author takes this number as the number of years since the death of the Prophet, and claims that the work was written in 561 AH (1265/66). The scholar also takes into account the fact that Nizami had been desiring forty years during the writing process of "Treasure of Mysteries". So, Nizami was at least 35 years old when the poem was written. If we subtract 35 from 661, we will get Nizami's date of birth. B. Zanjani concludes his thoughts and writes: Nizami states that he is thirty-nine years old and he is in expectation of forty years age in that Masnavi (in the "Treasure of Mysteries"). And if we subtract this number from 561, we will get the date of birth of the poet. $561 - 39 = 522$.

Thus, the opinion of Mir Abbas Mirbagirzadeh, who considers the date of Nizami's birth is 520 AH, is close to the truth. In this regards, Nizami was twelve years old during the Ganja earthquake, in 534 AH. If number 35 is accepted as the lowest number for the phrase "being in expectation of forty years age", his birth date would be in 526 (1131-1132 AD). $561 - 35 = 526$ AH.

These conclusions of Barat Zanjani are wrong because they do not correspond to the poet's notes about forty years in "Khosrov and Shirin" and sixty years in "Iskendername". Zanjani does not take into account Nizami's essential notes in this matter. He doubts the power of Nizami's poetic imagination. He reflects on that if Nizami had not been at least 12 years old, he would not have been able to describe the Ganja earthquake with such accuracy. As mentioned above, numerous notes and points in Nizami's works confirm that Nizami's date of birth was 534-535 AH, 1139-1141 AD. At the same time, there is no significant difference between these dates, and this is unnecessary to create a new date of birth for Nizami, as the date of 1141 is vastly accepted.²³

In conclusion, it is important to note that on the basis of various historical as well as written scientific sources, in addition to individual archival documents, the study of centuries-old spiritual values in the rich heritage of the great Nizami Ganjavi as indicators of the folk wisdom of the Azerbaijani people is a rather important scientific direction. Therefore, in such academic works as this article, the exceptional source study significance of examples of religious traditions, as an integral part of the national and spiritual values of our people, contained in the works of Sheikh Nizami, should be explored, based on numerous artistic and literary examples. In addition to the above, this scientific work also explores the significance of the works, as well as the scientific and literary heritage of Nizami Ganjavi as sources in the study of the environment of the Renaissance, as well as in the study of the multicultural values of our people, traditions of coexistence, based on examples given from the works of the great thinker from Ganja.

²³ Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja*; E.L. Hasanov, "Innovative Study of Historical-Ethnographic and Cultural Heritage of Ganja City for Renaissance Period," *International Scientific Journal Theoretical & Applied Science* 94, no. 2 (2021): 248-54, <https://doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2021.02.94.53>.



In addition, along with secular sciences, Nizami Ganjavi was a skilled connoisseur of religious (jurisprudence) sciences, and most importantly, he was recognized as a true saint-sheikh and a ulema whom people respected. Much of the evidence for this fact is contained in separate sources. Even today a clear indicator of the sanctity of Sheikh Nizami's personality is reflected in the tradition of endless respect and love of the people of Ganja for him. The tradition of newlyweds visiting the mausoleum of Nizami Ganjavi for the first time shows that despite the fact that centuries have passed since the death of this genius, he lives in the memory of people as a valuable poet and thinker. This is undeniable fact that the belief in the purity of Sheikh Nizami's personality and the place where he rests eternally. Because the custom of giving a successful and pure beginning to a new family, hearth, and receiving a blessing from Sheikh Nizami is also a visual proof of devotion to ancient, rich, true spiritual values in Ganja. One of the most important reasons that connected the genius of Nizami Ganjavi with the Ganja Imamzadeh shrine with unbreakable spiritual cords was the eternal historical connection of his genealogy with this sacred place. More precisely, as noted in a number of historical sources, the Imamzadeh shrine and the surrounding areas belonged to Nizami Ganjavi.

It is known that the lands mentioned in 1186 were presented to the great erudite Nizami Ganjavi by Mohammad Jahan Pahlavan the ruler of the Azerbaijan-Atabeylar (or Eldeniz) state for his invaluable pearl of art, the famous poem "Khosrov and Shirin".

On behalf of his brother Mohammad Jahan Pahlavan, Gizil Arslan, who later ruled the Atabey state presented valuable gifts to the great poet, along with a village called Hamdunyan, located 200 kilometers from Ganja. It is said that this village (territory) covers the current Imamzade complex and the surrounding lands. Meanwhile, it is a historical fact that Sheikh Nizami Ganjavi was not a palace poet, and he did not write works by any order.²⁴

It is generally wrong for him to own a certain territory based on his material interests. Therefore, Nizami Ganjavi endless respect for the Imamzadeh shrine, this sacred place, prompted him to take possession of these lands. Despite the information contained in various sources, the Imamzadeh shrine has always been the territory of Ganja and has a direct connection with the city since ancient times.

The genius Nizami Ganjavi considered Ganja as his one and only place until the end of his life, that is why the pure traditions that have lived here for centuries in area of the Imamzadeh shrine and the surrounding areas have been preserved. Among these traditions, it is especially important to provide free assistance to those in need, infants and the elderly.²⁵

Nizami might have had a son or sons after Muhammad, but the genius thinker only included his son Muhammad in his work. As we have mentioned, one of the scholars of the 18th century in the field of language and literature, Az-Zabid, in his work "Mujemul-meshayikh" gave information about Nizami Ganjavi's four children named Sheikh Hasan, Sheikh Ilyas, Sheikh Muzaffar and, Sheikh Hasan who lived in

²⁴ Ahmadov, *Historical mind of Ganja*.

²⁵ Hasanov, "About Comparative Research of Poems 'Treasury of Mysteries' and 'Iskandername' on the Basis of Manuscript Sources as the Multiculturalism Samples."



the XV-XVIII centuries the report says: One of the prominent pillars of Sufi literature is Sheikh Hasan ibn Sheikh Muzaffar ibn Sheikh Ilyas ibn Sheikh Hasan Ganjavi, a great genius of Ganja, who rose to the rank of a sheikh. These four descendants of Sheikh, who belonged to the family of Hadrat Nizami, were well-known thinkers in the field of jurisprudence, theology, logic, philosophy, and science. Al-Zabidi's real name was Muhammad. In addition, the author is known by the nicknames "Abul-Fayd," "Abul-Wakht," "Abul-Eshbal" and "Abul-Jud. The nickname "Abul-Fayd" was given to him by one of the sheikhs of the sect, "Abul Anwar ibn Wafa 17 Shaban 1182/1715. The honorable names given to Az-Zabidi indicate that he was a very reliable true, and correct person. Sources even say that he was a descendant of Imam Hussein, and that is why he was named al-Zaydi because he was descended from Hussein's grandson Zayd. Az-Zabidi's work "Mujemul-meshayikh" about Nizami Ganjavi's children tells about the lessons he taught or gave, met, corresponded, and so on. s. Contains biographies of about 600 scholars who have risen to the rank of Sheikh. Az-A copy of the work, compiled in alphabetical order, is preserved in the "Library of Wisdom" in Medina.²⁶

The location of the city of Ganja on the major caravan routes in the XII century created conditions for its close trade relations with several countries in the Middle and the Far East, Europe, and thus the development of trade and crafts, and the city has become an important center of commerce and crafts.

The city has become famous not only in the country but also abroad for its products, and the "The Mother of Arran cities" has reached a high level. During the reign of Jalaleddin in Ganja, who put an end to the rule of the Atabegs in 1225, the local population was ruthlessly treated, excessively raised taxes, resulted in a revolt of the populations of Ganja against the invaders in 1231. As a result of the uprisings, the mayor's palace has been destroyed, his servants killed, and the local rich has been forced to pay taxes for several month. This revolt led by the potter Bandar against Kharazmshah Jalaleddin had been written in capital letters in the heroic history of Ganja. Gathering young artisans like himself, the young Bandar destroyed Jalaleddin's headquarters, destroyed the hundred-year-old sultan's throne, and forced the local rich to pay taxes for several months. But inexperience proved itself. To drive out the enemy cavalry who had gathered in the surrounding gardens, the brave axis who had gone beyond the castle walls and joined the open battle with an experienced army was defeated. Thirty of Bandar's supporters were captured and executed, and the rebel leader was cut to pieces. The Mausoleum of the Generous Butcher, considered a historical document of Ganja, also shows the high level of Akhilik in this city. I.M Jafarzadeh writes: "According to the legend, this tomb built on the grave of a generous butcher who lived in the time of the fourth caliph Ali ibn Abu Talib (656-661). . It is interesting to know whether this tomb belongs to Akhilik. According to Ibn Battuta, the Achaeans were generous and fought for justice. Jomard Gassab has been chosen for his support, honesty, and integrity.²⁷

²⁶ Tabeikyna, "The Place of Intelligentsia in Socio-Economic Development of Society: The Creative Perspective."

²⁷ Hasanov, "Innovative Study of Historical-Ethnographic and Cultural Heritage of Ganja City for Renaissance Period."



At the time when the people of the city believed in idols, he secretly converted to Islam. As we have mentioned, the tomb, which is estimated to built in the VII-VIII centuries, is located on the right bank of the Ganja River, 1 km from the ancient Ganja fence, and today it is one of the 800 historical monuments listed in Ganja.

The Tomb of the Jomard Gassab is one of the 288 monuments protected by the state, which indicates its importance. The tomb was demolished in the 1970s and rebuilt in 2004 by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in full accordance with its original appearance. Thus, in the Middle Ages, crafts developed in Ganja, Sufism and Akhism spread, and the number of sheikhs increased. Nizami Ganjavi had a special place among them. Bertels, a prominent researcher of Nizami, noted that Nizami's family, born in Ganja, was closer to urban artists than to a feudal aristocratic family. Y. Krinsky, in his work "Tazkirat ash-Shu'ara" (1487) of Dovlatshah (15th century), touched upon the issue of Nizami's affiliation with the akhis and was surprised that none of his researchers in this field paid attention to this very important factor, ie the poet's social mood. Nizami Ganjavi was born, lived, and died in Ganja, the ancient cultural center of Azerbaijan.²⁸

Along with the rich libraries, madrassas, scientific and cultural environment of Ganja, which is considered one of the important scientific and cultural centers of the Renaissance (Renaissance), the article contains such important spiritual values as national memory, moral values, historical and ethnographic heritage of our people, which have traditions with thousand-year past, traditions of tolerance are studied as significant indicators of the global heritage of Nizami Ganjavi from a historical and ethnographic point of view. Historical-literary heritage of Ganja city also belongs to such thinkers of Azerbaijan as Nizami Ganjavi, Mahsati Ganjavi, Mirza Shafi Vazeh and other scientists, poets, philosophers. Because study of their heritage based on different historical sources, archival documents, various manuscripts is very important for research of the past of Ganja city. It is important to note that based on a scientific study of the appeal to the national memory, historical roots and religious values of our people, the great poet, who has repeatedly stated in his works the national identity and heritage of glorious ancestors, the undeniable indicators of Eastern wisdom, humanity, and devotion to universal values are clearly demonstrated.

Conclusion

Nizami Ganjavi, through his literary works, successfully portrays the role of women as symbols of strength, wisdom, and love within the Akhlik ideology. The characters of Shirin and Nushaba in Nizami's works not only demonstrate the resilience of women but also teach that women can develop independently without relying on men. In the context of da'wah management, this provides an important lesson that da'wah should not only rely on the dominant narrative of men but must also include messages about the empowerment of women. By exploring the values

²⁸ M. Poulmarc'h Laneri, N., & Hasanov, E.L., "Innovative Approach to the Research of Ethnographic-Archaeological Heritage in Ganja Based on Materials of Kurgans," *International Scientific Journal Theoretical & Applied Science* 77, no. 9 (2019): 341-45, <https://doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2019.09.77.60>.



from strong female figures within the Akhilik ideology, da'wah management can design more inclusive messages and build broader social awareness about gender equality in religious teachings.

Nizami Ganjavi, through his connection to Sufi and Akhilik traditions, made significant contributions to the spiritual and moral development of the society in Ganja. His teachings, which emphasize courage, justice, and wisdom, laid the foundation for a more civilized and balanced society. In da'wah management, this approach can be applied by emphasizing moral and social values in every message conveyed. Da'wah based on universal moral teachings, as presented by Nizami, can guide the community to prioritize not only spiritual aspects but also social welfare, justice, and equality. Therefore, da'wah management that integrates Sufi and Akhilik values can produce a more holistic approach that is relevant to the social challenges of today.

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