

**Maharramazada T.**National Museum of Azerbaijani Literature named after Nizami Ganjavi  
of National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan**RESEARCH OF MAMMADAGHA SULTANOV  
ABOUT CLASSICAL AZERBAIJANI LITERATURE**

*The main goal of the article is to prove that Mamedaga Sultanov, known as a poet, writer, publicist and translator, is also an outstanding literary critic. He was known as a textologist, source scholar and archivist both at home and abroad in Azerbaijan, working on primary, handwritten sources, as well as the history of translation. It is noted that the famous literary critic devoted most of his life to scientific research and proved himself to the scientific community as a historian of Azerbaijani literature.*

*The article notes that, being one of the first researchers of Azerbaijani manuscripts, M. Sultanov was also a poet and translator. Tracing his literary activity makes it possible to deeply study the history of the development of Azerbaijani science and culture in the middle of the 20th century, to clarify the achievements of Azerbaijani philological thought over the last century.*

*The novelty of the article is that M. For the first time in the history of Azerbaijani literature, Sultanov deeply and comprehensively investigated many problematic aspects of national literature, classified them and presented them to the attention of a wide range of literary scholars both in Azerbaijan and abroad.*

*Research method and methodology.* In the work, general methods, methods of analysis of the processing of scientific texts, methods of description, methods of comparative analysis, methods of historical and chronological analysis of the works of outstanding representatives of Azerbaijani literature are widely used.

*Conclusions.* In conclusion, the author notes some important aspects of the research activity of M. Sultanov, characterizing him as an experienced connoisseur of Azerbaijani literature. He emphasizes that such famous poets as Fizuli, Vagif, etc., who put a lot of effort into the development of both Azerbaijani poetry and the literary Azerbaijani language. In his work, he determined the true identity of the poet Vazekh, data about his personality, which was hidden from the public for a long time, gave a detailed analysis of unknown examples of the work of such little-known artists as Assar, Hasrati, and also brought to light in Azerbaijani literature several other artists who forced to forget Soviet ideologies.

**Key words:** Azerbaijani literature, literary criticism, scientific articles, literary study, analyses, scientific description.

**Introduction.** Literary criticism was the main direction of scientific creativity of M. Sultanov. His multifaceted scientific heritage includes several significant research works about work art of Near and Middle Eastern peoples, as well as Azerbaijani literature. In the creativity of literary study of the scientist, research materials on the analyses of the creativity of outstanding poets such as A. Khagani, A. Navai, M. Sh. Vazeh, A. Tabrizi, M. Mojuz, M. P. Vagif have a special place. There are also important articles about the comparative literary study and international literary relations in his scientific heritage.

It could be find researches of M. Sultanov such as “Azerbaijani ashiks – on A. S. Pushkin” (1937), “Khagani Shirvani and Near Eastern literature” (1947), “A. Pushkin and Azerbaijani literature”

(1949), “Firdovsi and Azerbaijani literature” (1959), “Navai in Azerbaijan” (1968), “He was a friend of Mirza Jalil” (about the friendship between M. Abashidze and J. Mammadguluzada) (1974) published in different years in the press and scientific collections which were very interesting. But his scientific heritage is primarily based on research works related to Azerbaijani classical literature.

**The main part.** One of the most outstanding names of Azerbaijani literary community of XX century was Mammadagha Sultanov. Being one of the first manuscript scholars of Azerbaijan, M. Sultanov was also poet and translator. To follow his literary activity allows us to deeply learn the development history of Azerbaijan science and culture under the Soviet Union, to clarify the achievements of Azerbaijani philological thought in the last century.

**Research on Khagani.** M. Sultanov defended the candidate dissertation on “Afzaladdin Khagani Shirvani” in 1947. Currently, one copy of dissertation work are kept in scientific archive fund of Manuscript Institute of ANAS named after Mahammad Fuzuli where the scientist worked in before [1, c. 237].

The scientist generalized his research in the topic of dissertation work and published them in the form of monography named “Khagani Shirvani (About life and creativity) in 1954 [2, c. 114]. In the monography, the time, environment, life, worldview, creativity, literary influence of the poet, and other related issues are examined from various perspectives. First, researcher considered the study history of Khagani’s heritage. He refuges the fact that Khagani and other poets who were forced to write their works in Persian to be Iranian poets: *“European, Indian and Iranian orientalists (for example: E. Brawn, V. Minorsky, Sh. Nomani, R. Shafa and others), who engaged the Khagani’s creativity whenever the occasion arose, they put forward false ideas about him, distorting Khagani in their one-sided works, forgetting the poet’s creativity power and deep philosophical views, and attempting to portray him as a mere “panegyric” court poet of Iran. In general, when discussing the literature of this or that people of the Near East, they have typically linked him either to Persian, Arabic, or Ottoman literature”* [2, c. 114].

The scholar, who believe that due to his artistic characteristics, life events covered in his creativity and issues raised, Khagani has the most outstanding place in the world literature among the representations of Azerbaijan literature of Middle Ages after Nizami evaluates especially his “Habsiyya” series of poem in which there are realism components in his heritage, ghazal, stanza and rubais in which philosophical view are expressed. M. Sultanov noted that it is possible to see Khagani’s sincerity in the mentioned works rather than exaggerated odes.

The scholar listed the information about Khagani given by the most reliable sources starting from the ancient tazkiras and commented on them. Among them, he says that we can see the first biographic information about Khagani in “Lubab ul-albab” by Mahammad Ovfi, other biographers repeated them by changed and added the information in here. That is why he says that it is important to write new knowledge related to the great poet’s biography based on his creativity. He mentioned that the first research work about the poet was written in Persian by N. Khanikov in 1864. The author speaking about this work, named “Memories on Khagani” (“Memoire sur Khacani”)

considered this research to be the first serious and remarkable step to learn the poet’s biography.

M. Sultanov noted that “Khagani’s quatrains” by K. Zaleman written in 1875 was the main reason to well know the poet. Because compared to Khagani’s odes, which are complex in terms of the poetic presentation of his thoughts, his rubaiyat are simpler in expressing artistic ideas and are more closely related to life.

One of the most important points of this monography by M. Sultanov, he gave the information about the comments to the poems of Khagani for the first time. The scientist wrote that the work with the verse “Falak gajrovtar ast az-khamm-e tarsa” has been interpreted more frequently. He says that in “Javahir ul-asrar” by Sheykh Arif Azarin, “Sharh-e qasaid-e Khagani” by Abdurrahman Jami, “Farah afza” by Kabil Mahammad, “Muftah ul-kunuz” by Razgulu khan Hidayat, “Hall-e qasaid-e Khagani” by Ahmad Hasan Shovkat, “Mahabbatnama” by Abdulvahab Ghinain, other works by Mahammad ibn Davud ibn Mahmud Alavi Shadiabadi and Alavi Lahij the qasidahs of great poet have been detailed analysed. In modern presses these comments have been used widely.

We should note that, exactly M. Sultanov could determine the date of birth, geographical place of birth, the real name, date of death of Khagani for the first time. Using directly his works of the Poet he revealed his exact date of birth, the land where he grew up and lived, real name and date of death based on the inscription on his tomb. He explained the mistakes made by N. Khanikov, E. Brawn, H. Danish, K. Zaleman, A. Krinsky and others. He gave detailed information about his parents, family, close relatives, especially uncle. The researcher, with the examples taken from the poet’s works, provides the first information about the poet’s relationship with the members of the court, ruling circles, and rulers, his life in the prison of Shabran fortress, and other important moments and remarkable facts in his biography.

M. Sultanov is the first scholar carried out detailed research work about “Tohfatul-Irageyn” poem – the first sample of epic poet of Azerbaijan known to us. He involved the eleven manuscript copies of the work (6 of them is protected in Baku and 5 of the min Sankt-Peterburg) in the comparative research, based on the difference of the copies, he has tried to determine the variant close to the original. He writes: *“Unfortunately, we have not the correct text of this interesting work. None of 11 manuscripts known to us were not perfect, they are completely*

*different for either chronological structure of events, or description and explanation of separate events*" [2, c. 114]. The scholar was sorry since due to the scribes' arbitrariness, this important and significant work was not included in some of Khagani's "Divan" and "Collected Works".

On the basis of the language and general style of the work he evaluates "Tohfatul-Irageyn" as the first Poetic travelogue in Azerbaijani literature, consider that the poet wrote it in the form of the travel notes, as diary and then he brought it together into a unified work by organizing it in Shirvan, by polishing and sealing, and, as he himself put it, "*reforming and perfecting*" it [2, c. 114].

As a result of M. Sultanov's research, the history of Azerbaijani literary prose has been traced further back, and A. Khagani has been recognized as a powerful prose writer. The scholar translates and presents a passage from the introduction written for the masnavi "Tohfatul-Irageyn" and attempts to convey the poet's expressiveness in prose to the reader. He writes: "*Through this introduction (although in Persian), we become acquainted with the early Azerbaijani prose of the 12th century*". [2, c. 114].

M. Sultanov has pointed out that, in some sources there is Khagani's work titled "Khatm al-Qaraib". He emphasized the importance of approaching such information with caution and has expressed his expert opinion on this matter: "*Those, who pressed Khagani's heritage and the secretaries who copied his "Divan" sometimes gave different names to the poet's separate works (especially qasidahs). In our opinion, "Khatmul-Qaraib" title is also the name given by someone to one of the qasidahs exist now*" [3, c. 477].

Thus, as result of activity of M. Sultanov on Khaganology based on the position of the poet in Azerbaijani literature, naziras written to his works literary school covered Near and Middle East has been determined. The scholar stated that the complete collection of Khagani, compiled from various manuscript sources, encompasses more than 25,000 couplets.

**Research on Nizami.** M. Sultanov knowing about the nuances of the Persian language, one of the masters of classical Eastern literature has written an article named "On a new ghazal of Nizami Ganjavi" consisting of the information obtained the first sources. He gathered lyric poems belonging to the lost "Divan" of the great poet from takzira and anthologies and presented a ghazal which nobody has published until him in a poetic translation.

The author of article presents a fact proving that the mentioned ghazal belongs specifically to Nizami

Ganjavi (neither to Nizami Aruzi Samargandi nor any other Nizami), is that the manuscript in which it was included was written specifically in Azerbaijan – in Baku, and that only the poems of Azerbaijani poets were collected in that manuscript. Additionally, M. Sultanov notes that: "*Since in Azerbaijan never other Nizami is mentioned, as well as Khagani, it is obvious that this ghazal belonged to only Nizami Ganjavi. Finally, the language and style also prove that it belongs to Nizami Ganjavi*" [4, c. 4].

**Research on Assar.** M. Sultanov is one of the first scholars present Assar Tabrizi to the scientific community. He gives information about literary environment formed in Azerbaijan places of XIV century in his article named "Assar Tabrizi and his work "Mehr and Mushtari"" published in 1969. He gave the unknown facts about Azerbaijanian poet Assar Tabrizi, grew up in such environment and used to teach the children of the ruler, as well as not well known until then. The scholar determines the fact that Movlana Mahammad Assar Tabrizi died in 1390 and finished his famous poem "Mehr and Mushtari" in 1376 according to the notes in sources. From the content of the work he concluded that its author belonged to Nizami Ganjavi school that is, along with the poet's poems such as "Leyli and Majnun" and "Khosrow and Shirin", he also successfully drew from the Eastern literary love epics such as "Vamik and Azra" and "Verga and Gulsha". M. Sultanov, briefly summarizes the plot of the work, and points out that this reminds the famous Greek epic "Orestes and Pylades" according to the fact that here, traditionally, it is not the love between a boy and a girl that is emphasized, but rather the friendship between two boys [5].

**Research on Nasimi.** M. Sultanov kept in the centre of attention the issue of publishing Imadaddin Nasimi's heritage. He notes that Nasimi's ghazals have a great influence on our literature both in his time and the next stage in his article named "On publishment of Nasimi's literary heritage". The author mentioned that several poets wrote poems under the pen name of Nasimi creates difficulties in the publication of his legacy emphasizes the importance of being cautious in order not to confuse the works of the great artist with the poems of others. The researcher, highly evaluates the Nasimi poems published by Salman Mumtaz in 1926 with Arabian alphabet, based on the scientific-critic text prepared in 1969 on the poet's 600th anniversary determines that, the previous publishments did not include ghazal and qasidahs more than 300, that is 4000-couplet heritage of Nasimi [6, c. 2]. That is why it expresses



his belief that the new edition will make a significant contribution to Nasimi studies.

**Research on “Verga and Gulsha” poem.** One of the interesting articles of literary critic is titled “On and ancient poem “Verga and Gulsha””. In the article the information about the oldest variant of the mentioned poem. According to the manuscript revealed by M. Sultanov, it is known that more ancient variant of “Verga and Gulsha” masnavi whose author is known to be Ruknaddin Masud Masihi, who lived in the 17th–18th centuries in the history of Azerbaijani literature has been written in 1386. This, in turn, traces the history of the plot of the work back 260 years before Masihi. The researcher remembers a note of Ismail Hikmat and emphasizes that there is information in the sources about the fact that one poet named Ziyayi has also written “Verga and Gulsha”. The scholar, considering that other copy in this name has been found in Istanbul shows that it belongs to Yusif Meddah. The scholar, considering that this epos was memorized in the language of the ashiks as a sample of oral folk literature concluded that both Masihi, Ziyayi, and Yusif Meddah all drew from a single source – folklore [7, c. 3].

**Research on Hasrati.** Late it is revealed that the older copy defined in Manuscripts Fund of Republic (Now Manuscripts Institute named after M. Fuzuli of ANAS) belonged to unknown person named Hasrati. M. Sultanov writes: “*Most of the verses with Hasrati pennames from Epos proves that this epos has been written by a poet with pen-named Hasrati*” [7, c. 3]. Author of article note that this talented Azerbaijani poet lived in XIV century and hereby in the history of our literature, epic poetry in the native language is attributed to an earlier period with proud. “... , *This work, besides being the oldest variant of the “Verga and Gulsha” epic in the Azerbaijani language, would also be of great significance from the perspective of studying the history of the development of the Azerbaijani language*” [7, c. 3].

**Research on Fuzuli.** M. Sultanov has also engaged in the research of life and creativity of the great Azerbaijani poet Mahammad Fuzuli. The scholar evaluates him as a thinker worthy of standing alongside Nizami Ganjavi in his article named “Fuzuli lives” published on the 400th anniversary of the death of great writer, and notes that his works are known in whole Near East. M. Sultanov generally analysing the literal heritage of Fuzuli Against the backdrop of the earlier Azerbaijani literature, evaluates the poet as the most powerful wordsmith of his time.

Addition to noting the various directions of Fuzuli’s creativity, he also considers that it is his duty

to present the great artist as an experienced teacher. By analysing the didactic passages in his other lyrical works written in Persian, which include advice to Fuzuli’s son, Fazli, he concludes that: “*Fuzuli, as an experienced teacher, gave many pieces of advice to children and adults.... Every delicate word said by Fuzuli was for the happiness of the people*” [8, c. 1].

The article of M. Sultanov named “Follower of Fuzuli literary school” is about Karkuk poet with Khalis penname, originally from the Iraqi Turkmens who once migrated from Azerbaijan. The scholar states that two of his ghazals are in Persian, along with twenty-four ghazals, six rubais, one mukhammas, and six ghazals in Turkish. He notes that, Khalis Karkuki commented the starting couplet of “Masnavi” by Jalaladdin Rumi in Persian by verse, wrote naziras to the works of classics such as Maghribi Tabrizi, Hafiz Shirazi, Kamal Khojandi, Nurali, Mahammad Fuzuli in the Persian and Turkish languages, has composed takhmis of his famous ghazals. The researcher comparing the works of Khalis – saying “*I am neither on the path of Sharia, nor a kafir, nor a Muslim*”, with other representatives of Azerbaijani classical literature sees the similarity between him and Abulgasim Nabati. But based on the takhmis and specific ghazals he considers more purposeful to compare him with Mahammad Fuzuli. Among these takhmis, the scholar considers to be more noticeable those takhmis written to the ghazals by Fuzuli with the couplets “When your beauty is overwhelming, the lovers of love become a mere jest”, “For many years, we have been waiting at the alley of reproach”, “I am so intoxicated that I do not comprehend what the world is” [9, 1].

M. Sultanov has revealed an interesting fact while studying the heritage of the poets writes Nazira to Fuzuli’s works and composed a takhmis of his ghazals. He defined that, Arabian Persian poet Mirza Abdulvahhab Nishat Isfahani whose creativity was predominantly in Persian and partly in Arabic and who loved in the beginning of XIX century wrote Nazira in Azerbaijani language to Fuzuli. The scholar compared the ghazals of Nishat in Azerbaijani language with poems of Fuzuli and came to such a conclusion: “... *While wanting to write ghazal in the Azerbaijani language, he chose Fuzuli as master. Here the form, meter and rhymes of the ghazal, have been determined*” [10, c. 1].

**Research on Vagif.** One of the directions of literary criticism of M. Sultanov is related to Molla Panah Vagif. The scholar pays attention to the less known field – artistic characteristics of the heritage of the great Azerbaijani poet in his article named “Some notes on Vagif’s artistry”: he shares his thoughts

about metaphor, repetitions, interrogation, the art of circular and linear expression, form, meter, refrain, rhymes characteristics. The researcher emphasizes that the mentioned literary heroes in his works show his wide reading.

In our opinion, M. Sultanov was one of the literary scholars who determined the series of metaphors in Vagif's works. He considers that, the laconic of the examples of metaphor and metonymies was the artistic talent of the poet: *"We can see a lot of subtle metaphors and metonymies in the poet's ghazal and mukhammas .... Sometimes Vagif shows such originality in his metaphors that no other poet else can use a similar metaphor. For example, while comparing the face of the lover with a poem, and eyebrows with its first couplet (verse) he has demonstrated such mastery and originality"* [11, c. 34].

While speaking about Vagif's mustazad the scholar says how sensitively the great artist approaches to the literary form and write also: *"The poet has five mustazad, four of them have been adapted to separate poetic forms. These mustazad can be called mustazadi-ghazal, mustazadi-mukhammas, mustazadi-musaddas tarji, mustazadi-muashshar"* [11, c. 36]. M. Sultanov was sorry that whole collection of the poet, who has signed such a great number of innovations in just one genre did not reach us and he has no doubt that Vagif has written in classic poet forms such as masnavi, rubai, tarkibband, besides the works in the specific genres (ghazal, mukhammas, goshma, etc).

In the article named "New file about Vagif" M. Sultanov revealed an interesting fact about the biography of the great poet. He writes according to the file of 1802 kept in Manuscripts Institute of Georgia: *"It seems from the last research, the person who executed in 1797 in Jidir Plain with Molla Pənah was not the poet's eldest son Ali agha, but the youngest son Gasim agha"* [11, c. 4]. So, in the file compiled after five years of Vagif's death the seal of his son's Ali agha and a little note *"The highly respected, great scholar, deceased Molla Pənah's son, Akhund Molla Ali Agha"* were available.

**Research on Vazeh.** The scholar wrote an article also about outstanding enlightener artist Mirza Shafi Vazeh lived in XIX century. In this article written on 100-year anniversary of the poet's death M. Sultanov presents information related to the characteristics of Mirza Shafi based on the first sources. Then, he considers the history of translation his works in Russian language. He thinks that the heritage of the great poet in the translations of Yakubovich, Radchenko, Eyfert and other spread to the world through foreign language.

Later, he pays special attention to the expression of the optimistic mood and enlightenment spirit in Mirza Shafi Vazeh's works, valuing the poet's distance from Islamic superstition, his emphasis on the expression of pure and sincere love, and his promoting of ideas such as attachment to this world and enjoying life, as significant progress. The author who evaluates Mirza Shafi as humanist artist writes about his works promoting women's freedom: *"Mirza Shafi pay special attention to the question of women's freedom. His poems about "Zuleykha", "Hafiza" and "Susani" are very interesting in this sense. He says in his, "Hafiza" poem:*

*"Take off your chador and show your beauty to the world.*

*You are rose and rose is created to give joy to the eyes"* [13, c. 2]. As we see, the author pays special attention to the innovative aspects for his time in the works of M. Sh. Vazeh.

**Conclusion.** To sum up, it can be noted that M. Sultanov's literary studies characterize him as a skilled connoisseur of Azerbaijani literature. The scientist's monograph with a scientific description, scientific articles, introductions to books and comments allow us to say that he studied the literary heritage of world-famous Azerbaijani poets such as Khagani, Nizami, Fizuli, Vagif, established a fact that determines the true identity of Vazekh, information about whose identity is hidden, gave a detailed analysis of unknown examples of creativity of little-known artists such as Assar, Hasrati, and also determined the place of a number of artists forgotten by Soviet ideology in Azerbaijani literature.

We should note that, M. Sultanov was one of the manuscript scholars who first introduced the heritage of Azerbaijani classical authors, both in Azerbaijani and Persian, to the scientific and literary community. He is one of the wide-ranging literary scholars who turned not only our classic literature of XII–XIX centuries, but also poetry of XX century into learning object. However, when we analyze his scientific heritage, we see that the study of the life and creativity of the most prominent representatives of Azerbaijani literature occupies a more important place among M. Sultanov's works of literary studies. Thus, he wrote the lyrics, epic poetry and artistic prose of Khagani Shirvani, referred to as a coherent source by world orientalists, the ghazals included in Nizami Ganjavi's lost "Divan", the poems of representatives of Muhammad Fuzuli's literary school, the life of Molla Panah Vagif, the founder of Azerbaijani realism. He is the author of important fundamental scientific research works in the field of translation research, the works of Mirza Shafi Vazeh, one of the 19th century Azerbaijani intellectuals.

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**Махаррамзада Т. ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ МАММАДАГІ СУЛТАНОВА  
ПРО КЛАСИЧНУ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСЬКУ ЛІТЕРАТУРУ**

**Основна мета статті** – довести, що Мамедага Султанов, відомий як поет, письменник, публіцист та перекладач, є ще й видатним літературним критиком. Над початковими, рукописними джерелами, а також займаючись історією перекладу, був відомий як текстолог, джерелознавець та архівіст як на батьківщині, так і за кордоном в Азербайджані. Зазначається, що відомий літературознавець присвятив більшу частину свого життя науково-дослідницьку діяльність та зарекомендував себе науковому загалу як історик азербайджанської літератури.

У статті зазначається, що, будучи одним із перших дослідників рукописів Азербайджану, М. Султанов був також поетом і перекладачем. Простеження його літературної діяльності дозволяє глибоко вивчити історію розвитку азербайджанської науки та культури у середині 20-го століття, прояснити досягнення азербайджанської філологічної думки за останнє століття.

**Новизна у статті** полягає в тому, що М. Султанов вперше в історії азербайджанської літератури глибоко і комплексно досліджував безліч проблемних аспектів національної літератури, класифікував їх і представив до уваги широкому колу літературознавців як в Азербайджані, так і за його межами.

**Метод та методологія дослідження.** У роботі широко використані загальнонучні методи, методи аналізу опрацювання наукових текстів, методи опису, методи порівняльного аналізу, методи історико-хронологічного аналізу праць видатних представників художньої літератури Азербайджану.

**Висновки.** У підсумку автор зазначає деякі важливі аспекти дослідницької діяльності М. Султанова, що характеризують його як досвідченого знавця азербайджанської літератури. Наголошує, що такі відомі поети як Фізулі, Вагіф та ін., які немало старанностей вклали для розвитку як азербайджанської поезії, так і літературної азербайджанської мови. Він у своїй діяльності визначив справжню особу поета Вазеха, дані про його особистість, якого довго приховували від громадськості, дав детальний аналіз невідомих зразків творчості таких маловідомих художників як Ассар, Хасраті, також вивів на світ в азербайджанській літературі та інших кількох художників, які змушували забути радянськими ідеологами.

**Ключові слова:** азербайджанська література, літературна критика, літературознавство, аналіз.