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SHAH ISMAIL KHATAI

Poet, 1487-1524

AZERBAIJANI LITERATURE



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Shah Ismail Khatai, XVI century. Medieval European rendering by an unknown Venetian artist. The original rendering is kept in the Uffizi Gallery museum in Florence, Italy.



Shah Ismail Khatai

Shah Ismail Khatai is the founder of Safavids, first shah, classical poet of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani Turkish was declared state language first time in the history during the reign of Shah Ismail. He wrote his poems with pseudonym of "Khatai".

Shah Ismail was born on June 23, 1487 in Ardabil in the family of religious-political figure, head of sect. He is from Safavids dynasty. His grandfather Sheykh Juneyd and father Sheykh Heydar were rulers. His mother Alamshahbayim was daughter of Uzun Hasan, ruler of Aghqoyunlu.

His father Sheykh Heydar was killed in 1488 in the war with Shirvanshah, Ismail and his family were imprisoned. Having spent 4,5 yeras in prison, Aghqoyunlu Rustam Bayanduri released them from Istakhr fortress and send them to Ardabil. Shortly after, getting scared of the fame of Sheykh Heydar's sons and sent troop of 5,000 horsemen after them. Gizilbash adherents were defeated in the Shamasi battle. Although Aghqoyunlu re-occupied Ardabil, they couldn't find Ismail and Ibrahim. Beacuse Gizilbash adherents took them away from Ardabil to Gilan – Lahijan. Ismail stayed in Lahijan with his brother for 6 years and learned Arabic and Persian and reading "Guran" from Shamsaddin Lahiji .



*The bust of Shah Ismail Khatai
in Ganja.*



"Shah Ismail Khatai"
Painted by: Elmira Shahtakhtinskaya, 1986



"Shah Khatai"
Painted by: Mahlukat

After a number of conquests, Ismail came to Tabriz in 1501 and declared himself shah. In 1503 he defeated Sultan Murad near Hamadan and put an end to the history of Aghqoyunlu reign. After it, he gained much greater victories in his military marches. Till 1510 he had conquered Iraq, including whole Iran and Baghdad. The vast territory between Amu Darya and Euphrate was subjugated to the Safavids. In general, the Safavids was considered one of the most powerful states in the Near East.



*The monument of Shah Ismail Khatai
in Ardabil, Iran*

Regardless of his short life and spending much of his time in state affairs, Shah Ismail Khatai left rich and diversified literary legacy after his death. He wrote in three languages – Turkish, Arabic and Persian, both in Arud and syllabic verse and in the genres of epic and lyric. The sincere poetry of Khatai appearing as an answer to claims of his time merged with his public activity in most cases. This poetry either joined the sword in battle fields, or turned to the sermons of wise elders and sheykhs of sect, or commenter of heart full of love to the world and human. Khatai's poems encompass love to heroism, beauty, inner purity, but hatred to evil, ugliness, faithlessness, apostasy, infidelity and ignominy.



*Silver coins minted on behalf of
Shah Ismail Khatai in Ganja*

لا جوردايكن پسياه اولدي سما

ايشل برافله طودتيه هوا



حتمت ايله بندي قالدردى علم

ن شاسي داخني اول كن سجدم

The Battle between Shah Ismail and Shaybani Khan. Miniature

Beginning his literary activity from adolescence, Khatai wrote his first poems under the impact of Yunus Imra, Gazi Burhanaddin, Imadaddin Nasimi. His poems in syllabic verse are of *qoshma*, *garayli*, *varsaghi*, *bayati* genres, and his poems in Arud verse are of *ghazal*, *gasidah*, *gitah*, *murabbe* and *tarjiband* genres.



"Shah Ismail on attack"
Painted by: Chingiz Mehbaliyev



*The handicraft made from walnut tree
with engraving "Shah Ismail Khatai".
Engraved by: Seyfaddin Mansimoglu*

The literary legacy of the poet consists of "Divan", didactic poems, "Nasihatnameh" (Book of Advice) and "Dahnameh" (Book of Ten Letters). The major part of his works are in Azerbaijani Turkish just a few of them being in Persian and Arabic.



*Divan - the only manuscript of Shah
Ismail Khatai. USA*



Helmet of Shah Ismail Khatai



Khatai is lyrical poet. The key plot of his poems, especially *qoshma* and *garayli*, is admiration of Shia (or Shiite)-Gizilbash sect.



*The monument of Shah Ismail Khatai
in Khachmaz, Azerbaijan*



خپان بندق اوزد که خود فلاد را برین و بر تو پیرو مسانه او آمده و از آنجا



محمد خان
شاه عالم شاه
با سلطان شکر
آنگاه را با مرکب
بیک خنجر
بار کرده
چون

برکدوی سپهرم بند شده از میان سرد و دپت مرکبند دارشد و چون آن

Shah Ismail is fighting with Sheybani khan in Marv battle. Miniature

Khatai dedicated some his poems to propogation of Sufi views. His poems about sufism express great humanism. He thought love to be unearth feeling and the way of spiritual eminence. Idealizing the love as “bearing power of universe”, the poet also wrote the poems glorifying the nature.



*The miniature depicting
Chaldirsn battle (1514)*

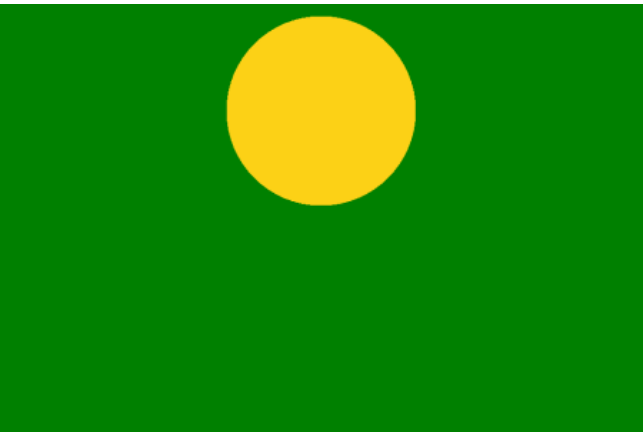


*"Sultan Salim and Shah Ismail Khatai"
Painted by: Mahlukat*

The simplicity, naturalness and originality of his poetic style is worth attention. He gave a great importance to the development of native-language poetry, he was the benefactors of poets writing in native language and set up assembly of poets in his palace. Azerbaijani was not only literary language during his reign, but also became an official language and was used in diplomatic correspondence.



The territory of Safavids during the reign of Shah Ismail I



The Safavids banner used during the reign of Shah Ismail I and Shah Tahmasib I

Khatai's poems reached a number of countries of the Near East during his time. His manuscripts have been preserved up to date in famous manuscript funds and museums of the world.



Khatai's Divan



*The miniature depicting the Maro battle
between Shah Ismail and Sheybani khan
(The Palace of Chahal Sutun).*

Shah Ismail Khatai died on May 23, 1524. He was buried in the Sheykh Safi tomb in Ardabil. He passed away when he was 36 in full swing of his life, creative activity and wishes, but he gained immortality for his achievements in such a short period. Khatai is accepted as the founder of one of the most brilliant pages of political and cultural history of Azerbaijan people. K.Marx wrote about Shah Ismail's great military talent: "Shah Ismail, the founder of Safavids kingdom was a conqueror. He conquered 14 provinces during his reign of 14 years."



Ullah
Ucnajob
Xomau

*"Shah Ismail Khatai"
Painted by: Maral Rahmanzadeh*

An opera (M.Magomayev “Shah Ismail”) and a symphony (S. Farajov “Shah Khatai”) were composed about him, one of the districts and metro stations in Baku were named after him, his monuments were built up in Baku, Ardabil and most cities of Azerbaijan.



The shrine (tomb) of Shah Ismail and his great grandfather Sheikh Safiaddin

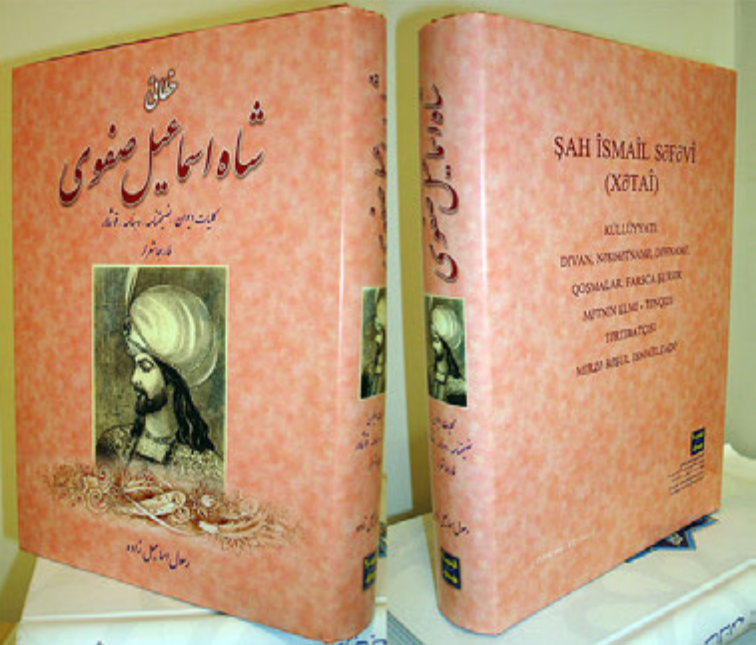
Appreciative statements about Khatai:

“Shah Ismail, the founder of Safavids kingdom was a conqueror. He conquered 14 provinces during his reign of 14 years”.

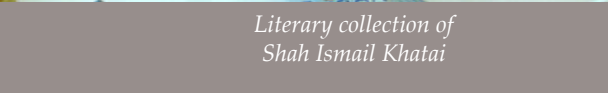
Karl Marx

“When Shah Ismail was advised to attack the Ottoman troops at night, he answered as a real Turk: “I’m not a highwayman.” But Sultan Salim whom you can’t help overpraise, killed his brother and father for throne.”

Ziya Bunyadov, academician



*Literary collection of
Shah Ismail Khatai*





*"Shah Ismail enters Tabriz and
declares himself shah"
Painted by: Chingiz Mehbaliyev*

*"Shah Ismayil was a proud, freethinking
commander as well who believed in his
strength and a noble man who didn't
whenever evade his targets."*

Nazim Hikmat

*"Being very attentive and careful in his
every step, Shah Ismail took clever advice
and focused on his belief and faith. He went
to battle in optimistic mood. He could behave
accordingly."*

Aziza Jafarzadeh

Trees make jubilee in leaf-green bowers,
Bindweed seeks relief by river-bed,
Cowling shirt in reefs above his head.
Linden boughs display their dancing grace,
Praising spring the rose lifts tender face,
Rivers top their banks: a flood terrene,
Garden trees put on their mantles green.
Moonlight boon is pure on cherry-tree,
Mute the moon, lost in a starry sea.

Over meadow lies a flowered throw,
Veils of snowy bloom on lilacs show,
On flower petals rime of silver down.
Narcissi rise and mime in paper crown,
Argavan is vain of buds that blush,
Doves would fain be near a blooming bush.
When first sighs the early, pre-dawn breeze,
Buds veil eyes in sepal-curl to tease.

Orion spears with light a purple sky,
A cypress rears in giant pride on high.
Saucy flirt, the rose her power knows,
Deeply hurt, the nightingale's love flows
In notes as dour as any mullah knew.
Meadow flowers cherish rime and dew,
Morning finds Narcissus sleepy-eyed,
The tulip, crowned and throned, in solemn pride
Scorns the right of other suzeraine.
Combs its spiritly curls the whet-ear vain,

Distilling ambergris upon the air,
In murmured glee streams circle gardens fair.
To mountain tarn gazelles come from the heights,
Poppies turn their red lamps off at night,
Blinding lovers so they lose their way.
Peacock Ruler of the Garden sways
His trailing swathe, his diadem askew;
Rose petals bathe in cool and crystal dew –
A Mecca spring of water, chastely clean.
Gardens fling on togas red and green,
A snowy turban wears each mountain crest,
The Iris bears a dagger, in protest,
To stab the eye that joylessness denotes.



Khatai Carpet

Whistles rise from flocks of startling throats,
That answers find in bill and coo of doves.
Cool the wind and flagrant as it moves
All undeterred to shake the leaves to foam.
Migrating birds fly far away to home:
Raven, crake, and stork and wild goose clans.
Planes oblique to landing on the lake.
Owls shriek and hollow echoes wake,
Through mountain glade is partridge laughter
blown,
Cypress shade at rooted feet lies prone
With leaf-curl rim sun-dappled to a frieze.
Birds sing hymns pitched in a thousand keys,
The open lips of primroses pink stains,
Young foals skip and shake their growing manes,
Their shrilling neigh the whistling
Kite-scream feigns. Lambkins play, it's lambing
time again:
Sheep drive to the mountains has begun.
Sun-beams cut ill blood-red streamlets run.
Gaily gambol partridges with zest
Before they settle in the family nest.
Cypress, metal-green, lips folds of sky,
Left and right it gazes, towering high.
The rose-child plights its troth, becomes a bride
And wears a veil of crimson on her head.
Chamois frail her fawn has fondly fed,

Bounds away to feed on meadow-grass;
Gazelle musk perfumed through the steppe-lands
pass,
The sweet musk seeps the black earth through
and through.

Wild herds come down to feed on meadows too.
Flying cranes lament high in the sky
Wind sustains for miles their anxious cry.
The raven's heart one second misses beat
At plunging dart of falcon's taking feet.
Birds entice their nestlings to take wing.
Sun - paradise for every scaly thing.
Dews hang like pods on meadows, strung in rows.
The bull's horn prods the earth with vicious blows.
Each flower bears a thrusting bumblebee.
Ants with care drag loads in company,
Their damp eggs bring, to dry them in the sun.



The miniature depicting
the Chaldiran battle

🌀 Bayat 🌀

Hatai's of a special school—
Pedant, dot my i's to rule;
Sect—a Sufi: they know much.
Yet truth to tell, I'm but a fool.

Hatai, business may ordain
That you call, a loan to gain.
Don't bite off more than you can chew—
Or little friendship will remain.

Translated by *Gladys Evans*



The monument of Khatai in Baku



My heart loitered in a temple of idols—
idolater became;
Urgent the nightingale's singing—but I
know the promise he proclaims.
I razed the temple of my being to
ashes—all over first love:
O only among the ruins the young lover
may nurse his flame.
They are thirsting for my blood—your
inebriate, languorous eyes:
Your brows where these inebriates
couch—altar for each devotee.
Joseph the Chaste to the dimples that
dance in your cheeks would succumb—
Caught in the net of your curls, would
awake where only madmen be.
“O Hatai, where is your bed, your
turban?” asks the Hermit, stern—I
gave them up as pledge for wine—my
sorrows only taverns see. ous eyes:
Your brows where these inebriates
couch—altar for each devotee.
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Translated by *Gladys Evans*



Life must have a lodestar, dear—your love's
the only one for me,
The light that gleams in your sweet face—
the only sun that shines for me.
Shall I—about the heartache sore in every
vein I have—complain?
No, nor seek relief at all: my pain becomes a
salve for me.
This earth I picked up near your door, for all
the world I would not trade—
From earth one foot of yours has trod—a
Solomon's temple built could be.
The radiance of your face once seen, the
moon's a wan and worthless thing—
Your praises ever on my lips might truly
Koran verses be.
O Hatai! Love's torments are a sign to show
that you love true—
And torments from a loved one's absence—
Heaven's blessings, you'll agree.

Translated by *Gladys Evans*





*"Seven national poets"
Painted by: Mahlukat*



The portrait of Shah Ismail Khatai



The bust of Shah Ismail Khatai

Şah İsmayıl Səfəvi
(Xətai)



SEÇİLMİŞ ƏSƏRLƏRİ

*Shah Ismail Safavi (Khatai)
Selected literary pieces*



*An oil tanker named after
Shah Ismail Khatai*