

**Nizami Ganjavi Manuscripts Union  
Catalogue and Database (NGUC) Project**  
**An Overview**

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# Agenda

Nizami Ganjavi and Khamsah (Panj Ganj)

Background

Scope and Questions

Structure and Organisation

Workflow

Current position

Forecasted Outcomes

# Nizami Ganjavi and Khamsah

The Khamsah ('quintet') or Panj Ganj ('five Treasures')

- Makhzan al-Asrār ('Treasury of Secrets')
- Khusraw va Shīrīn ('Khosrow and Shirin')
- Laylī va Majnūn ('Leili and Majnun')
- Haft paykar ('The seven beauties') or Haft Gunbad or Bahrām-nāmah
- Iskandarnāmah ('the book of Alexander'), containing two mathnavis:
  - Sharafnāmah = Part One of Iskandarnāmah = Iskandarnāmah-i Barrī
  - Iqbāl-nāmah = Part Two of Iskandarnāmah = Khirad-nāmah = Iskandarnāmah-i Bahrī



# Works about Khamsah

- Khulāṣat al-Khamsah, or ‘A Summary of Khamsah’, a thematic work written by an unknown author
- Various works entitled as Muntakhab-i Khamsah, or ‘Selections of Khamsah’

# Background

- ◆ Inception: A legacy of the late Ahmad Monzavi...
- ◆ 2015: The first proposal
- ◆ 2019: Oxford Nizami Ganjavi Centre established in the University of Oxford
- ◆ March 1, 2023: The launch of the project, now formally called **Nizami Ganjavi Manuscripts Union Catalogue and Database Project**

# Scope and Questions

- Diversity in terms of time and place: at least 4000 manuscript copies spread around the world
- An online database will:
  1. provide comprehensive information about the content of Nizami Ganjavi manuscripts.
  2. provide information about the character and quality of Nizami Ganjavi manuscripts.

# Scope and Questions (cont.)

- A new union catalogue will:
  1. Facilitate the work of researchers and editors and save scholars from having to consult multiple catalogues
  2. Provide a comprehensive account of the bibliographical and codicological aspects
  3. Collect notes and observations written in the margins of the pages
  4. Provide future editors with full and consistent information about the various available manuscript copies of the work in question
  5. Fix existing errors and inaccuracies which have been carried over into scholarship and other catalogues

# Structure and Organisation

## **Project directors:**

Professor Edmund Herzig (Professor of Persian Studies, University of Oxford)

Professor Nargiz Pashayeva (Rector, Moscow State University, Baku Branch)

Dr Mohammad Kazem Musavi Bojnurdi (President, Great Islamic Encyclopaedia Center)

## **Project Advisory Board:**

Professor Julia Bray (Professor Emerita, University of Oxford)

Dr Gillian Evison (Keeper of Asian and Middle Eastern Collections, Bodleian Libraries)

Dr Alasdair Watson (Curator of Persian and Islamic Manuscripts, The Bodleian Libraries)

David Tomkins (Research Data Curation Specialist, The Bodleian Libraries)

# Structure and Organisation (Cont.)

## Researchers:

**Professor Ali Mir-Ansari** (Centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia)

- Lead researcher for the project
- Creating the Persian version of the Union Catalogue

**Dr Mohammad Emami** (Wadham College, University of Oxford)

- Translating the catalogue entries into English, creating TEI files, and curating the Persian and English entries on SDS and ORA platforms

**Dr Nasib Goyushov** (Institute of Manuscripts, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences)

- Translating the catalogue into the Azerbaijani language

# Structure and Organisation (Cont.)

## Persian

Conducting  
Research and  
Library Visits

Creating  
Catalogue Entries  
in Persian

## English

Creating  
Catalogue Entries  
in English

Creating TEI files  
and Curating  
Online Data

## Azeri

Creating  
Catalogue Entries  
in Azeri

# Workflow

## Data Collection

- **Direct method:** Visiting the library in question to consult the manuscript in person
  - After consulting a handlist or a catalogue, OR
  - Without any prior information about the collection
- **Indirect method:** Using existing manuscript catalogues and digital copies
  - Not adopted so far, but may be required while including copies held in the US libraries

## Workflow (Cont.):

## English Translation Completed in MS Access

Khamseh		Khusru va Shirin			
Binding Decoration		Pagination	Incipit	Explicit	Colophon
Outer cover: g oval medallion finals, four quar horizontal and corner-pieces, c binding is cover motifs entirely; c oval medallion finals.	Haft Paykar Masnavi Identifier H.1581.WAD.16	30b-108a	خداوندا در توفیق بگفتای / نظامی را ره تحقیق بنمای	روانش باد جفت شادگامی / که گوید باد رحمت بر نظامی	
Outer cover: int centre, two att medallions, rulin on a turquoise c the centre, two finals, four quar and decorative merlons and arc Khitān motifs.	H.1815.WAD.171	27a-72b	میرا حکمش از نوری و نیبری / ملزه داشت از بالا و زیری (folios missing)	بمقبولان خلوت برگزیده / بمعسومان آرایش لندیه (missing)	
Doubleure: Simp the centre, and envelope flap.	H.08XX.NLI.18880	66b-223a	خداوندا در توفیق بگفتای / نظامی را ره تحقیق بنمای	سعادت یار او بادا نظامی / که گوید باد رحمت بر نظامی	
	H.09XX.NLI.16969				

# Workflow (Cont.):

# English RTF (Word) Output exported from Access database

K:\D\OL\NL1.16969 (en).rtf - Compatibility Mode	
References Mailings Review View Help Acrobat	
<b>Institution</b>	National Library of Iran
<b>Repository</b>	
<b>Collection</b>	
<b>Library Catalogue No</b>	16969
<b>Title</b>	خسرو و شیرین
<b>Origin Date</b>	16th century
<b>Origin Date Hijri</b>	10th century
<b>Extent</b>	157
<b>Pagination</b>	66b-223a
<b>Incipit</b>	خداوندا در توفیق بگشاید / نظامی را ره تحقیق بنمای
<b>Explicit</b>	سعادت یار او بادا نظامی / که گوید باد رحمت بر نظامی
<b>Colophon Format</b>	
<b>Colophon</b>	
<b>Binding</b>	Green leather, 11*17 cm, front + back cover, leather + pasteboard, no doublure; case wrap binding with brown spine
<b>Binding Decoration</b>	Gilt tooling comprised of a central medallion ornamented with flowers and birds, four finials, six ten-petaled flowers, and arabesque motifs at the four sides
<b>Binding Border Decoration</b>	Decorative frame
<b>Binding Condition</b>	Damage (head band in some disarray); the age of the cover does not match perfectly with the copying date of the manuscript.
<b>Paper Description</b>	Oriental paper, ordinary buff, coated, normal thickness, one size
<b>Leaf Dimensions</b>	11*17 cm
<b>Paper Decoration Note</b>	Frontispiece with an inscription containing seven <a href="#">triangles</a> ; the
Page 1 of 3	

## Workflow (Cont.):

# TEI Encoding XML Files exported from Access database

```

<handDesc><handNote><persName xml:lang='eng' role='scr'>
Unknown</persName></handNote></handDesc>
<bindingDesc>Green leather, 11*17 cm, front + back cover,
leather + pasteboard, no doublure; case wrap binding with
brown spine
<decoNote type='border'>Decorative frame</decoNote>
<decoNote>Gilt tooling comprised of a central medallion
ornamented with flower and bird, four finials, six ten-petaled
flowers, and arabesque motifs at the four sides</decoNote>
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cover does not match perfectly with the copying date of the
manuscript.</condition></bindingDesc>
</physDesc>
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1600 '>16th century</origDate></origin>
<acquisition></acquisition>
<provenence></provenence>
</history>
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created by Dr <persName type='standard' role='trl'>Mohammad
Emami</persName> based on the Persian catalogue by <persName
type='standard' role='cataloguer'>Dr Ali Mir-Ansari</persName>
within the framework of Nizami Ganjavi Manuscripts Union
Catalogue and Database Project.</source></recordHist>
<note><div>1. The copy contains all Masnavis, either in the
body text or in the margins, in this order:</div>

<div>A. Body: , Makhzan al-Asrār (1b-66a), Khusraw va Shirin
(66b-223a), and Haft Paykar (223a-363b)</div>

<div>B. Margins: Sharafnāmah (1b-168a), Laylī va Majnūn
(169a-287b), and Iqbāl'nāmah (287b-374a).</div>

<div>2. The Masnavi of Haft Peykar is completed in the text of
f. 363b. On this folio, Iqbāl'nāmah, which is originally
written in the margin, finds its way into the body text and
continues both in the margin and in the body text until the
end of the copy.</div>

```

Workflow  
(Cont.):

Data  
presented  
online on  
Oxford's  
SDS platform

rn/Nizami\_Ganjavi\_Union\_Catalogue/groups



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3 groups in total



# Current Position

Universities, libraries, and centres visited:

- United Kingdom: 22
- Iran: 15 in Tehran and 14 in other cities
- Azerbaijan: 1 in Baku

- United Kingdom:
- Oxford, Bodleian Library
- Oxford, Ferdowsi Library
- Oxford, All Souls College Library
- Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Library
- St Andrews, St Andrews University Library
- Eton, Eton College Library
- Birmingham, Birmingham University Library
- London, Victoria and Albert Library
- London, Royal Asiatic Society Library
- London, British Library
- London, British Museum
- London, India Office Library and Records
- London, London University Library (SOAS)
- Manchester, Manchester University Library
- Cambridge, Cambridge University Library
- Cambridge, St John College Library
- Cambridge, King's College Library
- Cambridge, Trinity Library Hall
- Cambridge, Library of Iran and India
- Cambridge, The Fitzwilliam Museum Library

# Current Position

Universities, libraries, and centres visited:

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- Iran: 15 in Tehran and 14 in other cities
- Azerbaijan: 1 in Baku

Countries whose universities, libraries, and centres will be visited in the next three years:

- Turkey, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, France, Germany, and Austria

# Current Position

Universities, libraries, and centres visited:

- United Kingdom: 22
- Iran: 15 in Tehran and 14 in other cities
- Azerbaijan: 1 in Baku

Other activities:

- ❑ Training three Iranology students at Oxford University in the field of codicology
- ❑ Training three students at Baku State University in Azerbaijan in the field of codicology
- ❑ Training of two employees of the Azerbaijan Institute of Manuscripts in Codicology and Cataloguing

# Forecasted Outcomes

The main outputs of the project will be:

1. Union Catalogue of the works of Nizami Ganjavi, available on the Oxford University Sustainable Digital Scholarship (SDS) service and archived on the Oxford Research Archive (ORA)
2. Book-form catalogues in Persian, English and Azerbaijani
3. Scholarly articles on the history and codicology of Nizami manuscripts



# Thank You

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