

The Personal Life And Career Of Nizar Qabbani

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Nizar Qabbani is known to be a prolific writer of his time. His masterpieces of writing do not correspond to any particular time of his life. Rather, he was able to stay productive and provide rich content throughout his career. Nizar Qabbani was a Syrian nationalist, and his writings were so profound that they were considered as pride for the Arab nation. Nizar has the capability of penning down his brilliant thoughts into beautiful words that are capable of mesmerizing the readers. Qabbani's writing skills were not the result of his experience, but from a very young age, he had the urge and the capacity to write, which made him prominent among his age fellows. The sad incident of suicide committed by Nizar's sister made him write about women's rights. He was the first Arab poet and writer who produced some fabulous pieces of writing to raise a voice for women. It was a daring step, but this gesture tells that the great mind and writing skills are not bound by any authority. They are just expressed about what they feel is right and must be implemented (AlKhalil).

Thus, this is indeed a fact that a great writer like Nizar Qabbani's writing is filled with women's rights. Rather majority of work focuses on raising the plight of women in the societal culture. It was indeed a brave step for putting forward such thoughts which were not meeting the culture they were living in that time. The women were not given equal rights, and their will was not considered necessary. Therefore, at these times Nizar Qabbani wrote for wakening up the society and making them realize that women are equally important as men. However, these initiatives for writing for women also pushed him into numerous controversies, but he never took the influence of them and stayed focused on his aims.

It was the quality of the writing of Nizar Qabbani that he used to represent his country on numerous platforms. Though this earned him much respect as a diplomat, he left this appointment on the realization of the fact that he is more inclined towards writing about his thoughts and free will than staying entangled due to the position of being a diplomat. Thus, he left his job and focused on his writing career. Thus, he wrote marvelous literature books that will be forever appreciated by literature lovers. The words can never be forgotten, but the actions do.

Childhood & Early Life

- Nizar Qabbani was born in a famous Syrian family on 21st March 1923. The instincts and the skills of writing run in the family's virtue. Nizar's great uncle was the great Syrian writer Abū Khalīl Qabbani. His family was running the mercantile business, and his father, Tawfiq Qabbani, had his chocolate factory, but Nizar took an interest in writing and never participated in the family business (Boullata et al. 756).

- Nizar Qabbani had five siblings: two sisters, Wisel and Haifa and three brothers, Sabah, Rashid and Mu'taz.
- He attended the National Scientific College School, administrated by a friend of his father, Ahmad Munif al-Aidi, during the period 1930-41.
- After completing high school, he joined Damascus University to study law. This University was previously known as the Syrian University. His writing career began at his university, where, in his free time, he used to write poems, and it was in 1944 that he first published his book of poems named 'The Brunette Told Me.'
- The poems were subjected to controversies in Damascus. However, these verses were given approval by the education ministry who was his father's friend Munir Al-Ajlani. Nizar's father knew about his interests, and this was the reason that he supported him in this cause. Thus, this was the reason and the influence that even this minister helped Nizar to write a preface to his poems.

Career

- After graduating from the University with the degree of LLB, Nizar Qabbani was appointed as an ambassador to leading countries like London, Cairo, Madrid, and Istanbul.
- It was in the period of 1948-50 that Nizar was able to write three marvelous Arab writings, which are Samba, You Are Mine and 'Childhood of a Breast.
- He published his poems in his name in 1956 by titled the poems by Nizar Qabbani. These poems reflect his intellect and are known to be the most famous poems of his time.
- He was appointed as the Vice Secretary to the United Arab Republic located in the Chinese Embassies.
- In 1960, Nizar wrote three more poems the name 'Diary of an Indifferent Woman, Drawing with Words and My Beloved.
- Nizar resigned from his position of Ambassador in 1966 and dedicated his life to writing masterpieces of literature.
- In 1967, Nizar Qabbani founded his personal publishing house after his name 'Manshurat Nizar Qabbani.' At that time, the Arabs lost the war to Israel, and Nizar took it as an opportunity and start writing about the war and the loss of Arabs after this war.
- In 1970, Nizar was able to publish nine poems, which are 'With My Love,' 'To Beirut the Feminine,' 'Poems Against The Law,' '100 Love Letters,' 'Book of Love,' 'Savage Poems,' and others.
- However, 1980 was the most productive year of Nizar Qabbani's life as he wrote dozens of publications and printed them in his paper house. Among them, the famous was 'The Lover's Dictionary,' 'I Write the History of Woman Like So,' and a dedicated publication to his second wife by the name 'A Poem For Balqis.'
- The other notable poems that were released in the same year were 'Insane Poems,' 'Love Does Not Stop at Red Lights,' and 'The Trilogy of the Children of the Stones.' Whereas others are

‘Love Shall Remain, My Lord,’ ‘Biography of an Arab Executioner,’ ‘Secret Papers of a Karmathian Lover,’ ‘A Match in My Hand, ‘I Married You, Liberty!’, ‘No Victor Other Than Love,’ and our Petty Paper Nations.’

- For the year 1990, the publications released by Nizar Qabbani’s paper house were ‘Marginal Notes on the Book of Defeat’, ‘Do You Hear the Cry of My Sadness?’, ‘I’m One Man, and you are a Tribe of Women.’ The ‘Nizarian Variations of Arabic Maqam of Love,’ ‘Alphabet of Jasmine,’ and ‘Fifty Years of Praising Women’ are also among these writings (Gabay 207-222).

Major Work

- The suicide act of his sister profoundly influenced the life of Nizar Qabbani, and he subjected this as the reason for his writing for feminism and going against society because his sister was unable to marry as per her will.
- The literary work by the name ‘Poems by Nizar Qabbani’ is known to be a famous piece of his writings. The focus of these poems was the woman rights. He clearly criticized the practices of society and the discriminatory behavior held towards women. In his, men were over-hauling on women due to their prejudices.

Personal Life

- The first marriage of Qabbani was a family wedding, and he was married to his cousin; they both had two children: a son named Tawfiq and a daughter, Hadba.
- Nizar Qabbani again got married in 1973 to the love of his life. His wife’s name was Balqis al-Rawi. He met her for the first time at a poetry concert in Baghdad. However, she later died due to a suicide bomb attack during the ‘Lebanese Civil War.’ In her love, he wrote her the famous poem, which is taken as a symbol of love for a wife by a husband.
- After his wife’s death, Nizar Qabbani was in deep pain; therefore, he left Beirut and traveled around the country; finally, he settled in London.
- For one year after settling down, he was reported to be unwell. However, later, he died on 30th April 1998.

Trivia

The literary work of Nizar Qabbani has been translated into English and Nepali languages by different publications.

The Comparison Of Nizar Qabbani's Work

Nizar Qabbani's work was known to be controversial due to the factors stated below:

- He was the first Arab writer who used the bold introduction of the topic love in his stories. It was not initiated by any other writer than him.
- He openly talked about the relationship between men and women, and he always emphasized that this relationship shall never be kept within close boundaries and no one has the right to interfere.
- His literary work is filled with everyday experiences and realistic adventures that he had beautifully translated into poetry using the metaphors.
- Nizar used new expressions in his poems. He uses to write in a similar tone, such as if two people are speaking through the poem.
- In his poems, he uses to promote women to go ahead and propose the man. This act shows that he was presenting women as the daring species and it is not only the men who could propose women, but it is the right of the women to that they can offer any men.
- Nizar openly discussed the appeal of women. Such as in his writings Nizar boldly presented the physique and body of females.

The Effect Of Nizar's Poetry Upon Modern Arab Poetry

- Nizar built his school, and it has been founded for more than forty-five years, where the talent of children with literary skills is focused and polished so that they can turn out to be great writers.
- The elements of his poetry that influenced modern poets and writers are the wealth of his melodies, the newness of his subjects and tones, and the simplicity of his language.
- Thus, Nizar's poetry is a whole discipline in itself for the Arab people, and it needs to be thoroughly studied and discussed. Thus, all the modern poets and writers are studying Nizar's poetry to develop their experience and grip overwriting (Loya 481-494).

Nizar drew the romantic picture of Damascus in his poetry. He clearly indicated two elements the joy of the city and the beauty of nature observable through the naked eye. In his writings, he emphasized his love for the city, which was due to the woman he used to love living there. Nizar, despite writing few publications on war, his primary work has centered the love for a woman and nature. The substantial relation of the writer with Damascus could be understood by this term that while staying connected with Damascus, he will live; however, if he is separated from Damascus, he will die (Loya 481-494).

Damascus, O Damascus, O Princess of my love

How can the madman forget his love?

The sun of Granada has risen over us.

After we had despaired, and Maysalün has uttered cries of joy (Rihani 54-57).

Nizar also beautifully described nature in the celebrations of Arab victories. He wrote in unusual words about that time, such as if he had entered Damascus. The quote from his writing is stated below to explain his love for nature.

How did the ears of wheat become higher,

How did your eyes become a swallow's nest?

The land of Jawlän resembles your eyes,

Flowing water, almonds, and figs;

Every wound in it is a garden of roses,

Spring, and a hidden pearl (Rihani 54-57).

Conclusion

Nizar was a passionate nationalist and has always expressed his love for his city in his publications. The war's use to be interesting for him and he uses to write openly about the happening and use to motivate the leaders, on the other hand, he was a diehard follower of the concept of openness in love. In Nizar's view, love was a proximity measure which is the right for every gender. Despite few writings on the occasion of war, Nizar's major work is focused on women's rights and their will so that they shall be given the opportunity to decide for their lives. He was a lawyer by career, but he gave it up for the love of literary writing, even the ambassadorship didn't make him compromised upon his literary knowledge. He was born with natural instincts and skills of writing, and he served throughout his life writing on purposeful topics. Till the end, he was productive but unfortunately could not survive the heart attack of 1998 and passed away.

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