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PSEUDONYM AS AN INTEGRAL ELEMENT IN THE WORKS OF AZERBAIJANI, ENGLISH AND AMERICAN WRITERS AND POETS

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Abstract. The article examines the phenomenon of pseudonym usage in Azerbaijani, British, and American literature across different periods of social and cultural development. The study aims to identify the main reasons that motivated writers to adopt pseudonyms and to analyze the methods and principles of their formation. Particular attention is paid to the historical, political, social, cultural, and gender-related factors that influenced authors' decisions to conceal or modify their real identities. The research explores how pseudonyms served various functions, including protection from censorship, avoidance of social prejudice, creation of a distinct literary image, and separation of personal and professional spheres. Through a comparative analysis of literary traditions in Azerbaijan, Great Britain, and the United States, the article reveals both common and culture-specific patterns in pseudonym creation. The findings demonstrate that pseudonyms represent not only a means of anonymity but also an important linguistic and cultural phenomenon reflecting the relationship between authors, society, and literary practice. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of authorial identity and naming strategies in world literature.

Key words: Pseudonym, classic author, work, authorial identity, pertinent, sign-off.

Introduction. This article is devoted to the study focuses on the pseudonyms of Azerbaijani, British and American writers. The relevance of this research stems from the fact that pseudonyms carry immense historical and social significance, serving as an integral part of a nation's culture.

The word “pseudonym” originates from Ancient Greek. It literally translates as “false name” and consists of two parts: *pseudes* (Greek: ψευδής) – false, fictitious; and *onoma* (Greek: ὄνομα) or *onyma* – name. Literary works published without an author's signature (anonymous) or under a pseudonym have been known since ancient times. Before examining the pseudonyms of celebrated authors, it is necessary to highlight the specific underlying factors that prompted their emergence:

1. Political or Personal Security: Fear of political persecution, censorship, or legal repercussions.
2. Aesthetic Considerations: The phonetic unappealingness or perceived unmarketability of the author's legal name.
3. Socio-Professional Constraints: High social standing or professional roles (such as civil service, academia, or the military) that deemed literary pursuits inappropriate or undignified.
4. Defensive Strategy against Criticism: A deliberate attempt to insulate the author's personal reputation from hostile critical reception.
5. Conformity to Literary Trends: Aligning with contemporary artistic fashions or cultural movements that favored specific types of names.
6. Onomastic Differentiation: The necessity to avoid confusion caused by sharing a surname with already established writers or public figures.
7. Literary Mystification and Reader Engagement: The intentional creation of a literary hoax or riddle designed to intrigue audiences and provoke speculation regarding the author's true identity.
8. Altruistic Modesty: Genuine humility or a fundamental indifference to public renown and celebrity status.

The purpose of this study is to identify the reasons why Azerbaijani, British and American writers adopted pseudonyms across various historical periods of social development, and to describe the methods of their formation.

Discussion and results. First and foremost, I would like to direct our attention to the creative output of the great and eminent Azerbaijani classical authors.

Manisa Khatun Mehseti Ganjavi, who is one of the founders of the new poetic school and new poetic genre in the Azerbaijani literature of the 12th century, is one of the masters of words who played an important role in the creation and development of the humanistic trend in our literature. There are quite contradictory opinions about this poetess. She is also one of the heroines of the epic “Amir Ahmed and Mehseti”, which exists in four copies. She was a bright representative of the Muslim renaissance who lived in the late 11th – early 12th century, and was a representative of the new urban poetry who glorified the images of artists, poets, singers and poets in his poems. Mehsati won first place in everything. She is the first famous medieval Azerbaijani poetess, the first female chess player, and probably the first female composer in the East. Mehsati Ganjavi was born in the city of Ganja around 1089 and lived here until the end of her life. This girl's real name was Manija, and she took the name Mehsati as a literary pseudonym. There are several stories about the origin of that nickname. In one of them, it is said that in one of her conversations with Sultan Sanjar, she told Sultan that she was the smallest and invisible in her environment. The Sultan disagreed with her and said, “to, meh-hasti” (that is, “you are the greatest of all”). And supposedly “meh-hasti”- has become “mahsati”, her nickname. According to the hypothesis put forward in the part called “Conclusion” of Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov's work “Gulistani-Iram”, “Mahsati” consists of two words, “mah” and “seti” and means “great lady”. Finally, according to another possibility, this name is composed of the words “Mah” and “seti” (“Hey Lady”) (Nizami Ganjavi's Mahin Banus (Khosrov and Shirin) is analogous to this). Mehsati Ganjavi's rubai, which is close to the style of folk poetry, and her poems, which are deep in their philosophical essence, played an important role in the history of Azerbaijan and Eastern poetry in general (Habibli, 2022).

Khagani Shirvani Khagani was born in 1126 in Shemakha. The name of this poet is Ibrahim, the patronymic is Ali. In medieval sources he is presented as follows: Abu Badil Afzaladdin Ibrahim ibn Ali Najar ibn Osman ibn Ibrahim Hagaigi Hassanul-Ejem Khagani Shirvani. In this compound name, the words “Hagaigi”, “Hassanul Ejem” and “Khagani” are pseudonyms of the poet, Afzaladdin is his nickname, Abu Badil is kunya, and the word “Shirvani” indicates the place of which the poet was born. The rich literary heritage of Khagani consists of a divan of lyrical poems in the volume of 17 thousand beits, the poem “Tohfatul-Iragain”, as well as 60 letters, which are interesting examples of artistic prose. The poems in the Khagani diwan are written in the genres of qasida, gezel, medhiya, mersiyya, rubai and other genres. His works of socio-philosophical content include the qasidas “Shiniye” and “Medain Ruins”, poems under the general title “Hebsiye” and the poem “Tohfatul-Iragain”.

Abu Muhammed Ilyas ibn Yusif (Nizami Ganjavi) is an outstanding master of words, who matured in the 12th century on the basis of the culture of the Azerbaijani Renaissance, one of the great thinkers and philosophers. He was born in the ancient city of Ganja, located on the famous Silk Road, where Eastern and Western cultures combined. He received his pseudonym thanks to the Farsi language, in which he wrote poetry. Nizami literally means “stringer of words.” “Ganjavi” indicates the place of which the poet was born, like many writers and poets do. Like other predecessors and contemporaries, Nizami also began his artistic work by writing ghazals and qasidas. However, this path did not suit him, and he became seriously interested in epic creativity in the genre of the novel-tale (epic), which began to develop after the 11th century – from the time of Ferdowsi. The first test of his strength in this direction was the work “Makhzanul-Asrar” (“Treasury of Secrets”). This work, written by the poet when he was soon to turn 40 years old, is one of the original examples of the epic genre “mesnevi”. In this work, along with the stories and plots of the legend, their artistic value also attracts attention. Stories and epics reflect the main features of epicness – especially artistic language, specific forms of expression and content. Mesnevi consists of 13 legends and 7 stories. As a rule, legends and stories are preceded by “megalates”, which serve to verbally reveal philosophical and moral meanings and symbols and their artistic presentation.

Mirza Shafi Vazekh is one of the most brilliant representatives of Azerbaijani social and poetic thought of the first half of the 19th century, the author of exquisitely subtle lyrical songs,

He memorized the entire text of the Koran, mastered the Arabic and Persian languages perfectly, became a connoisseur of oriental poetry, in addition became famous throughout the city for his beautiful handwriting and later earned extra money with private orders for the census and book design of the works of famous oriental poets. Soon he was nicknamed “Mirza” – this is how educated people who knew how to write correctly were called in the East. In addition, from a young age he began to try the pen himself, taking the poetic pseudonym “Mirza Shafi Vazeh”: “shafi” in Arabic means “mediator, conciliator”, and “wazeh” means “open, clear”.

Mirza Fatali Akhundov is an outstanding writer, thinker and public figure who played an important role in the development of literature, social political and philosophical thought of modern times. In his youth, M.F. Akhundov began to work as a poet and until the end of his life he continued his poetic work from time to time, writing poetry under the pseudonym “Sabuhi”. Akhundzade set the goal of his life and work to the best of his ability enlighten your people, guide them to a new day, light, new dawn – hence his pseudonym “Sabuhi”, the man of the dawn. He turned to such poetic genres as goshma, gheraily, muhammes, writing in verse, satirical and moral-didactic poems, qasida. M.F. Akhundov was recognized and became famous as a writer and philosopher, occupying an extremely important place in the history of the development of literary and philosophical thought of Azerbaijan and the Muslim peoples of the Middle East in modern times. At the same time, he is considered one of the brightest representatives of the world educational ideological trend as a whole (Məşədiyev, 2018).

Mirza Alakbar Sabir was born on May 30, 1862, in the city of Shamakhi, part of the Shirvan region of Azerbaijan. His real name was Alakbar Tahirzade. “Sabir” – translated means “patient”, “Mirza” is a form of address used to show respect and honor to educated people who can read and write. These names stuck with the poet, although he also had other pseudonyms. Mirza Alakbar Sabir's main pseudonyms are “Author” (in his own works), “Haji” (mainly in the “Haqiqat” newspaper), “Nizadar” (in satirical publications), Mirza Bisavad (in the “Shikayat” feuilleton), and “Az-Taraba-Mirza Bisavad” (in his works). His pseudonym “Nizadar” indicates that he was the leader of the satirical collective. Alekper began his literary activity very early. His first attempts at writing poetry were approved and edited by the renowned poet Seyid Azim Shirvani, who advised him as a teacher. In 1905 and 1906, several of his poems with social content and the well-known satire “Conversation of Twelve Men in a Majlis” were published in the newspaper “Hayat.” But Sabir the poet's true strength and fame were revealed in the pages of the magazine “Molla Nasreddin.” Sabir's work laid the foundation for a revolutionary satirical literary school and led it himself. Sabir's poetry played a special role in the growing popularity of Molla Nasreddin magazine. Afterward, in addition to his artistic pursuits, he opened the “Ummid” (“Hope”) school in Shamakhi and began teaching there. He took an active part in the organization of a library-reading room in Shemakha, the preparation of theatrical performances and other cultural events, both through his artistic creativity and practical activities, and worked as a true citizen to eliminate the consequences of the genocide committed by Armenians against Azerbaijanis. His works have been published multiple times as a book titled *Hophopname*, and numerous scientific articles, monographs, and dissertations have been written about him (Azərbaycan dilinin izahlı lüğəti, 2006).

Jalil Mammadguluzadeh Jalil Mammadgulu oglu Mammadguluzadeh rightfully ranks among the canonical figures of world literature. As the founder of the early twentieth-century Azerbaijani school of critical realism and the visionary behind the revolutionary-democratic satirical periodical *Molla Nasraddin*, he forged a new trajectory for national literature. Mammadguluzadeh distinguished himself as an avant-garde writer, dramatist, journalist, and cultural intellectual, ultimately serving as a champion for the ideals of humanism, democracy, and liberty. Furthermore, the author frequently published under various pseudonyms throughout his literary career. The famous pseudonyms of Jalil

Mammadguluzadeh emerged as tools for denunciatory satire and public enlightenment. They were necessary to safely criticize societal vices, religious fanaticism, and Tsarist censorship, as well as to create the illusion of a collective “voice of the people.” The writer himself signed his work with dozens of names, the most famous of which were: 1. Molla Nasraddin: Chosen in honor of the legendary hero of Eastern folktales—a wise man who spoke the bitter truth under the guise of a simpleton. This pseudonym became the overarching brand for the entire magazine, symbolizing laughter in the face of ignorance. 2. Mozalan (The Gadfly): This pseudonym symbolized an annoying yet useful insect. “Mozalan” acted as a whistleblower, delivering painful “bites” to bureaucrats and conservatives to force society to wake up. 3. Laglagi (The Chatterbox): Used to ridicule empty talk, gossip, and idleness. 4. Hardam-khayal (The Dreamer / The Fickle): Applied in articles mocking fruitless daydreams and the lack of real action. 5. Gizdirmali (The Feverish): An ironic pseudonym used to describe a society gripped by a “sickly” slumber or fanaticism. These names reflected the very essence of critical realism. They allowed the author to speak on behalf of various social archetypes of the era, making the satire sharper and more multifaceted (Classics of Azerbaijan literature).

The following section provides an analysis of British and American authors. Many famous writers published their first works anonymously. For instance, Alfred Tennyson did not utilize permanent literary pseudonyms; the poet overwhelmingly published under his legal name—Alfred Tennyson (and later, following his elevation to the peerage in 1883, Lord Alfred Tennyson). Nevertheless, the following nuances can be distinguished within his authorial biography: 1. Early Anonymity: He issued his debut poetry collection anonymously in 1827. Written in collaboration with his brother Charles, it was titled *Poems by Two Brothers*. 2. Satirical Sobriquets: In contemporary literary circles, he was occasionally targeted with derisive nicknames—such as 'Lawn Tennyson' (a satirical pun later referenced by James Joyce in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) 3. Domestic Monikers: Within his family circle and among intimate friends, he frequently answered to the affectionate, diminutive nicknames 'Tenny' and 'Sonny' (A Dictionary of Literary Pseudonyms in the English Language, 2000).

James Fenimore Cooper, a distinguished American author best known for the *Leatherstocking Tales*, entered into a wager that he could produce a narrative superior to those read aloud by his family. This prompted the publication of his first novel, *Precaution* (1820). Regarding literary work as an unserious pastime, Cooper published it without attribution. Similarly, his breakthrough novel, *The Spy: A Tale of the Neutral Ground* (1821), was also issued anonymously despite bringing him immediate renown. James Fenimore Cooper did not utilize literary pseudonyms; although his debut novel was issued anonymously, his major works were all published under his legal name. However, his middle name and various sobriquets are frequently subject to onomastic confusion: Fenimore: This is not a pen name, but rather the maiden name of the author's mother, which he officially appended to his surname in 1826. Prior to this legal change, he was known simply as James Cooper.

Similarly, Edgar Allan Poe had at least 3 pseudonyms. He utilized several pseudonyms and assumed names throughout his career: 1. 'A Bostonian': This was Poe's initial literary pseudonym, under which his 1827 debut poetry collection, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, was published. 2. Edgar A. Perry: An assumed name adopted by Poe in 1827 for the purpose of enlisting in the United States Army artillery regiment. 3. 'The Tomahawk Man': A semi-official sobriquet bestowed upon Poe within contemporary literary circles during his editorial tenure, reflecting his sharp, vitriolic, and uncompromising critical reviews.

At the age of twenty, Arthur Conan Doyle published his early short stories in the *Cornhill Magazine* anonymously. He did not utilize secret literary pseudonyms; however, his full name at birth was Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle. The development of his surname involves the following biographical details: Conan was originally his given middle name, bestowed in honor of his uncle, the artist Michael Conan. In his mature years, the author began using it in conjunction with his surname as part of his literary persona—Conan Doyle.

The renowned nineteenth-century English novelist Mary Ann Evans adopted the masculine pen name George Eliot. This strategic choice was intended both to command serious critical reception for her novels within a patriarchal literary market and to safeguard her private life from public scrutiny (Room, 2014).

The seminal works that brought international renown to the English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson were published under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll. When the publisher Edmund Yates requested a pen name for Dodgson's forthcoming poetry, the author submitted four potential options: Edgar Cuthwellis, Edgar U. C. Westhill, Louis Carroll, and Lewis Carroll. Rejecting the first three proposals, Yates selected the fourth, which relied on a sophisticated onomastic derivation from Dodgson's legal name. Specifically, 'Lewis' and 'Lutwidge' both serve as English cognates of the Latin *Ludovicus*, while the Irish surname 'Carroll' and the given name 'Charles' both derive from the Latin *Carolus*. The structural mechanics of this pseudonym creation involved a multi-step linguistic translation: the original name 'Charles Lutwidge' was first rendered into Latin as *Carolus Ludovicus*, followed by a reverse translation back into English. By inverting the sequence of the resulting names—Carroll and Lewis—the iconic pseudonym 'Lewis Carroll' was established. Remarkably, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson maintained a strict binary in his publishing practices, signing his rigorous mathematical treatises with his legal name while reserving his pseudonym for his literary output. Throughout his life, he steadfastly rejected any conflation of his academic persona with his literary alter ego, persistently denying that Dodgson and Carroll were one and the same.

Both emerging and established authors frequently adopt pseudonyms as a defensive mechanism to insulate themselves from critical scrutiny. A contemporary case in point is the renowned British author J.K. Rowling, who assumed the masculine pen name Robert Galbraith for her *Cormoran Strike* detective series. Rowling noted that publishing under an alias liberated her from the burden of public expectation, thereby allowing her to gauge the critical reception of her work through an entirely unvarnished and unbiased lens.

A distinct set of motivations compelled Stephen King to issue the novels *Rage*, *The Long Walk*, *Roadwork*, *The Running Man*, and *Thinner* under the pseudonym Richard Bachman. Principally, the author sought to conduct a sociological experiment regarding literary merit, testing whether his creative alter ego could replicate his commercial success without the benefit of the established 'Stephen King' brand. Additionally, King was constrained by contemporary publishing industry conventions, which traditionally restricted authors to a single book release per calendar year. The selection of the Bachman eponym was a deliberate homage to the rock band Bachman-Turner Overdrive, of whom King was an avid follower.

Seeking to achieve literary autonomy independent of his father's formidable legacy, Stephen King's son, Joseph Hillstrom King, adopted the pseudonym 'Joe Hill.' This moniker was an intentional abbreviation of his legal name, which also served as a direct allusion to his historical namesake. The original Joe Hill was a prominent early twentieth-century American labor activist and songwriter who became a martyr for the labor movement after being wrongfully convicted of murder and executed in 1915." (Pen Names: Secrets of Famous Authors Who Used Pen Names).

When an author seeks not merely anonymity but intentional mystification—either to attribute the text to an alternate persona or to construct a fabricated authorial identity—they may adopt the name of an existing individual. A classic example is William Sydney Porter, who assumed the pen name 'O. Henry,' which is widely believed to be derived from the name of a prison guard, Orrin Henry. Convicted of embezzlement during his tenure as a bank teller, Porter began composing his celebrated short fiction while incarcerated. Although he published fourteen stories under various aliases during his imprisonment, he achieved definitive renown as O. Henry. This celebrated pseudonym debuted in December 1899 with the publication of 'Whistling Dick's Christmas Stocking.' To maintain this literary subterfuge, a confidant in New Orleans brokered the manuscripts to publishers, effectively concealing Porter's incarceration."

Historically, female authors frequently adopted masculine pen names due to pervasive anxieties that publishers would reject a manuscript if its female authorship were known, and that readers would dismiss the work on identical grounds. Contemporary literary critics harbored a similar skepticism toward female authorship. Driven by these institutional barriers, the Brontë sisters—Charlotte, Emily, and Anne—initially obscured their identities beneath the gender-neutral, masculine pseudonyms Currer Bell, Ellis Bell, and Acton Bell.

Conversely, male authors occasionally adopted feminine pseudonyms—a phenomenon known in literary studies as pseudogynography. For instance, the nineteenth-century Scottish writer William Sharp, who produced a substantial body of work rooted in ancient Celtic folklore, published under the self-invented female persona Fiona Macleod. Similarly, the American humorist Benjamin Shillaber wrote extensively under the maternal alter ego Mrs. Partington.

In certain instances, authors deliberately utilized pseudonyms to obfuscate or misrepresent their professional identity. A notable example occurred during the Second World War, when the prominent English writer H. E. Bates published a series of short stories in the *News Chronicle* under the moniker 'Flying Officer X.' This tactical deception stemmed from the editorial reality that the public found bureaucratic facts and statistical records far less compelling than first-hand narrative accounts from active combatants.

Furthermore, many authors adopted toponymic pseudonyms, drawing inspiration from their birthplaces or regions of significant personal relevance. For example, John Wilson—whose dramatic poem *The City of the Plague* famously served as the textual source material for Alexander Pushkin's *A Feast in the Time of Plague*—wrote under the pseudonym 'Christopher North' to signal his Scottish heritage. Similarly, the English poet Bryan Waller Procter constructed his literary persona, 'Barry Cornwall,' as a direct allusion to the Cornwall peninsula.

Authors also utilized descriptive or characterological pseudonyms designed to mirror specific facets of their personal character or lifestyle.

A premier example from eighteenth-century American print culture is the pseudonym 'Poor Richard.' The annual periodical *Poor Richard's Almanack*, issued between 1732 and 1758 across the British North American colonies, achieved exceptional commercial and cultural resonance, offering readers highly practical insights and didactic moral maxims. It was a matter of public knowledge that this persona served as an alter ego for Benjamin Franklin—the eminent polymath, Enlightenment statesman, and civic leader.

Beyond characterological nomenclature, ludic or satirical pseudonyms designed primarily to generate comic or derisive effects gained significant traction. Notable historical examples include the actor-playwright David Garrick, who adopted the moniker 'Sir Nicholas Nipclose, Bart.' (punning on *nip* and *close*), and the pamphleteer William Cobbett, who chose the prickly persona 'Peter Porcupine.'

Furthermore, authors frequently resisted the constraints of a singular alias, embracing a fluid practice of polynymity by continuously fabricating new fictional identities. The genesis of these shifting pseudonyms was often intricately linked to evolving biographical circumstances, the distinct socio-literary contexts of their publications, or tributes to intimate personal relations.

The celebrated American novelist and screenwriter Michael Crichton published his earliest literary ventures under the pseudonym 'John Lange.' While pursuing his medical degree, Crichton was concerned that future patients might suspect him of exploiting their clinical histories for fictional material. The structural prototype for this alias was derived from the name of the British author and folklorist Andrew Lang; Crichton appended the letter 'e' to the surname and substituted his own first name, John. Under this specific moniker, Crichton issued his entire debut corpus of pulp thrillers, including *Odds On*, *Scratch One*, *Easy Go*, *Zero Cool*, *The Venom Business*, and *Grave Descend*.

Conclusions. The evolution of pseudonyms constitutes an ongoing search for adaptable linguistic forms that fulfill the human need for self-identification while simultaneously reflecting historical traditions, cultural customs, and contemporary societal trends in Azerbaijan, the UK and the USA.

The study of proper nouns (onomastics) remains perennially relevant due to the continuous and evolutionary nature of societal development, wherein names serve as a sociolinguistic mirror reflecting a nation's history and cultural heritage of all three countries.

The pedagogical applications of these findings are extensive; the results may be integrated into curricula for linguistics, cultural linguistics, translation theory and practice, and intercultural communication. Furthermore, the material is highly applicable for English language instruction across various educational tiers, including secondary schools, colleges, and institutions of higher education.

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