

Features of Shah and Vizier among Selseh-al-Zahab, Salaman and Absal and Leili and Majnoon Poems of Jami

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ABSTRACT

One of the ways of familiarity with government of each period of history is study of great works which have been left from those periods. It will be also possible to achieve these conditions by investigating complete poetical works of the poets, literary texts and historical documents. Among the present literary texts are Selseh-al-zahab, Salaman and Absal and Leili and Majnoon Poems of Abdolrahman Jami, poet and mystic of ninth century A.H. and study of these poets indicates political and social conditions of Timurids era. According to social classification society of Iran was composed of different social classes on top of which were shah and vizier in Timurids period like the previous periods. In this paper, attempt is made to mention, criticize and study attitude of this great poet toward shah and vizier in his era.

KEY WORDS: Jami, shah, vizier(minister), people, society.

INTRODUCTION

Nooroddin Abdolrahman Jami is undoubtedly one of the most reputable mystics and poets of century 9 A.H. who didn't have close relation with center of political power during kingdom of Sultan Hossein Baighra but his relation with Sultan and vizier –Amir Ali Shir revealed bitter realities of his time (Dargahi, 2006:39).

Study of government and characteristics of the rulers and ministers of Jami's era which have been written as eloquent and enjoyable verses caused more familiarity of readers with government of Iran at Jami's era centuries ago. The writers try to answer this question: how did Jami imagine features of shah and vizier at his time in Selseh-al-zahab, Salaman and Absal and Leili and Majnoon Poems?

Shah

Iranian society was a society at center of which was shah or sultan in Timurids era from the viewpoint of social classes. Sultan ruled as an unconditional power and absolute commander and duties of all people were to obey him, pay tax and participate in the affairs requested by the king.

Jami seldom named his contemporary historical persons while imagining features of kings and manifested their features beyond figurative features. In fact, all features of kinds which he has imagined are features of the kings and strong men at his era. Now, one should see what attitude the Jam's mystic had toward commanders of their era and what characteristics he has considered for a person who was regarded as king on top of power.

He believes that the first and the most important conditions for a king are justice and justice administration.

The king who disdains oppression supports justice and generosity

(Lieli and Majnoon , 1987: 762)

He believes that the kingdom remains with heresy but it will not be stable with oppression:

That farsighted person has said a good word that justice not religion will make the king powerful

The just pagan is better than the religious oppressor (Salaman and Absal, 1987:325)

As writer of Marzaban Nameh has referred: ((الملك يبقى مع الكفر و لا يبقى مع الظلم.)) (Varavini , 2011:77).

Considering word of Hazrat Ali (PBUH) in oration 239 of Nahjolbalaghah: ((بالعدل قامت السموات و الارض)) (Feizoleslam: 826):

The kings had no duty but justice sky and earth are erected by justice
(Selseh-al-zahab, 1987:14)

Jami referred to justice of some kings such as Shah Sultan Hossein and Senjer Ben Malekshah in his verses:

Shah Sultan Hossein established justice and prevented oppression (the same: 12)

Senjer Ben Malekshah who was a brave shah published generosity at that time (the same: 286)

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He also mentioned the just shah as ((ظل الله في الارض)):

The just shah is shadow of God The people are protected by shadow of God
(Salaman and Absal , 1987:314)

Jami mentioned wisdom of king in his verses and has emphasized on it and believes that wisdom in king causes honesty and justice:

Do you know that wisdom of shah and emir under moon

Chose justice as their leader and did work justly (Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:16)

According to Jami, an unscholarly and stubborn commander who didn't know statesmanship and didn't take advantage of others' policy will cause collapse of the king.

Because the shah was not inherently wise or didn't have wisdom

Foundation of the king's palace was loose his judgment was almost untrue

He applied oppression instead of justice He disdained justice

(Salaman and Absal, 1987: 325)

He has mentioned four characters of kingdom condition as follows:

There are four conditions for kingdom wisdom, chastity, bravery and generosity A person who has no such characters will not be regarded as king

(Salaman and Absal , 1987:354)

One of the characters which Jami regards necessary for a king is patience:

Shah should be patient he should have dignity (Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:43)

Mystic of Jam believes that king should be aware of all affairs of the country and supervise on all things to remove deficiency from the world.

Shah should be watchful for bad and good

His eyes should be open from left and right to remove deficiency from the world

(Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:269)

As Khajeh Nezamolmolk Toosi has said about supervision of the king: the person who is trustful is ordered by the grandees to go to the court and he knows and shows what they want (Toosi, 1990:133).

The poet has regarded religiousness as necessary condition of a king in poem of Salaman and Absal and mentioned that the king should be aware of religious secrets:

Shah should apply religion in his government

His job causes command and becomes origin of the eternal governments.

(Salaman and Absal, 1987: 316)

According to Jami, greed is a scourge which the king should avoid:

The beggar disdains greed how can it be rightful for the king?

(Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:17)

The king should inevitably accept two persons: a scientist who makes his religious world and the vizier who makes his material world:

The king should inevitably accept two persons who deals with his government and dignity

One person who makes his religious work and another person who makes his government

(Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:289)

The poet objects to the oppressors in text of the stories and informs the people at his era and other people at other eras about what occurs in his society with fluent and strong language. For example, he tells a story in Selseleh-al-zahab poem: an old person who goes to Senjer and makes a petition against some oppressors and removes their oppression (Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:273)

Jami has likened shah to shepherd and people to cattle in his verses:

Shah is shepherd and all people are cattle and wolf of those cattle is oppression (Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:15)

Of course, this metaphor has been spoken by many poets and has turned into a main review which can be found in Mathnavi of Molana, the poet and the mystic of century 7 A.H. (Molavi, 1993: 195)

Proper and necessary policy and punishment of the offenders are methods of the kingdom. As this issue has been referred in some stories such as story of a young man who fell in love with his cousin (Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:228), complaint of widow against women before Sultan Mahmoud (the same : 271) and story of Hormoz ebne Kasra (the same: 275)

Vizier (minister)

In royal systems, the ministers are regarded as the most powerful people after shah because most of the affairs are controlled by their judgments and views. Therefore, if ministers are highly aware, they can keep balance of shah and bring comfort to people. In case an oppressive minister comes to power, security and confirm of the people will be endangered. Minister was responsible for supervision on judicial, military, financial and religious affairs and management of the formalities.

Khajeh Nezam-ul-Molk writes about duties and function of ministers: when minister is good-natured, the country will be prosperous and army and subjects will be satisfied and restful and king will be at ease but if he is bad-natured, the country will be disrupted (Nezam-ul-Molk 1990:63).

Jami believes that minister is the most powerful one after shah and should be aware of condition of all people:

A person will be suitable for ministry who is the powerful after shah

A lucky, kind, beneficent a good doer and honest

He is aware of demon and brute he is short of good and bad property

(Selseleh-al-zahab, 1987:292),

Competency and expertise are the necessary conditions of a minister:

He assumes responsibility of shah and handles affairs so that shah is not put under pressure of all people

If he doesn't refuse efficiency he will not prevent the efficient people (the same: 293)

Jami has necessitated the presence of a wise and trustful minister beside a powerful king and believes that the condition for good government is awareness of the minister with all affairs:

The kings should inevitably accept ministers the minister should be wise and trustful

He should know conditions of the countries to arrange the system properly

(Salaman and Absal, 1987: 361)

Conclusion

Considering the study which was conducted in Selseleh-al-zahab, Salaman and Absal and Leili and Majnoon Poems of Abdolrahman Jami, it can be said that these texts properly show condition of government and characteristics of shah and minister in Timurids era. Jami who was teaching religious and mystic instructions was aware of condition of his society. The informed poet examines shahs and ministers with his acuity and criticizes their method. According to Jami, ideal king is the person who is just, wise, patient and religious and overcomes his anger and greed. Jami has regarded efficiency, expertise and wisdom as characteristics of a competent minister. The image which he gives of this shah and minister is a reliable image of the stories which occurred at that time.

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