Review of the allusions of Solomon story in poems of Hafez and Anvari
(according to the Quran and Osoul-e-kafi Hadith)

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Abstract

Survey on the great works of Persian literature reveals that most of the phrases, expressions, allusions and inferences mentioned in these prose and verses have been adopted from Quran and Hadiths. Various concepts and contents have been borrowed from these divine sources in Persian literature. Perception of the Iranian poets and writers’ works requires familiarity with Quran and Hadith. One of the Quranic contents mentioned in Persian literature frequently and used in various allusions is the story of Solomon. This article examines the allusions of the story of Solomon in the poems of Hafez and Anvari according to Quran verses and Osoul-e-kafi. “Suleiman or Solomon” evokes happiness, enjoy, spring, flower, beauty, authority and at the same time, humility in the poems of Hafez and in contrary, we find demon, demon, preacher, sheikh and ascetic against Suleiman. Anvari emphasizes his glorious reign, his magnificence and seal and speaking to birds and meeting an ant, possession of wind guardian angel, losing throne, meeting the queen of Sheba, Asif, hoopoe and demons in visualizing a fantastic image in order to praise him.

Keywords: Suleiman, Hafez, Anvari, allusions, verse, Hadith.
Introduction

Islam has had considerable effect on Iranian life specially, in literary domain. Survey on the Persian literary works depicts that most of the literary subjects have Quranic concepts and contents. The influence of Quran and Hadith is obvious in Persian prose and verse. The poets and writers have employed Quranic contents and words in various forms and aspects directly and indirectly. They have employed them as allusions, allegories, citations and translations, etc. Persian literature has borrowed various contents and concepts from this divine source that perception of the Iranian prose and verses needs familiarity with Quran and Hadith. On the other hand, this influence is not limited to the contents, but it includes literary science and usage of the words and quality of speech. According to this fact that Quran, as a literary book, is an outstanding example of influence on the reader, it has gained the attention of the poets and writers in order to culminate their works.

One of the Quranic contents that have significant places in Persian literature and used frequently in various allusions is the story of Solomon. Suleiman, the son of David, was one of the great prophets who had powerful kingship and territory. His name has been mentioned seventeen times in the chapter Al-Baqara, twice in An-Nisa, and Al-Anam, three times in Al-Anbiya, seven times in An-Naml, twice in Saba and Saad. In these verses, the exemplary points from his life, prophecy and governance have been mentioned. According to holy Quran, the God had offered him abundant blessings including knowledge, wisdom, knowing birds language, possessing the wind, a corps of men and jinn, access to the copper mine and melting copper and unlimited territory.

Because of the events happened in his prophecy and governance and also expansion of his realm and his extraordinary power, numerous stories have been told in the narratives and books and Quran which some of them denotes mythical aspects.

This story examines the allusions of Solomon in the poems of Hafez and Anvari according to Quran and Osul-e kafi Hadiths.

1-Bilqis and the devise of Asif

I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne (An-Naml:23).

Ali Ibn Mohammad Nofeli has quoted from Imam Asghari: The God’s great names have seventy three words and Asif had only one of them and he uttered it and the land of Sheba was opened and took the throne of Bilqis to Solomon and then it was opened at a moment and returned to its former state and we know other seventy two words and a word is dedicated to God which has distinguished it in foreknowledge for him (Koleini, 1996:v.2, p.213).

After correspondence between Suleiman and Bilqis and informing on his power, the queen of Sheba decided to meet him and Suleiman planned to show his power and invite her to monotheism. Hence he asked his attendants “O, the great men, who is able to bring her throne before her arrival”. Two men accepted and one of them was a righteous man that the interpreters
have described him as a faithful man and friend of Solomon (Asif ibn Barkhiya) and he was Solomon’s minister. An Ifrit (strong) from the jinn said: "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work" (An-Naml: 39). He brought Queen of Sheba’s throne to King Solomon in the twinkling of an eye (Khazaeli, 1962, pp. 344-348). Her name has not been mentioned in Quran but it has been cited in the narratives of Asif ibn Barkhiya) (Zamakhshari, 1996, v. 3, p. 367; Tabatabaei, n.d, v.15, p. 517).

The queen of Sheba was the only woman in the story of Solomon who ruled out the territory of Sheba, she entered to the story at first by description of the hoopoe, the messenger of the king Solomon and it described her power and realm: She said: "O chiefs! Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me." (An-Naml: 32). The queen of Sheba is symbol of a woman with power of management, devise who welcomes peace (Seyed Qotb, 1989, p.171). She is famous for policy and trading. “Such a woman might be intelligent, astute and efficient to rule out country”(Sattari, 2002, p. 132).

The story of the queen of Sheba and the devise of Asif has specific representation in the divans of Hafez and Anvari:

1-1-Bilqis (the Queen of Sheba)

With glad tidings, the breeze is the lapwing of Suleiman

That, from the rose bed of Saba, tidings of joy brought (Hafez, 2006:292)

O lapwing of the east wind to Saba I sent there

Behold from where to where, I send there (Hafez, 2006: 194)

Although in the Sheba of your highness

The wind and demons are servants (Anvari, 1968: v.1, p. 236)

O, Suleiman, nobody brought David the promise of Bilqis (Anvari, 1968: v.2, p. 155)

1-1- The devise of Asif

Know that Hafez is a lover, the muhtasib

And the Asif of Suleiman court, also (Hafez, 2006:720)

Last night, a messenger of news from his highness, Asif came

From his highness Suleiman, the order of joy came (Hafez, 2006: 344)
O, you that by the devise of Asif brought to the realm of Suleiman

Order the jinn, men and wind (Anvari, 1968: v.1, p. 101)

O, Suleiman had Asif and his devise

He had his throne and crown forever (Anvari, 1968: v.1, p. 103)

1-2- As-Sarh (a glassy palace with water underneath it)

It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh" [(a glass surface with water underneath it) or a palace], but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs, Suleiman (Solomon) said: "Verily, it is Sarh [(a glass surface with water underneath it) or a palace] paved smooth with slab of glass". She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit (in Islam, together with Suleiman (Solomon), to Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)" (An-Naml: 44).

When she saw that glassy palace

She uncovered all her hidden treasures (Anvari, 168:v.1, p.362)

That wine becomes as pure as glassy palace

By combing water and soil (Anvari, 168:v.1, p.374)

2-The Seal of Solomon

Imam Bager said: One day, Imam Ali went out after praying and said: it is a dark night but it ends when it wears the dress of Adam and has the seal of Solomon and the rod of Moses (Koleini, 1996:v. 2, p. 217).

Although there are differences in the details of mysterious stories on the seal of Solomon in various interpretative, narratives and stories of the prophets, the common point in them is that the power of Solomon depended on that seal. One day a demon stole it and was converted to Solomon and sat on his throne and Solomon who had lost his power became poor and miserable and began to fishing and finally, he found the seal in the body of a fish and began kingship once again (Tabarsi, 1971:v. 23, p. 101). Quran does not mention the seal of Suleiman directly, but it has a significant representation in the poems of Hafez:

On Ahirman, shine not the splendors of the ism-i-azam

That is the country and the seal-ring, what do you wish order (Hafez, 2005: 968)

Of the seal-ring of his ruby lip, it is fit that a Suleiman-like boast I should express
When mine is the ism-i-azam, of Ahriman, what fear I have (ibid: 654)

Against Asif, the tongue of the ant became long in reproach, and it is lawful

For the Khwaja lost the seal of Jam and sought not (ibid: 52)

Who wants the devise of Suleiman

Its true advices are due to that seal (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.77)

If your devise aids the king

It is on the hand of Suleiman (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p. 133)

If Asif brought that land at a moment

Why Suleiman lost his seal (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p. 459)

3-The power of Suleiman

Ibrahim narrated from his father that: “I asked Imam Kazim about the holy prophet and this question that is he heir of other prophets?” he replied: yes, I asked about Adam’s period till his period? He answered that Mohammad is superior to other prophets and then I told the Jesus Christ made the dead alive. He told Suleiman, the son of David spoke with birds and knew their language and I once again asked that did the holy prophet have that power. He replied when Suleiman lost hoopoe he doubted about it: He inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees? (An-Naml:20). Have we sent you (O Muhammad) to a community before whom other communities have passed away, in order that you might recite unto them what we have inspired to you, while they disbelieve in the Most Beneficent (Allah) Say: "He is my Lord? La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but Him)! In Him is my trust, and to Him will be my return with repentance"(Ar-Rad: 30). “If the Quran makes the mountains to move and earth to rise and dead to become alive”(Koleini, 1996:v.2, pp. 199-201).

The glory of Suleiman and his dominance on wind and knowing the language of birds and animals and talking to the head of the ants have a significant representation in the Hafez and Anvari poems:

3-1-Knowing the language of the birds (hoopoe)

And Suleiman (Solomon) inherited (the knowledge of) David. He said: "O mankind! We have been taught the language of birds, and on us have been bestowed all things. This, verily, is an evident grace (from Allah)" (An-Naml: 16).
One of the specific characteristics of Suleiman was his power to speak to the birds. The story of hoopoe, the messenger of Solomon is famous in the Quran. "I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne (An-Naml: 23).

The hoopoe took the letter of Solomon to the queen of Sheba. It has been paid attention in Persian literature, particularly in the mystical literature. We find the allusions of this story in the poems and Hafez and Anvari.

With glad tidings, the breeze is the lapwing of Suleiman

That, from the rose bed of Saba, tidings of joy brought (Hafez, 2006:292)

O lapwing of the east wind to Saba I sent there

Behold from where to where, I send there (Hafez, 2006: 194)

Not of myself, took I the path to the abode of the Anka

With the bird of Suleiman, the travelling of the stage, I made (Hafez, 2006: 634)

Asif of the Suleiman arose the tent

Put the pillar as the hoopoe (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.444)

Among the Sufis, this word is common

That the sheikh calls hoopoe brother and Suleiman brother (Anvari, 1968:v.2, p.447)

3-2-Knowing the language of ants

When they came to the valley of the ants, one of the ants said: "O ants! Enter your dwellings, let Solomon and his hosts crush you, while they perceive not" (An-Naml: 18)

An ant asked other ants to return their homes in order to be protected against Suleiman and his crops. He laughed at it and said: O, my God give me blessings to thank you. In Persian literature, ant in the story of Solomon is symbol of inability against power and glory and it has been referred in the poems of Hafez and Anvari.

In that cavalcade when they fasten the saddle on the back of the wind

With Suleiman, how may proceed, I whose steed the ant is (Hafez, 2006: 556)

Against Asif, the tongue of the ant became long in reproach, and it is lawful
For the Khwaja lost the seal of Jam and sought not (Hafez, 2006: 52)

I am ashamed of sending the grasshopper

To the court of Suleiman (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.444)

3-3-Wind

And to Solomon (We subjected) the wind, its morning (stride from sunrise till mid-noon) was a month's (journey), and its afternoon (stride from the midday decline of the sun to sunset) was a month's (journey i.e. in one day he could travel two months' journey). And we caused a fount of (molten) brass to flow for him, and there were jinns that worked in front of him, by the Leave of his Lord, and whosoever of them turned aside from Our Command, We shall cause him to taste of the torment of the blazing Fire (Saba: 12).

Solomon orders the wind to take his trading and military ships on the sea for a month and return them (Khazaeli, 1962, p. 367). Instability of wind in the story of Solomon is narrated in the poems of Hafez and Anvari.

You are Suleiman with the moving throne

The throne is on the wind as dust by miracle (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.188)

Through the fortune of love, Hafez became a Suleiman

That is of union with that, he has naught in hand save wind (Hafez, 2006: 60)

Fix not a knot on the wind though, on that object, it favorably blow

To Suleiman this speech, as a proverb, the wind, uttered (Hafez, 2006: 188)

In that hand is only wind, if that place and heart on any thing

In a meeting place, where to the wind, Suleiman throne goes (Hafez, 2006: 204)

3-4-Demon

And to Solomon (We subjected) the wind, its morning (stride from sunrise till mid-noon) was a month's (journey), and its afternoon (stride from the midday decline of the sun to sunset) was a month's (journey i.e. in one day he could travel two months' journey). And We caused a fount of (molten) brass to flow for him, and there were jinns that worked in front of him, by the Leave of his Lord, and whosoever of them turned aside from Our Command, We shall cause him to taste of the torment of the blazing Fire (Saba :12)
Everybody who rebels against you as the demon of Suleiman

Pain and sorrow nested in the home of demon (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p. 102)

O, you that the demons and fairies are in your order

Try to not lose the prestige of the king Solomon (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p. 468)

3-5- Resetting of the sun for the sake of Solomon

And he said: "Alas! I did love the good (these horses) instead of remembering my Lord (in my 'Asr prayer)" till the time was over, and (the sun) had hidden in the veil (of night)(Saad: 32).

I did love the good in the daylight

Then the dark night came and veiled the day (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.28)

4- The realm of Solomon

He said: "My Lord! Forgive me, and bestow upon me a kingdom such as shall not belong to any other after me: Verily, You are the bestowed" (Saad:35).

Zeyd Shaham said: I asked Imam Sadeq about the almighty God: And (remember) the Day when He will gather them all together, and then will say to the angels: "Was it you that these people used to worship?" (Saba: 40) and he said: Suleiman had been offered great power, then this verse was descended for the holy prophet (peace be upon him) and he had right to give everything to everyone who wants and asks everyone and the God has given him more than the Solomon power hat Allah gave as booty ('Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad) from the people of the townships, - it is for Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad), the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad), the orphans, Al-Masakin (the poor), and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment (Hashr: 7)(Koleini, 1996:v.2, p. 331).

The picture of Khwarizm and the fancy for the bank of Jihun it kept establishing

With thousands of complaints, from the land of Suleiman, it kept going (Hafez, 2006: 1027)

After the Kayan kings, in the country of Suleiman, none found

This resource, this treasury, this army weighty (Hafez, 2006: 999)

O beloved if, from that ruby I gain a ring of protection
Beneath the order of my seal- ring, will be hundred countries of Suleiman (Hafez, 2006: 328)

He has the glory of the king Solomon

It is surprising that he is the son of David (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.56)

You have the realm of Suleiman

Your enemy is in the house of demon (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.231)

With patience of Job, meeting Joseph

Pious of Yahiya and realm of Solomon (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.361)

5-The Wisdom of Solomon

And indeed we gave knowledge to David and Suleiman (Solomon), and they both said: "All the praises and thanks are to Allah, Who has preferred us above many of His believing slaves!" (An-Naml:15)

Also the verse 79 of chapter of Prophets says about the wisdom and knowledge of Seligman that the God had given him and his father.

Mofzal ibn Omar said: Imam Sadeq said: Indeed, Suleiman inherited from David and Mohammad inherited from Suleiman and we have the knowledge of the Torah, the Bible and the Psalmsand. I asked: in fact this is knowledge and he replied: that knowledge is not hidden and the complete knowledge is obtained all days and all hours (Koleinin, 1995: v. 2, p. 197).

Zaris Konasi said: I met Imam Sadeq and Abu Basir and Imam said: David was the knowledge of all prophets and Suleiman was his heir and Mohammad was Suleiman heir and we are the Mohammad heirs and we know the scrolls of Abraham and Moses Tablets. Abu Basir asked: indeed, it is knowledge and Imam said: it is not knowledge and knowledge is in day and night and hours (Koleini, 1996:v.s, pp. 198-199).

Suleiman is famous for knowledge and wisdom and the Quranic verses emphasize it. “And indeed we gave knowledge to David and Suleiman (Solomon), and they both said: "All the praises and thanks are to Allah, Who has preferred us above many of His believing slaves" (An-Naml: 15). Solomon knowledge and wisdom is divine (Sattari, 2002, p. 86).

The Wisdom of Solomon has been manifested in the poems of Hafez and Anvari:

Doubt in Suleiman pomp, whoever displayed

On his wisdom and knowledge, the bird and the fish will laugh (Hafez, 2006: 968)
You cannot be as Suleiman

As pride with those names (Anvari, 1968:v.1, p.236)

**Conclusion**

Survey on the Persian great literary works reveals that most of the phrases, allusions and inferences have been adopted from Quran and traditions. Suleiman is one of the great prophets whose name has been cited in some verses. The God had offered him numerous blessings including knowledge, wisdom, familiarity with language of animals, dominance on wind, a corps of men and jinn and unlimited realm and governance. Each of these stories and Quranic themes has been represented in the poems of Hafez and Anvari.

Suleiman is symbol of happiness, pleasure, spring, flower, beauty, power and humility in the divan of Hafez that is against to demon, evil, preacher, sheikh and ascetic. Perhaps Hafez has employed the story of Solomon for criticizing the hypocrite ascetics. He has used this story for expressing his artistic purpose via considering various aspects of this story not for praising or exaggeration but for presenting tangible viewpoints on human relations, natural manifestation, life and existence. The instances of these inferences can be found in numerous couplets.

Anvari emphasizes the Seal of Solomon and his glorious kingship, speaking to birds and ants and possessing guardian angel of wind and losing his throne and meeting the queen of Sheba, Asif, hoopoe and demons to offer an imaginary image in praising his power. The frequency of mentioning the name of Suleiman in the poems of Hafez and Anvari is shown in the following figure.

The following figure shows the frequency of the allusions of the story of Solomon in the poems of Hafez and Anvari.
References

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