Mofakhereh in Azerbaijani Style with an Emphasis on Mojir Al-Din Bylqany

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Abstract

In terms of social and political evolutions, sixth century is one of the most important eras in Iranian social life. The impact of this turbulent and unstable situation on life, spirit and poetry and even poets’ perspective to the world is in such a way that have distinguished poets of Azerbaijani style from other Iranian poets dating back to other periods. One of the impacts of this turbulent situation in the poetry dating back to Azerbaijani style is the poets’ proclivity toward Mofakhereh or boasting style, and this trend has influenced the Mojir’s collection of poems (Divan) to the extent that one prominent motif of Mojir’s poetry is Mofakhereh. In this regard, Mojir expressively recites that:

I have become self-conceited, as every breath of the sun/puts the world as a mirror before my eyes (Divan, 1979: 141).

Keywords: Mojir Al-Din Bylqany, Divan, Mofakhereh.
Introduction
Self-praise is a type of self-expression. It is a revelation of unexpressed concepts hidden in the heart and soul of man, when the storm of everyday events forces man to release all the untold pains and tribulations in the format of words and poetry. Under this condition, man seeks to expose its actual and desirable position to others’ eyes. From this perspective and based on the definition presented regarding lyrical poetry (Dashty, 1945; Shamisa, 1994: 122; Rastegrar Fasaei, 1993: 157), self-conceit is considered to be one prominent theme in lyrical poetry. Although poets in their boasting expressions and description (i.e. Mofakhereh) often did succumb to inner emotions and recourse to exaggeration and aggrandizement, the climate of the era could provide the readers with so much information in terms of character analysis and familiarity with the community that had obliged poets to take advantage of arrogance and pride. The current research seeks to analyze the motif of self-praise or more specifically the same Mofakhereh as one characteristic of Mojir al-Din Bylqany’s collection of poems.

Research Question
Can we trace the motif of self-praise and self-conceit in Mojir’s poetry? How is Mojir’s style of dealing with the motif of Mofakhereh in its collection of poems?

Note
Pedantic and referring to various disciplines, conversion of epic tone into Mofakhereh along with some other issues such as different allusions, address the teachings of ancient Iran, etc. are some of the most prominent features of Azerbaijani style, and these concepts have been distinctively portrayed in the poetry of Mojir al-Din Bylqany as one of the distinguished poets practicing in this style. Accordingly, self-praise and Mofakhereh in the poetry recited by Mojir is analyzed in the following part.

A) Mere self-praise and egotism
As it was said earlier, self-praise is one of the stylistic features in Mojir’s poetry. Sometimes, Mojir presents an exaggerated opinion of one's own qualities or ability and is boastful of the rhetoric blessing that God has bestowed to him. In a Qasideh (Ode) with starting line: “every night that I delve into my realm of wonder/I penetrate into the veil of the heaven, transcend the body”, other initial lines are expressive of the poet’s arrogance and self-conceit:
The words become vibrant and vivacious in my poems/the words in my poems are flawless spring and gold.
Even the earth is a servant to my words/even sugar is envious of the sweetness of my poem.
I have become self-conceited, as every breath of the sun/puts the world as a mirror before my eyes.
I am conscious of my soul on this ephemeral earth/I radiate like the sun both to my soul and body (Divan: 141).
Mojir regards Jam-e-jam as a sip of its existence which the Sky’s Cup has secured its soul against any threat:
Jam-e-jam as a sip of my soul and existence/has protected me like a guardian descending from the sky. (Divan: 117)
Mojir sometimes is boastful of himself as a Phoenix that has no place in the world, because the world has bestowed the world crown to hoopoe, and the power of speech to parrot. Thus, inevitably Phoenix should be recluse:
The world has bestowed the brilliant gifts to parrot and hoopoe/the speech and crown, and for the Phoenix nothing!
Phoenix is alone, recluse and isolated/hoopoe and parrot boastful and merry (Divan: 10).
Mojir is perplexed of the providence that is envious of him and makes him dejected, because he sees himself at a higher position!
I yearn for a happy day/ yet the day is envious of me with such a high position in the world (Divan: 117).
Sometimes, Mojir is so arrogant of himself that believes that Jesus in the fourth orbit calls him the axis of all significations, and even regards the poet’s status higher than that of the heaven and earth. In addition, in response to the king’s detention command, Gabr Znnd Khan believes that the poet is not deserved to be imprisoned, and wishes for his emancipation:
Jesus in the fourth orbit called me the pivot of the sense/yet the heaven is not as same rank as me.
Ask GabrZand Parsy, whether I am deserved to be detained/he does not believe in my detention, he yearns for my emancipation (Divan: 310).
Mojir eulogizes his poetry and believes that the heaven and sky cannot recite poems as well-crafted as me: I am a selected soul in terms of poetry/even the heaven fail to compose such poetry (Divan: 274).

B) Arrogance to counterparts, rivals, and opponents
Mojir regards himself as “Seal of the words” and “Second Mo’ezzi”, and because Ghezel Arsalan Asir Akhsikati has chosen Jamal Ash’hari (rather than Mojir) to visit the king, in a complaining stanza present following self-conceited descriptions:
God know that I am the Seal of the words/the fame of my poetry spreads to Iraq.
I am the second Mo’ezzi today/while the uproar of Onsori’s poetry can be heart at your house.
You cannot find somebody superior than me/you cannot see somebody more determined in composing poetry than me. (Divan, 1976: 295-296)
Mojir was not content with the fact that others consider him as a counterpart and he thought that he is superior over others, and he had the same expectation of his admirers:
My poetry is like shining and unrivaled/the words are like Khosravi’s document at the hand of prosperous king
No one can emulate his poetry/none can claim that is more versatile than him.
No one must see him as a counterpart/no one can see a rotten corpse same as a young and powerful horse (Ibid: 159-160).
Mojir regards his rivals as some straws and chips and is concerned with the fact that lest the king liken him to them:
I am the beggar at the doorway of your court/yet I am the king of the words.
Is it fair to liken me to the rivals/the rivals that are nothing other than straws and chips? (Divan: 141-144).
Mojir believes that the only person that is deserved to be admired is himself and he considers other as inferior even they are sun and moon, such that referring to Atabak Nosrat al-Din Jahan Pahlavan Mohammad ibn Ildgaz, Mojir recites that:
The only thing that deserves to be admired by you is me rather than the moon and sun/the best companion to Rostam is Rakhsh rather than a lion (Divan: 119).
Mojir describes his rivals and opponents as “giant-like liars”, “tricky people as Sameri cow that only deserved to be companions to donkeys” with “black faced same as tablet”, and the people who are dumb yet have two tongues. In contrast, he praises himself as someone who has miraculous powers same as Moses:
Flee from this giat-like liars/with a bitter tongue, ill same as cholera.
Same as Sameri cow/deserved to be companions to some donkeys.
Have two faces same as tablets/are hypocritical with two tongues yet dumb in speech. (Divan: 4-5).
Other qualities that Mjir uses for rivals and opponents out of his arrogance and self-conceit include hypocritical, fragile in the time of debate, boastful in speech, close-fisted and stingy that have no mercy, satirical same as cold wind and depressed same as the coldness in Bahman, in contrast to Mojir that is described as animated and exhilarating, and Mojir separate himself from that category of people:
Mojir is distinct from this stingy and hypocritical/this people of lie and hypocrisy.
Fragile in the time of debate, boastful in speech, close-fisted and stingy that have no mercy.
The cold people same as the cold days of winter/depressed and dejected, disappointed and heartbroken (Divan: 13).
In a 39-line Qisadeh, Mojir recites that:
These stingy men whose poetry has no sense and meaning/have a body like a man yet a head like a Satan
Mojir throughout the Qasideh uses some inferior adjectives for the rivals and considers himself superior over them (see Divan: 71-73; other cases: Divan: 149, 340-344, 353-354, 356).

C) Self-glorification relative to the successors
The best poems of Majir are the ones that is recited by the same style of the successors. Although Majir was a follower of the past poet, same as other poets of Azerbaijani style, he considered himself to be superior over them. One example of such superiority was his sense of higher position in terms of poetry and prose compared to the masters such as Onsori and Farrokhi, and Manteghi, respectively:
Majir is versatile and eloquent in his description/ his poetry is fluent, his words are magical.
Witty and provocative in nature, sweet-spoken/ poetry full of sense and sensibility, full of charm, shining.
Farrokhi and Onsori envious of his poetry/the poetry that is a praise of your virtues (ibid: 296).

D) Arrogance to expression technique
Majir describes himself as mellifluous and sweet-spoken, and claims that he enjoys from a witty and bright nature, and his poetry is elegant and charming and every point addressed by him in his poetry forces the successors to be envious of him.
Majir is versatile and eloquent in his description/ his poetry is fluent, his words are magical. Witty and provocative in nature, sweet-spoken/ poetry full of sense and sensibility, full of charm, shining. (Divan, 1976: 41-42).

Farrokhi and Onsori envious of his poetry/the poetry that is a praise of your virtues (ibid: 296). Sometimes, Majir regards himself as Abraham the Prophet that a point like basil sparks out of the fire of his inner world. In other cases, he likens himself to elegant rosebush and tuneful nightingale. He claims that he is the King of speech and also a laureate among the Persian poets and elocutionists.

I am Abraham, full of fire in nature/the sense spurts from my mouth same as the sweet basil. I am an elegant rosebush, a tuneful nightingale/ in praise and in words, in description. I am a beggar at the door of your majestic court/yet a king sat on the throne of the words. May I am Mohammad the Prophet?/ No I am the superior of all the poets. (Divan: 141-144).

E) Self-conceit and arrogance by composing Arabic poems
One aspect of the sense of superiority and exaggeration of the poets practicing in Azerbaijani style is their disposition to apply Arabic language to the poetry. Majir is highly versatile in using Arabic terms and lexicology in his poetry: he has composed a 55-line Qasideh whose starting line is as below:
Safety of the day, wonder of the night/so much likened to my poetry (Divan: 135-137).

F) Self-conceit and sense of superiority over master
One of the negative characteristics of Azerbaijani style is sense of superiority over master which emanates from arrogance and pride caused by the narcissistic nature of this group of poets. Such arrogance and narcissism itself can be the consequence of improper social and political situation underlying the community and the excessive pessimism of the poets of the sixth century, such that Mojir reproaches his master Khaghani and has a sense of superiority over him. According to reliable sources, in describing a well-dressed man (see Ghaghani’s Divan, pp.916-917), Khaghani presents some ironical descriptions of the man that some believe the man Khaghani’s disciple Mojir. In response, Mojir lets out a stream of invective, and even he expressly satirize the profession of Khaghani’s father as a carpenter. The lines recited by Khaghani are as bellow:
So determined to torture and annoy/ the one with bruised lips, teary eyes like Nile river, like lily. Iron faces such as mirror, mirror always in hand/ submerged merely in beholding themselves. As if Muslim and believer/yet infidel, vicious, and liar in the heart. In response, Mojir recites the following poems:
O Mojir! You are the most versatile, the most superior/overcome the rivals, the opponents. You are the only artist with the most delicate taste/they are only enemies, only in strive to fight. In a 34-line Qasideh, Mojir recites the first line as below: These ignorant men that come and go in vain/interpret the world, interpret the words in vain. In satirizing his master (i.e. Khaghani), Mjir ignores the respectable position of the master narcissistically: As if they are equal in status/yet I am a garden, they are a branch in a garden. This people that present themselves as pure and honest/ idolize the idols, are profanes to God, infidels to human. I am sorrowful for soul, they for bread/they search for body me for soul (also see Divan: 125-130)
G) Arrogance in love:
Sometimes, Mojir is so arrogant that at the time of love failure do not seek to implore the beloved, and likens the rush of the sorrow caused by separation to a king’s army, and describes itself as a king that an army is responsive to his commands.

Pain and pine cannot overcome my strong soul/ I am like a king sat on the throne, army prepared and responsive to the kingly commands.
The power of your love cannot force me to implore you/let’s resume the love, fill the cup, and drink the wine (Divan: 116).

Conclusion
One of major characteristics of the poets of Azerbaijani style is thier self-conceit or Mofakhereh. Such prominent feature is influenced by both the poet’s personality and social situation underling their mind and language. In Mojir’s poetry, one of the most conspicuous motifs is Mofakhereh and self-conceit whose culmination can be traced in the boastful poems recited by Mojir in response to his master Khaghani and preceding poets such as Farrokhi and Onsori. Most of self-congratulatory poems recited by Mojir are expressed in the form of Ghaside (ode), and other forms analyzed in his Divan are less colored by such self-conceited poems. Mojir expresses his boastful themes sometimes in the form of complaining themes, and he presents a portrayal of himself as an invincible and recalcitrant poet that refuses to surrender to the rivals, opponents and even the kings of the time.
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