A new report on the image of the prophet of Islam in the seventh century Lunar Hijri and a description of its similarities and differences with the poetry of the fifth and sixth centuries Lunar Hijri.

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Abstract
Praise and odes have long been a way of expressing devotion to the praiseworthy and the beloved and one of the most common contents of Persian poetry. Most poets, particularly to the middle of the sixth century Hijri, have written praise poetry in order to please people and make a living. Late sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries Hijri mark the beginning of the Mongol invasion. It happened as a result of the inefficiency of Kharazm dynasty ruling over Iran more or less coinciding with the crusades and its religious goals on the Iranian western borders. It seems that the Mongol invasion of Iran happened under the influence of and as a result of the then Christian world and the Abbasid Caliphate. The invasion happened as a result of the turbulent situation and killing and looting which had stolen peace and comfort away from the society replacing it with chaos and insecurity. In such circumstances, people and the majority of mystics and poets were seeking ways to distance themselves from the material and mundane world and its turbulent circumstances. With the establishment of Ibn Arabi’s mystical school in the seventh century Lunar Hijri, favorable circumstances were created. As a result, the majority of mystics tried to use the image of the prophet of Islam as an exalted mystical character and his sacred aroma as a healing power on the profound wounds that were inflicted on them by the disasters of their days. In this essay we have tried to render a definition of eulogy and Manghabat which is a special form of eulogy which is solely dedicated to the praise of the Holy Prophet. At the same time, we will study the image of the prophet of Islam in the Persian poetry of the seventh century and compare it with the previous centuries, specially fifth and sixth centuries Lunar Hijri.

Key words: the image of the prophet of Islam, its study, analysis and comparison with the image given in the literary works of the sixth century, Ibn Arabi’s mystical school, social developments following the Mongol invasion, crusades.
Introduction

There has been a long, admirable tradition in Persian literature for praising Mohammad as the noblest, most supreme creatures God has ever created in a most beautiful way by expressing outstanding characteristics of this sublime character from the human race. This particular type of praise poetry is called this “Manghabat” in Persian.

Considering the fact that praise and laudation form a large portion of Persian poets’ works, it is possible to say that such “praise” was the most important subject in Persian poetry and has lasted for many centuries.

In no period of the one thousand and two hundred years of Persian poetry, the number of literary masters does not equal the number of poets of this period. One of the literary characteristics of these centuries, including the sixth century which we have studied, is the growing number of poems particularly praise poems. Poets in kingly courts were obliged to write poetry on different occasions with each poet trying to write a better poem.

From among the sixth century poets, some like Anvari followed the period’s tradition and wrote praise poetry for the prophet after praising God dedicating an ode to him while dedicating most of the rest of their divans to the praise of kings and famous figures. Some others, like Sana’i and Khaghani, dedicated a part of their lives to praising kings giving up such kind of poetry for the rest of their lives. There are groups that have never done this. The reason is that they are Sufi poets who put no value on the material world and have never praised anyone in order to achieve dignity. Such Sufis lived in the beginning of the sixth and seventh centuries.

We can also point to religious eulogies in which some poets wrote in praise of God almighty and the holy prophet and Imams. What I mean here are the literary masters whose poems are dedicated to religious eulogies. Those who mostly lived from seventh to eleventh centuries, pious dignified poets like Rumi, Attar, Araghi and others are among this group.

Over the past few years, articles have been written under the title of “The image of the holy prophet in Masnavi”, “The image of Meraj (the ascension of the holy prophet to heaven) in Khaghanis’s and Sana’i’s poetry”, and “The image of The Prophet Mohammad in Khaghani’s eulogies”. In such articles, writers have exclusively examined the holy prophet’s image in a particular period or in the works of a particular poet from an aesthetic point of view. In this article, we have explained the similarities and differences and other influencing factors. Among the most important of such factors are the Mongol invasion, the establishment of the Ibn Arabi school of mysticism and the crusades.

Manghabat and its different kinds

In Persian literature and Islamic culture, since the beginning of Islam, there have been numerous poets who believed in the holy religion of Islam and sought the peace of their hearts in religious education. Such poets had the honor of understanding brilliant truths of Islam. They made the praises of the holy prophets family the ornament of their poetry considering their poems as a tool for advertising and scattering their own thoughts and beliefs.

According to Dr. Ahsan Zandi, praise poetry of the Holy Prophet, called Manghabat, can be divided into two categories:

1. Official praise.
2. Main praise.

The official Manghabat makes an investment in requesting charm, conscience, richness, oblation, and aid by the poet from the one he has praised. In such poetry, the poet describes the worthy traits, morality, spiritual influences and the dignity and perfection of the soul of the praised person who might be a spiritual master in the mystical world of a Sufi together with a pre-eminent figure of the Sufi world.

A brief history of praise poetry

As we already know, praise poetry has been common in Persian literature from its beginnings. It may be the oldest genre that has been noticed in the Dari Persian poetry. The reason may be that the Dari Persian poetry belonged to the courts and poets received prizes from government agents, officials and important people.

From the beginning of Persian poetry to the start of the sixth century Lunar Hijri, most of the praise poetry was of the “official” type. We see very few poets who write their poems for spiritual attractions. This is to mention that in the fourth and fifth centuries Lunar Hijri, there are many mystics such as Sheik Abu Saeed Abol Kheir and Abol Hasan Kharaghani and others who praised and described the holy prophet with admiration out of their own spiritual fascination. But since they used their genius in prose rather than poetry and because of the doubts that exist in the poems attributed to them and also because the period we are going to study is the sixth and seventh centuries, we refrain from considering them.

The position of praise poetry and the situation of poets in the fifth and sixth centuries Lunar Hijri

Writing praise poetry in the fifth and sixth centuries had significant differences with the previous centuries. In the previous centuries, those who were praised were from important families, scholars or just kings with admirable characters and brave combatants. To praise such people, poets had a variety of subjects at hand and were not required to enter long, extreme exaggerations. But as long as such praise poetry is about servants who have just risen to higher ranks or savage invaders of the Muslim lands these natural aspects are destroyed and replaced by exaggerations that are far from reality. Considering the fact that during the major parts of this period, poets were mostly dealing with such people, they had no choice but to refer to such themes in their poems.

In fact, the contents of praise poetry within these two centuries had a very high dignity with an influence on the majority of poets. Poets sometimes indulged in such poetry to such an extent that they exaggerated and considered their praised person great and supernatural while thinking of themselves as inferior and small.

The poets of this century were among the respected classes of the society and the kings of those days were eager to have great poets in their system. The reason for this was that great poets were a good tool for advertising the king’s greatness and glories. Insistence on this sometimes caused conflicts between kings.

The praise poetry of this period was a means for making a living and a way for flattering the kings. In this period, we see few poets praising the holy prophet. Even if there is any praise, the poet has only wished to follow the current customs and traditions of his time which demanded them to write a poem in praise of God almighty and the Holy Prophet. From the poets of this period, some have spent some time praising the kings, but later these poets have changed their course in life and
chosen the mystical path. Through their later works in life, it is obvious that they have achieved very high mystical dignity and position. A number of other poets have been mystics throughout their lives and have not polluted their poems with the praise of kings and sultans. This group mostly lived at the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries.

Position of Praise poetry and poets in the seventh century

Praise and eulogy in the common sense of the words as a means to receive a prize was less popular in the seventh century than the previous one. It was almost removed from the literary arena and replaced with a kind of mystical poetry. Despite hundreds of eulogies and praise poems and other types of poetry written for kings, descriptive poems and stories of the beloved are more abundant than eulogies. Adoration of the beloved is different from praise for sultans. The beloved is the poet’s idol and the poet has a connection in soul with him or her. Aside from beautiful lovers, and attention to ephemeral joys of the flesh, a new, invisible lover emerged in poetry at the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries Lunar Hijri. This eternal, undying beloved was God almighty who held a burning flame on the way of a group of poets who had lost their hearts in his love. He took poets back to an immortal beloved and brought them to praise the holy prophet who in a Hadith quoted from God Himself is the reason for the creation of all the being. Poets dedicated many poems to this sublime, mystical character.

These changes were the result of the Mongol invasion and the crusades and the massacres of Muslims during these two devastating wars, one from the east raging like a dragon destroying everything indiscriminately and another from the western parts of the Muslim world. In addition to the above cases, we will examine the internal problems in the Muslim world which include inefficiency of semi-dependent governments, semi-Iranian governments ruling over Iranian plateau like Ghaznavids, Saljooghis, Torkaman and also the establishment of Ibn Arabi’s mystical school and his students.

The invasion of the Mongol and Tartar tribes

One of the important and sad events of Iran’s history is the Mongol and Tartar invasion which began with the devastating Chingiz Khan’s onslaught in the year 616 Lunar Hijri. This formidable attack which historians described as a ruinous calamity had such a devastating influence on the cultural, political and educative conditions and thoughts of Iranians the like of which has never been seen.

Mongol invasion had irrecoverable effects on Iran, especially on its scientific and literary centers. Mongol official’s neglect of praise poetry extinguished the lantern of this genre in courts, freeing poets from the rigid boundaries of court poetry sending them into the tastes of mystical poems in order to free them from conditions ruling over their country.

The effects of the disastrous Mongol invasion on doubling the attention to the tradition and morality of the Holy Prophet with different images of the past centuries

As if with the Mongol invasion, people, especially poets, suddenly realized that this scourge had befallen them from heaven as a result of their negligence of their religion and their indifference to the holy prophet. For this reason, attention to religion and the Holy Prophet found a very special place in the poetry and prose of this period in such a way that poets and writers justified the Mongol invasion by mentioning a Hadith from the Holy Prophet. The Mongolian tribes did not have any specific religion or faith. The faith common among them is mentioned as “Shamanism” in historical documents. For this reason, in the beginning days of their arrival in the Islamic land of Iran, they
tried to show themselves as believers. In the beginning, they tried to destroy Islam and its different branches, but later they pretended that they had converted to this religion.

Many books have been written about the Mongol history and its effects on Iran, Islamic society and the disappearance of scientists and great men and how the country became deprived of them. “The history of Jahangosha” written by Atta Malek Joveini is one of those books in which the writer has mentioned Iran’s situation and condition in the seventh century and the days when the foreign tribes invaded Iran. He has also written about the changes that the rulers of the time made in order to weaken Islam and justify their own sovereignty. The book also refers to the Iranian people’s indifference to Islam and its weakening in the society before the Mongol invasion a few samples of which is mentioned below.

“… and as a result of the changing time and the effect of the low universe, schools were destroyed and science was damaged and the people who sought it were trodden by malicious calamity, crushed by the time and the deceiving days. They were trapped in various kinds of calamities and tribulations before sharp sword before their faces are covered in dust now.

Virtue should be sought from dust these days
Because all virtuous people are in the dust. (Joveini)

“and now the extent of the earth in general and the cities of Khorasan in particular where prosperity rose, dreams came true and scientists thrived, scholars and artists gathered are all deprived of masters of science and arts and virtues – a land which in Holy Prophet’s words bears the fruit of the tree of science whose main tree is in Mecca.”

“the virtuous sheik and rightful Imam, Ala'idin Mohammad Khotna, may God pour light in his grave and multiply his rewards, rose and came to Koochlak and sat down to his service in true honesty and started discussions on different religions. As his voice became loud and the martyred Imam mentioned decisive reasons considering his own existence naught, truth conquered falsehood and the wise defeated the ignorant. Then the martyred Imam put such awe in his own words that it affected the behavior and words of that libertine in such a way that his tongue was cut in cowardice and his words were cut short. The libertine brought ugly curses on his tongue and suggested that he would leave Islam. Divine light cannot house of a demon.

“Another Muslim from among the emirs of Eighoor indulged himself in extreme luxury through loans which later became impossible for him to return. He was captured and punished by an order to leave the Mohammadan religion and convert to idolatry. If not, he would have been decried by cudgeling a hundred times in the marketplace in front of all people. The helpless Muslim asked the man to go to him and after witnessing his plight he ordered his compensation to be paid. Then the king ordered the same punishment to be inflicted on the infidel who had decided to punish the Muslim. The Muslim’s wife was returned to him and instead of one hundred whips one hundred pillows were given to the Muslim.

“…… a government agent was sent to him and expressed willingness to obey him. Among the gifts, there was a precious ruby which had been inherited from his fathers and forefathers. It carried the name of Mohammad the messenger of God with the names of his fathers after it. He had ordered gravers to engrave the name of the Holy Prophet above the names of his fathers and his forefathers.
The above books are a small sample of such works showing that after the Mongol Invasion, Iranian literary scholars and poets paid intense attention to religion and the Holy Prophet and his position. They believed that the Mongol invasion and the crusades were the result of the neglect of religious truths. In fact, many people and in particular scholars, mystics and writers considered the Mongol invasion a consequence of their own grave and small sins and the sins of the heads of state. They believed that God sent Chingiz in order to punish them for their ignorance. Of course, there is no doubt that Iranians needed such conclusions in order to heal their own pains. But all this reveals the same single simple fact. Attention paid to the Holy Prophet and religion in this period is different from the poets of previous centuries in forms and images. For this reason, considering the new conditions, poets found it necessary to draw a new image of the Holy Prophet and the religion of Islam. Without a doubt, this new image is different from that of previous centuries.

Under the influence of the crusades, there was more attention to Islam and the Holy Prophet in the seventh century Lunar Hijri and an increase in Nestorian expressions in this century. The reason for all this was that in this deplorable situation poets wanted to soften people’s feelings. They wanted people to look at religions with new eyes and render a more cosmopolitan look to the prophet of Islam. Such an image is not perceivable in the fifth and sixth centuries’ poetry.

The influence of the crusades

The Crusades are a series of wars that started as a result of the invitation of the pope and the European kings and nobility in order to recapture the holy lands from Muslims. Christians from various places in Europe participated in separate wars from 1291 to 1095. Similar wars were continuing on the Ibry peninsula and Eastern Europe until fifteenth century AD. Crusade warriors were catholic Christians who fought against Muslims and Orthodox Christians in Eastern Rome territory and to some smaller scales against Slavs, Mongols and neutral Christians.

The Crusades had some influence on the attention paid to religion in the seventh century, but not as much as the other two factors. This influence is obvious in the works of the poets of this period. Samples of this influence can be seen in poems from Khaghani who has repeatedly used Christian and Nestorian terms and in the couplet called “The Sheik of San’an”.

Perhaps one of the reasons for using Christian terms and the attention to Christian faith in this period is the sympathy Muslims wanted to show to Christians. It could also be said that where Attar speaks about the love of a Muslim Sheikh for a Christian girl while the sheik accepted the girl’s condition to burn the Koran and wrap a cincture around him. This causes the Sheik to leave his own faith and convert to Christianity. This speaks of true love showing how an individual ignores everything in order to reach true love. At the end of the story, the Sheik’s disciples ask the Holy Prophet for help and the Sheik is saved and returns to his own sacred faith. Attar serves two goals in this story. We can see both true love and the truthfulness of Islam in this story.

Mystical school of Ibn Arabi, a school in line with rendering a new image of the Holy Prophet

Mohyeddin is definitely the greatest Islamic mystic with no equal before or after him. For this reason he has been called “The great sheik.” From its beginning, Islamic mysticism improved by each passing century, each century adding to its glories with its own great mystics. This evolution was gradual until Ibn Arabi who gave it a sharp, sudden improvement and brought it to its ultimate perfection. All the mystics who came after him were gleaning from his harvest.
Mysticism and Sufism of every people carry their natural characteristics. Sufism means to put down everything you have in mind, in hands, everything that comes to you in favor of acquiring honorable characteristics.

Sufism is an inner aspect of the Islamic revelation for moving on the road of perfection. It is in fact the inner heart of Islam. It is true that this name emerged in later centuries and some of its apparent characteristics were taken from Neo-Platonic beliefs, Sufism and its methods go back to the beginning of revelations on Mohammad. Sufism carries strong connections with the Koran which is the most fundamental form of the Islamic beliefs.

As was mentioned above, despair and pessimism increased on a daily basis among people after the Mongol invasion. Enduring this difficult condition was hard. In particular, mystics were looking for ways out of this situation. In such conditions, Islamic mysticism emerged and found its perfection in Ibn Arabi. It helped people to free themselves from the harshness of the outside world by thinking about the world inside.

In fact, the reason that the theoretical mysticism emerged through Ibn Arabi was that even Ibn Arabi had noticed the damages of the two devastating invasions. By revealing Mohammadan truth and showing his interpretation of a perfect human being, he invited mystics and after that different social classes to a new understanding of religion and a new image of the Holy Prophet as the founder of Islam.

**Praise of the prophet in the seventh century**

As we mentioned before, a various number of functions, including Mongol invasion and the crusades caused an unprecedented development in mystical literature. Of course the emergence of outstanding poets in the seventh century was one of the important aspects in bringing such developments about in relation to reflecting a new image of Mohammad. Such a development is not limited to Persian poets and literature. It can be witnessed in the works of the poets of this century. Ibn Arabi, Ibn Farez and a little later in the poetry of Sharfod din Boosiri and the like.

Also the emergence of religiously oriented poets like Attar, Rumi, Araghi and others had its own influence on this periods’ poetry. It brought praise poetry. In particular, it freed praise poetry from its mundane form and gave it a more mystical form and brought the image of the Holy Prophet to a higher position.

The praise of the Holy Prophet, in its precise technical term, emerged in the seventh century within the Sufi literation with religious and literary motivations.

In this genre, poets usually speak of the places where revelations came to the prophet while praising the Holy Prophet’s traits and characteristics. They also referred to the prophet’s genealogy and mentioned several points from his tradition. One of the distinguished characteristics of this genre is to seek intercession from the Holy Prophet.

In the eyes of a man who enters Sufism and also the wayfarer of the Sufi road, the first and the most perfect mystic is the Holy Prophet, Mohammad, and after him Imam Ali who is the most excellent representative of the true nature of Islam.

Considering the Hadith from God that says, “If it had not been for you I would not have created the cosmos,” the goal of the creation was to create Mohammad. Therefore, without a doubt the man
whose creation is explained in such exalted words and is considered superior to the rest of the
creation is the source of all the virtues and can be a model for perfection.

In Ibn Arabi’s eyes, a perfect human being finds its real form in the image of the Holy Prophet of
Islam just in the way that when the seed is planted into the earth, it first grows into a stem, then into
branches and leaves and finally bears the fruit that carries the seed in it. The perfect man which is
the highest creation of God takes his perfect form on earth in the image of the Holy Prophet which
is the last prophet.

The seventh century is the time when mysticism dominates the society, a time when humanity
destroys fellow human beings, the century of inequalities when no one dares to object. People saw
that the pellucid waters in the rivers of their lands became red with blood as a result of the killings
and massacres. They witnessed that the books and historical documents that carried their national
identity were burning in the fire of their enemy’s anger, the boundaries of religious laws were
broken and people’s dignity was destroyed. No one dared to protest. There was such a huge horror
in that century that everybody thought only of himself like the doom’s day. A mystic like Najm
oddin Razi leaves his home and family behind in order to save his own life.

These conditions forced a lot of great people to leave their homeland. There were people who could
not or were not willing to leave their homes, nor were they able to endure the current conditions.
These same factors caused the Ibn Arabi’s mystical school to thrive and attract huge numbers of
enthusiastic followers.

Mysticism by definition is the recognition of the best human being and later to follow his way.
Since Shari’a consists of the prophet’s words and the way to God is shown through his behavior and
the ultimate truth lies in the prophet’s spiritual state, mystics tried to teach their followers to obey
Mohammad’s tradition obliging them to follow the Holy Prophet’s way of conduct.

In the meantime, many poets entered the mystical circles. Some of them spent half and some their
entire lives on mysticism praising the Holy Prophet asking him for spiritual help.

We can point to Sana’i as one of the most famous poets of this group. He is one of those poets
whose poetry culminated in both praise and mystical poetry. He had a powerful pen in praising the
Holy Prophet and obtained a lot of fame in this regard.

“To win the crown of dignity he put his foot on the whole universe.” (Meaning he closed his eyes
on all the superficial beauties of the creation.)

“Both worlds (meaning this world and the afterlife) were worthless before his ambition / When he
ascended to God’s heavenly throne he did not allow his eyes to stray on anything but God”

Khaghani who has 16 odes praising the Holy Prophet or his holy shrine makes references to the
Holy Prophet’s outstanding, noble characteristics.

“In the world of miscreants he does not reveal vice and blemishes. He reveals and interprets
mystical secrets from the unseen world.”

“He was the cypress of the divine garden. His whole existence was a cypress on the road of all the
young and old people.”

Attar who swam in the mystical sea of faith and certainty has several mystical divans. He has
several excellent odes that praises the Holy Prophet.
“The sun of the religious law and the sea of certainty. The light that is a mercy upon all the creation.”

“The souls of those who are purified in soul are like dust before his soul. Even beyond souls the whole creation is like dust before him.”

And Rumi who captured the mystical poetry that had reached its peak with Attar and left an unconquerable peak called Masnavi. This huge couplet is in fact the fruit of all Rumi’s life.

“If it had not been as a result of the Holy Prophet endeavors, you would have worshiped idols like your fathers.”

“The moaning pillar whimpered in the pains of separation from the Holy Prophet like wise human being.”

Rumi was one of the most sincere devotees of the Holy Prophet. Without a doubt the Holy Prophet is his number one character. Rumi praises the Holy Prophet’s dignity in various spots of his extensive works.

A comparison between praise poetry of the seventh century with the fifth and sixth centuries

1. Manoochehri Damghani: was a talented and powerful fifth century poet. There are different themes in his divan including description of nature, wine, praise of kings, and other subjects. In the beginning of his divan he has not even followed his time’s tradition to praise God and the Holy Prophet. The reason may be that Islam had become weakened in those days.

In praise of Sultan Mahmood

“My heart, Oh friend desires you / my lips desire kissing your dust”

“As long as I am alive I dream of serving you / The one who dreams of you reaps precious fruits”

Describing the spring

“The Norooz (New Year in Iran) beging to blow in gardens / In its magic the eyes of every flower opens”

“If a flower wakes up at night, it will wither in the morning / this withered flower will open its eyes and bloom in the morning.”

2. Sana’i: “You have been chosen by the God of the universes / He greets you pure soul

The moon and the sun are you servants / for the same reason the whole heaven turns round the earth”

“Gabriel would not have been called the trusted one / if he had not mentioned your name before God almighty.”

“These are the characteristics of a man for whom the sun pours its light on earth”

Hakim Sana’i is a poet who was perfectly at the service of kings to his middle age years, indulging in orgy and the praise of kings. He changed the course of his life, turned to writing mystical poetry and continued his journey on this road to the point that he is known by some as the beginner of
mystical poetry in Persian. There are a lot of poems in his divan which are dedicated to the praise of
the Holy Prophet. He mostly describes the spiritual and mystical character of the prophet and
mentions the story of his ascent to heavens during his life time in a very beautiful way. Sana’i is
among the poets whose works represent both the sixth and the seventh centuries. As a result of his
deeper involvement in the mystical aspects of literature he is mostly known as a mystic.

3. Anvari:

Ohad Oddin Anvari is a sixth century poet with an ode about the Holy Prophet as follows:

“To be familiar with the dust on your door / is sweeter than a thousand kingdoms
My eyes see the secret of the brightness of moon in your face
From the point on your lips / Simorgh chose pious solitude
Where you bestow life from your lips / Jesus comes begging
Your love in the heart of a person like me / is like peacock in a simple farmer’s house”

According to his own words, Anvari spent thirty years of his life praising Sanjar and did not refrain
from anything for this purpose. He is among the poets who spent their whole lives praising others,
making a living in this way. All Anvari’s divan consists of praise for kings and he has only one ode
to praise the prophet. It is mostly a descriptive poet possibly written when he had lost his hope in
kings. Maybe he wrote this ode only to follow his time’s tradition.

4. Attar

The beginning of Mantiq ut Tayr

“Lord of the universe and the religion, the treasure of faith / the head and the full moon of both
worlds Mustafa.”

“The sun of religious law and the sea of certainty / The light of universe and mercy on all the beings.”

“The souls of those who have purified souls are like dust before his soul / Not just souls, but the
whole universe is like dust before him.”

“Oh messenger of God, I am helpless / There is nothing but wind in my hands and dust on my head
You are the helper of those with no help / I have no hope in either worlds”

“Do not turn my face black as a result of my sins / Value the name that I share with you
I am like a child on your road / Black water is circling around me”

Attar is a poet from the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh Lunar Hijri. He has not
written even a single praise poem for kings or emirs. His most important work in poetry is Mantiq
ut Tayr which he has brought in the beginning of his divan of poetry. By mentioning the sublime
characteristics of the prophet, he has introduced the Holy Prophet as the only person who can take
people’s hands to help. In this sense, we can say that his poetry is different from religious praise
poetry.
5. Khaghani

“You are only a child tied to the cradle of inexistence / you will grow only when you separate yourself from others.”

“The stamp of prophethood is on Mohammad’s shoulder / that is why one thousand dragons are drawn on the shoulders of a thousand horses.”

“He is the mercy of God in the God’s universe / From God’s mercy you will become dear with God.”

“Our existence is borrowed from your existence / Khaghani is worthy of praise as a result of your gifts and mercy.”

Khaghani is one of the famous ode writers of the sixth century who wrote many poems in praise of the contemporary kings of Shervan. Like many of the contemporary poets of his time, he praised kings in order to make a living, but for unknown reasons, the kings became angry with him and could not achieve his ultimate goals. This caused him to move to mysticism and Sufism. He has praised the essential principles of Sufism like asceticism and leaving the material world behind in his poetry.

He cannot be called a mystic because there is no reference to him as a mystic in any document. Only in a few biographies he is mentioned as a mystic or Sufi. The reason may be that there is a heavy use of mystical terms in his poems. Furthermore, the most important subject in his poems is the praise of the prophet and the Haj rituals. Such poems are extremely beautiful.

6. Nizami Ganjavi

Hakim Nizami Ganjavi is one of the poets of the sixth century and one of Iran’s greatest storytellers. His poetry is renowned for its richness in philosophy and wisdom. He has gifted many of his poems to the contemporary kings and emirs. This may have been for the financial support he needed from them. Maybe if it had not been so, his works would have been destroyed like many other works which were destroyed and forgotten. His poetry may be considered the beginning of great fresh and new imagery. Nizami is a masterful poet, his poems on the prophet’s ascent to heavens enjoys a very high position in Persian literature. In the beginning of his Khosro Shirin and Leili and Majnoon has praised the prophet to follow his time’s tradition.

The beginning of Khosro and Shirin:

“A thousand praise and greetings on Mohammad before whom the whole creation is like dust

He is the one who brightens the eyes of insightful people / The soul of the whole creation”

The beginning of Leili and Majnoon:

“Oh the ruler of the whole universe / You are the masterful sultan of wisdom

You are the ruler of the lands of excellence / commander of the lands of Fatwas.”

7. Rumi

Rumi is one of the poets of the seventh century Lunar Hijri. Like Ibn Arabi, he is one of the wisest, most passionate and rare people of all times and one of the rarest gifts of ages and one of the true
representatives and most renowned characters of the world’s culture and one of the wonders of human race.

“With Mohammad true and purified love is coupled

The moaning pillar whimpered in the pains of separation from the Holy Prophet like wise human being.”

“God has said that He would not have created heavens and earth if it had not been for his sake, but this requires sharp eyes to see.”

“If it had not been as a result of the Holy Prophet endeavors, you would have worshiped idols like your fathers.”

8. Araghi

Sheikh fakhr oddin Araghi is one of the greatest mystics of Iran in the seventh century. He began his education in childhood and joined ghalandars circles to enter India. In all phases of his life, he was a mystic and wrote many mystical, joyful, fine mystical sonnets. There is special ecstasy in his poetry. His poems are at the peak of mystical beauty. The prevalent content of his poems is the separation from the mystical world. Throughout his diwan, mystical atmosphere is perceived. He has many poems in admiration and praise of Mohammad who is considered at the highest level of mystical world.

“I am the kings falcon and it is not still my dignity / I may suddenly fly away from the life in this ephemeral world.”

“Now that I can receive my daily food from kings hand / why should I be sad in the sorrows of the times

Why don’t we step on all beings / Aren’t we the dust at the foot of the prophet?”

"When lovers begin to enter madness / they put the fire of this madness on their passionate heart

He is the king in whose shelter other prophets call him from heavens”

**Examination of different aspects in the praise poetry of two centuries**

By explaining the condition of praise poetry in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries and mentioning samples of these three centuries, it can be said that the culture and literature of a country are the first to change as a result of the change in the society and its atmosphere. As we mentioned, nothing special happened in the society to have any influence on people and their literature. If a poet left the mundane world of the courts and crept into his own solitude, he did so only because he was subject to the wrath of kings and was ignored due to jealousy and pessimism and the fact that he did not achieve his financial goals. It can be said that mystics and their interest in the Holy Prophet played a weaker role. Even the praises at the beginning of the diwans in this period is considered part of the tradition and it should not be generalized.

There are very few poets who praised the Holy Prophet out of their own love, away from the time’s tradition. Such poets are considered mystics and their works form the boundary between the mystical poetry of previous centuries and the more evolved form of this genre in the future. But in the seventh century, literature was heavily influenced by the conditions prevailing in the society and
praise poetry lost its value. The ruling kings were Mongols who unlike previous kings showed no interest in odes. This caused a gradual shift from odes with financial goals to more mystical poetry. Since one of the primary tools that mystics used was poetry, literature began to be filled with mystical terms. Of course, such concepts and terms had a practical background. Poets were mystics themselves who based their poems on their own teachings and mystical moods. Since they followed the prophet, his traits and characteristics had huge influence on them and their poetry.

Of course, it is necessary to mention that many mystics who were pious lived in all centuries. Also in all the previous centuries, praise of the Holy Prophet can be seen in all literary works both in prose and poetry. But according to what we said above and as a result of the dominant conditions in that period, there is a major difference between the prophet’s image in this period and the previous periods, in particular the two previous periods. The most important change is the mystical aspect which has a very high position at this time.

The conditions of this period made people believe that the Mongol invasion and the resulting murder and looting were the consequence of the distancing from the religion and God. They considered it a calamity from heavens. The same desperate helplessness that existed in them made them seek remedy for their pains and ways to free themselves from their wounds. As was previously mentioned, in this regard, Ibn Arabi’s mystical school was considered a relief. It helped the defeated people of Iran to spend their time in Ibn Arabi mystical circles and make themselves busy with praising God and recognizing the traits and characteristics of Mohammad as the best human being.

This period’s mysticism is at a much higher level than the previous centuries. This historical period can be considered the peak of the mystical evolution in Persian literature. This difference which is the result of the factors we mentioned above had an influence on literature and in particular poetry. Such an influence can be seen in this period’s mystical poets. Praise poetry and the image of the prophet in the works and in particular poetry of this period follows the current style of the period, but in this century, that is in the seventh century, there is a sparkle of change that results from the devastating Mongol invasion and also the crusades. These wars increased the turmoil. The resulting killing and looting caused fear and horror in people and brought helpless depression to them. This separated them from the mundane world and sent them in solitude. Mysticism gave people a better remedy.

**Conclusion**

Praise poetry and odes are the most frequent genre in Persian poetry, especially until the twelfth century. In the beginning of Persian poetry, poets followed Arab poets and mostly praised sultans, emirs, viziers and kings and important people. In some periods, it seemed as if poets had no job other than to praise THE kings and the nobility. There is another kind of praise poetry. Since it is particularly written to praise the Holy Prophet, it is specifically called “Manghabat” in Persian literature. This genre is very similar to the praise written for sultans, but in its content it carries a lot of differences with that kind of odes.

Persian poets in the Khorasani period, paid less attention to the praise of the prophet. Although even in this period, poets such as Kasa’i and Nasser Khsro can be found who for some reason paid attention to this category. What is certain is that praise poetry opens its place in Persian literature when mysticism and Sufism flourish. This period starts with Aboobakr Khatooni, Baba Taher and Abu Sa’id Abol Kheir and moves to perfection with Sana’i and reaches the peak of its perfection with Attar and Rumi. On the other hand, two factors, one from the eastern borders of the Islamic
countries and one from the western side caused the praise of the prophet to find a special place with the poets of the seventh century at a higher level than the fifth and the sixth centuries. The profound mystical school of Ibn Arabi and the prevalence of mystical terms such as Mohammadan truth, unity of beings and perfect human being are an outstanding sample of this difference.

Through close examination, it is revealed that the most important differences in Persian poetry in the seventh century are related to three factors: first, the Mongol invasion and the crusades, second, increasing attention of people to scholars, to religion and the founder of the religion, that is the prophet and finally, the emergence of new mystical schools and the picture that poets drew of a perfect human being and the Mohammadan truth in their poetry. None of these factors is obvious in the poetry of the fifth and sixth centuries.
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