

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF AUTOCRATIC REGIMES' SUPPORT OF POETRY, WITH A FOCUS ON QAŞĪDAH'S EVOLUTION TO GHAZAL, IN PERSIAN LITERATURE

Dr. Ahmad Khajehim

Ph.D. in Persian Language and Literature,
Assistant Professor at Hakim Sabzevari University,
Sabzevar, Iran

Ali Sadeghimanesh

Ph.D.Candidate in Persian Language and Literature,
Hakim Sabzevari University,
Sabzevar, Iran

Hamideh Qaderi Sohi

B.A. in Persian Language and Literature,
Hakim Sabzevari University,
Sabzevar, Iran

Mohammad Ali Kowsary

M.A. in Applied Linguistics
Hakim Sabzevari University,
Sabzevar, Iran

Abstract

The present study is about qaşĪdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature which reveals some positive and negative effects of autocratic regimes' support of poetry in the past. At first, authors of the article have tried to present some tangible examples of autocratic regime's support of poetry and the other arts, to find out the hidden purpose of these regimes. Secondly, they have explained about form, implications and purpose of qaşĪdah. At last, the consequence of decreasing the support of qaşĪdah's poets in Seljuqs era and the reasons of qaşĪdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature is presented. Finally, it can be find out from qaşĪdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature, autocratic regimes' support of poetry, has only one purpose, propaganda. So, as freedom is something essential for poetry; free poets, can express their genuine emotions, but limited ones, whom are supported by autocratic regimes, have to act as a medium for propaganda purposes.

Key words: QaşĪdah, ghazal, propagandapurposes.

Introduction

The present study on qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature reveals that autocratic regimes' support of poetry did not always have positive effects in past, although in contrast, many people think it did. For example, in Samanid and Ghaznawid era, the kings had used poets as a medium for propaganda purposes.

This study is done based on the following fundamental research questions:

1. What was the purpose of autocratic regimes in supporting of the poets?
2. Does qaṣīdah consider as a propaganda medium for maintaining the autocratic regimes?
3. What was the consequence of decrease in supporting the qaṣīdah's poets by autocratic regimes?

The following research hypotheses are proposed in order to answer the above-mentioned research questions with a focus on the study of Qaṣīdah's evolution in Samanid, Ghaznawid and Seljuqs era in Iran:

1. Autocratic regimes had used poets as a medium for propaganda purposes.
2. As this form of poetry was very useful and effective for praising the kings, qaṣīdah is considered as one of the ways for maintaining autocratic regimes.
3. The consequence of decrease support of qaṣīdah's poets by autocratic regimes was qaṣīdah's evolution to Ghazal, which was not effective and useful for praising the kings and was not considered as a propaganda medium for maintaining the autocratic regimes.

At first, authors of the article have tried to present some tangible examples of autocratic regime's support of poetry and the other arts, to find out the hidden purpose of these regimes. Secondly, they have explained about form, implications and purpose of qaṣīdah. At last, the consequence of decreasing the support of qaṣīdah's poets in Seljuqs era and the reasons of qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature is presented.

In summary, the authors have considered qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal during the history of Iran, Samanid and Ghaznawid, when the rulers were autocrat but affected by poets, and then they have compared this period to Seljuqs era, when the rulers were also autocrat but insensitive to literature, especially poets. Although, in Saljuqs era, gradually the rulers found that supporting the poets may be beneficial for their maintenance.

Research background

In this article, qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature and the effect of autocratic regimes' support of poetry and their purposes is presented. Moreover, the positive and negative effects of rulers' support are revealed. So, this article presents a new approach in the historical literature. Also, many articles are presented by many scholars but all of them have considered qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature, and none of them focused on the consequences. Some of the mentioned studies are listed in this part. *Saeed NiazKermani, A glance at the history of Ghazal; EsmaeelHakemiVala, A review of the history of ghazal in Muslim world; JaledinHomayi, Ghazal and its changes in name in new and old literature; BahmanNazhat, An overview in qaṣīdah's structure and KeivanLo'loei, An Introduction to ghazal's format in the seventh century AD.*

The purposes behind autocratic regime's support of poets

As a matter of fact, autocratic regimes need to maintain their legitimacy, because, legitimacy can convince people and obeying of regime seems reasonable for people (Khosravi, 2001). Art is one

of the most effective tools that help autocratic regimes, in this way. So, autocratic regimes, have used art, as a medium for propaganda. For instance, Roman emperors always ordered to build their sculptures, and then sent them to their territories, from the fourth century BC; also, Napoleon (1769-1821AD) ordered to paint his visage, for sending it to his territories too (Antoine-Andersen, 2008).

In fact, showing the verity, is not beneficial for maintaining autocratic regimes (Antoine-Andersen, 1387); so they use of artists, for showing a good visage of themselves. Iranian kings were not exception using poets as a medium for propaganda purposes and maintaining their legitimacy. According to many researches, qaṣīdah is the first type of poem in Farsi Dari which was used for above-mentioned purposes.

"O king! All of the world's kings, are your slaves, your labors and your lackeys!" (Shamisa, 2003: p.21)

A qaṣīdah that Ya'qub ibn al-Layth al-Saffar (840-879AD), one of the Iranian kings, ordered to Mohammad Ibn Vasif Sagzi for praising him (Shamisa, 2003) and Samanids dynasty (279-389 AH), is an evidence of this propaganda. Bahram Chobin, was one of Iranian kings before Islam who was interested in poetry (Eqba Ashtiani:2011); one of the reason for this claim was an Iranian belief that called Farr; according to the Avesta, Farr is a spiritual quality, that everyone has it and brings legitimacy for rulers (Yahaqqi, 1375); thus, Samanids' kings based on Bahram Chobin, and his Farr, had legitimacy for ruling; therefore they need to revival Iranian old belief; so they support of poets, especially patriotic poets. Hence in their dynasty, poets poetize about 57 nation epic poem (Shamisa, 2003); furthermore, these kings support of poets that praise them by qaṣīdah (Qolamrezayi, 2008).

Ghaznawids dynasty (351-582 AH), that their founder was Alp Tegin, did not have Farr, because, they were not from Iran originally; they were from Turkey (Azadmehr, 2003); so their rulers only support of panegyrist poets. Their support of panegyrist poets, in such a way that, some of Iranian poets after that period, regret to fall of their dynasty (Shamisa, 2003). Ghaznawid kings found out that, poetry is a powerful media, for maintaining their legitimacy.

To conclude, we can say that autocratic regimes' support of poetry, was for propaganda purposes and maintaining their legitimacy.

2. Form, implications and purpose of qaṣīdah

Qaṣīdah is one of the Persian literature's forms, in lyrical genre that has a regular form; respective sections include: 1. Taghazzol, Nasib or Tashbib; 2. Transition or Takhallos; 3. Praise; 4. Shariteh (Nozhat, 2005). Poets speak about love and lovers, youth and springtime, spring and the beauty of nature, in Taghazzol, Nasib or Tashbib section. The poet makes a connection between Taghazzol to the body of the poem, in transition or Takhallos, by his poetic art. Praise is the body of qaṣīdah that poet poetize, as. Finally poet makes the best wishes of the king and want immortality for him, by conditional sentences, in Shariteh (Daad, 2005).

The purpose of qaṣīdah is praising, in principle; hence this form of Persian poem, was the dominant form in Samanids and Ghaznawids periods (Shamisa, 2003). In summary, these regimes use this form, for maintaining their legitimacy; so we can say this form of poem is one of the best tools, for propaganda and maintaining autocratic regimes.

3. The consequence of decreasing the support of qaṣīdah's poets and qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal

Qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal, began, when Seljuqs conquered Iran (Shamisa, 2003). Seljuqs (429-590 AH) were from Turkey not from Iran originally (EqbalAshtiani, 2001); so they did not have enough knowledge about Iranian culture at first. They were unaware from the power of poets in maintaining the rulers' legitimacy. Hence, Seljuqs did not support of poets in this period. So, poets got away from saying poems when they did not make any profit from praising the kings. So, just Taghazzol was remained from qaṣīdah, and poets instead of takhallos, put their names at the end of their works and ghazal, as a specific form of poetry was founded (Shamisa, 2004).

Overall, Seljuqs dynasty at the end of the period, changed his attitude, and supported of poets and qaṣīdah's form, but, their approach in the early years made ghazal as a specific form in Persian poetry. This form of Persian poem evolved and was leading, when Mongol invasion, eliminated qaṣīdah's supporters quietly (Shamisa, 2004)

Ghazal, is one of poetry form, in lyrical genre that is not special for praise of rulers; so poets have more freedom in this form than qaṣīdah; poets can speak about their genuine emotions, such as love or wishes.

Conclusion

As it can be found out from qaṣīdah's evolution to ghazal in Persian literature, autocratic regimes' support of poetry, has only one purpose, propaganda. In fact, autocratic regimes want to use poetry as a medium for maintaining their position and legitimacy. This purpose makes a limitation for the freedom of poets and Art, so we can say, this supporting, has some negative impact on the nature of poetry.

In summary, ghazal, the consequence of decreasing the support of qaṣīdah's poets, is considered as an evidence of this negative impact. Freedom is something essential for poetry; so, free poets, can express their genuine emotions, but limited ones, whom are supported by autocratic regimes, have to act as a medium for propaganda purposes.

Bibliography

- Art a way of understanding the world, translated by Maryam Chehregan, Mahmoodreza Bahmanpour, First Edition, Tehran, Nazar Institute of Cultural Research and Publishing.
- Khosravi, Gholamreza. (2001), "political legitimacy", Baztabe Andisheh, Vol. 24, p. 48 - 50.
- Azadmehr, Shahbaz. (2003), "Iran's History, from the past to the present", First Edition, Tehran, Barbod Press.
- Shamisa, Siroos. (2003), "Methodologies of poetry", 9th Edition, Tehran, Ferdows Press.
- EghbalAshtiani, Abbas. (2011), "Complete history of Iran from the beginning of Islam to extinction of Qajar", 7th Edition, Tehran, Negah Press.
- Yahaghi, Mohammad Jafar, (1996), "Encyclopedia of myths and narrative symbols in Persian literature", 2nd Edition, Tehran, Soroosh Press.
- Gholamrezayi, Mohammad, (2008), "Style of Persian poetry, from Roodaki to Shamloo", 3rd Edition, Tehran, Jami Press.
- Shamisa, Siroos (2004), "Different types of Literature", 10th Edition, Tehran, Ferdow Press.
- NiazKermani, Saeed (1990), "A glance at the history of the Persian Ghazal", Journal of Literature and language, Vol. 1, page 58 – 68.

- HakemiVala, Esmaeel (1992), “An overview of the history of ghazal in the Muslim world”, Faculty of Literature and Humanities Journal, Vol. 2, Issue 4 and 5, page, 24 – 27.
- Homayi, Jalaledin (1960), “Ghazal and its changes in name, in old and modern literature, Yaghma Journal, Vol 142, page 77 – 83.
- Nazhat, Bahman (2005), “An overview of qaṣīdah’s structure”, Month of Literature and Philosophy, Vol. 91, page 76-79.
- Lo’loee, Keyvan (1998), “An Introduction to ghazal form the seventh century AD”, NameyeParsi, Year 3, Vol. 4, page 143 – 147.
- Dad, Sima (2006), “An Encyclopedia of Literary Expressions”, 3rd Edition, Tehran, Morvarid Press.