

Breaking the Taboos of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah in Sanai's Poetry

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important areas of concern in the literature of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah is the subject related to taboo breaking or rising against common taboos of this literature. In fact, Taboo refers to prohibition of talking and taking action against anything which is either too important or too sacred. There are obsolete terms and concepts that have been challenged via certain encyclopedia of Malamatiyya literature. The style of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah poetry is, indeed, a kind of poetry in which poet is trying to raise question about official, customary, religious, moral and sacred values of the society by the purpose of replacing them with other values.

This study strives to define the term "taboo" in line with "Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah poetry". Furthermore, this essay tends to explain the contributions of taboo and taboo-breaking in this supreme literature. The author tries somewhat to divulge the secret behind the formation of important words of Malamatiyya literature.

KEYWORDS: Malamatiyya, Qalandariyyah, Taboo, Taboo breaking, Sanai.

INTRODUCTION

The word taboo is used in all languages of today's world. Etymologically, the word has its root in Polynesian languages (one of the Southeast Asian languages). To begin with, taboo is prohibition of talk or practice about something because of sacredness, forbiddingness, illegality or filthiness. Anyone who exceeds this boundary should wait for an ominous fate... (Shafiee Kadkani, 2007).

Gradually, the concept of the word "taboo" spread out through the studies of anthropology and psychology of the twentieth century in such a way that it gained the power to identify different taboos for all nations and ethnic groups. Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah are considered as outstanding mystical sects that have been very successful in breaking the common taboos of the society. The leading factor that caused Malamatist and Qalandarist to trespass the social taboos and honor tradition of their time and not to respect them was deviation that was brought about by the taboos themselves. For instance, asceticism and freedom from worldly concerns is a value in a religious community but when ascetics fall into mummery, this act of charity has been infected with duplicity. Hence, it acts as a counter value. Open eyed poets scorned such ascetics to the extent that they believe a lush is better than them. He goes away from the mosque of Hypocrites to pubs to show that the former is no better than the latter; rather, it is even worse than that.

That is, in a religious community, sometimes socially accepted institutions are regarded as taboos. Although they have originally contained supreme and positive values, little by little they lose their content. At this point in time, Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah try to strikingly attack the quivering body of such taboos. By doing that, they vividly depict the way toward reaching real values of society.

Religion and religious expressions in the Islamic community has a special status. Largely they are locked up; i.e. you cannot change them easily as long as they have their own value. They become taboos, violation of which is considered as an attack to the dominant value system of the society. The best way to fight against this reverse value system was to implement the theory of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah- that made mock of social conventions- on language. Emergence of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah's lyric poetry was the result of such innovations which were unprecedented until the age of Sanai. After him, little by little, this style became a dominant stream of literature in Persian poetry. Its progress was to the extent that it became one of the main areas of concerns in writing poetry for an outstanding poet like Hafiz. The huge amount of these poems indicates that he has consciously chosen this style of poetry. He has also mentioned it in some of his poems:

تسبیح مُرائیان شنیدیم
در عالم عالمیان دویدیم
هم خرّقه صوفیان دریدیم
هم شربت طبلسان چشیدیم
رنگی به حقیقتی ندیدیم
با او به مراد آرمیدیم

ما فوطه و فوطه پوش دیدیم
بر مسند زاهدان گذشتیم
هم ساکن خانقاه بودیم
هم محنت قال و قیل بردیم
از این همه جز نشاط بازار
بگزیدیم یاری از خرابات

We have seen stole and cassock
 We have heard Moraeen's rosary
 We have been in seat of pious ones
 We have run through the Aalamiyan's world
 We have dwelt among (in) the abbeys
 We used out (tear out) the Sufi's clock
 We had tribulations for other's upheaval and sophistry
 We have also enjoyed Sufi's mantle
 From all these colors
 We did not recognize but a color over the truth
 We choose a lover from among pubs
 Repose with him as we wish

These taboos are challenged in Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah. With regard to Malamatiyya, any institution or affairs that are socially accepted such as asceticism, abbeys, schools and Sheikhs are rejected. On the other hand, while it accepts those terms that are socially rejected, such as Pubs and Rends, they criticize hypocritical asceticism and governing values of the society so as to replace them with transcendental values. What is clear, hypocrites earn their living through this pretentious Shriah compliance but they don't actually follow the religious laws of Islam; "When they are alone they commit those others". Since Malamatiyya became aware of misuse of religion in the hands of Pharisees, they started a negative campaign against hypocrites, broke the taboos- motivated with social criticism- and trespassed their boundaries.

It should be noted that the purpose of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah is not to fight against the religion itself, yet, as the society has suffered a reversal of values and there is no trace of holy words and expression in practice, nothing is left but the appearance of it, they tried to alert people through this challenge.

The poets of Malamatiyya took the way of non-violence against pharisees and tried to break religious taboos in literature, either directly or indirectly. In indirect way, they used words such as cup barer, tavern, pub, gambler, rend, limmer, pious, warden. They presented themselves with such names to criticize pious and wardens. While in direct way they used religious terms such as Zonar, idol, bead, rug to distort the surface meanings of these words with the aim of giving new meaning to them. They sharply criticized the religious and holy terms that have been commonly accepted as taboos (i.e. bead, turban, robe and mosque); instead, they tried to ascribe holiness to negative words (Zonar, idol, magus).

In Sharia codes of law, words such as bead and turban have positive connotation, sanctity and dignity. However most of the people, who brag about religion, try to show it off and claim it to have dignity, are in fact hypocrites. They have given up their faith in religion at the expense of worldly gains. Thus, Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah are criticizing such faith while they argue that Islam severely censure the faith of these people. A pious or an old invoker reproaches drunkard and lush while he drinks wine in solitude and hides his latent defects under a usual bright colored rope. Yet Malamatiyya that considers himself as a drunkard or limmer shows himself as he is, he neither claims to be innocent nor does he attempt to show off. He is the same person whether you look inside or outside. He is free from duplicity. All the things that he deals with are wine and bard. He commits sins openly, in front of the eyes of people, without any effort to conceal it. In fact, he is not looking for worldly matters, position and honor among people. Hence, the serenity that ascetics believe in may be found in these people. Whatever is denied by the pharisees, Malamatiyya carry through baldly and without any concealment.

Violation of taboos, namely "piety", "pious", "school", "mosque", "abbey", "sheikh" and other defendant factors, reaches to the peak when their opposed concepts, "wine", "rends", "pub", "tavern", "Qalandar", and "Zonar" begin to be praised. To stain the rug and robe with the wine is an example of aesthetic violations of taboos. Honoring Qalandar profligates that have outrageously trespassed all the values, practically violates the ruling taboos of the society; taboos of mosque, abbey, Sheikh, pious, ethics, goodliness (Shafiee Kadkani, 2007)

Malamatist broke the taboos and replace them with other symbols. Words such as wine, tavern, limmery are in the opposition with Sharia, however, they receive positive meanings in Malamatiyya-Qalandariyyah literature. Actually, they change to symbols that carry a burden of taboo breaking. Pub is in charge of fighting against negative taboos aroused from religious leaders in mosques and abbeys. Tavern is its positive counterpart in Malamatiyya and it is regarded as a symbol of heaven and earth. Malamatist breaks mosque's related taboos in order to change their place with more valuable signs. Instead, they denote positive meaning to a negative word tavern, and regard it as a place of Allah's Saints. Their fight against hypocritical asceticism of the society has more inner and personal aspects. In order to get rid of the affection of reputation, they give up praying, they persuade others to talk about them so as not to become proud. But, incorporating this in transcendental literature of outstanding figures, like Sanai

and Atar, changed the current state of individual and personal into social-critical movement. Sanai Qaznavi had a tremendous influence upon odes and lyrics of mystical poetry. He brought about many innovations in the tradition of Persian lyricism, including, adding a new dimension to the lyrical poetry which was obsessed with personal and earthy experiences, until that era. So he merged religious and mystical feeling into it and brought the concepts of Malamatiyya and Qalandariyyah into poetry. Sanai hit out at most of the wrong social, religious and moral traditions and beliefs, meanwhile, in his Qalandaric genre of poetry he fought against hypocrisy and folly of the society to express his objections of the norms of the day. His protest was an opposition within the ruling governments. Such an approach did not exist in Persian poetry till the age of Sanai.

Lyrics of Malamatiyya-Qalandariyyah were first appeared by Sanai. This kind of lyric "shakes the bases of values in society. In fact, poet, as a critic or reformer, attacks the value system since he regards it as a corruptive and deceptive system (Fotouhi and Mohammad Khani, 2006)

Through his poems, Sanai repeatedly has talked of prevalent hypocrisy and immorality at different levels of religious community and has persuaded people to re-gain their faith in Islam. Sometimes, he complains of those wearing short sleeves and also of the creeds of previous Shaikhs, those who shamelessly talk about Maruf Karkhi and Junayd of Baghdad and with a sinful heart wear the garments of believers. Those, who sale barely instead wheat, are dressed so adorned like Yazid, but their inside is as ugly and dirty as Bu Lahab. They use patchy apparel while prick thousands of hearts. They have chosen clean-limbedness instead of chastity (Yousef Pour, 2001)

Sanai, all the times, has complains of empty-hearted pretenders and tries to scandalize them. He calls on them as people who are trapped in their souls, adorned-appearance with dirty heart, zealous, fortunate and ambitious, infidel. He believes that they are cheater of the naive, haunter of ignorant, traders of religion, arrogant, sick hearted and cavalier.

Selection and use of anti-religious words such as wine, pub, tavern, monastery, Zonar, sinus ... in Qalandaric poetry is regarded as objection to Islamic civilization which is based on Sharia. These words in Sanai's work have been detached from their dictionary meanings and have found new identity that is very different from people's mentality. Little by little, they have become symbols in the minds of people. Words such as drunkard or limmer have no equivalent in actual world but Sanai was the first poet in Qalandariyyah who hits out at sanctities of ascetics while he puts rosary out of hand and Aba off shoulder:

به دست عشق رخت دل به میخانه فرستادم همه خیر و صلاح خود به باد عشق در دادم که از رندی قلا شئی سرشتستند بنیادم کجا سودم کند پندت بدین طالع که من دارم رسید ای ساقیان بکره ز جام فریادم که من تسبیح و سجاده ز دست و دوش بنهادم	دگر بار ای مسلمانان بولا شئی در افتادم جو در دست صلاح و خیر جز بادی نمی دیدم کجا اصلی بود کاری که من سازم بهقرانی مده پندم که در طالع مرا عشق است قلا شئی مرا یک جام به زهر چه اندر جهان تویه الا ای پیر زرتشتی به من بر بند زاری (360 ص دیوان)
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Once more, Oh Muslims, I have befallen in limmery
I have sent heart's garment by hands of love to tavern
Whereas I did not see in discretion and welfare but a whiff
I have given away all my discretion and welfare at once to love's lust
Is not genuine the dead I made even if read aloud the holly book
As for me my nature is made of limmery and roguery
Admonish me not since my unavoidable lot is love and limmery
There is no benefit in your advice for me as with such a lot
A cup of poison is better for me than penitence in the world
Hearken my groan oh thou cupbearers help me with a cup
Oh thou, Old Zoroastrian's (master) girdle me with a Zonar
I have put rosary out of my hand and Aba off my shoulder
(Divan-e Sanai, P:360)

His companionship with drunkard and Qalandarist was not ineffective in his inspiration by this kind of lyrics.

همی نالم چو موسی در مناجات گهی پیش مغنی در تحیات گهی گویم که ای مطرب غزل، هات	هر آن روزی که باشم در خرابات گهی اندر سجوم پیش ساقی گهی گویم که ای ساقی قدح گیر (73 ص دیوان)
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Whenever I dwell in tavern
Whine like the Moses in the prayer
Somewhen in prostration before cupbearer

Somewhen say prayer before love song singer
 Somewhen to cupbearer I address to fill the cup
 Somewhen to minstrel I say to sing love odes
 (Divan-e Sanai, P:73)

Prior to him, no poet had dared and had the boldness to get into the realm of sanctities and religious terms so as to mock them with the critical eye or replace them with the concepts that are opposed to rules of Sharia. Malmatiyya's way of thinking for him is a kind of objection to pharisees of his time. In order to stand against asceticism, he turns to love while honoring drunkard and limmers, he firmly criticizes ascetics. In all Qalandaric lyrics, he is talking about wine, immorality and disregarding appearance. Besides, instead of going to mosque and Ka'abe, he goes to churches or pubs.

تا کی از ناموس و زرق و زهد و تسبیح نماز
 بندۀ جام شراب و خادم خمار باش
 می پرستی پیشه گیر اندر خرابات و قمار
 کمزن قلا ش و مست و رند و دُردی خوار باش
 (311 ص دیوان،)

Till when you speak of honor, deceit, austerity, rosary and prayer
 Be servant to wine and wine-seller
 Take wind worshipping as a way of life in tavern and gambling-house
 Be gamester, rouge, drunken, tippler and bib the cups to the dregs
 (Divan-e Sanai, P:311)

Using words of negative connotation such as pub, gambler, gamester, wind worshiper and also sinus-like expressions demonstrate another dimension of his complaint to piety. The Qalandaric tone of his voice in the poems both denotes aesthetic feeling to his poems and moves a step forward against hypocrisy and duplicity.

Sanai Qaznavi has propagated a challenge against duplicity and ascetics' sense of leadership. After Sanai, Atar continued his way, then Hafez became the champion of this campaign. Hafez, better than anyone else, was aware of Sufi's hypocrisy. So, more eloquently, he was able to disclose their secret.

می صوفی افکن کجامی فروشند
 که در تابم از دست زهد ریایی
 (331 ص دیوان،)

Where they sell strong wine that overturns the Sufi
 Well I am in suffer from the hypocritical asceticism
 (Divan-e Sanai, P: 331)

Atar, after Sanai, was the second poet of Qalandariyyah who was able to bravely continue the way that he had initiated. One of the subjects that stirred up his interest was the very cash trade-off the insincere Sufis. Atar's poem of Qalandaric style was also based upon Qalandariyyah's school of thought in line with the way of non-violence against Pharisees. He has talked about inappropriate appearance, being infamous as well as acting according to unusual behaviors. He also preferred to be infamous rather than well-known.

دی در صف او باش زمانی بنشستم
 قلا ش و قلندر شدم و توبه شکستم
 جاروب خرابات شد این خرقة سالوس
 از دلق برون آمدم از زرق برستم
 چون صومعه و میکده اصل یکی بود
 تسبیح بیفکنم و زَنار ببستم
 (392 ص دیوان،)

On the day last past, I stayed for a while at the rank of ignoble people
 I became rogue and Dervish and forgot my penitence
 This hypocrite robe became broom for pot-house
 I came out of cassock and escaped out of hypocrisy
 As for the nature of monastery and tavern were as the same
 I dropped rosary and took the Zonar

Malmatiyya – Qalandariyyah poets, like Sanai and Atar, all of a sudden, put whole common religious rules and taboos aside in order to replace them with anti-religious and unusual norms and values. Atar, like Sanai, has discussed about an old man of Qalandariyyah who wickedly takes his garment to a tavern, burns his robe, takes Zonar, and tramples all his honor and reputation underfoot.

بار دگر پیر ما، رخت به خمار برد
 خرقة در آتش بسوخت، دست بزَنار برد
 دین به تزویر خویش، کرد سیه رو، چنانک
 بر سر میدان کفر، گوی ز کفار برد
 نعره رندان شنید، راه قلندر گرفت
 کیش مغان تازه کرد، قیمت ابرار برد
 (146 ص ، دیوان)

Once again our master (Pir), took his robe to tavern-keeper

Put his stole on fire, took the Zonar
By his own hypocrisy, made the religion ashamed,
In such a way that, in profanity's ground, passed all pagans
Heard the yells of rogues and took the way of Qalandar
Made anew the faith of Magicians and got in rank as pious ones
(Divan-e Sanai, P:146)

Conclusion

Sanai's poetry trespass on taboos of the society. In fact, he has promulgated the act of taboo breaking in Persian mystical poetry. Passing through the art of these poets, we will reach to Hafiz poetry that has arrived at the summit of taboo breaking in his sonnets.

Gradually, hearts and minds of Iranian people, particularly our greatest artists and poets, such as Sanai, Atar and Hafiz, have made a hero out of the figures who have tried to break dominant taboos of the society that is far from the actual social and historical realities of the time (Shafiee Kadkani, 2007).

A divine Qalandaric figure in poems of Sanai and Atar has nothing to do with the realities of historical and social position of Qalandariyyah on that time. Yet, our poets, in their Utopia have depicted "Qalandar" in a way that, day after day, it gains more honor and dignity.

Sanai and Atar brought the literature of Malamatiyya – Qalandariyyah into play so as to deny the significance of the ruling norms of the society. Their aim was to challenge the mind of the readers with the idea of true faith which has departed from the society. Meanwhile, they tried to inform the society of deviations that has leaked into believes and religion.

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