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A view of Mir Sobdar Khan Talpur's Mathnawi Judai Nama with a new dimension

Abstract

The civilization of the valley of Sindh which dates back from 3rd millennium to 1500 B.C had a glorious impact on the Indus valley and part of the sub-continent, and is known as the first and greatest civilization of the world.

This civilization was explored after 1922 when the exploration of Moenjo daro and Harrapa took place. Both these places were the main centres of the Indus valley civilization.

This civilization has produced several skillful artists, writers, scholars, poets and mystics in the society. Among them is Mir Sobdar Khan Talpur son of Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur-the conqueror of Sindh. He was born in 1217 Hijra/1802 AD an hour before his father's death and died at the age of 44 in 1262/1846 under very pitiable condition during his exilation in Calcutta. He has written several mathnawis following the style of Nizami the persian poet of the sixth century. Mathnawi Judai Nama was composed by him in 1260 Hijra. As known by its title it is a narration of his separation from his homeland. This mathnawi is written in the poetic meter of Bahre Mutaqarib (Faoolun-Faoolun-Faoolun Faal) which resembles the meter of Shahnname e Firdousi. The great epic poetry of Iran is also written in the same meter.

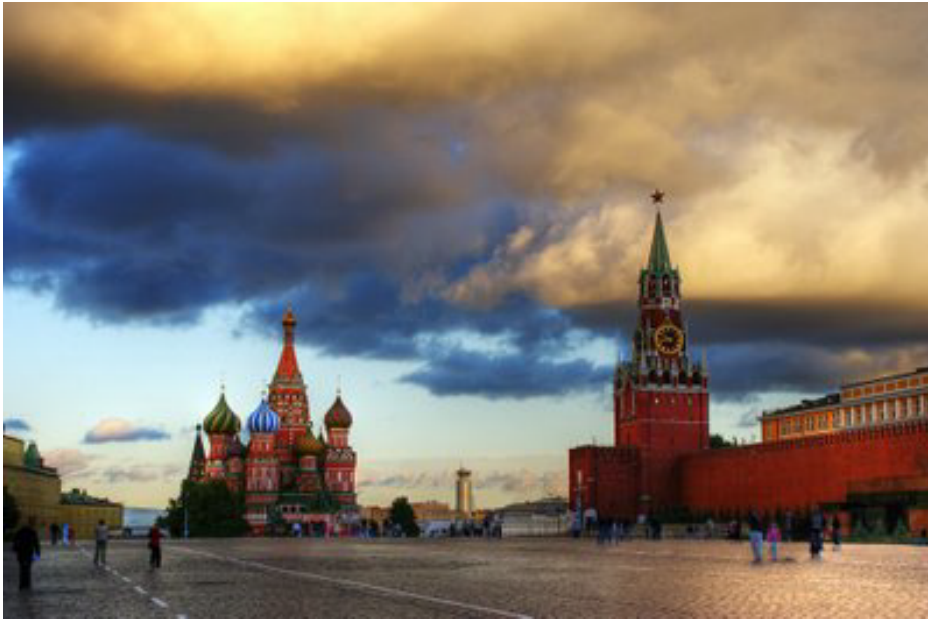
I name this Mathnawi of Mir Sobdar Khan as the "Epic of Sorrow" My article consists a critical appreciation of this mathnavi.

Key words: Sind, Mir Sobdar Khan, Judai Nama, Repetition, Separation.

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Introduction

The birth of Mir Sobdar Khan (1217-1262 AD) coincided with the death of Mir Fateh Ali Khan the founder of the Talpur kings. After his death his three brothers named Mir Ghulam Ali Khan (1227 AD) Mir Karam Ali Khan (1244 AD) and Mir Murad Ali Khan (1249 AD) respectively ruled over Sind. In the days of Mir Noor Mohammad Khan son of Mir Murad Ali Khan a part of the government of Hyderabad came under the rule of Mir Sobdar Khan who was given the title of "Sarkar Hashmat Madar". He unlike his family members was a Sunni by faith. Mir Sobdar Khan considered the rule of Sind as his personal estate therefore he was not at good terms with his uncles and cousins and when in 1259 AD the Britishers got hold of the entire Sind they cunningly promised the Mir to give him the reign of Sind and like this made the Mir accompany them. But immediately when they became the rulers of Sind, they prisoned and exiled him like the other Amirs of Hyderabad and send them through Bombay to Calcutta where he breathed his last in 1262 AD.



(The province of Sindh)

He is considered as a scholar and poet (Hassan Anushah, Danishnameye Adabe Farsi, Bakhshhe 3:2482) which is truly correct because he apart from

the Diwan and five famous Mathnawi's is a writer of a famous book named "Khulasat-ul-Tadawi" which is about Greek medicine, and another book which consists his letters written in verse which comprises of 1000 couplets. His Mathnawi's written under the influence of Khamsa-e-Nizami are as follows:

1- Fath Name written in 1244-45 comprises the history of the Kalhora and Talpur period. This Mathnawi is written in the poetic meter of Shahname Firdousi.

2- Saiful Maluk written in 1247 AD and consists 1250 couplets.

3- Khusro Shirin written in 1251 AD. which follows the style of Nizami Ganjvi.

4- Mah o Mushtari written in 1255 AD.

5- Last but not the least Judai Nama written in 1260 AD. in

Calcutta which describes the pangs of the poet's separation from and yearning for home. Also his separation from all worldly and spiritual attachments during exile.

This last Mathnawi is the longest Mathnawi by him consisting more than 8372 couplets describing the restlessness of the poet's soul. The poet names his prison in Calcutta as 'Sasur' and he expresses his sad stay and separation from homeland in the following manner:

دل خسته در حیدر آباد مست	تن اینجا به ساسور بر خاک پست
که ساسور ناسور باشد مرا	به دل داغ صد شور باشد مرا
زسوز دلم نیست آگه کسی	کشیدم به ساسور زحمت بسی
قیامت زجانم شده آشکار	درین بند ساسور بیرون یار
زغولان ساسور جان شد غمین	نمی بینم آن صورت بر گزین

(Judai Nama p. 1450)

Mathnawi Judai Nama the Epic of Sorrow

Mathnawi Judai Nama starts with the following couplets which is a secret talk between the poet and his God in which he requests God for freedom, he says:

خدایا شب هجر را ساز روز	زداغ جدایی دل من مسوز
زفضل خود الطاف شادی ببخش	بگوش ازو سالم منادی ببخش
سحر ساز از لطف شام سیاه	مکن روزگارم به هجران تباه
تبا هست پیراهن جان من	بپوشیده ام زنده برتن کفن

به خون نیست غلطنده کس همچو من	قبا چاک کردم کفن پیرهن
مکن کوه غم را به دل ریز ریز	شراب طهورا به جامم بریز
به لطف تو شادان و بی غم شوم	جهان را من کن که خرم شوم

(Judai Nama p. 1360)

Undoubtedly the short life span of Mir Talpur after exile is a witness to his sufferings and hardships from the time when the Britishers thronged around Hyderabad (1259) till the year of the poets death which is approximately a period of three years which shows that Mir Sobdar Khan died due to extreme grief, which on one hand is due to his grief of being an alien and on the other hand his separation from his homeland. He was also astonished by the deception of the British Commander Sir Charles Napier who did not fulfill his promise and with the rest of the Talpur rulers Mir Sobdar Khan was also taken as state prisoner and exiled from Sind. Mir Sobdar Khan after staying alone in exile for a few years suffering from grief at last died a disgraceful death. He in his poetry has grievance against this cruel firmament:

ز نـفتنه بر کین برانگیته است	فلک زهر در شیر من ریخته است
چو روغن به آب آورد رنگها	بود کار عالم به نیرنگ ها

(Judai Nama p, 1361)

Beautiful imaginary pictures are found in abundance in this Mathnawi, which shows the artistic talent of Mir Sobdar Khan as he says

برافروخت نمرود آتش بلند (P .۱۳۶۲)	خلیل دلم شد به مجمر سپند
شکار زبون یافت چون لقمه خورد (P .۱۳۷۸)	پلنگ غم آهوی دل صید کرد
سمندر به آتش بقا می کند (P .۱۳۸۲)	به دریای غم دل شنا می کند
جگر چاک چون گندم آمد مرا (P .۱۳۷۱)	چو آدم ز فردوس ماندم جدا

At times Mir Sobdar Khan's Mathnawi seems as if it is written by a person who utters unintelligible words in his delirium. His mind at times moves in a disorderly flow, which leads to prolixity and causes boredom for the readers. For example one fine day he thinks about his wife and then repeatedly asks himself what she would be doing? How she is? Does she also remember him so deeply? Is she also passing through the grievances

to the extent he is? Is she also impatient like him? does she cries for him? and several other questions such as :

چو خور بی نقاب است یا پرده پوش؟	به مردم به گفتن بود یا خموش؟
به خرم دلی یا غمین خاطرش؟	طرب باشدش یا حزین خاطرش؟
به غم هست یا مایل انبساط؟	دلش هست افسرده یا در نشاط
به سرمشک ریزنده یا عطر بیز؟	به خنده بود یا به چشم اشک ریز؟

(Judai Nama p. 1491-1492)

He is in the same state of mind, anxiety and emotional touch when suddenly he dreams his unconscious desire which is the reflection of his state now seen in his beloved.

که شب در نگاهم شد آن آفتاب	در بن شهر ساسور بودم به خواب
چو لعل بدخشان چو یاقوت کان	ستاره زمژگان چو گوهر چکان
برافزوده در دل هزاران الم	گریبان دریده چو دامن زغم
ز برق محبت دل و جان کباب	به حال پریشان به رنج و عذاب
کشان زلف در ماتم من به دوش	به ایران نشسته به یادم به جوش
زغم شورش بلبل انداخته	چو گل جامه بر تن قبا ساخته
چو بسمل که باشد به وقت هلاک	ز حسرت برافکنده بر فرق خاک

(Judai Nama p.1492)

What he has dreamt was almost written in 500 couplets in continuation of the above verses. He has expressed his emotions regarding his beloved in which due to prolixity has repeatedly brought the same meanings in several verses and sometimes same words are also repeated. Repetition has deprived the art of his composing poetry and repulsion to the reader.

After tiring, prolong explanation regarding the confused inner feelings of his beloved the poet tries to convince the readers that his beloved in spite of all the grievances is not hopeless, he prays God to bring an end to this situation his absence from his beloved should come to an end and everything should return to its normal situation. He also prays God to shower his bounties over him and may console all his ailments:

که گردد مگر شام هجرش سدید	فراوان زحق داشت در دل امید
که حق افکنند از دل او غمی	فراموش از حق نبودی دمی

طلب خواه بود از عنایات غیب براین درد می داشت یزدان طیب

(P, 1495)

But this episode does not ends here, reading the explanation about his beloved's good hopes and his prayers one thinks that his dream has come to an end, but he again starts narrating the distress of his beloved and another few pages are written describing his dream. This shows that the poet's grieves and sorrows are lightened due to the repetition of the same thoughts.

تلاطم زنان بود چشمش زخون چو موجی که آید زدريا برون
به صد حسرت دل مرا یاد داشت چو دهقان به جز تخم هجرم نکاشت
زمهرم غمین بود آن ماه من خبر داشت از آه جانکاه من

(P, 1497)

His dream continues to an extent that it becomes a reality for the poet and his mourns come to an end and the poet wakes up to see his beloved, but instead of looking around he could not find his beloved.

چو زین گونه خوابم درآمد به خواب به بیداریم سر برآمد شتاب
زیستر سر خود برافراختم مژه با زاز خوابگاه ساختم
نظر باز کردم به هر گوشه ای که برچینم از خرمش خوشه ای
کنم دوزخ جان خود را بهشت جو دهقان دهم آب راحت به کشت
تهی بزم دیدم زدلداری خویش ندیدم به دیده رخ یار خویش

(Judai Nama p.1503)

Separation from his homeland, banishment and grief had depressed the Mir to an extent that he soliloquized and like this expressed his hidden sorrows and for a very short span his deep wounds were healed. Although repetition in his poetry shows that his pains were not cured and this is true as it is obvious from his short span of life.

This epic of sorrow is full of repeated contents and words. Some words associate with other words and once these words are on the tip of his tongue he uses the same words in his couplets such as 'kilk'(pen), 'kaghaz'(paper), and 'qalam' (pen) (p.1536) 'bahar' (spring),

'khizan'(autumn) (p.1376), 'aahu(deer),(p.1377) jurm (crime) (p.1381) namak (salt) and husn (beauty)(p.1414) and several other repeated words.

These repeated words do not have a prominent influence in the couplets and have disorderly come in the beginning middle and at the end of the verses. At times there is repetition seen at the beginning of the verses apart from creating music also have a visual impact as the repeated words are arranged in one line one after the other such as repetition of 'Muhabbat' (p.1370), 'basi' wa 'khush'(p. 1724-1725), 'Ilahi'(p.1382), 'Judai'(p.1446), 'hanuzam'(p.1468-1469), do soo(p.1483), 'azin'(p.1482), 'dargah' and 'ajab'(p. 1448) etc. Such words have been repeated several times for example the word 'Judai' used at the beginning of both the hemistiches in about 30 verses.

جدایی بسوزد تن و جان خلق	جدایی کند دیده را رود خون
جدایی کند جسم عاشق زبون	جدایی به پشت افکند کوه غم
جدایی کند قامت راست خم	جدایی به پیری جوان را کشد
جدایی به زهر آب جان را کشد	جدایی خرابی فزاید به جان
جدایی بود محشر عاشقان	جدایی زند شیشه دل به سنگ
جدایی کند صید شیر و پلنگ	جدایی کند نخل جان بید خشک
جدایی به خاک آورد نرخ مشک	

(Judai Nama, p. 1446)

The whole Mathnawi comprises of trials and tribulations and the last couplets on page 1531 shows that the poet at the time of dawn has visited a wise man to know the interpretation of his dreams and inquires a few questions from him:

پرسیدم از مرد دانا جواب	به وقت سحر بهر تعبیر خواب
ز ترتیب خوابش نمودم خبر	حکایت بدو ساختم سر به سر

(Judai Nama, p.1531)

The wise man laughs on hearing the dream and he gives the poet good news regarding his delayed works:

جهان شد به کردار باغ بهشت	بهاران رسیده خزان برگذشت
بهشت برین شد گلستان تو	برون رفت رنج از دل و جان تو
ز فردوس در کف گل آید ترا	مراد جهان حاصل آید ترا

(Judai Nama, p.1532)

The poet feels happy hearing this interpretation regarding his dream and expressing his joy and happiness he quotes Saadi Shirazi saying.

که جان سخن زان رقم زنده کرد	درین باب سعدی رقم زد زمرد
نماند گرفتاری اندر وجود	اگر جرم بخشی به مقدار جود
به دوزخ فرست و ترازو مخواه	وگر خشم گیری به قدر گناه
بزن مهر بر لب زگفتن خموش	از این پیشتر میر ازغم مجوش
زبان بستن از گفتگوها خوش است	خموشی زتقریر بیجا خوش است
که گفتار بیجاست ناسود مند	لب خویش از یاوه گویی بند
چو دانش نباشد بود یک پیشیز	سخن های دانش بود پر تمینر
میفرود چون شمع از تاب دود	زتقریر غم چون ترا نیست سود
به دانش خموشی بود ارجمند	درین وقت باشد خموشی پسند

(Judai Nama, p. 1538)

After this the Mathnawi consists topics like silence, greatness of God, trust in God, hope in God, to entrust oneself to God, abstinence from disappointment with regard to Gods support and lastly with the following verses he brings an end to this Mathnawi which shows change in his mood when he says:

به گردش درافکن چو جام بهشت	بیاساقیا ساغر زر سرشت
زیباغ طرب گل به دستم کند	میئی کو زدیدار مستم کند
بیارای مجلس به بانگ سرود	بیامطربا با رخنه برزن به عود
شکرخا چو گفتار دلبر بود	سرودی که از زهره خوشتر بود

(Judai Nama, p.1543)

Conclusion

The Mathnawi Judai Namah as is obvious from its name is a narration of the poets failure and separation from his homeland. Its poetic meter is "Faoolun Faoolun Faoolun Faool or Faal" known as Bahre Mutaqarib. As it is full of sorrows and grievances it is an Epic poem and it seems to be the epic of inner fight and conflict with oneself. The poet in one of his verses remembers Sind and he says.

خلان است در پای من خار هند	جدا ماندم از خوبرویان سند
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(Judai Nama, p.1378)

The whole Mathnawi is about the separation of a woman. This can be a symbol of the poet's country, his homeland, his honor and pride, tranquility, prosperity, his wife and children and all the things desired by the poet.

The beginning and the end of this Mathnawi comprises of remembrance and seeking assistance. Although several verses consist the same topic of despair and complaint of bad luck and misfortune but at the end of this poetry he compels himself to remain quiet as he realizes that all his complains and moans are ineffective therefore he only trusts in God.

From the artistic point of view, the poet's artistic recognition beautiful and lively similes, prominent metaphors are not limited. Prolixity in the subject matter is due to his emotional status. The Mathnawi is full of repetition, which has a boring effect on the reader. The reason is that this Mathnawi, which is the outcome of the poet's inner feelings, was not actually composed for the readers but rather composed to satisfy the poet's inner feelings and his desire to soliloquize.

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