

Bidel Dehlavi and The Persian literary language

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Abstract

India, since a long time ago was the main shelter of Persian language and Iranian literary men who were running away from war and death. The India's role in protection of Persian language is so much that one of the main literary styles in the Persian poetry, called "Indian style" was created in this country, principally by the Iranian or Indian poets who lived in India in the 16th to 18th century.

Bidel Dehlavi is one of the most famous Indian poets who learned Persian language and composed many touching mystic poems in Persian. His poetry is one of the main examples of Indian style which shows its principal characteristics. So the study of Bidel's poems, apart from recognizing Bidel's individual style, could result in knowing more realities about this literary school.

Keywords: Persian language, poetry, Indian style, Persian grammar, Arabic language

1-Introduction

Persian language was introduced into India in the tenth century by Mahmud of Ghazna, who led many raids into the subcontinent and occupied Punjab. His descendants continued to rule in northwestern India until 1168. They were followed by other Muslim houses, mostly of

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Turkish or Afghan origin: the Ghorids, the sultans of Delhi, Kashmir, Gujarat, and Bengal; the Bahmanids of North Deccan, and others. They extended Muslim rule, and with it the Persian language and culture, to most parts of the subcontinent, as far east as Bengal and as far south as Hyderabad . (Safa, 1381:627)

Persian poetry had been cultivated in India since the 11th century. Amīr Khosrow Dehlavi is one of the first main Indian poets who composed several couplets² (Mathnavi) in Persian. In the 15th and, particularly, the 16th century, contemporary with Safavid period, many Persian poets were attracted to the court of the Mogul Emperors (1526-1858), whose reign constituted a golden age of Indo-Persian literature. Some of the emperors, like Homayun and Jahangir, as well as many Mogul princes and princesses, governors, nobles, and high officials, were not only enthusiastic sponsors and promoters of Persian letters but wrote Persian poetry themselves. The court of Akbar (1556-1605) was studded with a large number of poets who wrote in Persian. A large body of Persian poetry, historical works, mystical treatises, literary criticism, biographies of poets, works of theology and Qoranic literature, and numerous Persian grammars and lexicons were produced in India during this period.

Persian poetry in Iran and India during these centuries is usually mentioned in terms of very general categories so as *Indian*, *Safavī* or *Isfahānī* style, marked by innovative and complex metaphor as opposed to the simpler *Irāqī* or *Khurāsānī* style of the earliest Persian poetry; but numerous literary critics believe that this poetic style is

² - a kind of Persian poetry

not as highly equivalent as the two previous: *Irāqī* and *Khurāsānī*. Persian poetry, in the basis of their opinions, lost much of its freshness and vigor and became entangled in a web of farfetched ideas and images (Zarrinkub, 1383: 423).

Indian style, doubtlessly, because of the grand social, cultural and mental transformations, occurred at the interval of these two centuries, appeared different from the former Persian poetic styles in many respects. So it seems that for evaluating such long period and extensive area's poetry (en principe India and Iran) it must be analyzed separately, considering all conditions and circumstances, each of these covers.

Apart from all other characteristics, the utilization of language is the main considerable reality in the works of Indian poets. In fact, the continuation of Persian decadence process, started since some centuries ago and which appeared in the long usage of Arabic vocabulary and incorrectness of grammar's employment, attained this period's literary works.

Bidel Dehlavi, famous Indian poet, is one of the best examples for the examination of the position of Persian language in the literary language of Indian poems.

2- Bidel Dehlavi

Abdul Qader Bidel Dehlavi (1642- 1720) was a famous Persian poet and sufi, born in Azimabad. He spent much of his professional life in Mughal Delhi and died there in 1720 (Safa, 1381:1802). In his own lifetime he acquired great fame as a Persian writer and poet who laid the groundwork of the Indian school of writing in Persian. He mostly wrote Ghazal and Rubayee (quatrain) in Persian.

His books include *Telesm-e Hairat*, *Toor e Ma'refat*, *Chahār Unsur* and *Ruqa'āt*.

Although barely read or even known in India today, Bidel has had a long afterlife glory in the brilliance and complexity of phrase of Ghalib's Urdu and Persian poetry on which he exercised an influence. In Iran, Bidel's poetry commonly is criticized for its complex and implicit meanings.

Even though Bidel has used Persian language in the period's current manner, it seems that, for the reason of his evident individual style's signs, the examination of Persian usage by him is an undeniable necessity. So this research tries to analyze Bidel's literary language in four instances:

2-1- Long usage of Arabic vocabulary

Since the Arab conquest of Iran in the seventh century and the subsequent conversion of a majority of the population to Islam, Arabic, as the language of contact, of the Muslim scripture and liturgy, and of a large volume of wide-ranging scholarly literature for more than a thousand years thereafter, has exercised a profound influence on the Persian language. Apart from the writing system, this influence is evident chiefly in the large Arabic vocabulary that has been incorporated into the Persian lexicon. But by the Safavid time, after the grand immigration of religion jurists and scientists, the entrance procedure of Arabic vocabularies went into new ways. In Bidel's poetry, particularly, long usage of unusual Arabic infinitives is his main language speciality. Many of these words are not poetic and melodious. In fact, the frequency of some words in Bidel's poetry is so much that none of the other Indian style poets go ahead of him. In the following text, we propose a list of some

Arabic unusual vocabularies and their frequencies in Bidel`s ghazals.

- Taqāfol* = negligence (240)
olfat = friendship (240)
mahfel = assembly (240)
e`tebâr = importance, credit (238)
enfeāl = reaction (207)
tahayyor = amazement (205)
matlab = affaire, aim (161)
ezhâr = declaration, showing (141)
ehtiâj =necessity (108)
keifiyat = quality (105)
ezterâb = agitation (70)
esteqnâ = independence (65)

The following words are less repeated, less poetic and somehow unusual:

- rounat* = foolishness (34)
e`tebârâ t = importances (31)
taskin = pacification (23)
tanazzoh = purification (22)
enqelâb = revolution (21)
tajaddod = modernity (12)
masruf = spent (10)
tajrid = abstraction (10)
maqşuş = disorderly (4)

These vocabularies are among several examples of abundant Arabic infinitives in Bidel`s poems (ghazal) that show their occurrence in the literary language of Indian representatives (such as Iranians) of Indian style.

2-2-Grammatical errors

Persian language`s movement towards degeneration had its roots, in addition to the absorption of a great deal of

Arabic words, in the carelessness of many writers in the observation of grammar principles. There are many wrong grammatical sentences in the main literary works of great writers. Bidel, apart from his undeniable proficiency in Persian, is one of these poets who, like many of his contemporaries, has glaring errors in the structure of his sentences. His most important errors consist of:

- Wrong employing of verbs with single or plural subjects
- Usage of the forged infinitives, such as: *ijād kardan* (creation), *ya's sanjidan* (hopelessness), *alāj šodan* (to treat) ...
- Adjective setting instead of adverb, such as: *por* (full) replacement of *besyâr* (many, much)
- Usage of the infinitives and adverbs in the state of plural
- Omission or incorrectness usage of the prepositions

2-3-colloquial speech

Dignified literary Persian language tradition in *Khurāsānī* style, deeply rooted in the Persian panegyric poetry, although considerably different, was continued to great *Irāqī* works with the exception of some *sufi* poets such as *Moulavi* and *Bâbâ Tâher*. In Indian style expanded currency of colloquial speech in Persian poetry is expressed. The main reason of this phenomenon was the circulation of poetry between illiterate public, in to opposition the past periods, *Khurāsānī* and *Irāqī* when the poets were the most educated peoples.

Corresponding to current language tradition, Bidel used many colloquial words with growing frequency in his poetry. The following list shows examples of these words and their frequency:

abele = smallpox (240)

moft = gratuitous (162)

qolqol = a kind of sound(an onomatopie sound) (73)

kuče = alley (66)

bang = hashish (46)

baxye = stitch (30)

arre = a saw (11)

2-4- Coinage of words

The Persian language is very powerful in word building and versatile in ways a word can be built from combination of affixes, stems, nouns and adjectives. Persian language frequently uses derivational agglutination to form new words from nouns, adjectives and verb stems. New words are extensively formed by compounding two existing words combining into a new one. One of Bidel's admirable proficiencies is his capability in the creation of new combinative words, so much that his collection consists numerous new innovative vocabularies, some of which had no precedence in Persian poetry. Such as:

Adabgâh = (adab + gâh)

Parfešân = (par + fešân)

Namadpuš = (Namad + puš)

Jelvezâr = (Jelve + zâr)

Raqamsâz = (raqam + sâz)

Xiâlbâz = (Xiâl + bâz)

tavazo'xâne = (tavazo' + xâne)

xâbnâk = (xâb + nâk)

jonunzâr = (jonun + zâr)

tâqatgodâz = (tâqat + godâz)

âinedâr = (âine + dâr)

3- conclusion

Bidel Dehlavi, the famous poet of Persian Indian School wrote many effective poems known as the best Indian style examples. Bidel`s poetry has the characteristics common with the other Indian-born poets who learned Persian language and composed poems in Persian. It seems that the most important specialty of his poetry, as we mentioned, consists of:

- Long usage of unusual Arabic vocabulary
- Wrong grammatical usage of sentence structures
- Appearance of colloquial words with growing frequency
- Creation of new combinative words

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س س ک ا ل

بیدل دهلوی و ادبیات زبان فارسی

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هند از زمان‌های قدیم مأمن اصلی زبان فارسی و ادبیات ایرانی برای افرادی بود که از جنگ و کشتار گریزان بودند. نقش هند در محافظت از زبان فارسی آنقدر زیاد است که یکی از سبک‌های مهم در شعر فارسی سبک هندی نامیده شده است. نام‌گذاری توسط شاعران هندی و ایرانی قرون ۱۶ تا ۱۸ انجام شد که در هند ساکن بودند. بیدل دهلوی یکی از مشهورترین شاعران هندی است که زبان فارسی را فراگرفت و سبک‌های متنوعی در شعرهای تمثیلی فارسی آفرید. اشعار وی یکی از نمونه‌های بارز سبک هندی است که ویژگی‌های اصلی آن را نشان می‌دهد. از این رو شعرهای بیدل نه تنها موجب شناخت سبک شخصی وی می‌شود، بلکه واقعیت‌های بیشتری نیز در مورد این مکتب ادبی در اختیار ما قرار می‌دهد.

واژه‌های کلیدی: زبان فارسی، فن شعر، سبک هندی، دستور زبان فارسی، زبان عربی

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