

IMPACT OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CONDITIONS ON THE MASNAVI-E MANVI OF MAULANA JALALUDDIN RUMI

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Abstract

From 1219 A.D. till the death of Rumi (1207 A.D.- 1273A.D.) the entire period was full of battles, killings of innocent people, destruction and plundering of cities. The reason behind was battle of crusade and invasion of Mongols over the Islamic empire. These two battles had left tremendous effects on the social conditions of the Islamic empire. The battle of crusade had weakened the Islamic empire however, the continuous invasion of Mongols which, culminated in the sack of Baghdad and assassination of Caliph Al-Mustasim Billah had not only weakened the Islamic Empire but the Islamic empire came to an end with the sack of Baghdad in 1258 A.D. The fall of Baghdad had left tremendous effects on the social condition of the people. Because cities were burnt and plundered. A large number of people were killed and poverty had taken place which, ultimately gave rise to various social evils. As Maulana Rumi was witness of all destructions which, gave rise to various social evils therefore, impact of contemporary social conditions on the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi can be seen if studied minutely.

Keywords: Condition, Impact, Masnavi-e Manvi, Rumi and Social Condition.

Introduction: The topic impact of contemporary social conditions on the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi is quite important. If we have a glimpse of the history of Islamic empire we will find that the Islamic empire had already achieved its full political maturity within the first century of Islamic rule. Islam and Islamic empire which, were already threatened from within were confronted with two of the most dangerous enemies. The first being the crusaders from the west and the second was Mongols from the east, who were more formidable in the immediate effects of its destruction. In the autumn of 1219 A.D. Mongol

invasion commenced with the attack on Transoxiana by Changez Khan, and Otrar town being the first target fell after a siege of five or six months. After Otrar, Uzkand, Jand, Bukhara, Samarqand and on 13th February 1258 A.D. Halaku Khan captured Baghdad, massacred 800000 of its inhabitants, killed Al-Mustasim, the last Abbasid Caliph on 20th February in the village of Waqf, plundered the city and destroyed the literary and scientific monuments of the once glorious metropolis of Islam.

Social and moral forces which, degraded lower and middle strata of the society had also contributed to a larger extent to the degradation of ruling class and especially monarchs. The large haram had become common which, was maintained by countless number of eunuchs, slave system had given rise to the girl and boy slaves (Ghilman) which, contributed most to the degradation of women hood and men hood. The unlimited concubines and the numberless half-sisters in the imperial household and their unavoidable jealousies and intrigues weakened the empire and the luxurious living style of monarchs with the emphasis on wine and song, sapped the vitality of family life. The Muslim society which, in the beginning of thirteenth century represented, a decadent social order, growing under the weight of superstition, ignorance, intellectual debauchery and moral cowardice, incapable of dynamic growth, divested of a capacity for effective resistance was invaded by Changez Khan, a Mongol and more formidable enemy against whom people of Islamic empire could not raise to defend their country.

The Mongol conquest resulted in the fall of the population, mostly among the working class in town and country due to massacre. A Sizable number of remaining population was abducted into slavery and captivity and most of the remaining members of the society took flight to safer places deserting thickly populated areas which, resulted in deterioration of economic condition of the society. Thus, Islamic empire which, was already suffering from various social evils; during and after Mongol invasions came under severe new human problems like insecurity, poverty, and hunger which, further aggravated the social condition of Islamic empire in the given period. Maulana Rumi was also a witness to these grave human problems therefore, the impact of contemporary social conditions played a crucial role in shaping the mind and thoughts of Rumi and therefore, it is also reflected on the Masnavi-e Manvi.

Review of literature: The review of literature suggests that the impact of contemporary social conditions on the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi is a very important topic. However, no systematic research has been done on the topic. Therefore, the topic impact of contemporary social conditions on the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi has been selected for this research article.

Case Study

Impact of Social Conditions: Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi is regarded as a monumental work on mysticism. The Masnavi of Rumi is widely read only because it leads towards divinely abode. However, this is not known to the most of the readers that apart from mysticism this masnavi also points towards the impact of contemporary social conditions To find out impact of contemporary social conditions on the Masnavi-e Manavi few stories have been selected. However, this is to be clarified that Maulana has dealt with the topic in a symbolic way and not directly as the fear of life from Mongol was already there.

Social Impact: Study of the stories of the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi suggests that like every society the society of Islamic empire was also not free from the various social evils which, generally exist in any society. This was also one of the reasons of the decline of the Islamic empire which, was latter invaded by the Mongols and during invasion cities were destructed and plundered. Not only men who were fighting in the battlefield were killed but also civilians whether men, women, or children whosoever, opposed the invading army of the Mongol were killed. Thus, many people of the Islamic empire were killed during the Mongol invasion. Contemporary writers are generally silent on the barbarous acts committed by the Mongol army. This is obvious they were knowing about their lives. If they would have written their lives would not have been spared therefore, they remained silent on the destruction of the cities and killings of innocent civilians. It can be said that degrading social system was also one of the reasons of the cause of defeat of the Islamic empire. Degradation of the society somehow or other caused disintegration among the people and the ruling class who deviated themselves from their duties of taking care of the society and performing their duties of fulfilling social responsibilities for which, they were made the heads of the country.

There are various stories in the Masnavi-e Manvi which, through light on the social evils existed in the contemporary society in which, ruling class is also involved. If the head of the country is himself involved in spreading the social evils, then what can be expected from the common men of the society. There is one story in volume-I of the Masnavi-e Manvi of Rumi which, sheds much light on the conduct of a king. Though this story is not directly indicating that who was the king involved in this act however, it can be concluded that while Rumi was writing his masnavi he would have taken various stories which, existed in the current society in which, he lived. One such story is ‘Hekayate Badshah wa Ashiq Shudane au Ber Kanizak’(1)

A minute study of the above story of the Masnavi-e Manvi reveals the facts that a king had fallen in love with his maid slave. For a king this act is unethical but it happened. The interesting point of this story is that when the king goes to the maid slave for merry making and while he was in motion, suddenly the sound of a mouse came in to his ears and the king was afraid. After this incident due to fear he was not able to satisfy the maid slave. Maid slave takes it seriously and quotes one incident of a warrior with whom the maid servant had enjoyed earlier. She narrates that once, while the warrior was performing the act, one lion came in front of the warrior. However, the warrior did not express any kind of fear and continued performing the act of merry making with the maid servant.

The above story of Rumi does not only reveal the sexual weakness of the king who became disturbed from the sound of a mouse and stopped performing the sex with the maid slave and the superiority of warrior who even did not fear the lion and continued with the maid servant with the same enthusiasm and vigour but reveals the sex related problem which, was not limited to the king but this problem seems to have spread in the society.

A minute study of the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Rumi suggests that there are other stories which, shed light on the social impacts of the Islamic empire on the masnavi of Rumi. In this regard there is one story ‘Duzdidan-e Margir Marera az Margire Digar.’(2) This story of Maulana suggests that in the contemporary society in which, Maulana lived the social evil like theft also existed. The above story is the proof of the existence of this evil. The said story informs that one snake charmer steals the snake of another snake charmer.

Another story, ‘Andurz Kardane Sufi Khadim Ra Der Timar Dashte Bahima wa Lahaul Guftane Khadim.’(3) This story informs about the another social evil which, existed in the society. In fact, this is a kind of anarchy which, existed in the society because this story reveals that the servant does not follow the order of his master. Disobedience to the order of superior is nothing but a kind of anarchy which, prevailed in the contemporary society in which, Rumi lived. In fact, the story narrated by Rumi is that, the one saintly person had one servant. The duty of the servant is to follow the command of his master however, in this story the servant does not follow the command of his master. In fact, the saintly person has one animal which, is to be taken care of. He tells his servant to take care of the animal by providing food and shelter but the servant refuses to do so.

Another story ‘Tarsanidane Shakhse Zahidra ke Kam Geri ta Kur Nashavi’(4) is also included in the Masnavi of Maulana Rumi. In fact, the basic work of a saintly man is to spend his maximum time in prayer and perform the duty which, has been assigned by the God. In the day -to- day activities of a Sufi prayer and all the activities are included. In all the works which,

must be performed by a Saintly figure weeping has more important place and God likes this act of the saintly person. However, in the said story one person is seen frightening the saintly man by telling, that if you will weep you will become blind. Ignorance is also one of the major social evils and in this story, Maulana has tried to highlight the same aspects of the society. This story of Rumi also sheds light on the condition of education and illiteracy which, existed in the society in which, Rumi lived.

Another story 'Malamat Kardane Shakhse Mardumra ke Madarash Ra Kusht be Tuhmat'(5) is quite interesting and shed light on the another aspect of the social evil in the contemporary society in which Maulana lived. The present story throws light on the lawlessness in the contemporary society in which Maulana lived. Aman or a women might be of different natures and character. Aman or woman might commit some mistakes knowingly or unknowingly. If a man or woman is found committing mistakes, he or she must be handed over to the concerned department of the government but in this story the situation is totally different. In this story of Rumi Situation is completely different. Here in this story people are seen giving punishment to a woman by taking her life on some allegations only.

In the same volume of the mathnavi there is another story entitled 'Farmudane Waliaan Mardra ke in Khaarbun ra Kai Nashandai ber Sare Raah, Barkun.'(6) This story of Mathnavi-e Manvi sheds light on the another aspect of the social problem, which existed during the contemporary society of Rumi. This story highlights two aspects of the society: one being the illiteracy and second lawlessness. If this is not true how a person can put brambles on the road, which is used by the people for coming and going from one place to another.

Story 'Uzrgiraftane Dalqak ba Sayed ke Chera Fahesha ra Nekah Kard'(7) throws light on another social evil, which existed in the society. In modern time bringing a courtesan in marriage may not be a surprising act but during the time of Rumi it was supposed to be an act against the family as well as society and that too for a person who belonged to the Sayed family. It was therefore, that when a jester heard about the marriage he questioned from the Sayed. This story sheds light on the another aspect of the society and suggest existence of courtesans in the society of those days.

Khwandane Muhtasib, Maste Kharab Uftadehra ba Zindan, (8) Faut Shudane duzd be Awaz Dadane Aan Shakhse Sahabe Khana ra ke Nazdeek Amdahbud ke Duzd ra Daryabad, (9) Qasd Kardane Ghazanba Kushtane yak Marde, (10) Muttahim Kardane Aan Shaikh ra ba Duzdidan wa Buridane Dastash ra(11) Mashuq ra Zere Chadur Nehan Kardan(12) Hekayate Aan Zane Paleed Kaar(13) Dastane Aan Kanizak ke ba Khare Khatun Khud Shahvat Mirand(14) Qissae Zahid wa Zane Ghoyur wa Juft Shudane Zahid ba Kanizak(15) Rasidane

Zan be Khana wa Juda Shudane Zahid az Kanizak,(16) Hekayat der Bayane Taubae Nosuh ke Dallaki mikard,(17) Hekayate Mokhannas wa Luti,(18) Hekayate Duzd ke Ba Shahna Guft ke Anche Kardam Taqdeere Khuda Bood, (19) Hekayate Juj ke Chadardar Poshideh Dar waz Mayane Zanan Nashist,(20) Hekayate Aan Zan ke Guft.....(21) Wasiyate Pedar Dukhtar ra ke Khudra Nigah Darad(22) Aamdane Khalifa Nizde Aan Kubru(23) Faash Kardane Aan Kanizak Aan Raaz ba Khalifa(24)

The above stories of Masnavi-e Manvi are well known. These stories shed enough light on the contemporary social conditions which, existed during the time of Rumi.

Conclusion: To conclude it can be inferred that there are several stories in the Masnavi-e Manvi of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi which, shed enough light on the impact of political, social, and economic conditions of the Islamic empire on the Masnavi-e of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi. However, these stories do not shed any light directly on the impact of political, social, and economic conditions but symbolically and through animals.

Notes and References

- 1-Ibid. P. 265 The Matnavi of Jalaluddin Rumi. Vol-I. P.117
- 2-Ibid. P. 269
- 3-Ibid. P. 186
- 4-Ibid. P. 286
- 5-Ibid. Vol-I. P. 35
- 6-Ibid. Vol-II. P. 176
- 7-Ibid. P. 177
- 8-Ibid. P. 188
- 9-Ibid. P. 200
- 10-Ibid. P. 217
- 11-Ibid. P. 259
- 12-Ibid. P. 261
- 13-Ibid. P. 278
- 14-Ibid. P. 288
- 15-Ibid. Vol-III. P. 169
- 16-Ibid.
- 17-Ibid. Vol. IV. P.29
- 18-Ibid. Vol-V. P. 141
- 19-Ibid. P. 221

20-Ibid. P. 224

21-Ibid. P. 227

22-Ibid. P. 254

23-Ibid.

24-Ibid. P.334

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