

Poverty from the Perspective of Molana

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Abstract: This article aims to study the viewpoints of Molavi on poverty and its different aspects referring to economic exemplum. This article has been written based on the poems of Molana. Since any poem depicts ideas and thought of the poet. Hence the main resource for research on Molana opinion about poverty is his poems. This article tries to uncover Molana attitude towards poverty and its aspects.

Key words: Molavi, Masnavi Manavi, Exemplum, Poverty, Economic.

Introduction

One of the meanings of economic is moderation and avoiding going extremis in any affair and Quran refers to this concept: And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass (Quran, 2014).

Since temperance in life is one of the manifestations of temperance and the word of economic has been used frequently so that usage of this word denotes temperance (Principle of Islamic economic, 1992).

In terminology, economic is meant employment of the methods and devices with less cost and high output in production, distribution and consumption. Hence, in ancient Greece, economic was meant application of the household principles and planning the costs and incomes" (Karami, 2007).

According to the mentioned definitions it can be said that economic exemplum and proverbs are short sentences that have been affected by expenditures and financial relations of the individuals and by passing of time have influenced those affairs and this influence has led the proverbs and exemplum to gain outstanding place in the Persian literary works particularly in the works of the famous poets including Molavi (PartoeiAmoli, 1986).

Regarding to multiplicity of the poems, Molana is similar to Sanaei and Attar among former mystics and he has paid attention to the mystical issues as these poets. He wrote MasnaviManavi in six books containing 2600 couplets. In this longest verse, he has discussed on the important mystical, religious and moral issues and referred to Quran verses and Imams narratives and proverbs.

This great work discusses on principles of mysticism from quest to love and perfection according to teachings of Quran, narratives and tradition and also opinions of the mystics and allegories and tales have been mentioned besides reference to social and moral teachings where it was necessary. For this reason, this great work contains specific didactic aspects for mystics and since it is one of the masterpieces of Persian literature naturally, it has been investigated by the scholars and researchers during seven centuries (Safa, 1993).

In this article, the poems and tales of Masnavi containing economic concepts of poverty and related proverbs of poverty have been studied.

Poverty from the perspective of mystics and Molana

In Molana opinion, poverty is a difficult way to reach perfection. Everybody complained about poverty and the dervish tried to arrive at destination and he calmed down (Molavi, 2009).

In the story of advice of man to his wife who considered the poor inferior the man said: o, my wife why you are annoying

Poverty is my proud do not blame me (Molavi, 1992).

The second hemstitch refers to the prophet speech that said: I am proud of poverty

This poverty that the prophet is proud of it is mystical poverty or faqr. This narrative is famous for mystical and economic proverbs and Dehkhoda has referred to it:

Everybody who is proud of poverty

Does not pay attention to the throne and crown (Dehkhoda, 2012).

In this regard, Molavi introduces Masnavi as the shop of poverty and writes that what it offers is indeed the product of poverty and immortality.

Any shop has own business

O my son, Masnavi is shop of poverty (Molavi, 1992)

The first hemstitch denotes the proverb of “any shop has own business (Dehkhoda, 2012).

It depicts that any shop has own transaction and everybody does his own work.

Material poverty

Molavi points out to the prophet narratives in his poem and then he writes about the rich:

O, the rich, you are wealthy so never laugh

On the misery of the poor (Dehkhoda, 2012).

Molana refers to the root of many of the economic and social deflections and abnormalities and believes that most of the guilty commit crimes due to poverty, otherwise the man likes to live with prestige.

The prophet said the truth

That poverty causes to blasphemy

The second hemstitch of this couplet refers to the prophet narratives.

The pain of son, life and garment and bread

Prevent the man from ascending in the heaven (Dehkhoda, 2012).

Molavi points out to the material poverty:

His poverty and misery have been proven for me

He has no good and food

He is poor and has nothing

Nobody gives him even one coin (Molavi, 1992)

He has not penny to bless himself with (Dehkhoda, 2012).

Pervasive poverty

Pervasive poverty is a kind of poverty that most people in the society are suffered from it and when material and immaterial pain become pervasive it can be tolerated easily.

Envious causes that some poor wish others suffer from poverty and economic problems. There are many proverbs in Persian language that express this content:

Misery loves company (Dehkhoda, 2012)

The loser does not want

To light up others candle (Molavi, 1992)

In economic in cash transaction is more valuable than by credit. Molana refers to this subject by narrating a tale:

“A generous rich man said to one of the Sufis: o my sultan, do you want to give you a coin or give nothing now and give you three coins tomorrow. The Sufi who did not lose cash said: I am content that yesterday I had half penny and today I have one penny and tomorrow I will have hundred pennies”(Zamani, 2012)

The last two couplets depict the value of in cash transaction and it can be referred to economic proverbs mentioned in Dehkhoda proverbs:

A bird in hand is worth than two in the bush

Never leave certainty for hope (Dehkhoda, 2012)

There are proverbs in the Persian language with the same application.

The dreams of the poor

Most people imagine what they lack and dream about their wishes. Molavi refers to this subject:

Said: Mosses came on the way

The cat dreams on fat (Molavi, 1992)

The second couplet is used as economic proverb and it is usually used when the person is overwhelmed in his wishes and desires.

The following proverbs denote the same meaning:

The cat dreams mice

Lover dreams of his mistress

The thirsty dreams water (Dehkhoda, 2012)

Necessity from poverty

He has forbidden you only the *Maytatah* (dead animals), and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah (or has been slaughtered for idols, etc., on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering). But if one is forced by necessity without willful disobedience or transgressing due limits, then there is no sin on him. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Accordingly to this verse if a person dies due to hunger he can eat the dead animal as it is permitted and in this case, necessity and requirement causes to legality of illegal affair.

Molana has reflected this content in this couplet:

If it is required the dead body becomes legal (Molavi, 1992)

Poverty and beggary

In the tale of Daquqi and his generosity in the book 3, Molana suggests ignorance as the reasons for beggary and believes that if a beggar takes refuge to the people and begins to beggary is not due to poverty or having defect in his body but it is due to ignorance that instead of God he takes refuge to the people:

I prayed blindly for everybody except God

Consider me as one of those blinds

He never saw my need and sincerity (Molavi, 1992)

The trap of the blinds is prayer

He only opens his mouth for demanding (Dehkhoda, 2012)

Molanahas only one negative viewpoint towards hunger. In the story of the prisoner that the officers walked him around the city, where they take out the prisoner from jail and he resists since he eats and sleeps there and he does not want freedom and says:

Said: our home is your beneficence

As a pagan my heaven is your prisoner

If you throw away me from the jail

I never leave there and it is my fault (Molavi, 1992)

In this story poverty and hunger cause the prisoner to prefer hardship and inferiority of prison.

“Bread is here, water is here where I go better than here (Dehkhoda, 2012)

The consequences of hunger

Hunger is result of poverty and usually it has negative effects on body and life of humans. But Molana considers positive from either material or spiritual perspectives.

Hunger causes that the person to eat eagerly and Molana believes that hunger of the king Curesh is pains and causes him to live healthy.

The hunger of sultan is cure

Hunger offers him health

Hunger cures illnesses

He offers other example:

One man ate bread and said: that causes illness

Said: by patient the bread is sweet for me (Molavi, 1992)

Enjoying eating simple food at the time of hunger has been referred in Dehkhoda proverbs:

Hunger is the best sauce

Hunger makes hard beans sweet (Dehkhoda, 2012)

In mystic's opinion, hunger is one of the rituals of quest and it is said that hunger is food of the mystics Molana believes that hunger is blessing for the friends of God that converts them to a fierce lion (Sajjadi, 2002).

In Persian proverbs hunger is more valuable than eating more.

Hunger empowers the body and being full empowers inner of the man

Do not fatten your stomach

That the stomach of the enemy is thin (Dehkhoda, 2012)

Conclusion

According to limited number of couplets on the poverty in the MasnaviManaviit cannot be introduced Molavi as economist poet. He has described poverty difficulty and he has also referred to material poverty, pervasive poverty, dreams of the poor, needs resulted from poverty, beggary and consequences of hunger and lying in his poems. Also, these poems contain allegories, simile and proverbs common in Persian language so that he has employed the proverbs in his poems proportionately and he has securitized poverty in his poems.

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