



Death escaping or accepting the death (A study in the death in Khayyam's poems)

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ABSTRACT

Death is a phenomenon whose mysterious shadow is widespread throughout human culture. Its nature and vague structure has been a permanent concern and basic question for human beings and there have been different theoretical and religious schools from the beginning till now. It has also attracted the many poets' views. Along with ancient literature of Iran and the first myths and epics of that era, in the post-Islamic Persian literary prose and verse, whose first works remain from the mid-third century, we have seen these historical concerns. With few exceptions, in this paper we can study the attempts of after Islam poets in Iran to overcome the death or reduce its concerns.

Keywords: death, death escaping, Khayyam

INTRODUCTION

Thought, feeling and action have been and will be the dual nature of the human being. Intellectual and literature history is nothing but history of human thought and behavior in the passage of time. It roots in curiosity and creativity of man and impacts it. This thinking includes a very wide scope of subjects, but the fundamental question, however, relates to man and his destiny. Since a man identified himself and felt himself free from the constant worry of trying to survive, he started looking at himself and his environment and considered the death as the world's largest change. During this, he began to find solutions for his immortality; concepts such as the elixir of life or fountain of living water or spring of animals which imply the invulnerability and immortality of man, it reminds us the unforgettable attachment of human being. However, the man soon found that death, at least in physical sense, is his twin and there is no way to escape. Death is undoubtedly the most important event in anyone's life. Like an intricate puzzle that always aroused human curiosity and has engaged man during the time. It is not nonsense to say that after Adam's fall to the ground, the main concern of his mind which transmitted to their offspring from generation to generation is death. It is so important that it engages the person at all moments of pain and pleasure that is ingrained in the thoughts, as far as looking for a way to escape from the death or overcome it. Through reducing the terror and fright of the death, he can show the consequence of the works in the end of the world. The earliest historical myths and epics remained from the ancient past, are based on overcoming the death and fear from that can be studied [2]. Gilgamesh, the most ancient myth of the world and with more than five thousand years of historical background, is the epics of life and death. He is hero of exploring and searching ways to overcome the death or explore the mystery of death. It is an outcome that leads to failure (in the epic of Gilgamesh, there has been shown the earliest philosophical thoughts about the secret of death and life) [9]. Being invulnerable that can be seen in the world's famous epics and myths, such as Iran, Greece, India, Germany, Scandinavia and even among tribes of primitive Indians in America and Africa, represents the aspirations of people around the world to overcome the death and destruction. Common themes such as water of life, invulnerability and making some holy man as eternal one, Elias water, water, animal's water, and Einol Hayat etc. have been formed in explaining the mystery of life and causes of death, and perhaps fighting with it. In different societies, ways of creating these myths and mythical symbolic responses to different philosophies of life and death have been different from each other, but the nature of all roots in human fear of death and disability from taking recourse in dealing with it [8]. Death is a necessity and reality of human life which is influenced by various

factors such as cultures of societies, beliefs, social and political evidence governing communities. As renowned sociologist of construction school, Emile Durkheim argues the main role of death in social and cultural development of societies and he says that society consists of the dead and the living because the vast majority of today's civilization is the product of the Dead people.

Research goals

Analyzing the themes and images of death in the poems of two ancient poets and comparing them with other themes are the goals of this research. Through it, we can recognize the transcendent poetic thoughts and aspirations of atheist mystic and also lack of human being in comparison with the source of truth and mental oriented one. Therefore, through new critical methods, one of the most important topics can be offered to a society based on testimony culture.

With this goal in mind, this question comes to mind that how is the attitude of these poets towards death? What is the cause of this different attitude? What is the place of death in the thoughts and mind of these poets?

Definition of death

Geologists define death (*mar* root in *mar*) [9] as revocation of instinctive power of animal, destruction of life, death and leaving the world. There have been different synonyms such as death, intelligence, Kaam, Ajal, and Ommol Aldahym and Rooze Yaghiin. Also, Quran applied a particular interpretation about the nature of death and calls death as "Tavaffa". According to the narrations, death is not destruction but starting a new life which is different from past lives.

Death Background in Ancient Literature

Immortality has a long history in human mind. With reference to the primitives of every nation, we can find traces of belief to immortality. For example, in studying the ways of burial forms and its rituals, we come to these conclusions: three aspects of prehistoric burials show the religious beliefs about the death. Firstly, it is discovered that in Europe, China, Africa, Australia and America cemeteries, the red soil is being used for body painting. Probably the red colour is a symbol of blood and life. Secondly, putting tools, food and other supplies in the grave was a common custom and perhaps indicates belief to after - death life. Finally, actions that have been performed during burial essentially have religious quality and represent a concern and anxiety about the dead people. In many Hjr Age burials, the bodies were placed towards the East. This may probably indicate that they expected the dead to have a rebirth with the sunrise [3].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Since that this is a qualitative study, the process of study is based on Content Analysis Method: methodologically, Content Analysis Method starts from theoretical level but in empirical level, instead of questioning the person, it asks questions from the text. Here, the observation unit is text.

Death escaping procedure

In Persian literature, along with Roodaki, Persian Literature Father, whose poems have faint traces of these ideas, in 5th century; Manoocheher Damghani indirectly argued this procedure in his poems [2].

But the full representation of this belief, in Persian poetry among Iran's intellectuals, is deliberately Khayam. Ghiyathoddin Abolfath Hakim Omar Khayam (527-439 AH), in the Seljuk era as one of the most brilliant period in the history of science and intellectual geniuses and giants, emerged and lived [2].

Omar Khayyam is the best known and most popular Persian poet in the world. Though his poetic statues is much inferior than his scientific one, high concepts and meanings that remained in the form of a limited few quatrains, they made him unclaimed and his scientific authority undermined by his poetic statues.

Khayyam is the main representative of pessimism towards the death and resurrection in another world. He thought, however, is greatly influenced by the social and political situation of his era. An era in which from one hand, the Seljuk kings, in alignment with the Arab Abbasi Caliphs, with the force of spears, they could promote the religion of Hanafi and Shafi'i Jurisprudence and Ashari theology. From the other hand, the Ishmaelis, who once were representative of enlightenment and intellectual thoughts, were caught in a sinkhole of dogmatism and determinism. However, they had the claim of rationalism and wisdom. To attack these two communities caught into recession and dogmatism, Khayyam attacked their beliefs and states that the basis of their beliefs is false. What became more enthusiastic tone, but in ambiguous and vague form, in Hafez poems [6].

Nishapur, the birthplace of Khayyam, experienced the high level of prejudice and strict adherents to mysticism and philosophy in this period and looked at followers of the philosophy and mysticism as disbelievers. Khayyam who has philosophical view, he looked at the life and universe with doubt in this situation. Sadness of death roots in his philosophical pessimism. Pessimist Philosophers calls life without any goal and free from any wisdom. They think that if we had to go, it was not necessary to come. Now we have come to this world without any authority, we must not let the life continue with absurdity [8]. Some scholars have found the origins of Khayyam thoughts in Abol Malali Moarri believes [8].

But Abol Alla and others have their own theme and borrowed the intellectual thoughts from Epicurus and other philosophers of Greece. This group of Greek philosophers believed that human suffering is as long as he has the sense and intelligence. But when the intelligence and senses leave the body and it becomes a lifeless body, it cannot find the other thing is: it does not feel the death and do not suffer. This known sentence of as Epicurus says: "Death is the butt of all ugliness and evil, but does not rule over us because when we live, there is no death and when there is the death, we are not there." [4].

Central questions of Khayyam are based on two main turns of life and death. A question which cannot find any rational and appropriate answer to each of them. Khayyam calls death as virtual one and thought that hell is flare of the human pity and suffering. He calls the heaven is the time of human comfort and free from any sorrow and distress in this world.

Hell is cinders from our futile suffering paradise is a time of our comfort

From Khayyam view, death is gradual changes and evolution of the forms and material reincarnation. Its philosophical bases were shown in symbols such as pottery and vegetable blown from the soil and manage the endless flow of particles from death to life and from life to death with poetic alas [3].

Khayyam's thoughts of creation have a great similarity to the religious beliefs of the Ebrahm religions about the birth of human being. As God, based on the Holy Quran verses, makes a man from potters' clay, and then he breathes his spirit in him. God of Khayyam is a potter who makes his new potteries from the last broken potteries and his heaven breath is tasty wine poured in them to be free from the heavy thoughts of death [10].

***I bought a pottery from the pot
That pottery talk about every mysteries
once I was a the King's Golden Cup
Now I have become the pottery of each drunk***

Since that there has not been any news from the next world, Khayyam recommends that we would be happy in this world and welcome the opportunity and seize the day. Hakim Omar Khayyam says that eternal and inevitable result of the world is in drinking and being happy and says that Houris and Paradise are credits which should not put the cash aside for them.

***Oh Idol! Get up and come to our heart
Solve our problems with your beauty
to drink a cup of wine with each other
Before making the potters from our soils
Wow this life caravan passes fast
Seize the happy moment
butler! Why are you worried about the next days of the rivals?
Bring the cup closer since the night is passing***

Among the prominent and main characteristics of Khayyam Thoughts, we can mention the following ones:

1. Khayyam's fundamental questions linked with the world, especially ambiguity in the beginning and performance of it.
2. General and controversial doubts about public perceptions from the religion and invalidity of uncertainty thoughts.
3. bitter, humiliating and absurd looks to the world
4. Gradual and non stop orders to seize the opportunities and being happy in this fleeting time.

Nature of Khayyam Quatrains

1. Descriptive
2. Questioning
3. Causal explanation

Descriptive Nature

1. Descriptive nature:

Some quatrains of Khayyam have descriptive nature: describing death, life, time, and time performance. In these quatrains, circuit of performance is time. That is, in these quatrains, governance is by time. A kind of governance in which the algebra has a major role and in determining the destiny of man, the governor is not bound to anything except the death [6].

Projection of actions to the time has a long history. In all ages in which the earth is considered static and the sky as moving one, it is believed that one of the aspects of the stars is determining the human destiny. For example Saturn star is a symbol of misery and Jupiter star is a symbol of happiness.

In this interpretation of the universe, celestial elements have been considered as the wise instruments. According to this assumption, the respondent is admittedly asked not interpret the objects deeply because not only the ordinary people but also leaders and the wise men lost in this round and cannot find any solution. In description of inexistence, he resembles the sea and human being to a drop and in another resemblance; he found similarities between man, death and particle. in describing the world, inexistence and its effects, along with certainty of the secrets of the universe, he states that the secrets are hidden [3].

2. Questioning

The other part of the Khayyam quatrains has inquisitive spirit: the questions about life and death, questioning some of the unanswered question and if the legendary writers have prepared an answer for it, it is also a kind of "answer to non questions". Such as Coming to life does not benefit the life, our death will not harm it, so when life and death does not benefit or harm the life, our existence or nonexistence are the same. Therefore, why do we come or go? What is philosophy? [7].

This question for Omar Khayyam is expecting complex response, no one answered convincingly to Khayyam, if they answered, their answers were without questions whose taste was bitter than unanswered questions:

***I did not hear by my two ears from anybody that
Why do we come and why do we go?***

3. Causal explanation: some quatrains of are in the field of the causal relationships. In most of these quatrains, Khayyam tries to explain the fact of seizong the day. In other words, he theorizes the happiness of people in causal relationships.

In phenomenological approach, Khayyam resembles the non existence to desert and he can see the people coming and going through this desert. Through describing this instability of life of and stability of the world, does a flip in human mind and reminds him dwindling time of opportunities [9].

Nature of death

The most important issue Khayyam thoughts, in terms of qualitative and quantitative form is "death". In Khayyam thoughts, death is Gazing-stock and leads to seizing the life time in the world. It is a phenomenon which ends the joy and pleasure.

In earlier studies, it seems that Khayyam quatrains consider the death as an unreasonable phenomenon.

***Last night I went to pottery workshop
I saw 2000 potteries silent and still
Suddenly one of the potteries screamed
Where is the potter, where is the potter seller
and where is the potter buyer? [5]***

More focus on death related quatrains leads to different results. We can say that Khayyam's death related poems can be categorized in these parts:

1. Quatrains which consider the death as a warning: we cannot interfere, for example, that Khayyam considers the death as the end point of human life or uses death as futility and absurdity [5]. This group of quatrains which reminds the death as a truth is more than the other kinds of quatrains in number:

***A palace where Jamshid received the cup there
Deer gave a birth and fox slept
Bahram who wring the tombs
You see that how finally tomb hugged him***

It means that we must pay much more attention to death and the fact that death is a reality.

2. This group states the death with an objection and says: it seems that these kinds of objections root in Khayyam's knowledge and his philosophical thoughts and view dominated the poem. It is not limited to him, but many of the thinkers have used this method in their poems. In general, we can say that if this objection is for interrogation and wisdom or richening the weak thoughts and ideas, it is acceptable and desirable and they cannot be considered disruptive because it makes the beliefs stronger.

***Composition of the bowl which attached to each other
Drunk does not allow breaking it
Heads and hands of several sweet and dear
In whose seal was attached and for whose hatred was broken?***

3. The third category of Omar Khayyam quatrains describes the life and death along with man's incapacity in encountering its complexity [4].

***Although I have beautiful and nice face and colure
My face is Like Tulips and like cypress I am tall
It is not clear that in soil pub
Why did the painter of eternity make me up?***

Here we have different interpretations. Some people like Ahmad Khatami believe that we cannot infer disbelief or deny the Hereafter concepts from these quatrains. Another interpretation is that Mahmood Dargahi states that major problem of Khayyam is despair and frustration and the loss of his life and that Khayyam calls death and the instability of life as a great flaw in the scheme of creation.

4. Other quatrains of Khayyam about death refers to those unaware from the works of the world that a man has to be suffer these pains in the name of "life" does not stand, while he does not knows what is wisdom of world issues?

It seems that man never get the light of truth and determination [7].

***He says that drink wine as much as possible
'Cause there is many people like us who went and did not come back***

5. In some other quatrains of Khayyam, he uses them in funny way. It seems that this group of quatrains is mainly influenced by social, political and religious situation of the time. There were Hypocrites who show themselves as religious one [5].

***I do not know who made my identity
I belong to Heaven or Hell
Jaami, Batti and Barbati on the edge of the ship
These three are present for me but for you borrow it for heaven***

He calls death an irritable path. That is, when you die, you never come back to the world. His death takes the road of no return, as others before us went and did not return.

***When you go, you won't come back
Drink wine as much as possible that I told you thousand times***

Images Features and Interpretations of Death in poetry of Khayyam

Dream Color quatrains of Khayyam (about death) has reasoning form and he, instead of than poetical imagery and fantasies and imagery, focuses the minutes of the world and tries to wake the reader up from ignorance and neglect to seize the day and get the opportunities of the world [1].

Death in Khayyam poems has been pictured in Undesirable form which roots in his gloomy feeling towards the death. Most elements of the death have been chosen from the declining ones of the nature. Each of these elements brings immediacy in the mind. Pictures of "rocks glass", "tulip blight" are examples of this sort.

Illustrations and interpretations of Khayyam about death

1. Stone to glass

***Days of life has stigma from one
Who is heavy hearted and sad for the days of the life
Drink wise in the glass with whining
Before hitting the glass to the stone***

2. Reaper

***Poor farmers has planted and harvested so much of us
Being sad without reason has not profit and result
Fill the bowl in my hand soon
To redrink it because everything was before like this***

3. Fading

***Drink wine because you will sleep under the soil so much
With no mons and opponent and companionship
Be aware! Do not tell this secret to anybody
Every tulip which faded, will not bloom again***

4. Box of eternity

***We are balls and the heaven is ball player
Not the virtual one but the real one
We play the game in existence
Then fall in the box of eternity one by one***

***5. Home collapse (body)
After me we have the other you
Everybody can do wrong and false works
The soul started to go and we said Go!
It said that what can I do the home is collapsing***

***6. Filling the bowl
When the life comes to end either Baghdad or Balkh
When the bowl is filled either sweet or bitter
Drink wine that after me and you
It comes from Ghare to Salkh and from Salh to Ghare***

CONCLUSION

***You and I do not know the secrets of the world
You and I cannot read these puzzling words
Behind the curtain, there is my and your conversation
If the curtain falls, neither you nor I will remain***

A brief look at death in Khayyam poems shows that it is an opportunity to get experience and seize the pleasures of life. It is a mysterious and secret with ground nature and time have a major role in the creation of it. It takes place as dissolution of temperaments and lack of clemency (Quadruplet). The world after that is a world in which is not dark and not light with ambiguity and uncertainty. The mysterious nature of death and the inherent limits of wisdom in understanding the world affairs, including supernatural matters (e.g. death) caused Omar Khayyam to be bewildered about the death. In this situation he thinks that the human being is unable to unlock the secrets of life and show them ultimately unable in giving awareness and knowledge to the world.

Khayyam's poetry writing about death is praising the life, praise: a praise that roots in optimism of the poet not his pessimism. Constantly reminding of death is honoring lasting existence of the man to understand its value before leaving the world which cannot be repeated again.

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