



Review on the Salaman and Absal commentaries of Hunayn ibn Isha

Dr Sayyedah Maryam Rozatian^{1*} , Najme gerami²

1-Associate Professor of Persian Language and Literature, Persian Literature Group, Human Sciences University of Isfahan, HezarJarib Street, Isfahan

2-Graduate of Persian language and Literature, Persian Literature Group, Human Sciences College, University of Isfahan, HezarJarib Street, Isfahan

Abstract

Salaman and Absal is a symbolic story that is reputed with several narrating. The reason of vogue the different narratives of this story is the critical of Fakhr Razi on the expression of Sheikh Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sina has been entered in Al-Isharat Namat nine. The criticism is busied the mind of Khaje Nasir Toosi and compeled him to searching the narrative and other authors now have been expressed the various perspectives about different narratives of Salamn and Aabsal and and description of its codes from Khaje Nasir up to now. All of these works are founded upon Khaje Nasir comment that is achieved to two narratives of Salaman and Absal after several years of searching. One of the two narratives is the story that Hunayn Ibn Ishaq had been translated from Greek into Arbic a century ago but Khaje Nasir that has been interpreted symbols of both stories with philosophical manner, doesn't know the Hunayn ibn Ishaq narrative accepted on Ibn Sina. In this paper we want to cash the Salaman and Absal commentaries of Hunayn ibn Ishaq according to Arabic text of Al-Isharat , Al-Tanbihat" Namat nine and show contrary to the belief that is affected on to Khaje Nasir comment since the seventh century AD, the accepted Salaman and Aabsal of Ibn Sina is Hunayn Ibn Ishaq narrative and perhaps in compared with other commentaries that is written on this story, Sheikh Al- Rayis remarks in Al-Isharat Namat nine is the best mystical interpretation of this story.

Key words: Salamn- Absal- Code- Interpretation



Introduction

Sheikh Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sina (370-428) has been allocated to interpretation the mystics positions in "Al-Isharat , Al-Tanbihat" Namat nine" and has been entered in the beginning: when you receipted the Salaman and Absal story and a person cited it for you, be attended since Salaman is a proverb and Asal is a second grade proverb in mysticism, so if you are a mystic, solve the code and express it" (Malekshahi, 2006:439). Fakhr Razi had been believed that Isharat nine Namat is the most important and valuable contents of this book, since Ibn Sina has arranged Sufia science and education that nobody before him did it and after him also won't increase (ibid) but couldn't receipt the Sheikh Al-Rayis mention to Salaman and Absal story and criticized it and called enigma and mystery (Sajadi, 1995: 118). Khaje Nasir has been searched several years to reply the Fakhr Razi criticized – that entered other questions to opinions of front philosophers and that is why has been dubbed Imam Al-moshakekin- and finally achieved to different narratives of Salaman and Absal. One of these narratives is a symbolic story that Hunayn Ibn Ishaq (149-264) the famous physician and interpreter of Greek and Syriac book, retured it to Arabic. The story is discussed the love between Salaman, Greek prince and his nurse, Absal. In second narrative, Salaman and Absal are brothers, Salaman's wife become lovesick Absal and plans with different ways to deceive him. Absal didn't attend to her request and finally kiiled with her trick. Khaje Nasir has been paid to description the both narratives codes with a philosophical manner and known the recent narrative according to Ibn Sina speech. Historically after Ibn Sina, Ibn Tofayl (or 581 AH) is written Salaman and Absal story meanwhile another allegorical story in name Hayy Ibn Yaqzan but Ibn Tofayl's Salaman and Absal is not like the two previous narratives. Somebody are associated the Salaman and Absal story to the story that is famous between Arabs (Roshan, 1994: 108). In the seventh century AD, Ismail Rizi has been exposed Salaman and Absal story according to Hunayn Ibn Ishaq Narrated and of course with little difference in Hayat Al-nofus that is one of the philosophical writing in Persian language. Ismail Rizi description is based on Khaje Nasir philosophical interpretation and has a large difference with it. Finally in the ninth century AD, Salaman and Absal of Hunayn Ibn Ishaq has been translated to Persian poem by Jami for the first time and after then became one of the lovely stories of Persian literature, although Jami has been emphasized to the symbolic story with a brief interpretation at the end of his poem. Although Jami interpretation has a mystical state but is not far away from impact of philosophical description of Khaje Nasir. Description the Salaman and Absal code have been continued up to the present and proceed from different perspectives, yet more story exponents believe that Hunayn Ibn Ishaq story is not the accepted Ib Sina narrative. In this paper, in addition to comparison the famous commentaries including Salaman and Absal of Hunayn Ibn Ishaq and vote criticism of authors the commentaries and according to Isharat nine Namat, we will expose that Ibn Sina aspect from mentioning the Salaman and Absal story is providing a mystical decoding of Hunayn Ibn Ishaq narartive and this point has not been considered so far.

Text

1- Salaman and Absal story narrated by Hunayn ibn Ishaq

In the distant past, before the fire storm, a hermit kingdom in named Hermanus was governed to Roman, Greek and Egypt and had a wise counselor named Aqlyqulas that always was involved to worshiping and fasting in a cave named Saryqun. The king was desirous of



having children that become heir his state and wisdom at the same stay away from socializing with women. Then with Aqlyqulas devise and immediately, his mother borned a child and named him Salaman and given him to a young and beautiful nurse in named Absal. After finishing Salaman infancy Era, the king wanted to separate him from Absal. Absal was so Impatience and king decided that Salaman be aside her until puberty but her loving to him was increased at the age of puberty and Salaman spend all times with her and neglected from king serving. King adviced her to leaving Absal but she escaped with Absal to a remote island. The king informed from them and sent their supplies to the island so Salaman will repent and return to him but Salaman didn't leave her and king planed and Salaman realized that this suffering is caused by the wrath of king, so went to his father apologetically but king said that acceptance his apology is provided to Absal leaving. Salaman came back to Absal and together went down in sea. After that king ordered to water that Salaman be safe but Absal sank in the sea. Salaman was exposed to perish from away pain of Absal and king wanted help from sage. Sage took him to Sariqun cave and began to teaching Salaman with fasting, invocations and Zohreh special prayers (Godhead of love in Greece). After 40 days, sage appeared a so beautiful face for Salaman that the same Zohreh face. Salaman falling in love Zohreh and forgotten Absal. Then the sage caused the face of Zohreh in capturing Salaman and manifested on Salaman at all times. Finally, Salaman achieved to a clean conscience with love of Zohreh. Hermanus placed him on the throne and got allegiance from the king of other countries. After that Salaman had great reception and appeared alot of wonders from him.

2- Review on the commentaries of Salaman and Absal stories

We review the Khaje Nasir, Ismail Rizi and Jami commentaries from Hunayn Ibn Ishaq's narrative before mystical decoding of Ibn Sina. The three commentaries is presented in a table so that provided the ability to adapt between story's codes and exponents decoding.

Jami commentary	Ismail Rizi commentary	Khaje Nasir commentary	The codes of Salaman and Absal story
Active intellect that is the same tenth intellect	intellect active	intellect active	king
Divine grace	Grace of active intellect	Grace that is imparted from heaven	sage
Spirit is from tenth intellect and has been created without linking the intellect with body	Rational soul	Existence of rational soul is caused of active intellect without depending to physicals	Salaman
Body is voluptuous and soul is loves body, like Salaman	Animal body force	The animal body force that the rational soul is	Absal



loves Absal.		evolved by it.	
-----	-----	Dependence the animal body force to the soul without depending the body	Attribution the Absal to malfeasance
Animal lusts and sensual pleasures are merging in sea and get away from Haq	Driving the man in physical pleasures	Involving in transient and changeable pleasures of material world and get away from Haq	Escaping Salaman and Absal to beyond the East sea
-----	Putting down the time for him	Releasing the body and soul to their own by active intellect	Releasing both to their own by king
Influencing the age of decadence and loss of lust	Languor in physical powers in old age acting	In aging time, soul is depending to body and tending to material pleasures since material and physical forces become weak and powerless and can't use the material pleasure	No abling at enjoyment of joiner
Seeking intellectual pleasures and going up to wisdom	Seeking perfection and remorse	Recepting the spiritual perfection by rational soul that is remorse mark of using the transient material pleasures that are void and changeable and flexible	Returning Salaman to his father
The fire of hard austerities leads to destroyed the nature effects	Weaking and destroying the body or the soul for conforming to the body forces	Expressing the destruction of body and soul	Throwing Salaman and Absal in the sea and in the fire in Jami poem
Disappearing the nature effects and remaining life	Survival of soul after destruction the body	Survival of single soul after destruction the body	Releasing Salaman from Absal death and destruction
Zohreh is the high perfection that life will be venerable with	Strengthening the soul with the real perfection	happiness of the soul in order to intellect perfection	Informing Salaman to the Zohreh face

Arch



its joiner			
The soul will be king of human life in order to reaching to perfection	-----	Getting the rational soul to the last degree of human perfection	Sitting the king on the throne



Comparison of the three commentaries show that Ismail Rizi and Jami have been considered the Khaje Nasir commentary but Jami has been focused on the their mystical aspects but Ismail Rizi has been changed just some Khaje Nasir's phrases. All three commentators are known the king, active intellect code and the sage, active intellect grace that come from heaven. Khaje Nasir and Ismail Rizi have been known Salaman a rational soul according to philosopher interpretation and Jami called Salaman, the soul code. The three commentators of Absal interpretation are similar and the difference is only in applying the philosophical interpretations by the first two commentators. Ismail Rizi has not been presented love between Salaman and Absal. Interpretation of Khaje Nasir of Absal depravity is not clear and Jami and Ismail Rizi has not been attended to this. Interpretation of the three commentators about escaping the Salaman and Absal is a same but Jami didn't talk about releasing the Salaman and Absal by king. Khaje Nasir has been known that active intellect left body and soul and Ismail Rizi has been increased the ambiguity with changing the Khaje Nasir phrase's appearance. All the three commentators are known the aging and influence of age degeneration signs of become incapacitated Salaman to reaching Absal and soul loses the power using of material pleasures. These commentators especially Khaje Nasir are known the Salaman and Absal story a symbol of natural flow of human life from childhood to death. Lack of attention to mystical concepts in this story resulted in wronging the analysis of commentators in this part of story. They know that coming back the Salaman to his father and his apology is the penitentiary code that will be achieved with attention to material pleasures in old time. So when man become older and is incapable from using the material pleasures then will tend to intellectual pleasures. This matter is not suitable with the mystical analysis. In particular, no one of the commentators didn't attend to the symbolic code of this part of story, when king said acceptance of Salaman apology is providing to leaving Absal. Khaje Nasir is known the drowning of Salaman and Absal in the sea at night, perish that body becomes mortal and single soul remains. Ismail Rizi has been provided two analyses from this code: weaken or destroyed the body and powers or destroyed the soul in order to obeying from body powers. Jami analysis is so different since he entered in essence of the story in this part. In Jami poems, Salaman and Absal go into the fire, he is known the fire, hard austerity that destroys the nature effects. Despite, Jami has been attended to Khaje Nasir commentary and matched many of his decodes with this but didn't know that Khaje Nasir analysis of this part of story is caused to error the decode continuing. Since Khaje Nasir has been interpreted the unfolding of Zohreh face for Salaman and sitting him on throne to enjoying the soul of intellect perfection and reaching the rational soul to the last stage of human perfection and according to his analysis, this event must occur after death and this is not accepted. Ismail Rizi interpretation like Khaje Nasir has been gone wrong in this part. But Jmai has been concluded to it that spirit will reach to the spiritual perfection after hard



austerities and soul become king. Khaje Nasir, Ismail Rizi and Jami as the most famous authors that have been described the Salaman and Absal story of Hunayn Ibn Ishaq and its codes with philosophical way. Also some of these codes have been neglected and are with errors. All this points show that deeper reflection in concepts of this symbolic story is necessary.

3- Mystical decoding of Ibn Sina from Salaman and Absal

Mentioning the Salaman and Absal names with Sheik Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sinain the beginning of Isharat Namat Nine resulted that commentators neglected the deep decoding of Hunayn ibn Ishaq narrative by Sheikh and without understanding the relationship between the phrase with discussion topics were satisfied to finding a appropriate narrative with Ibn Sina's purpose. Ibn Sina is assigned this chapter of Isharat to expressing the degree and officials of mystics and said that will express the mystical concepts in the form of a story. The accepted story of Sheikh is Salaman and Absal story and Sheikh has been known Salaman the "you (= your) code and Absal " you degree in mysticism" code. The Isharat commentators didn't find the relationship between this phrase with later concepts and so they have been disabled in solving the codes of this story particularly the relation between Absal and human grade in mysticism. We will express the Ibn Sina mystical decoding of Salaman and Absal in the following:

Ibn Sina writes in definition of the 'pious' word: "pious is a person that avoids of all commodity and enjoyments of life" (Malekshahi, 2006:440). Hermanus the king of Greek was pious and avoided from world commodity.

Ibn Sina believed "votary" is a person that is worshiping. (Malekshahi, 2006: 441). Aqlyqulas, the king's advisor and partner was a votary and in Saryqun cave has been fasted and worshiped.

But "mystic" is a person that thinks about Haq and always uses the right in his conscience. (Malekshahi, 2006: 441). Salaman reached to Haq after surving the mysticism stages and shined the light of Haq in to his conscience.

Ibn Sina is believed that the mystic, votary and pious are together in a person (Malekshahi, 2006: 441). Pious king, votary advisor and mytic Salaman are the different dimensions of a person that finally at the end of self-analysis stage combine with together and build a complete human.

Ibn Sina believed that asceticism is a type of transaction near non mystic. Like when you buy worldly goods against the hereafter goods. But asceticism aside mystic is cleaning from all things that away him from Haq. Asceticism is a transaction for king that had been achieved the kingdom but Salaman with this reached to a point that his consience cleaned from other except Haq.



Worshipping is a type of transaction near non mystic and he worships just for the hereafter reward but worshipping near mystic is austerity that can reach the soul to the Haq (Malekshahi, 2006: 441). Worshipping was transaction near Aqlyqulas and king requested the pyramids for be calming after death but worshipping near Salaman is austerity that he suffered in cave and finally his soul was full of light and in this stage king and sage were with him so completely will reach to inside purity.

As this appears, Sheikh Al-Rayis has been decoded the most important codes of Salaman and Absal in the above phrases and mixed with the mystical concepts, so in continuing of Namat Nine concepts has been analyzed one of the code.

The first grade of mystics conduct is volition (Malekshahi, 2006: 446). Salaman with volition and apologetically came back to king and then drowning in the sea with Absal.

Then peripatetic needs to austerity and it has three goals: first, removing the non right with right way, second governing the sensuality and third tendering inside for punishment and awareness (Malekshahi, 2006: 447). Salaman worshiped and fasted in the Sariqun cave after creating the volition in him. He has been whispered special prayers and listened to the sage teachings. Finally during these stages he was achieved to a pure love (Zohre love) and reached to conscience purity with expression of lover not lust.

When volition and austerity reached the devotee to a limit that can create the light of Haq for him, so mystics has been named this "time" (Malekshahi, 2006: 448). Sheikh Al-Rayis has been analyzed the "time" topic in this phrase according to what entered to Salaman in Saryqun cave from expression of Zohre: the expression of Haq on mystic-like displaying Zohre on Salaman- is a light that shines and extinguishes and is pleasurable for mystic.

Then austerity has been reached him to a stage that "his time" changed to peace and achieved stable recognition for him (Malekshahi, 2006: 449). Salaman influencing the austerity reached to a stage that Zohre completely manifested on him. Turbidity of the terrestrial love changed to purity of divine love and Salaman achieved the kingdom grade.



The last and most important point in Sheikh Al-Rayis decoding is about Absal in this story and is known as Sheikh Absal, individual degree in mysticism. It seems that the main key of this story code is in this point, since Sheikh unlike other codes of story doesn't have any precision in solving the code and says: if you can then solve the code. Everyone can't solve the code and many commentators have failed in opening this. However, if we note to the main theme of Salaman and Absal story then this code will be revealed. Salaman and Absal story has been begun from a virtual love and ended to a divine love. So Absal is love code and as long as is terrestrial and worldly, the person's wisdom has been remained in this limit. But when volition was created and the person survived the austerity steps so then with passing of virtual love and reaching to real love, will be reached to Haq recognition. So the love matter that is the most important factor to reaching the wisdom in Islami mysticism, but this matter in Sheikh Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sina statements used as a more important point in analysis is a symbolic story and for centuries commentators have been tried to solving this code.

Conclusion

When Sheikh Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sina said about symbolic meaning of Salaman and Absal in Isharat Nine Namat and in expressing the degrees of mystics, so then decoding this story but commentators didn't understand the deep relation between the symbolic concepts of Salaman and Absal story with Sheikh's statements and is mistaken in interpretation of Ibn Sina speech. At first Fakhr Razi blamed Sheikh in using the Salaman and Absal names, then Khaje Nasir Toosi tried to respond the Fakhr Razi criticism and after several years said that Salaman and Absal story is made by Ibn Sina and is different with Hunayn ibn Ishaq narrative. All commentators and authors after Khaje Nasir decoded the Salaman and Absal story according to his opinion. However analysis the Isharat Nine Namat shows that Sheikh Al-Rayis with literary manner and allusions to Salaman and Absal story- Sheikh aware about it by Hunayn ibn Ishaq translation and familiar with medicine and philosophy of Greek- is mixed the codes with mystical concepts and issues. Sheikh Al-Rayis connected the non-iranian story as a symbolic story with conduct steps in Islami mysticism and this point has been revealed the mystical, literary and scientific official of Sheikh Al-Rayis Abu Ali Sina. He is a scientist that surrounded on philosophical issues and then it influenced on his mystical dimension.



References

- Pinz, Shlomo. Origin of Salaman and Absal story: possibility of the Indian impact, translated by Parvaneh Oruj Nia, Education, ninth edition, No. 3, December and march of 2002.
- Poornamdarian, Taqi. Code and symbolic story in Persian literature, third edition, Scientific and Cultural Publishing Company, 1989.
- Roshan, Mohammad. Salaman and Absal and categories in allegory, First edition, Asatir publication, 1994.
- Rizi, Esmail Ibn Mohammad. Hayat Al-Nofus, tried by Mohammad Taqi Danesh pajuh, 1983.
- Satari, Jalal. Entry on mystical semiotics, First edition, Markaz Publication, 1993.
- Sajadi, Sayed Zia Al-Din. Hay Ibn Yaqzan and Salaman and Absal. First edition. Soroush Publication, 1995.
- Shyegan, Daryush. Horizons of spiritual intellect in Iranian Iran, translated by Baqer Parham, Cultural and Scientific Publishing Company, second edition, 1994.
- Goharin, Sayed Sadeq. Interpretation of Sufism terms, Volume I, First edition, Zavar Publication, 1988.
- Malekshahi, Hasan. Translation and interpretation of Isharat and Tanbihat of Ibn Sina, fifth edition, Soroush Publication. Tehran. 2006.