

RELIGIOUS-LITERATURE VIEWS IN THE WORKS OF THE AZERBAIJAN POET GASIM BEY ZAKIR

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Abstract. The article discusses the poems written by Gasim bey Zakir on topics based on religious and literary traditions. The study of published and unpublished poems with religious content obtained from archival materials forms an objective idea about the poet's religious views. His religious views are glorified in his poems and in each work, images and events are described so accurately that the reader becomes a living observer of those scenes. One of the reasons for the success of Zakir's poems on religious topics was his ability to describe events with the precision of a skilled artist. The simplicity and clarity of Gasim bey Zakir's poetic language, its closeness to the colloquial language are among his most successful features.

Keywords: Gasim bey Zakir, religious and literary tradition, religious poetry, Hz. Husayn, Hz. Zeynab, Karbala incident.

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1. Introduction

The talented poet Gasim bey Zakir, whose literary heritage gained great fame while he was still alive, is one of the master poets whose creativity was highly appreciated by the prominent intellectuals of the time.

In all periods of our historical past, every writer, without exploitation, first of all addressed religious themes and sang their religious views in poetic forms such as lament, nohha, sinazan, minajat, nat, qasida. Religious poetry, which has passed a long path of development, has always been on the agenda, experiencing stages of progress and decline from time to time in connection with historical and social conditions. It is as a result of this that a religious and literary tradition has been formed in our literature. This literary tradition gained wider scope, especially in the 19th century and even created fertile ground for the emergence of religious and sectarian poets such as Raji, Qumri, Supehri, Shuai, Dakhil, Dilsuz and Nigari. Along with such artists who devoted their creativity mainly to religious themes, we witness that poets with a diverse creative range of that period also addressed religious themes. In general, since writing poetry on this topic itself took the form of a tradition, we witness that most poets, with the exception of a very few poets who lived and created in the 19th century, addressed this theme and we come to the conclusion that religious literature also played a unique role in the formation of the literary environment of each period.

2. Methodology

The creation of religious literature arose not only from the poet's own desire, but also from public demand, the desire and wish of the people. Therefore, each poet tried to write his best works on this topic in order to gain a more authoritative position among the people and in society. It is no coincidence that Abbasgulu aga Bakikhanov, who played a major role in the formation of 19th century enlightened literature and who worked in an important state apparatus of Tsarist Russia, in short, in an environment that was not very sympathetic to the Islamic religion, approached this topic with such sympathy and dedicated one of his most beautiful works to this topic. In addition, we see another prominent poet of the 19th century, Gasim bey Zakir, as a true servant of God who observed the rules and regulations of Islam throughout his entire creative work. The poet, whether in his poems on religious subjects or within his poems on different subjects, acted as a fanatic of religion as the turn came, inviting people to spiritual purity, the straight path and to become true servants of God. At the same time, Zakir called on people to be moderate in religious beliefs and not to follow the countless sects and denominations that were created by different tricksters at different times.

The poet, who was well-versed in the Islamic religion and its holy book, the Quran, saw that such sects were nothing more than tricks that were created by different individuals for their own interests to divide the monumental Islamic religion and advised his reader not to follow these tricksters and fraudulent religious leaders. Like other progressive intellectuals, Zakir also saw in his works the sharp differences between Shiites and Sunnis and criticized sects, especially Shiism, such as "Sheikhi" and "Usuli". The poet called such religious figures "arrogant charlatans who bring chaos to the country, call themselves scholars, but are themselves illiterate and whose religion is money and silk clothes". He brought to the attention of the reader with all his sharpness that every "Alif bey" who recites "Alif bey" does not understand what a "swindler" Shiite is, "they are destroying the sect-isna-ashari" and "the core of faith" (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Archive-2, Q-2 (15); (Gasim bey Zakir, 1964).

The "Sheikhi" sect, founded in the first half of the 19th century by Sheikh Ahmad Ahsai (1744-1827), was created as a religious and political movement based on Shiism. According to their theory, "the twelve imams are the necessary cause of the creation of all existence by the will of God. The twelve imams existed in essence before the world was created, God created the world through the essence of the imams and the world must act according to their command" (Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopedia, 1987). They considered the Prophet, his daughter Fatima and each of the twelve imams to be as powerful as God. Expressing his opinion on this issue, Mammadov (1978) rightly notes that "such exaggeration of the imams angered the poet (G. Zakir), who believed in God and His religious book, the Quran, with all his being".

Another issue that angers Zakir is the version put forward by the sheikhs regarding the revelation of the Quran. According to Islam, the Quran was revealed to the prophet by Allah through Gabriel. According to the sheikhs, the author of the Quran is the prophet and Gabriel revealed the Quran in the prophet's womb. Analyzing this in itself, the poet "comes to the conclusion that if this is indeed the case, then all poets are also prophets. Because they are also "mursals". "Mursals" are only prophets who have the book. Like Muhammad, Jesus, Moses, Abraham, David" (Mammadov, 1978).

The poet mocks them by saying that he is also a false prophet and says that what they say is nothing more than a joke. Along with this, one of the main issues that angers

the poet is that such toy sect leaders, under the influence of other religions, seek partners for Allah among people and trivialize Him. Then the poet again turns to the sheikhs and Usuli and says that the only one who provides sustenance to all living beings, satisfies their needs and has every “characteristic and potential” is Allah, the Almighty. It is simply foolish to apply the characteristics of Allah to people. The poet considers such charlatans who create divisions in religion as “disobedient to the abode of God” and informs them that as a result of your actions, you will definitely go to hell. Because what you have done is nothing more than disobeying the Great Creator. By criticizing such religious figures who were out of place, the poet not only tried to reform them, but also urged his contemporaries in general, especially the younger generation, to look at events with an open eye and not to be deceived by everything. Of course, everyone who read Zakir's critical poetry understood what the real truth was, approached events and happenings with a new way of thinking, drew the necessary conclusions from it and never believed the nonsense of such false religious figures again. This was the power of Zakir's poetry. He was able to make his readers think, as well as disbelieve them.

Gasim bey Zakir fulfilled his duty to the Islamic religion to which he belonged by writing several laments, odes, odes and religious qasids related to the Karbala disaster. The competent researcher Firidun bey Kocharli, expressing his opinion on Zakir's religious poems, writes: “The lamentation of the martyr and the story of the martyr of Karbala would have had a greater impact on Zakir, since he was a pious man and a son-respondent. In this regard, several odes were composed about this story” (Kocharli, 1978).

It is known that, like other poets belonging to the Shiite sect, he, first of all, described the calamity that befell Hazrat Ali, the Ahl al-Bayt and especially Imam Hussein, the protagonist of the Karbala disaster, in his poems written primarily on religious themes, in a fiery lyrical language. At the same time, he did not express any negative opinion about Sunni Islam, one of the strongest sects in Islam, nor about those who belong to this sect. He stayed away from sectarianism and took a conciliatory stance and tried to propagate the religion of Islam in general.

The poet, who skillfully described the different moments related to the Karbala incident, aroused the emotional feelings of his reader by creating these scenes. In addition to creating sympathy for the people who were martyred in the cause of religion, he also succeeded in awakening a deep sense of hatred for their enemies. Zakir's ode with the rhyme “Galir” is very interesting in this regard.

Up to this part of the ode, the poet described the tragic bringing of the families and children of the martyrs to the city of Damascus and by writing an emotional description of their difficult situation, the suffering and hardship they suffered, he was able to arouse in the reader a feeling of anger and hatred towards the murderers of the Karbala martyrs. Since the poet describes this scene extremely naturally and realistically, the reader, as soon as he reads the poem, is inevitably influenced by it and strives to follow the further course of events with great interest and feels himself in the flow of events. Most likely, Firidun bey Kocharli, when commenting on the poet's creativity, took into account these extraordinary qualities that he possessed: “Until now, as many odes have been written about the tragedy that occurred in the Nineveh desert and especially about the people of the house of the martyrs, no poet has been able to write a ode with such elegance, with such subtle metaphors and sweet phrases (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Archive -2, Q-2 (15)).

Zakir further increases the emotional power of the ode by introducing a new image in the second part of the lament - the image of Yazid's wife - and by doing so, he wants

to say that even open-minded people on the enemy side, including the wife who slept with Yazid, cannot accept this tragedy, understands its injustice and meets it with hatred. As can be seen, the poet, in addition to using a lyrical-sentimental style of description, was able to create a perfect example of plot-based lyrics to describe the calamity that the Ahl-e-Bayt suffered. After noting in the first part of the ode that “mahi-aza” has come and that the “Dashti-bala” calamity is the most tragic of all calamities, the poet describes the scene of the family members, wives and children of those martyred in the plain of Karbala being brought to the city of Damascus, barefoot, bare-headed and surrounded on all sides in a tragic appearance. At this time, Yazid's wife, who was standing among the people of Damascus and watching the captives, caught sight of Zeynab, who came holding Sakina's hand and asked Fizza who this bride was. She looked very familiar. Fizza replied that she was “the family of Hussein”. After the woman, who was unaware of the incident, learned what had happened to Hussein and why they had been brought here, she reproached her husband Yazid for his actions and asked him what he would answer to the prophet and his successor Ali before God on the Day of Judgment.

This incident, described in a clear and eloquent language, is “a versed prose”, as Firidun bey Kocharli said about Zakir's language. The fact that Zakir's poetic language is simple and clear and close to the spoken language of the people, is one of his most successful features.

Of course, the main idea of every work written about the Karbala incident is to make the tragedy that occurred affect human psychology, to bring it to mind and to instill in them the spirit of fighting for justice against the unjust bloodshed. Therefore, poets often turned to the images of women and children to increase the emotional impact of the poem. Of course, Zakir, like other artists, first of all turned to the images of Zeynab and Sakina when talking about women and to the image of the six-month-old baby Ali Asgar when talking about children. With the episodes he created against the background of these images, he managed to create scenes that broke the heart and caused people to feel angry.

A 19th-century person who knew the Karbala incident in all its details would recall the tragedy that had befallen him when the name of any of the participants in this calamity was mentioned and would experience those feelings under the emotional impact of the poem. Zakir, who was closely familiar with the psychological state of his contemporaries, first of all, when writing laments, nohs and odes, first of all, after considering which image to use at what moment and how, he wrote them. Since the poet was an artist who was able to convey his thoughts to the reader in a lively and figurative way by creating certain effective scenes around the image he chose, his works on this subject became a household name and brought great success to the author.

It is no coincidence that, despite serious prohibitions, during the days of Ashura in most regions, especially in the villages around Baku, one of the poets whose laments, nohs and odes were most widely read was Gasim bey Zakir. The main reason for the success of his religious poems, as we mentioned earlier, was that he chose the right topic and gave the necessary details in a timely manner. In each of the poems he dedicated to Hazrat Zeynab, Hazrat Sakina, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Hussein, we are living witnesses of these words (Mujtahidzade, 1995; Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Archive, B-5005).

The purpose of giving the full text is to clearly prove what we have said. Here we see the image of a loyal woman - mother, sister. In order to vividly convey the inner suffering of this woman who lost her loved ones, was taken captive and taken to Damascus and the excitement and turmoil she experienced, the poet used a rose, a flower,

a bud, a spike, a tulip, a nightingale, etc., which are capable of creating fragile feelings in people's hearts with their beauty, elegance and subtlety. By appealing to the nature, he further increases the emotional power of his poem and thus is able to cast a spell on people who are in grief. He personifies nature and creates images of flowers, nightingales and flowers that, alongside the image of Zeynab, echo her cry and share her grief, in its enchanting background, which in turn gives a new spirit to the overall level of the work.

We encounter such a lyrical-sentimental style, characteristic of the poet's religious poems, in his other poems, including his novhasan in Persian. In the 19th century, there was no need to write and create in Persian in Azerbaijan, especially in Karabakh. However, despite this, most poets wrote a certain part, sometimes half, of their works in Persian. There were several reasons that conditioned these poets to write and create in Persian, the most important of which was their loyalty to the tradition of our classics writing in Persian. This tradition was continued in the work of various poets until the end of the 19th century and even until the beginning of the 20th century. One of them was Gasim bey Zakir.

Zakir, who remained faithful to tradition like his contemporaries, wrote only a few poems in Persian, which once again confirms that writing poetry in Persian in the 19th century was not out of necessity, but out of passion and desire. It seems that Zakir also wrote those poems in order to demonstrate his talent for writing poetry in Persian. These poems are distinguished by their originality and high artistry. Like other poets belonging to the Shiite sect, he also, in his poems written primarily on religious themes, described the misfortunes that befell Hazrat Ali (a.s.), the Ahl al-Bayt and especially Imam Hussein, the protagonist of the Karbala disaster, in a fiery lyrical language (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Archive, B-5005).

ای گشته بی دفن و کفن یادگار من حسین
ای گشته بی دفن و کفن یادگار من حسین
حسین
ای لاله گلزار چمن داغدار
من
لاله زار من و گلزار من خار زار
من

جسم تو فتاده پاره پاره حسین وای حسین
وای
بر گر که چسان کنم نظاره حسین وای حسین
وای
زخمان تنت زبان گشاده حسین وای حسین
وای

از روضی ریزوان آمده ایم و ظلوم حسین محر محر
حسین
با حوریه غلامان آمده ایم مظلومیم حسین محرومیم
حسین
با سنبیه سوزان آمده ام مظلومیم حسین محرومیم
حسین

ای طایر بیبال چمن دلفکار من حسین
 حسین
 ای طاوس اجلال ز من بیقرار من حسین
 حسین
 زیبا پسر م یکتا گوهرم نور
 بصرم

مادر بفدای حنجر تو حسین وای حسین
 وای
 از تن که جدا کرده سر تو حسین وای حسین
 وای
 به خون که فکنده پیکر تو حسین وای حسین
 وای

ای بی یاور و بی سر حسن مظلوم حسین محروم
 حسین
 ای بی اکبر و اصغر حسین مظلوم حسین محروم
 حسین
 ای بی سپه و بی لشگر حسین مظلوم حسین محروم
 حسین

ای خفته خون خویشتن سر جدا ز تن حسین
 حسین
 ای دستش بریده از بدن نوبهاری من حسین
 حسین
 گل پیرهنیم سروی چمنیم ارام
 تنیم

In addition to describing such tragic scenes, the poet turns to Hazrat Ali, the refuge and refuge of the Shiites, asking for his help and wishing that he punish those who committed this tragedy (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Archive, B-5005).

بیا در کربلا یا
 بیا در کربلا یا علی
 مظهر الی بلا یا علی
 بدشت نی نوا یا علی

مظهر العجیب گیره گشا
 توئی
 توئی مظهر الغرایب عقده
 گشائی
 تو ای باب مانیمان چرا نه
 ای

شه دلدل سوار یا
 علی
 بیا کشا دلفقار یا
 علی

ز مرقد سر برار یا
 علی
 مظهر العجب گره
 توئی گشائی
 توئی مظهر الغرایب عقده
 گشائی
 تو ای باب مانیمان چرا نه
 ای

Describing the various moments related to the Karbala incident with great skill, the poet creates dramatic scenes that evoke the emotional feelings of the reader, in which he manages to arouse sympathy for the people who were martyred in the cause of religion and deep hatred for the enemies, instills in them a sense of truth, justice, love for the person they love and thus directs them to a sacred act of being ready to die for the sake of the homeland and the people. The facts show that Gasim Bey Zakir has established himself as a capable poet in his poems written in Persian, as well as in his poems in his native language. One of the reasons for the success of Zakir's poems on religious themes was his skill in describing the events with the precision of a skilled artist. While reading the poet's rendition of "Today", the bloodiest tragedy of the century that took place in the Karbala desert comes to life in all its reality before the reader's eyes. The poet, as if creating a tableau with each verse, described the dispersion of the people of the harem into the desert, the body of Alamdar, both of whose arms were cut off, falling on the Quran, the infidels throwing Gasim's flowery body into the fire, the cruel Nofal dismembering Akbar's head, the beheading of Husayn by Shumr, the shooting of Asghar in his swaddling clothes by Harmala, the setting of tents by the enemies, the scattering of hungry and thirsty children into the desert, the worsening of the sick Abid's illness in the desert and his death, the binding of Zaynab's arms and taking her prisoner, the killing of the flag bearer, the binding of Ali's sons and taking them prisoner arm in arm and their lack of support today, in a sad, burning language that moved the hearts and broke the heart. In each verse of the poem, he succeeded in turning the reader into a direct participant and spectator of the events by recreating new scenes that would make him feel sorry for himself.

Of course, Zakir's main goal is not only to describe events in such an effective and fiery language, but his real goal is to instill in people a sense of love for their parents, siblings, loved ones, truth and justice and to direct them to a sacred cause, such as being ready to die for their homeland and people.

3. Conclusion

Since religious poetry, which has been absorbed into the blood memory of people from time to time throughout long histories, is associated with the most sacred feelings that are treated with sensitivity, poets have given it special importance and skillfully used this sacred weapon of jihad to raise its children to their feet in the most difficult days of the homeland. Therefore, this poetry has been on the agenda at all times since the founding of the Islamic religion. The endurance and steadfastness, pride and greatness of the martyrs of Karbala, starting with Hazrat Hussein and the honor and dignity of women like Zeynab have been a source of nourishment for all writers, starting with the great Nizami and following him. While creating their positive images, they approached the

martyrs of Karbala as symbols and tried to create the high, sacred human qualities they possessed in the image of their heroes. Eternal religious poetry and the positive ideas it propagates are still on the agenda. In order for the young generation to be formed in the spirit of a true citizen who loves their homeland, people and nation, it is important to study, research and promote this poetry widely.

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