

A Comparative Study of Topic in Common Anecdotes of Shaikh Attar Neishabouri's Works and Molana Jalal-al-Din's Masnavi

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ABSTRACT

In homogenous assessment of topic in anecdotes of Molana's Masnavi and Attar's works, there are seen significant similarities which are due various reasons such as Molana's access to Attar's works, impact of Attar's ideas and mysticism on Molana, and the literary, religious, cultural, social, philosophical, mystical, national, historical, scientific, and intellectual commonalities of these two mystic poets. In the study, this significant influence with a focus on topic is investigated.

Keywords: Attar, Molana, Influence, Topic, Anecdote.

INTRODUCTION

The topic in story is the concept of story which is revealed in order to reader understands the nature of anecdote. In fact, it includes the elements and events which make up and show an anecdote's configuration and content. Sometimes, the charm and fun of anecdotes are based on reality, and sometimes the topic is preferred. Although there are stories which are certainly real, they are not universal and comprehensive. There are another category of stories which are far from the realities of life and show the events in society using symbols and allegory. Also, other group has recently revealed which combines the ordinary events of life, imagination, and fantasy; the border among these three is not clear. Now, comparing the topic of anecdotes in Attar's works and Molana's Masnavi, it is proposed that whether Molana has inspired from Attar's works in creating the anecdotes in Masnavi?

However, a number of common stories of Molana and Attar are investigated in terms of topic in the following:

1. The Master and Squinted-Eye Footboy

The master orders footboy to bring carboy. When the footboy goes to chamber, he sees two carboys. He returns to master and says that there are two carboys. Which one I should bring? The master says that there is only one carboy. Finally, when he sees that his footboy insists on, he says that go and break one of them. When the footboy breaks one of the carboys, he finds that he is squinted-eye.

(Attar, Asrarname, couplets 1611-1616) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 328-334).

2. Query of Khalife of Leili

In both anecdotes, the love and romance Majnun (Jamil) to Leili (Bazine) is questioned by Khalife (Aaron). Khalifa wants to know the secret of their love.

(Attar, Mosibatname, couplets 2498-2506) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 407-408)

3. Azrael Looking at the Man

In both anecdote, Azrael surprises to see a man on the side of Suleiman. The Lord has ordered him to take his life in India. The young (man) fears from seeing Azrael and wants Suleiman to order the wind (cloud) to take him to India hoping to get rid of Azrael.

(Attar, Elahi Nameh, couplets 1780-1804) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 974, 960)

4. Merchant who went to India For Trade

The topic of both anecdotes is captivity of parrot that imitates the behavior of free parrots and gets free.

(Attar, Asrarname, couplets 1437-1465) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 1547-1548)

5. Old Minstrel

The topic in both anecdotes is decrepit and feebleness of (old) minstrel, playing for God and demanding wage from God, and awareness of old (minstrel).

(Attar, Mosibatname, couplets 6592-6623) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 1913-2198)

6. Khalife whose Generosity is more than Hatam Tai

The topic in both anecdotes is generosity of Khalife. Meanwhile, the stories of woman and Arabic man is stated too.

(Attar, Mosibatname, couplets 7366-7425) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 2244-2933)

7. The Man who wants Help

In both anecdotes, the topic is about a lover who is eager to meet her lover. In Attar's anecdote, the lover cannot see his loved due to his selfishness. However, in Molana's anecdote, the lover repents from selfishness and after years he meets his lover.

(Attar, Mosibatname, couplets 6728-6743) (Molana, Masnavi, first book, couplets 3066- 3076)

8. Comrade Asks Jesus to Revive the Bone

In both anecdotes, the topic is that the ignorant man asks Jesus to teach the greatest name and revive the rotten bones.

(Attar, Elahi Nameh, couplets 2002-2020) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 502-841)

9. King Finds his Eagle in the Home of Old Woman

In both anecdotes, the topic is flee of eagle. It goes to the house of old woman. The old woman cuts its wings. Finally, the king finds it and talks with it.

(Attar, Asrarname, couplets 1649-1661) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 323-375)

10. Sheikh Ahmed Khazruye buys Halva

The topic in both anecdotes is that Sheikh Ahmad Khazruye is indebted. He is supposed to die. The creditors are worry about their money. Finally, due to dignity of Sheikh, all debts are repaid to creditors and Sheikh dies.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 309) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 376-444)

11. Zolnun's Friends come to the Hospital to Question him

The topic in both anecdotes is insanity of Shibli (Zolnun Mesri) due to the influence of the love of God in him. He gets imprisoned in the hospital and when he meets his friends, he tests them to prove their true friendship.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 539) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 1386-1461)

12. King says Sheikh that ask me Something to Give you

In both anecdotes, the topic is about imprisonment of king at the hands of the king of self and free nature and disposition of Darwish. In the interaction of king and Darvish, the Darvish portrays king's states and king gets aware of them.

(Attar, Mantegholteyr, couplets 2013-2034) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 1462- 1560)

13. Appearance of Loghman's Grace and Art

The topic in both anecdotes, the servant (Loghman) takes a bitter fruit from King (Khawaja) and does not say that it is bitter. Seeing the craving of servant to eat the fruit, King also eats the fruit and soon knows its bitterness. Then, he asks Loghman why he did not say that it is bitter.

(Attar, Mantegholteyr, couplets 2431-2444) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 1510-1560)

14. Bayazid Bastami goes to Kaaba

The topic in both anecdotes is Bayazid's travelling to Mecca. Along the way, he encounters a blind Dervish who has wife and children. In talking with Bayazid, Darvish finds that he goes to Hajj and has two hundred dirhams. He suggests him to give the money to him and revolve seven times around him. Therefore, his Hajj will be accepted. Bayazid accepts this suggestion. In explaining this, Darvish says that God has never gone to Kaaba, but his heart has always been the home of God.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 143) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 2218-2226)

15. Ibrahim Adham Dignity on the Beach

In both anecdotes, due to dignity of Ibrahim Adham, he answers to king's question. He was questioned that whether it is better to reign to territories or to hearts of people.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 108) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 3210-3239)

16. Miracles of the Sheikh who was Accused to Stealing

The topic in Attar's anecdotes is questing for wages of ship from Malek; but in Molana's anecdotes, the topic is accusing the poor Darvish to stealing and reveal of Darvish's dignity.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 42) (Molana, Masnavi, second book, couplets 3478-3505)

17. The Lovers' Error is Better than Aliens's Requit

In both anecdotes, false pronunciation of words in Azan and prayer by Balal. The detractors question him and their answers are given excellently.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 54) (Molana, Masnavi, third book, couplets 172-179)

18. Darvish Isolated in the Mountain

The topic in both anecdotes is that the hand of Abu al-kheir Aghtaa (Sheikh) is cut off. This is expressed as unintentional incident which is due to his dignity and God's test.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, pp. 481-480) (Molana, Masnavi, third book, couplets 1613-1720)

19. Bayazid and his Avoidance

In both anecdote, the austerity of Bayazid due to rebellious of his ego from his command is described.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 159) (Molana, Masnavi, third book, couplets 1699-1704)

20. Sheikh does not Get Upset for the Death of his Children

The topic in both anecdotes is death of Sheikh's child (Fazil). Sheikh not only does not mourn on the death of his child, but also he smiles and is happy to please God.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 85) (Molana, Masnavi, third book, couplets 1772-1834)

21. Mosquito Complains from Wind to Suleiman

The topic in both anecdotes is that the mosquito complains from wind to Suleiman.

(Attar, Asrarnama, couplets 898-910) (Molana, Masnavi, third book, couplets 4624-4645)

22. The Tanner Gets Fainted from the Odor of Perfume

The topic of dialogue in both anecdotes is that the tanner gets fainted and his brother treats him.

(Attar, Asrarnama, couplets 959-986) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 257-305)

23. Miracles of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Maghrebi

A: Attar's anecdote: The topic is humility of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Maghrebi (Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 489)

B: Molana's anecdote: The dignity of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Maghrebi is expressed (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 598-613)

24. Reason of Ibrahim Adham's Migration and Leaving the Khorasan

In both anecdotes, the topic is going of camel on the roof. Ibrahim Adham changes and leaves the reign.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 87) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 726- 844)

25. Sufi who was Meditating in Rosary

The topic of both anecdotes is thinking of Sufi about the divine creations in rosary. The maid protests his behavior and says take your head up and behold the works of God. Sufi responds to her.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 70) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 1359-1372)

26. Bayazid gives Tidings of Birth of Abolhasan Kharghani

The topic of both anecdotes is that Bayazid Bastami gives tidings of birth of Abolhasan Kharghani in the future.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 577) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, Couplets 1802-1855)

27. Bayazid Bastami says Praise be to me, I'm such Exalted

The topic is both anecdotes is that the Bayazid tells praise be to me, I'm such exalted and his disciples protest him. Bayazid answers his disciples not by speech, but by action.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, pp. 143-144) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 2102-2153)

28. Bird wills do not Regret the Past

The topic in both anecdotes is bird predation by man, cunning of bird for freedom, and regret of man.

(Attar's Elahi Nameh, couplets 3704-3727) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 2245-2265)

29. Sunnis and Philosopher Dialogue

In both anecdotes, the topic is debate and discussion of Malek and Dheri and mystic and philosopher on their rightness and going to fire to test and prove their rightness.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 43-44) (Molana, Masnavi, Fourth book, couplets 2833-2880)

30. Wrath of King to his Companion

In both anecdotes, the topic is wrath of king to his companion and intercessory of Emadalmalek and cry of Nadeem due to not receiving king's consent.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 568) (Molana, Masnavi, fourth book, couplets 2932-2973)

31. Answering to the Ignorant who Said the World Would be Good if there would No Death

The topic in both anecdotes is worthlessness of world due to existence of death angel.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 317) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 1760-1771)

32. Ayaz and his Chamber

The topic of dialogue in both anecdotes is accusing Ayaz to stealing and becoming clear the Ayaz's honesty and integrity.

(Attar, Mosibat Name, couplets 2520-2531) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 1857-1926)

33. Sheikh becomes Aware of his Disciple's Greediness

In both anecdote, the topic is complain and fear of disciple from Junaid (Sheikh) about hunger and nudity.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 376) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 2841-2854)

34. Greedy Cow

The topic of dialogue in both anecdote is greediness of cow. From morning to night, he eats grass in an island and gets fat, but in the night he concerns that maybe he has not get something to eat tomorrow and gets thin. Despite several years of eating the grass, he is always concern about this issue.

(Attar, Elahi Name, couplets 5241-5256) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 2855-2869)

35. Darwish sees that the Amid Khorasani's Servants are Well-Dressed and Adorned

The topic of dialogue in both anecdote is complaint of rude person to God for hospitality.

(Attar, Mantegholteyr, couplets 2773-2787) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 3165-3209)

36. Muslim Invites the Unbeliever to get Muslim in Bayazid Age

The topic of dialogue in both anecdote is that the unbeliever does not get Muslim in Bayazid age.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, p. 152) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 3356-3366)

37. Ayaz went Seventy Times to Battle

The topic of both anecdotes is fighting with ego.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, pp. 304-305) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 3780-3814)

38. In the Party, King Mahmud gives JEWEL to Minister and Asks how much it costs

The topic of dialogue in both anecdotes is that the king orders to break the precious jewel and king's companions refrain from breaking it and Ayaz breaks it. King's companions blame him, but King admires him.

(Attar, Mosibat Name, couplets 5781-5791) (Molana, Masnavi, fifth book, couplets 4035-4119)

39. At the Night, the Lover Hopes for Meeting his Loved

The topic of dialogue in both anecdotes is meeting of loved and lover.

(Attar, Mantegholteyr, couplets 3545-3555) (Molana, Masnavi, Sixth book, couplets 593-642)

40. Balal Habashi and his Passion and Khawje Displeases him

The topic in both anecdotes is faith of Balal and his licking by his Khawje to convert his religion.

(Attar, Mantegh Al-Teyr, couplets 565-571) (Molana, Masnavi, sixth book, couplets 888-953)

41. Sultan Mahmud sits on Reign Throne, the Slave Crying

The topic of both anecdotes is crying of captured child and asking its reason by Mahmud companions.

(Attar, Mosibat Name, couplets 5367-5378) (Molana, Masnavi, Sixth book, couplets 1383-1449)

42. Sheikh Abolhasan Kharghani's Disciple comes to see Sheikh

The topic in both anecdotes is that the Avicenna (Darwish) knows the dignity, grace, and mystical ethics of Sheikh Abol Hasan.

(Attar, Tazkare Oliya, pp. 582-583) (Molana, Masnavi, sixth book, couplets 2044-2152)

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the common stories of Molana's Masnavi and Attar's works, it was concluded that in creation of Masnavi, Molana has directly or indirectly considered Attar's works and has inspired from his works. However, Molana's strength is that he provides brighter, more attractive, and more effective anecdotes.

The comparative categorization of these anecdotes provides systematic and meaningful information to the reader. They show frequent common topics in works of these two mystics and poets. It is needless to say that since the childhood of Molana coincided with oldness of Sheikh Attar, most reputation of Molana is significantly thanks to Sheikh Attar whose ideas and life is not available to researchers.

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