

Criteria and Structure Analysis of the Dialogue among Religions in Mathnavi Ma'navi

Helale Amini, Khalil Mirzaei Varoei

Abstract - Mystic Poetry from its birth till its maturity has been irrigated with one main destiny and has been overfilled with divine minutes. One of the effective elements which blossomed mystic poetry, and Mathnavi as an example, is a "dialogue". Mathnavi is a dialogic book which has narration in its infra-structure and its style is in a way that dialogue gives it a special look. In Mathnavi, the tone of voice is completely in harmony with the characterization, and so is the tone of the speaker in harmony with its listeners. The goal of this study is the analysis of Mowlana's ideas about dialogue among different (human and non-human) characters and among the representatives of different schools of thinking and different religions. Additionally it engages to show the internal characteristics and personality of the characters and their actions and reactions to the presented thoughts through dialogue. This study attempts to give a history of dialogue and dialogical approaches among religions. It also explains the characteristics of dialogues through examples. From another viewpoint on which this study is founded dialogue is categorized according to its types (Dialogue and Monologue), the parties of speaking (Human and non-human), aspects of speaking (brevity, equality and verbiage) and thus the dialogues which have communicative and religious confronting representations.

Index Terms: Mowlana, Mathnavi, Dialogue, Religions,

I. INTRODUCTION

Highlight Mowlana Jalal-e Din Mohammad has been one of the best speakers of Gnostics and a famous mystic. Mathnavi is his masterpiece. One of the important discussions in his Mathnavi is dialogue which is very live and dynamic and is divided into different types; i.e. mass of the audience, external, internal and monologue. Since Mathnavi is a mystic didactic work, the poet has always tried to preach advices, moralities and ethics and also to define his own mystical thinking through dialogues. Thus the analysis of stories, narratives and allegories of Mathnavi is various. The dialogue among religions has been always proposed for finding common forms. Mowlana has also made use of dialogue among different religions' famous characters in order to reach to the union of religions. This study attempts to analyze dialogues, narratives and allegories of the six books of Mathnavi, and categorize the different types of speaking (dialogue and monologue), aspects of speaking (brevity, equality and verbiage), the parties in the dialogue (God, prophets, humans, ...) and to study the stories according to their mystic, cryptic, historical, didactic, philosophical etc aspects.

Dialogue

Speech in narratives and allegories of Mathnavi is used in two ways; sometimes dialogic and sometime mono-logic. Ways of characterization, characters' features and their variety are prominent in Mathnavi. God, prophets, angels, Satan, humans, animals, objects, etc. are the parties active in these dialogues. Additionally, the pertinence of situation, speech and the partners have classified these speeches according to their brevity, equality and verbiage.

Dialogue or speaking together is one of the issues that, generally, the history of its study goes back to the start of human civilization. According to Plato, dialogue is the indirect signification of truth in the form of philosophical thinking in which a bilateral dialogical connection can be developed between the parties in order to help other people and thus according to Plato, with the help of the second party, one can realize his own thoughts [1]. Dialogue is an interactive process among two or more speakers and its aim is to gain a general result. Thus dialogue is a means to reach to a certain result [2]. Dialogue is the collection of different recitative actions and attempts for the proximity toward truth [3]. The study of dialogue is important since it illuminates the other aspects, since agreement is approaching truth while keeping reality in hand [4]. The advantages of dialogue is putting an end to enmity and introducing of identity.

Dialogue and Conversation

These two words have similar meanings which mean parlance and discussion. "Their difference is that in conversation the auditory aspect of dialogue is noticed" [3]. Accordingly, it is elicited that dialogue is not merely speaking, but its listening aspect has the priority. The difference between this kind of listening and listening in a conversation is that in a dialogue listening is unconscious and unexpected while listening in a conversation should be conscious and deliberate and the listener should give the speaker the permission to talk and state ideas. In a dialogue like conversation listening to others, taking up a role and improving a part of the discussion or the acceptance of being a speaker and a listener at the same time are very important. In dialogue (both linguistic and narrative) the standard language starts. Official and everyday language starts with dialogue and is accordance with rule. Dialogue is the basis of order [5]

Monologue and Interior Monologue

Monologue is talking singly and addressing oneself in a way that one experiences his/her interior and addresses it and talks to it, thus soliloquy and stream of consciousness are in close connection with monologue. "Monologue is a kind of speech which one does it with him/herself and states his/her thoughts and feelings in a loud voice in loneliness [6]. Soliloquy is also a speech in which only one person talks and is divided into two types; Internal Soliloquy and Dramatic monologue.

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Outline of the Cultural Dialogue Among Religions in Mathnavi Ma'navi

In Mathnavi Ma'navi the dialogue among religions is observed:

II. MORALITY AND RELIGION

assuming the impossible, human can one day live without food and sleep, but cannot stay human without propositions like morality, identity, peace, justice, agreement and tolerance. Mowlana in Mathnavi Ma'navi pays full attention to morality principle in art and science. In the fifth book where he narrates the story of a person who was afraid of the governor hunting donkeys, points to a moral minute; no guilty takes the guilt of another, and invites man to his origin and perfectness of morality, i.e. living a good life. In this story Mowlana shows the dialogue between two people of which the first addresses the other and asks him why he is escaping. He answers:

He said: They are very serious and if they take me as a donkey, it would not be a wonder (Book 5, line 2543)

Since the undistinguishing people are our masters, thus they take the donkey-possessor instead of the donkey itself (ibid, line 2545)

Thus the divine man addresses him:

The King of our city does not take anybody bootlessly, he is of recognition and insight (ibid, line 2546)

Be human and do not fear the donkey-hunters; you aren't a donkey, O the Jesus of the time, do not be afraid (ibid, line 2547)

The point and the basis of its moral theme, like the whole book of Mathnavi, is the dependence of man on morality and religion.

III. FREEDOM

Freedom has always been eulogized in the all mystical schools and religions, and like many other social issues has two sides, i.e. it can be considered as a means or as a goal by itself. Mowlana, in his sixth book of Mathnavi, narrates the story of an ill person who would not be healed, thus the physician had given him the unlimited freedom to do whatever he desired:

He told him to do whatever you like in case that this old illness goes out of your body (Sixth book, line 1323)

Whatever your heart desired, do not deprive it in case that your patience and abstinence do not turn into tiredness (ibid, line 1324)

The point of this story in Mowlana's idea is this excellent line:

He laughed at you, the one who told you that this is your cure; he is the one who leads you to wheat (ibid, line 1341)

Speaking about freedom, man is always seeking freedom and has observed that some people have considered passion as their right and have rebelled against and oppressed the rights of the poor. Yet the world justice, as the judge of this case, instead of sentencing them verbally and actively, supports them itself.

The other point about freedom which is expandable in Mathnavi is that since man is a speaking animal, he has the ability to think and speak and because of these thoughts, he will be afraid of threats and punishments and will always seeks to uncover the mystery of what he is prevented. The last story of Mathnavi (The story of the Castle of the Owner of the Faces) is a good example of this issue:

O, beware of that Castle of the Owner of the Faces, avoid it and fear its danger (Sixth book, line 3634)

The in and out of its towers and its floor and ceiling is covered completely with the images of beautiful [ladies] (ibid, line 3635)

Then Mowlana points out that if the father did not warn his sons against that castle, they never desired to see that castle:

If this wasn't said by that father and he didn't warn [the sons] against that castle (ibid, line 3653)

They never were lead to that castle altogether and never desired to see that castle (ibid, line 3654)

IV. JUSTICE

All the divine, philosophical or religious schools aim to set up justice and equality according to wisdom and righteousness. Some story and narrations are in a masterpiece part of Mathnavi which can be studied according to this view; i.e. the story of "the deaf neighbor and the weak" in the second book and "the rustic and the townsman" in the third book which is speaking about justice and equality and tells the reader that man will give in to the justice wholeheartedly when he had been in love of truth from before.

V. TOLERANCE, TOLERATION AND MODERATION

The language of a bilateral speech is the language of peace and love; thus agreement should be the base and the understanding of others' speech had been the basis and foundation of human's life through history and is the main element in challenges and controversies. Thus agreement and disagreement result from true understanding and misunderstanding. The story of "4-people buying grape" in the second book of Mathnavi is the symbol of this point that the means of disagreements and discussions all over the world are that everybody or every sect, understanding only a part of truth, considers himself or itself righteous. The story of "Disagreement on the shape and form of the elephant" in the third book of Mathnavi is also another good example for this idea. Islamic tolerance and moderation requires that we don't consider ourselves to be right more than others in the world-wide scope and in the international town. Thus at the beginning of dialogue we have a part of the candle of truth, thus we cannot completely accept or dismiss something and we have to respect other cultures as well. Therefore in a dialogue, those will be successful who seek a common result. If in a dialogue parties wish to defeat each other, no result other than defeat and misunderstanding will be the outcome.

Some Points about Dialogues in Mathnavi

- 1- Dialogue is not used as a decorative figure for the stories, but it leads the stories in a certain direction and thus it should be said that dialogue is completely presupposed and deliberate.
- 2- Dialogue is in harmony with the characterization and is not against the social situations and personal inclinations.
- 3- Dialogues are realistic and natural for the readers even if they are not real.

- 4- There are differences among the speaking of characters according to its vocabulary choice, rhythm, tone and the length of the sentences etc. which adds a cultural theme to the dialogues and thus they become more fruitful and differentiated.
- 5- Dialogue in Mathnavi is both important and prominent in main and conclusive stories and minor sub-stories at the same time.
- 6- Among the stories, there are stories which are presented on the basis of questions and answers. These are wonderful and interesting examples of stories which are founded on mere speech and action has no role in these stories. "Rhetorical question" is always dominant on these stories and the answers are normally include wise points and because of this they are like popular anecdotes are in relation with folklore.
- 7- Long dialogues in stories are in itself interesting to be studied, yet the proposition of thoughts in them by Mowlana in here and there adds to its attractions. Mowlana, intriguing deceptively, avoids tiredness in his public readers and one of them is the minute trick to narrate an allegory or a short parable or a long fable inside the main long dialogue. "bringing these narratives is normally itself an excuse to propose many discussions and thoughts and going back to the main story which is desired by the reader results in cutting the propositions of the discussions narrated before which was bringing tiredness and gives the mind a short break" [7].
- 8- The dialogues in which actions are more prominent or their theme, personality or manner of the characters are shown, again speech in the form of question and answer is reflected and this kind of dialogue normally submerges questions and answers in attractive discussions and thus the story becomes full of adventure and movement.
- 9- The dialogues of Mathnavi, like the Quranic dialogues, are introduced via a medium. In these kinds of the dialogues, Mowlana because of the emotional excitements loses his control over speech and is no longer the producer of his own thinking and speaking, but he states other's speech and thus he distorts the logic of his speech and his way of speaking becomes similar to that of Quran.
- 10- The questions and answers in Mathnavi are not artificial and complex but are skillful and show Mowlana's ability and talent; since his statement is harmonious and appropriate in the context and is appropriate for the characters.
- 11- The description and the order of situations and the dialogue between characters adds to the artistic aspect Mathnavi, since Mowlana does not only aim to state his philosophical and mystic ideas. Thus we can see these two aspects, i.e. philosophical and artistic, in it and these two aspects make Mowlana a philosophic artist or an artist philosopher. Thus art and philosophy are correlative and each paves the ground for the other. [7].

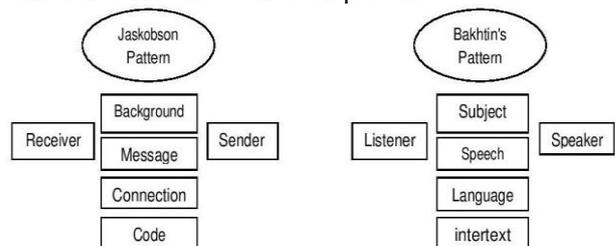
Philosophy and the Dialogic conditions according to Mowlana's view with a comparative look to Bakhtin and Buber

According to Mowlana dialogue is founded on communicative act among the parties of dialogue and setting up a bilateral connection among them i.e. the speaker and the listener. Mowlana speaks about this social bilateral

relationship in speech with words like "connection" or "attraction". From this viewpoint "the presence of the listener or reader, for setting up the connection, is not important. Thus, relationships which are founded on polarization, like friendship, enmity, love and hate, from that aspect that connote a kind of relation and cannot be without the other beside, against or around, can be proposed in the same dominion [8]. Yet it is necessary to refer to this point that in the relation between man and God, Mowlana calls to the mind speaking with God and the dialogue between God and his creatures and as he puts it the dialogue between "The Creator of Right" and "The whole elements of the world" to be a kind of "attraction"; Dialogue according to Bakhtin can be external (between two people) or internal (between one's old self and new self). Additionally Bakhtin also refers to the different levels and much various forms of dialogue. Dialogue cannot be limited to forms like discussion, challenge and parody which are the most evident and the best formed kinds of dialogues. There are other kinds of dialogues like trust on others' speech, pious acceptance (which leads to dictation), submission to the word of the leader or one's peer, deep survey of meanings in understanding concepts and formation of definitions on another definition and formation of one sound on another sound, invigoration of speech through mixing with another speech, and transcending from understanding's limitations" (ibid). "Man, confronting you, becomes I and I as an autonomous entity, never occurs" [9]. "Maybe one can say that the differentiating aspect and the difference between ideas of these two lies on the point that as much as Mowlana insists on divine nature of speech, motivation, reason and end of it; does Bakhtin on the social destiny of language. Thus it is good to be said that the insistence of Mowlana on divine nature of the resource, end, reason and motivation of speech with the scrutiny and scholarly analysis of his has been inserted into discussions in which he had to ignore analysis, explanation and description of some linguistic discussions and engage in explaining linguistic issues only through the unseen world and the unquestionable globe. Bakhtin informs us of the dialogic logic of language in the culture and life" [10].

Dialogic Logic According to Bakhtin and Jakobson

Dialogue happens in the process of two social members and even if there is no addressee, dialogue can be done with a presumed addressee in the standard group to which the speaker belongs" [8]. "Accordingly the message or the speech of the speaker is transferred via an intermediate. This is either a message or a human and is transmitted either orally or written of which the addressee receives the message of the speaker"[7]. The dialogic pattern which Bakhtin puts forward is different with what Jakobson presents.



According to Bakhtin, speech and language is mentioned and the speech is connection generally speaking, yet it is totally different from telegraphic radio and electricity" [8].

Dialogue among religions is a controversial issue which is put forward to us. The proof for this claim is the deep gap between the advocates and opponents of dialogue which has divided them into two different parties with totally different discourses. Thus one can say that we are facing a phenomenon called dialogue among religions and not a certain dialogue. "The dialogue among religions is an individual attempt which has his own rituals, traditions and culture and beliefs yet knows another individual whom has different religion and according to this definition, the religious person in the dialogue among religions, do not leave his own religious beliefs and would not prefer unprejudiced and negligence but thinks that the efficient dialogue between the two different group just according to the criteria accepted by the two parties can be reachable and acceptable" [11].

Mowlana believes in this definition of the unification of meaning in which one can reach to the foundational issues with bypassing of the outward differences and reaching the nature of religion. There is no religion that its meaning and inside is different from other religions. Thus the essence of every religion is the relation between the devout and his God and thus it is the relation between the lover and the beloved. Mowlana searches the bypassing of differences with coming to one color. Mowlana narrating the story "Os and Xazraj" in the second book attempts to prove the unity of religions:

There were two tribes called "OS" and "Xazraj" which were blood thirsty for each other (Second book, line 3722)

Mowlana believes that the difference between the religions and beliefs results from raw and inappropriate some of them and completeness and perfection of some others. When the person who believes in the incomplete belief understands the perfectness of the other person, then the difference can be solved. Mowlana believes that everybody should leave the differences and looks only at the same light ray of all religions. But he sees the differences among religions resulting only from different viewpoints, as it can be seen in the famous allegory of the elephant in the dark house in third book of Mathnavi. He thus considers the difference between religions as dispensable and due to the differences in the viewpoint and that the tiffs of souls are because of the objectivity of the world of multiplicity and asks the readers to consider the common reality of religions instead of the appearances if religions. The spiritual presence of Moses and Jesus can be seen almost in all of the mystic Muslim works especially in Mowlana's. Mowlana sees the roots of every problem in looking at outwards and fanaticism and sympathizing. In the second book of Mathnavi, it is said that:

The differences between people comes from his name when it goes to the meaning, it is resolved (Second book, line 3659)
"Mowlana in his book *Fih-e-Ma-Fih* has a sentence which confirms the dialogue between different religions and the final unity of all religions. According to Mowlana fidelity and infidelity has meaning only when we think of path, but when we are speaking about the end, the end of all religions is the same and that is reaching to God" [12].

Narration and Characterization in Mathnavi

Mowlana in his Mathnavi starts his words wisely and with the intension of presenting certain meanings in a curt outline, but before introducing the meaning, he separates the density of meanings which is due to the associations and takes it with

himself. Mowlana, when speaking about an issue, remembers a famous event and starts discussing that, he narrates an anecdote, that anecdote requires a mystic principle, narrating that, he remembers an allegory and that allegory takes him to narration of another anecdote and thus suddenly another anecdote and he finally tells us the philosophical principle hidden inside. Again he goes back to the first narration and before finishing it he goes back to the very first issue. One of the best example of these frame stories and the interference of narrations may be in the third book in the story of "the people of Saba' and the rebelling the blessings for them", there the narration stops, there is an insistence on the narration of details and mentioning of all of the speeches said by the characters, which is a positive aspect of his narration and makes it closer to the contemporary story telling. "Mowlana makes use of means and media for characterization and among them is dialogue" [13].

- I. description: stating the outward features
- II. dialogue: instead of quoting what characters say, he sometimes lets them to speak to each other directly and this characterizes them easily.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study shows that dialogues in Mathnavi are dynamic and live and this shows the scrutiny of Mowlana and his observance of the characters of the parties of the dialogue. Dialogues are in harmony with the mind of characters of the story and in accordance with the social situations and individual inclinations. Studying the stories of Mathnavi, the dialogues of the characters in the story, gives the reader a sense of reality and naturalism, even if it is not real.

The writer of this study studies the different kinds of speech (dialogue and monologue), aspects of dialogue (brevity, equality and verbiage), parties of dialogue (human and nonhuman) and also stories in which dialogues are direct or indirect and have the presentation of confrontation and communication of religions and other schools shown in charts: In the 178 stories studied in the six books of Mathnavi, dialogic aspects, there are 76 examples of brevity (43%), 56 case of equality (31%) and 46 cases (26%) for verbiage. Thus the frequency of brevity is the most happening and verbiage is the least, yet as for the different types of dialogues, there are 355 dialogues totally (87%) and 53 cases of monologues (13%). Thus dialogue has the most frequency. As for the parties of speech generally there are 8 cases of dialogue with God with prophet, with prophets and with saints), 23 cases (7%) God with human, angels, Satan and unintelligent entities and the four elements of nature, 64 cases (18%) dialogue of prophets, saints and peers with human, angels, Satan, animals and unintelligent and conceptual entities, and the four elements of nature, 3 cases (1%) dialogue of human beings with angels and Satan, 121 cases of dialogue between human (man and women), human community, 3 cases of dialogue between human and unintelligent and conceptual entities, 7 cases of dialogue (2%) of human beings with animals and animal community, 15 cases (4%) with a group with another group, 46 cases (13%) of the dialogue between the king and his minster with people, 7 cases of the dialogue (2%) between lover and the beloved, public and 10 cases (3%)

dialogue of a child(ren) with parents, 19 cases (5%) of dialogues between animal and animals, animal groups and thus accordingly as it can be seen the most frequent dialogue is the dialogue among human communities and the least frequent is a dialogue between man and Satan and angels and the dialogue between human beings with unintelligent and conceptual entities and the four elements of nature.

In another classification 15 cases (8%) of these stories include stories that contain a dialogue among religions and according to this percentage it can be said that Mowlana sought a dialogue among religions with the intension of coming to one unity in the essence of religions and putting aside the outwards and differences of religions. He considered the differences of religions dispensable and an obstacle in the way of perfection, thus he is ambitious to put away the disagreements with the shine of the sun of truth. As a matter of fact, it is only with putting away the prejudices and severity that everybody can sit beside the banquet of communication and mutual understanding. Thus Mowlana believes that some people are conceited in seeing the differences and they think that they are looking at realities. Narrating all these, Mowlana attempts to speak for dialogue and tolerance among religions which is possible only when we see the internal truths of religions deeply and pass through their faces and come to see the unity of them.

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