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Extended Abstract

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New Findings about the Works of Noqtaviyan Based on the Newly Discovered Biography and Poems of Amri Shirazi

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Introduction

Noqtaviyah is a branch of the Hurufiyah movement, founded by Mahmud Pasikhani (died 1427 AD) In the 15th century AD. This is why the followers of this movement are sometimes called Pasikhaniyan and sometimes Mahmudian. Mahmud Pasikhani himself was initially a follower of Fazlullah Na'imi Astarabadi (died 1393 AD), the founder of the Hurufiyah, who was later rejected by Na'imi due to his excessive materialistic beliefs. The beliefs of the Noqtaviyah include materialistic-reincarnation ideas, elements of ancient Iranian, and tendencies of chauvinism and blasphemy (from the point of view of the refutationists). The aforementioned group lived in secret for about a century and in that state they devoted themselves to propagating their teachings, and as can be seen from a number of sources, they had connections with the remnants of the Ismailis in the 16th century AD. Noqtaviyan were persecuted and searched many times from the second half of the sixteenth century until they were severely suppressed and massacred in several stages, especially in the years (1574 and 1585 AD). In the meantime, many scholars and preachers of the Noqtaviyah were also destroyed, as were their works.

Abul-Qasim Muhammad Amri Shirazi is one of the extraordinary and at the same time one of the most controversial figures of the Noqtaviyah movement in the sixteenth century. As the chroniclers have written, Amri was an unparalleled figure in the sciences of the occult, numbers and mysteries, and therefore in a short period of time, many people gathered around him. Due to the dissemination of his ideas, which were considered atheistic by the rulers and people of his time, he first became blind in the year (1565 AD) and finally was murdered in the year (1590 AD) while he had repeatedly insisted on his monotheistic faith and renounced the propagation of the religion of Mahmud Pasikhani. Apparently, Amri Shirazi had many works of poetry, most of which have been lost today. In this article, a large number of poems by Amri Shirazi are discovered and introduced from manuscripts and lesser-known sources.

Method, Review of Literature, Purpose

Very few important studies has been done on Amri Shirazi and his works. Rokn-zadeh Adamiyat introduced Amri in his book *The Scholars and Orators of Fars* (1958). Golchin Ma'ani (1980) published the *Saqinameh* of Amri Shirazi in his book *Tazkira of Peymaneh*. In his articles between the years (1987

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and 1998 AD) that sought to introduce and explain the Pasikhani movement through remaining works, Zakavati Qaragazlu also paid attention to some of the works of Amri.

The research method in this article is descriptive-analytical. The method of studying and collecting the required information was done through library sources. Most of the sources used in this research were Tazkirah of poets and manuscripts of poetry collections in libraries of Iran. The aim of this research is to add a page to the history of the Noqtaviyah sect and a line to the history of Iranian thought by studying and reconstructing the circumstances and works of Amri Shirazi.

First, a brief introduction to the Noqtaviyah sect, its founder and works is given. Then, an attempt is made to present a relatively acceptable biography of this thinker based on primary sources and the statements of Sheikh Abul-Qasim Amri Shirazi himself. Reconstruction of the key dates of his life, reflections on his Noqtaviyah ideas with a Shi'a background and his Ismaili background are among the most important contents of this section.The final section of the article will introduce his newly discovered works.

Discussion

There have been obvious errors in previous research conducted on Amri Shirazi. Roknzadeh Adamiyat (1958) mentioned Amri in his book, *The Scholars and Orators of Fars*. He gave a brief and effective discussion on a few verses of Amri that have been attributed to others. The criticism he received is that, without historical research, he considered the year of Amri's blindness to be 1525 AD, which is actually 1565 AD. Golchin Ma'ani (1980) published Amri's *Saqinameh* along with the *Tazkira of Peymaneh*. The main problem with the research on Golchin Ma'ani is that *Saqinameh* is quoted in the aforementioned text exactly from a collection (belonging to Central Library of the University of Tehran, No. 5400). However, upon comparing the solid text of *Peymaneh* with the collection, the author realized that Golchin Ma'ani had not been duely careful in quoting the source. Golchin Ma'ani has omitted four important verses, including one containing the date, which indicates the year 995 AH, the year the *Saqinameh* was composed, and has distorted or fabricated some verses according to his own wishes.

Among the Noqtavis, except for Mahmud Psikhani, the founder of the Noqtavis sect, the largest number of remaining works apparently belong to Sheikh Abul-Qasim Muhammad Amri Shirazi (died in 1590 AD). Some Literary Tazkirah state that Mahmud Psikhani's works numbered one thousand and one treatises and sixteen books, although the first number seems exaggerated. According to some historical-literary sources, Amri Shirazi had many works. It is said that he had a poetry collection that contained seven thousand verses of poetry, however, today we do not know about his complete collection. The reason for the loss of this poet's poems, like other works by the Noqtavians, was the opposition of the Safavid government. What we have today of Amri Shirazi's poems are scattered fragments in manuscripts and poets' Tazkirah. In the poems that have remained from him, Amri has revealed his beliefs and sometimes complains about the accusations that fanatics make against him and tries to refute those accusations.

Conclusion

The findings of this article show that Amri Shirazi had seven thousand verses of poetry, of which we know only 967 verses today, of which 491 verses, mostly in the four poetic works, were introduced for the first time in this article. The four remaining works of Amri Shirazi are *Fikr & Zikr*, *Anwâr al-Oyoun*, *Sirr-e Alef* and *Mohit al-Ma'âni*. These poetic works are very valuable in that they contain the thoughts and beliefs of the Naqtawis, and their use is essential and efficient in formulating the beliefs and theories of this sect. With this research, it can be said that currently we have the largest number of poetic works of the Noqtavians from Amri Shirazi. All of these poems contain the Noqtaviyan beliefs of this thinker with a Shi'a background, and the poet tries to provide new interpretations of Shi'a propositions by utilizing the beliefs and concepts of the Naqtavians.

Key words: Noqtaviyah, Amri Shirazi, *Fekr va Zekr*, *Anwar al-Oyoun*, *Sirr-e Alef*, *Mohit al-Ma'ani*.

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