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## TO THE QUESTION OF THE SOURCE OF DAKHNI POET MUHAMMAD SHARIF AJIZ’S MASNAVI “LAILA MAJNUN”



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### ABSTRACT

*The article discussed how Muhammad Sharif Ajiz sings of pure and sublime love, which ennobles and exalts a person in his masnavi "Leyla and Majnun". It is being told that it is so powerful that a person, for the sake of his love and beloved, does not stop at any difficulties and obstacles. The bright feeling of Leyla and Majnun is strangled and trampled, insulted and humiliated in a feudal society, one of the main laws and moral norms of which is an unshakable principle: wealth is above all.*

**Keywords:** *masnavi, poet, subject of masnavi, linguistic influence, authorship, explanatory list, manuscript, Dakhni period, ancient Urdu.*

### INTRODUCTION

This popular story of the Arabian desert “Laila Majnun” became an interesting subject of Persian romance poetry, then the Iranian mind found a mystical aspect in this love story. Laila Majnun took a literary form in Nizami Ganjavi's famous "Khamsa". This is the third story of Nizami’s Khamsa. The literary works of Amir Khusrau, Jami and Hatafi in Persian and Hamdi in Turkish are considered to be of the highest literary value.

### DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Ajiz is an famous poet of the reign of Sultan Muhammad Adilshah, ruler of the Adilshahi dynasty of Bijapur. His full name is shaykh Muhammad Sharif. He was the son of Ahmad Gujrati (author of masnavis “Yusuf Zulekha” and “Laila Majnun”). Ahmad Gujrati came from Gujrat and joined the court of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutbshah, while his descendants moved to Bijapur. Like his father

Muhammad Sharif Ajiz wrote two masnavis on the same topics – “Yusuf Zulekha” (1044 AH) and “Laila Majnun” (1406 AH)<sup>1</sup>.

Masnavi “Laila Majnun” of Ajiz has been compiled by Dr. Ghulam Umar Khan. This book was published by Osmania University in 1977.

In the first half of the 70th century, which was the era of Muhammad Quli Qutbshah two poets of ancient Urdu Vajahi and Ghawwasi, made “Laila Majnun” the subject of their masnavis - one is Ahmad, the other is Ajiz. A few scattered pages of Ahmad's masnavi reached the hands of the eminent historian of Urdu Hafiz Mehmud Khan Shirani, he mentioned in his "Punjab Mein Urdu" - these poems show that Ahmad Gujrati had access to the court of Muhammad Quli Qutbshah and Ahmad started writing this masnavi on the king's command. If, according to the assumption, it is accepted that Ahmad's Laila Majnun was completed during the reign of Muhammad Quli Qutbshah, then this masnavi can be considered a pre-1590 work and thus the first Urdu work on this subject .

The second poet of the first half of the 70th century who has made Laila Majnun the subject of his masnavi is Ajiz, who was not associated with the royal court, and who completed this masnavi in 1630. His other works are still shrouded in obscurity. But some evidence suggests that this masnavi was read with interest not only in Deccan , but also in Delhi and Punjab, even ears after the time of its authorship, due to the general interest of the story and its literary appeal. About two hundred ears after its authorship, during the reign of Shah Hatim and Mirza Mazhar a poet from North India Mir Ahmad wrote a masnavi on the same subject, and the masnavi was a guiding light for him.

Ajiz's masnavi is mentioned by Nasiruddin Hashmi, who found a manuscript of it in 1906 during the compilation of an explanatory list of the manuscripts of the librarian Salar Jang, although in an explanatory note to this manuscript. Hashmi writes “it is a pity that we do not know anything about Ajiz before this, no historian of literature knew about Ajiz and his masnavi”<sup>2</sup>.

In 1908, when Dr. Zor compiled the fourth list of Urdu manuscripts of the Department of Literature, he traced another manuscript of Ajiz’s masnavi. Dr. Ghulam Umar Khan, when investigated from the point of view of compiling this masnavi he found four more manuscripts of it in various libraries and private collections of India. Masnavi of this name was found in the library Jama Masjid in

بحوالہ پروفیسر سعیدہ جعفر تاریخ ادب اردو ۱۷۰۰ تک دہلی ۱۹۹۸ جلد دوم ص ۴۷۰<sup>1</sup>  
دکن میں اردو، چھٹا ایڈیشن، ص ۱۱۱، اور دکن کے چند تحقیقاتی مضامین، ص ۱۴۲<sup>2</sup>

Bombay. Later it turned that the presence of another manuscript is kept in the library of Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu Aligarh.

A manuscript was discovered in the Library of manuscripts at Usmaniya Jamia, and a manuscript of it was also discovered at Maulavi Jamal Sharif .In this way, he traced a total of six manuscripts of Ajiz’s masnavi Laila Majnun.

There is a veil of deep darkness over the life of Ajiz - author of Laila Majnun. The Dakhni period of ancient Urdu is a dark period in the history of Urdu literature. There are many achievements of this period which are only due to the preservation of the language, not only from the literary point of view, they deserve to be noted and important in the history of Urdu poetry and literature, but no other details about their lives are available except the pseudonyms of their authors.

When investigated in order to find out the life of Ajiz, and for this purpose, in search of his other major or minor works, the existence of several poets with the pseudonym Ajiz among the Dakhni poets came to be known. Works and elaborate ghazals, elegies and mukhammas etc. whether important or unimportant are found scattered in the collections of manuscripts , but the author of masnavi Laila Majnun is someone else. Probably Muhammad Sharif Ajiz is the oldest among the poets in Deccan. Maulavi Nasiruddin Hashmi and Dr. Zor have expressed different opinions regarding the mentor of Ajiz based on the following poem of Ajiz:

مدد پاک پنجنتن و بار امام مدد پیر میراں منزہ مقام

*In this world help can only be expected from the panjatan<sup>3</sup>, bara imam<sup>4</sup> and pir Miran, who are free from faults, and they are highly esteemed.*

Both Hashmi and Dr. Zor agree that Ajiz is referring to his spiritual master entitled " پیر میراں ". In the Deccan, three sages have passed by the name of Shah Miran. One Shah Miran who was the famous caliph of Shah Aminuddin Ala, the follower and caliph of Khudavandi Hadi. He died in Hyderabad in 1125. The second elder is the famous Shah Miranji Shamsul-ushshaq of Bijapur, and the third is Sayyad Miran Husaini -alhamavi, who came to Hyderabad during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutbshah, and settled here . He died in 1094<sup>5</sup>.

According to Hashmi " as the masnawi of Ajiz was written in 1040 A.H., it is assumed that this sage Miran Hussaini al-Hamwi is praised by Ajiz."Dr. Zor's research is based on the above-mentioned poem of Ajiz as follows:

<sup>3</sup> The five chaste personalities of islam namely the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Fatima, Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain.

<sup>4</sup> The twelve imams (religious leaders) of the Shiite sect

<sup>5</sup> تذکرہ مخطوطات اداره ادبیات اردو، جلد چہارم، ص ۱۱۳

" Pir Miran of whom the poet mentioned was the famous Sufi poet Shah Miran Ji Shams-ul-Ushshaq of Bijapur, who was the father of Shah Burhan-uddin Janam, and the founder of a great line of mysticism, poetry and literature of the Deccan. Many books of his grandson Shah Aminuddin Ala are available in the institution<sup>6</sup>.

Shah Miranji Shams al-Ushshaq died in 1397 A.H. As if he had died one and a half hundred ears before the creation of Ajiz's masnavi, if it is assumed that Ajiz had pledged allegiance, then he would be a follower of Shah Amin-uddin Aala, or one of his caliphs, and in such a case, ignoring a well-known and famous gentleman like Shah Amin, to whom Ajiz should be related, directly or very closely, it is not a far-fetched assumption to call Shams-ul-Ushshaq as his follower.

In fact, the poet may refer "Pir Miran" to Hazrat Abdulqadir Jilani. Most of the poets of the Deccan after praising in the preface of their works showed great commitment and respect to Hazrat Abdulqadir Jilani. They worship him with the epithets "Pir Miran" and "Mir Miran" for Hazrat Abdulqadir Jilani. "Pir Miran" and "Mir Miran" are commonly used among them. Although Ghawwasi in the beginning of his masnavi "Mina Sanwati" praises his caliphs - Khulafae Rashidin<sup>7</sup>.

But as it has been clarified from the previous papers, Ajiz was actually the follower and caliph of Hazrat Shah Wajihuddin Gujrati - however, he also had devotion to Hazrat Sheikh Abdulqadir Jilani, who was the founder of the Qadiriya chain.

Those poets of the ancient Deccan school who had access to the royal palace or those who were willing to have access to the palace, must include some verses in praise of the king at the beginning of their masnavis. It is evident from the praise of Sultan Muhammad Adilshah in masnavi Yusuf Zulekha that Ajiz was related to the palace.

At more than one place in masnavi, he prays that God will forgive his sins and grant him a good end - this kind of poetry suggests that the poet must be a man of deep religious inclinations and perhaps at the time of writing this masnavi he may be a man of mature or declining age. References to the Qur'an and Hadith at several places in the text of the masnavi suggest that Ajiz was a highly educated man of his time.

The ear of composition of Laila Majnun is mentioned in four manuscripts among the six manuscripts of masnavi. According to version (a) its ear of

<sup>6</sup> ايضا ، ص ۱۲۳

<sup>7</sup> Titles given to the first four caliphs of the Islamic community.

composition is 1040 hijri. The year of authorship of manuscripts (b), (c) and (d) 1046 A.H. (1636 A.D.) seems acceptable.

The love story of Layla Majnun has been a favorite subject of Arabic, Persian and Turkish literature for centuries. According to common traditions the story of Laila Majnun is attributed to a man named Qays Ibn al-Muluh, who was a young man from the Banu Amir tribe. Laila belonged to the same tribe. She was a daughter of Saad. But the early historians of Islamic history and literature such as Aghani, Ibn Khalkan and Ibn Khaldun believe that the Majnun is a fictional character and has no historical existence. The story and the poems that are attributed to it, are the creation of a mind of that era. Various poets have made around this incident of love the original story. So Qais met Laila in a group of girls, and he fell in love with her at first sight and slaughtered his camel and feasted on these girls and Laila accepted his passion. But Laila's father refused to marry her to Qays, later she was married to a man named bin Muhammad Al-Uqaili. Qais was so shocked by this failure that he used to roam around the gorges of Najad day and night half-naked like a madman. He used to walk around and satisfy his grief by writing poetry, occasionally he got the opportunity to meet Laila but he died in the midst of this horror.

Hatafi's masnavi Laila Majnun is written in 928 AH (1520 AD). Abdullah Hatfi was the nephew of the famous Persian poet Abdurrahman Jami. Four manuscripts of his masnavi are kept at the Salarjang State Library. Ajiz's masnavi is written based on masnavi of Hatafi.

Ajiz's masnawi is certainly based on Hatfi's story, but it cannot be called a translation of Hatfi's masnawi. As far as the events of the story are concerned Ajiz has marked the path of Hatfi's story, but brevity in the narration is a prominent feature of Ajiz's masnawi. In most places where the description of an incident has been described by Hatafi in twenty to twenty five poems, Ajiz has generally presented it in two or four poems.

This is the reason why the story of Ajiz's masnavi moves quickly, while the verbal and semantic industrialization are the features of Hatfi's masnavi. That was written according to the general traditions of Persian poetry, sometimes lead to a loss in the beauty of poetry. The rapid movement of the story is a common feature of the masnavis of the ancient Deccan school, which is the primary poetry of this school. There are main characteristics of realism and simplicity.

It seems that Ajiz was fully aware of the literary mockery of his era, because despite following Hatafi's masnavi, he used the words to explain a single event or

situation in detail or by creating a pause in the story at some point. He has avoided the tendency to show off the industrialization and the wildness of the imagination.

Although in most of the cases Ajiz has strictly followed the events of Hatfi's story. It seems that other famous masnavis on this subject and perhaps the popular common folk tales related to Laila Majnun have also been in view of him. he makes liberal use of them, for example at the beginning of the story Ajiz describes Qais's father as a king, and Laila's father as a big trader of the city and later close of the king.

But according to Hatfi's masnawi Qays' father is a noble of Arabia, and he has no relation to Laila's father. According to the statement of Ajiz Qays and Laila's mothers were mutual friends and spent time together. Qais was infatuated with Laila since childhood, and this infatuation turned into love in the school age. But in Hatfi's masnavi the character of Laila is introduced for the first time in the school.

Similarly, there are passages in Hatafi's masnavi, which have been ignored by Muhammad Ajiz, for example, Hatafi has a description of a dream of Majnun . He dreamed that Laila was offering him a bouquet. When he woke up he sees that there is actually a bouquet in his hand . This incident ignited Qais' passion and then once he walked towards the city in the desire to see Laila. This long dream of Qays is not mentioned.

## CONCLUSION

As indicated, brevity and the sufficiency of words are the prominent features of this masnavi. This feature of Muhammad Sharif Ajiz's speech often reminds us of "Gulzare Naseem" . There are many poems in which a question and its answer are found in one poem. There are many places if one line is missing, so the story cannot be understood. The details of an incident are conveyed with the help of short word gestures with great fluency and cleverness.

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