

Investigating Social Injuries and Maladies in The Poems of Mahdi Akhavan Sales

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Abstract

Social injuries are real, variable, regulated, controllable and preventive phenomena. The control of social injuries, their scientific recognition in each society to answer theoretical, practical and applied scientific ideas and scientific findings produced in short and long term planning, for correct coping with social injuries, treatment or preventing their development and emergence becomes essential. The main question of this article is whether Mehdi Akhavan-Sales paid attention to social damage in his poems? his poems and writings as a committed, painful, and engaging writer with social issues in his age is shown. He deals with issues such as: Addiction, alcoholism, indifference, homelessness, suicide, haram, robbery, prostitution, imprisonment, social poverty, smuggling, spousal abuse, orphans and. in his poems has proven his deep awareness of the topics that he called "social harm" today. The results of this research can extend the dimension of personality and thoughts of the Brotherhood to their loved ones.

Key words: Social harm, Social pathology, Akhavan-Sales, Deviation, Social disturbances

INTRODUCTION

Social Damages

Social harm refers to any type of individual or collective action that is not performed by the actors in the framework of the principles of ethics and general rules or the formal and informal collective action of society. Therefore, it is confronted with a legal source or moral and social disapproval (Abdullahi, 2004: 15). It is very difficult to define social harm not only in Iran but also in Western societies. Even the prominent physical losses of individuals and their characteristics may be regarded as social harm in any society and at different times and places. For example, we can refer to "sexual disabilities, psychological abnormalities and deficiencies such as paralysis, blindness, mental retardation, cerebral deficiencies, obesity, stuttering, ill manners, deceit, nudism, voyeurism through the window to satisfy the inner desires or wearing tight and sexually

suggestive clothes in public, drug addiction, illegitimate births, or refusing to pay for nurturing them, violating the social laws or hygienic principles, failing to properly implement medical treatments and disobeying the amateur and professional sports regulations." (Farjad, 2009: 19).

Social Pathology

Social pathology addresses the types of problems that are raised at the social level and tries to examine their various causes from different individual, social, and other aspects. In the words of some thinkers, the social damages are the direct outcome of the industrial revolution and they exist in most societies and produce their own effects. Social pathology is the study of anomalies along with the causes and motivations for their emergence and the methods of preventing and treating these phenomena included in the study of the undesirable conditions of society. The main source of harms and social misbehaviors should be sought in the entirety of social life and the type of human relations. Socioeconomic disadvantages such as unemployment, poverty, bribery, inflation, financial and legal insecurity and other factors causing deprivation can pave the way for various types of social damages such as suicide, prostitution, felony, drug addiction, alcoholism, child abuse, burglary, vandalism, divorce, beggary, and the like. Hence, the concept of pathology is quite widespread

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and has far-reaching and practical consequences and values. From the combination of knowledge, experiences and the learned lessons, they have succeeded in establishing the grounds for the study of different fields to determine abnormalities and disruptions in life. The result of this task is the emergence of the knowledge of social pathology (or the sociology of deviations) (Sotoudeh, 2006: 26).

Social Damages in Iran

What can be said about social damages in Iran is that due to the particular political and social condition that is predominant in society, social harms have a value load in addition to being regarded as social problems. This means that such harm is considered merely as a crime in a society with liberal politics. In Iran, however, it is regarded as a sin in addition to being a crime. This particular attitude towards social issues makes the criminal or the pervert to view himself as a sinner instead of considering the society and its predominant relations as the factors in his deviation and this can be another personal and social harm.

The Importance of Social Pathology

In accordance with its condition, culture, growth and degeneration, each society faces various kinds of deviations and problems that have a destructive effect on its progress. Understanding such factors can clear the way for the community to move towards further development and interaction. As such, in addition to understanding their actions and preventing their continuation, the society can offer solutions to contribute to the health of the community. Let us consider the problem of addiction as an example. This problem is both an individual and a social problem. It is clear that it leads to the destruction of the energy and productivity of the society at the social level. Identifying the underlying causes and controlling them can revive much of the lost vigor and guide it within the healthy course of society. Nevertheless, no doubt, the most important issue in terms of social harm is the debate on "divorce". Divorce is a symbol of a healthy and correct communicative problem which occurs between individuals. At the micro level of families, this communicative problem can also spread to a larger dimension (which is the society) and disrupt human communications. It is never possible to study social pathology and deviation without addressing the issue of divorce. When the family unit suffers from weakness and insecurity, the moral and social foundations of the entire social system are shaken and the society is driven towards various crimes. Divorce can increase social harm such as addiction, alcoholism and sexual perversion. Moreover, it is one of the factors influencing the suicide rates. In a given society, divorce indicates social destabilization and instability that can lead to the degeneration of families and family values in that society (Azad, 1998: 203).

DISCUSSION

Social Damages and Disturbances in Akhavan's Interviews and Writings

While expressing a memory of his father's advice to him about giving up the art of music, Akhavan shows that he was familiar with social harm since his early childhood. In reviewing this memory, he pointed to social damages and disruptions such as poverty, displacement, homelessness, addiction, oppression and being an orphan: ". [My father] said: I enjoy music myself and lose my consciousness when I hear the sweet or passionate tunes of Tar or Kamancheh. But to think about the ordinary needs of life, I would not be pleased if you were involved with this troublesome art. A few days later, in the shades of the alley next to the place where he owned an old perfumery selling traditional medicine, my father invited me to a spectacle and showed me a black and sunburned man wearing a thin and shabby cloak. He was sitting on a small stool as my father had asked him. Next to him, there were a large cup of black and bitter tea from the tea house, a pack of cigarettes, and an old and black smoking tube. He had a small and elegant Tar with a marbled handle that he had taken out of his cloak. He was playing for us. He was a seasoned musician who played the instrument here and there when asked by the people who offered him little money for his sweet melodies. He threw a sugar cube in his mouth and drank some tea with it. With an odd honesty and a humiliating compassion, he told us how his father had died in unspeakable misery in a corner of a ruin in one of the southern neighborhoods of Mashhad at the height of affliction and poverty. His music had so many listeners and fans that he could have some shelter in a rented house, marry a woman, and have children. But he said: "I did not even have this much and could not have it. Today or tomorrow, I shall have to embrace a black death not in the corner of a ruined house, but in the corner of a street or an abandoned ruin..." (ShahinDezhi, 2008: 22-25). It is amazing that Akhavan was so devastated by poverty in his future life that he hoped he had followed the troublesome music: "If I had learned playing an instrument, I would have become somebody by now. If I had followed any other trouble, I would have been better than what I am now. Everyone who comes here lectures me about how a poet should be. Who would ever know what I am suffering?" (Tahbaz, 1991: 44).

Poverty poses another social harm for Akhavan that is the loss of his child. Akhavan Sales explains the cause of his four-day-old daughter's demise who was named Tanasgol: "I know that my newborn baby jumped into the arms of the cemetery because of poverty. If we had five hundred or even two hundred toman to bring a private midwife, the child would not have been lost." (Kakhi, 2006: 354).

In a memory of the time when Akhavan was a teacher in Khatun Abad in Tehran, Reza Marzban writes about his experience of poverty and hunger: "I accompanied them (Ahmad Khoyi, Akbar Azari and Akhavan) to Khatun Abad. In Khatun Abad, we were stuck in a rural school for a whole week on a cold and frozen day, we walked around the village as we had no loaf of bread, water or oil (for the heater)." (Ibid: 374).

In his memoirs, Akhavan refers to the terrible social disorder known as the "War" and the martyrdom of his first wife's two sons that she had from his ex-husband and writes: "The twin boys, Saeed and Abolfazl, were my wife's sons from her ex-husband and I had raised them when they were only three years old and they were later martyred at the very beginning of the war and I myself had another son from the same Arab woman. He went missing in the so-called imposed war. I am still looking forward to seeing him. They all called me father and there were also children I have from this wife of mine. They were all my children and they still are (Hariri, 1989: 18).

The Reflection of Social Damages and Disorientations in the Poems Written by Akhavan Sales

Displacement and homelessness: In his poem called "Chavooshi" of the collection called "Winter", Akhavan refers to the issue of the gypsies' displacement in this way: "And danced by the wave of hands and the knock of heels like a gypsy girl." (Akhavan, 1985: 105).

In the poem called "The Tale of the King of Stone City", from the collection called "From This Avesta", Akhavan has also referred to the subject of displacement and has written: "He is a homeless man, this lost traveler. He is the same prince driven from his city. He has headed towards the wilderness. He has passed the islands and seas. He has found no way and has stayed exhausted on the mountains and rocks." (Akhavan, 1975: 14).

- Hoarding: Hoarding is one of the abnormalities that become prevalent due to miseries such as war, displacement and poverty. Akhavan has pointed to this issue in the poem "The Wicked Hajji and the Godless Salesman" (R. K. AkhavanKakhi, 1991: 602).

-Opium: In the same poem known as Chavooshi, Akhavan touches upon the subject of opium and addiction and says: "And it goes out in the other way/To another chamber/In the hope that he would have the breath of fresh and free air/But there is the Hadith of Opium." (Akhavan, 1985: 105).

In the poem called "Kaveh or Alexander", Akhavan has also pointed to the use of opium in prisons: "The wind has stopped blowing into the sails/Again, we are left

with the choice between this and that/We are the guests of wine and opium/Of the gifts of the foes and friends" (Akhavan, 1966: 43).

In the beautiful poem called "The Sunrise", he also refers to the pigeon-man's smoking habit in the morning: "Over the thatched and wide roof/Beside the empty stable/The man is leaning on the wall/He has lit a cigarette for breakfast/Drowned in the sweetest pleasures of visiting this flight." (Akhavan, 1985: 54)

- Alcoholism: In Chavooshi poem, Akhavan has also referred to the problem of alcoholism and has said: "Do you know this is not the journey to the heavens?/To the Venus, this wicked widower and she-wolf who knows no sorrow/That clicked his demonic cup against the cup of Hafez and Khayyam and now drinks by the cup of Nima/And tomorrow will drink the cup of whoever comes after us." (Akhavan, 1985: 153). In the other part of this poem, Akhavan writes: "...As a lifeless worm with no head and tail/From the poisoned and masked chamber of my veins/He pulled himself as the drunkards, holding his hand to the wall..." (Ibid: 154).

In the poem known as "Kaveh or Alexander", Akhavan refers to the subject of alcohol in this way: "The waters dried out of the mill/We were left with the justice of the divinity/And what you said echoes as I will drink every night/Drunk and empty-handed, you have returned again?/The one who had gold and honor in his blood/Shrugged his shoulders and drank the cup/Holding the unseen metal umbrella/He walked towards the other shores" (Akhavan, 1966: 43).

In the poem called "The Swamps" from the collection known as "The End of Shahnameh", Akhavan points to his drinking habit: ". Every night/I ask the Saki of the temple/To give one more and more/From that clear, bitter and joyous water/The legitimate daughter of the fiery grapes." (Akhavan, 1990: 31).

Akhavan has also pointed to the custom of pouring the last sips of the wine on the ground: "There is wine and a shelter and a clean night washed away/I have had a few sips and shall pour the last on the ground/Slowly whispering the path of sorrow and sadness/I shall drink the wine of fiery pearls by a sonnet (Ibid: 34).

In his poem called "Hellish But Cold", Akhavan uses the subject of alcohol to illustrate the poem: "The last chapter/the last page/The last or even less pages/They are the last lines from the end of the paper/This sad and wet breath between my lips/the last drop/of the last drops from the cup of this cup" (Akhavan, 2000: 33).

- Being a widow: In the poem known as Chavooshi, Akhavan takes a quite negative view of widows and writes: "to the Venus, this wicked and conceited widow and she-wolf (Ibid., 31).

- Beggary: In "Kaveh or Alexander" Akhavan refers to the problem of begging in this way: "The strong and crushing punches to the sky/The open and scandalous fists of all types/Either secretor known slaps/It has become the cheap bowl of begging" (Akhavan, 1966: 43).

- Slum life: The slums are also a consequence of the migration of villagers to the city and have been reflected in the poems of Akhavan Sales. In the poem called "The Story of the Night" from the "Winter" collection, Akhavan writes about the destitute family living in the slums: "It's night/a calm, rainy and dark night/beside the city of vanity, a sad dreamer, an abandoned cabin/the barks of a stray dog is heard from far away." (Akhavan, 1985: 54-53).

- Illegitimate children: Being a bastard that is the outcome of a clear anomaly and deviation known as extramarital relationships has been reflected in Akhavan's poetry. In Chavooshi poem, Akhavan implicitly points to this social harm: "Behold! The clean sky is the pasture of those like Christ and others./The hideous ones have never known and will not know who their fathers were./What is good about them?" (ibid: 106).

Suicide: Suicide is a painful social damage that can be the result of many social problems. In the poem called "On the Wet Road", Akhavan has thus pointed to the subject of Sadeq Hedayat's suicide: "A captive who is angry with this vanity has bitterly lost the whole of his life on a red gamble." (Akhavan, 1353: 56).

- Infidelity: Unfaithfulness is one of social anomalies appearing in Akhavan's poetry. In his poem known as "Shatighi" from the collection "Life says: But one must live again", he refers to the subject of unfaithfulness by speaking through Shatighi about Tavoos' affair who is his fiancée: "Hey, you! Life may be the same thing/A small deception, by the hands of a beloved with whom and for whom you want the world/I have come to believe that this is true." (Akhavan, 1979: 45).

- Theft: In the collection known as "Life says: But one must live again" and in a poem titled "Mr. Felon", Akhavan points to this person's theft from the government: "Hey, you! Do you know what a prison is?/Shatighi, this time/ addressed the newcomer in fine dresses/the thief who is said to have stolen seventeen opium trucks that belonged to the government, but he is still alive!" (ibid: 50).

In "Kaveh or Alexander", Akhavan has written about the poor prisoners in jail who had stolen his cigarettes: "His eyes are filled with tears hoping to visit me/I stare at his tears here/The poor thief has taken my cigarettes" (Akhavan, 1966: 43).

Prostitution: Prostitution is also an important social anomaly reflected in his poetry. With hatred and anger, he refers to the problem of prostitution: "Do you know this is not a journey to the heavens?/To Mars, this immortal vampire/To Venus, this wicked widow and happy whore..." (Akhavan, 1985: 106).

In the poem called "The Prince of the City of Stone", Akhavan also looks at this problem with hatred and disgust and writes: ". Now, this is the blemish of a nest reeking of rancor. The mourning is bitter/As if the prostitute's gutter has opened its arms wide open towards the sky." (Akhavan, 1975: 18).

- Prison: Being incarcerated for any reason is one of the most severe social damages that are reflected in the poet's lyrics. This social anomaly and its consequences are so vivid in the poems composed by Akhavan that he has even devoted the title of one of his collections to this subject - "In the Autumn's Little Yard in Prison." In collection known as 'Organon', and in a poem titled "Khan Dashti" he protests against a major social problem which is the oppression of the feudal lords and their aggression and cruelty towards their workers, their enslavement, and the appropriation of their belongings and defiling their wives (Akhavan, 1356: 302). One of the consequences of the imprisonment of the head of household is the livelihood of his family. In the poem titled "Kaveh or Alexander", he refers to this in this way: "He says: But your sister, child, and wife?/I will set the tooth of negligence on the liver/The eye, too, will claim blindness/And the ear was deaf when the first word was heard" (Akhavan, 1966: 54).

Akhavan himself writes about his writings during imprisonment: "This epic poem [Life says: But one must live again] is a short story made of the views, impressions and thoughts with a great deal of effort, irony, imagination and narrations coming from the preoccupation of the mind and the passivity and flame of the inner life which are the consequences of the experiences from those days of imprisonment" (Akhavan, 2006: 120).

- Trafficking (Smuggling): Akhavan addresses the smugglers in the poetic collection called "In the Autumn's Little Yard in Prison" and especially in a poem titled "The Speech" in a rural tone. He says: "I swear on you traders/On the victorious spirit of profit/And the soul of that yellow idol which I know/You adore and worship by heart/And

wherever it can be seen in the hollowness of your eyes and hearts/I swear on these words/As long as I get used to your world one bit/Clean the air of the city with the filter of purity” (Akhavan, 1977: 58).

In the collection called “Life says: But one must live again” and in a poem titled “Mr. Felon”, he points to opium smuggling by a stylish man who has stolen seventeen opium-filled trucks belonging to the government and has got away with it!, “Hey, you! Do you know what prison is?/Shataghi, this time/addressed the newcomer in fine dresses/the thief who is said to have stolen seventeen opium trucks that belonged to the government, but he is still alive!” (Akhavan, 1979: 50).

- Temporary marriage: This is one of the abnormalities and social deviations that results from the temptations of men. In this sense, the issue of temporary marriage is reading and rereading the verse. In a poem titled “Wicked Hajji and the Godless Salesman”, while expressing some memories in explaining this poem, Akhavan refers to the subject of temporary marriage, womanizing, debauchery, divorce, sexually transmitted diseases and complications such as sterility. Akhavan says: “. Ghafouri later became the son-in-law of Hajj Morad Falamaki which means that Hajj Morad had taken his only daughter from her first woman and his many wives who suffered from thousands of diseases and he could not have any children. because he was a skilled womanizer – he bought a house in Sarshoor neighborhood in Mashhad for having liaisons with his temporary wives whom he made sick from time to time and changed them and brought the younger ones home... ”(Akhavan Kakhi, 1991: 601).

- Social Poverty: The social and economic poverty and the unjust distribution of wealth and its consequences are the most important social damages that Akhavan has taken into account in the collection called “The Sudden Setting of a Star”. In this poem, he says: “In the late winter/I saw it and so did he/that young man in shabby clothes who suddenly fell to the ground with his false shakes/He stayed on the ground for a while/then he cast forward his false roll in the stream/A stream whose dirt and layers were real” (Akhavan, 1975: 100-99). In an interview about this young man and the social poverty of society, he says: “This Iranian young man is one of the sons of this land and one of the owners of oil wealth, and. Why shouldn't he have a job, a profession or an occupation? Why? They take his oil with ships, guards and patrols but why is he in this bad shape? ”(Mohammad Ali, 1990: 66).

In another part of this poem, he describes a man who is walking with a handful of fresh and sweet-smelling bread as

a yellow dog follows him: “We have also heard that lovely smell was lost/and came a sinister smell in its stead/and then we saw that the dog/showed an anger and rage as if the golden morning overcame the darkness of the night/But as the furious dog stays down/That dark spotted cat is on the tree.”(ibid: 66). In interpreting this poem, Amoli wrote: “The main intention of the poet in the illustration of such an event is the expression of economic poverty. He believes that, as long as a person is not economically under pressure, he goes about his life quietly but he attacks everything in the world when the hunger strikes” (Mohammadi Amoli, 1998: 170).

In “Kaveh or Alexander” poem, he also refers to the issue of poverty: “The house was empty and the table cloth had no food and bread/and what had remained was no prize. It's night. Yes, It's a horrible night, but there was no sunlight behind the hills either (Akhavan, 1966: 43).

In the poem known as “The Story of the Night”, from the ‘Winter’ collection, Akhavan writes about poverty and inferiority and how a poor family spends a night till the dawn: “It's night/a calm, rainy and dark night/beside the city of vanity, there is a sad dreamer, an abandoned cabin/the barks of a stray dog is heard from afar/A roar that seems to be coming closer/under the dome of an old cottage where yellow drops fall through/A woman is sleeping with her baby with desirable comfort/A smile sometimes runs on her face/Telling the story from the garden of a happy dream/Her husband is sitting and says in a painful silence:/“Today's gone. What should be done tomorrow?” (Akhavan, 1985: 54-53).

Gambling: Gambling is also a social problem that has many consequences and dire outcomes. In the poem called “On the Wet Road”, he points to the unfortunate consequences of gambling as follows: “A captive who is angry with the vanity and has bitterly lost the whole of life on a red gamble.” (Akhavan, 1975: 56).

- Wife abuse: In the poem “Khan Amir's hands” from the collection called “In the Autumn's Little Yard in Prison”, he points to the beautiful and innocent hands of Khan Amir that one day or one night squeezed his wife's throat and strangled her to death: “These beautiful hands/These sad and innocent hands/and the agile and delicate fingers/with the fawn nails,/With all this freshness and beauty/conscious or unconscious, without fear or perception/Any movement of which is no doubt a dance of subtlety and sensation/How should one believe?/These all too human hands/like two bright days and nights/have squeezed a woman's throat on a day or a night/Her eyes have popped out full of frustration and excitement and the poor thing has died right away (Akhavan, 2006: 123).

- Being an Orphan: In the poem called “Legacy” from the collection known as “The End of Shahnameh”, Akhavan tells us about his life as an orphan and the difficulties after the death of his father: “On the Day of Death, he left us his skin/We were five after him/I was like a caravan front-runner/a runner who does not know the way/Rising and falling/We walked as far as you can see” (Akhavan, 1966: 23).

CONCLUSION

In his poems and writings, Mehdi Akhavan Sales not only has reflected many of the social disorders, anomalies, deviations, and social abnormalities such as displacement, homelessness, hoarding, the loss of one’s child due to natural death, illness, martyrdom or disappearance during the war, the loss of the family’s protector, imprisonment, addiction, opium, alcoholism, widows, vulgarity, beggary, men’s excessive sexual appetite, war, slum life, illegitimate births, suicide, unfaithfulness, extramarital relationships, theft, enslavement, smuggling and trafficking, temporary marriages and sexually transmitted diseases and their consequences, divorce, social and economic poverty, gambling, disharmony and deviation, wife abuse and being an orphan, but has also given detailed comments on the roots and causes of some social disruptions, damages and especially economic poverty to offer a pathology of these issues. He has thus introduced himself as a successful

and committed poet who is familiar with social pains and anomalies.

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