A Comparative Narratological Analysis of Bayhaqi's General History and Zeidari's Autobiography

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Abstract

The Persian prose of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries involves some significant books about courtier history. Further, autobiography, as a subcategory of general history, has notable instances in this period. On the one hand, both mentioned groups are worthy literary works of art. On the other hand, they have inseparable ties with story and narration. So, the narratological analysis of such texts not only exposes the secrets of our ancestors' lives but also give insight to novel's predecessors. The following study compares the narrative elements of Bayhaqi's *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* (or *Tarikh-e Mas'udi*) as a general history, with Zeidari's *Nafsatol Masdur* as an autobiography. Regardless of nearly two centuries time-space in between, there are similarities, as well as differences, between the way that Bayhaqi, a Ghaznavid courtier secretariat, narrates the events of the royal court of the king Mas'ud and the coutiers with the method that Zeidari, a courtyard secretariat of Jalal ad-Din Mingburnu Kharazmi(also known as Jalâl *ad*-Dîn Khwârazmshâh), narrates the story of his own life. We have examined the narrative elements of each text, in three broad categories to answer regarding "Who" "What" and "How" questions, while in the final section we have compared the characteristics of the two texts.

Keywords: Narratology, History, Autobiography, *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, *Nafsatol Masdur*

Introduction

History mostly tells the story of the human beings, and analyzing history books reveals how the authors described the life of the people in the past. Although narrative history is suspicious since it usually causes shifts in the route of reality from reporting the exact occurrences (Nojoumian 313-316), historians prefer the narrative language because it is more appealing to their readers. However, such preference makes it reasonable to treat a history book as a narrative description of historical events and people's deeds; the kind of description that one of its new versions is employed in the modern novel.

The present paper is a study two texts in two categories: general histories and its subcategory, autobiography. Our case study for the general history is *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* and for the latter one, which is a autobiography, is *Nafsatol Masdur*.

Since autobiography is a kind of history, a wide range of similarities between the two types and their samples is naturally expected, while, the essential subject of description provides the main difference between them. A general historian details the events, regarding different persons, while the main concern of an autobiographer is the events that relate to him. Still, there should be more comparable factors that are worthy of analysis.

This research sheds light on the early roots of how fiction developed gradually. Understanding different aspects of the contemporary novel, as the most distinguished literary genre of the time, requires a comprehensive knowledge of the novel's ancestors. Out of which, history texts that involve narration are examined through the present study.

Such research may assist the academic students and researchers of literature, especially narratologists, as well as those who care about history. Also, the ordinary readers of literature and history may learn more about the precise features of the books they read.

Literature Review

There is no study record neither of comparative narratological analysis of general history and autobiography nor on comparing *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* with *Nafsatol Masdur*. However, the most relevant researches to the objectives of the present survey are as follows:

Studies on narrative features of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*

There are some general studies on the relationship between general history and narration such as M. R. Waldman's *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography*. In this book, under the title "*The Basic Structural Feature: Narrative and Interpolation*," Waldman suggests that the basic feature of the structure of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* is Bayhaqi's frequent interruptions in the central annual narrative of the reign of Mas'ud, with poetic selections and historical anecdotes from other places and times. Waldman believes these interruptions are entirely conscious and Bayhaqi has employed them as a method (51).

Dezfoulian and Moloudi in an article as "Narratology of Tarikh-e Bayhaqi and Narrative elements of anecdote of Bubakr-e Hasiri" examine this story arguing that *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* is not merely a historical book, but more than that, it is a literary work which is valuable for its narrative features. They apply Genette's three narrative levels of a tale studies, Histoire, Récit, and Narration concerning the anecdote of Bubakr-e Hasiri (90-996).

Mansouri tries to confirm that *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* is a historical novel, that is, a novel concerning the human's life, their feelings, and interactions over time. His discussions are based on the stories of "Afshin and Budolof", "the death of Bunasr Moshkan", "Bubakr Hasiri's pulling down", and "execution of Hasanak". Mansouri indicates that these stories are full of tragic themes and other characteristics of historical novels.

Mirhashemi, and Mohammadian apply Words Cohesion Theory to narrations of history books, such as *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, *Tarikh-e Vassaf*, *Tarikh-e Jahangushaye Juwayni*, and *Tarikh-e Yamini* (260-261).

Vahidi et al. analyze the narrative structure of "The Tale of Afshin and Budolof". They argue that Bayhaqi has improved the level of his narration from the first level, which is story to the second level that is narration, by employing narrative features. They declare that the order of narrated events is compatible with the linear order of events and time, and the direct and straight sequence of narration has been kept to end. Also, the story is narrated with a regular rhythm and speed. By performing dialogues amongst characters, Bayhaqi has created an engaging story. Furthermore, the story has the best timing in its plot, because of selecting proper actions and stating them in the fitting length. Bayhaqi strives to produce suspension by repeating distress actions, although he explores to describe the main message of his narration; the suspension and crisis continue to the end of the story. In this concern, the dramatic perspective of the story is maintained.

Nejadnili in her paper entitled, "Matching Story elements with Narrations of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*: An analysis of theme of a non-courtier narrative" investigates narratology of the story of flood which is anthropologically and historio-geographically valuable, since it provides reliable data about ordinary people of the time, because Bayhaqi as the author and narrator has observed the events himself (145-150).

Riahizamin and Heidary have conducted a semiotic study of the fifth and sixth volume of Tarikh-e Bayhaqi and they have deduced that the narration of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* involves a multilayer structure of time element; the text temporality is on a similar level with the plot, and the principal feature of this narration is extracting the semantic functions of the time as a narrative element (55-56).

Studies including comments on narrative features of *Nafsatol Masdur*

In his short investigation on Persian historiography, Kenneth Allin Luther centres on the rhetoric and "figured style" in chancery prose and histories. Luther believes that some Persian historical writings, including *Nafsatol Masdur,* are inspired by the ornate style that was preferred in Persian chanceries. He states, "All of these works, whether they were token in some particular social or economic change or not, seem to have been thought of as ornate objects, to be presented and, if the authors' ambitions were realized, admired by the members of the elite and the literary men of the age" (90–98).

In their Persian article: "An Analysis of narrative and storied Motifs in Nafsatol Masdur", Ranjbar and Khazanedarloo indicate that Zeidari has furnished his literary masterpiece with technical devices and historical indications. Zeidari employs a narrative structure, and like other ancient historical and biographical books, his text is based on a reversal cause and effect system, in such a way that the reader returns to the past after understanding the effect to find the cause. Zeidari has not followed a path toward story-telling but employed narrative motifs and other literary devices thus creating a linear story that includes narrative suspense (112).

Nosrati & Kahdooee in their article as "A Survey on the *Koranic* Quotations in Zeidari's Nafsatol Masdur, based on the Inter-textual Effects" examine the Inter-textual effects of *Koranic* quotes, along with several Arabic hadiths, poems, and proverbs that the author has used in his elaborated Persian text of *Nafsatol Masdur*. These quotes have a high recurrence of almost one per page in the text and practically function as a widespread, impressive motif. They are employed in the text through "direct borrowing" and "adoption" considering their literal meaning. However, the inter-textual effects of some of the Arabic quotes may cause a duality in the reader's feelings and so interrupt the stream of understanding in his mind (1208-9).

Khazanedarloo and Soltani conducted a study, titled "Comparative Codicology of the Manuscripts of Nafsatol Masdur-e Zeidari- ye Nasavi, based on the Hierarchical Analytic Process." They emphasize that some of the main challenges of the historiographers are the non-versatility of manuscripts, determination of their reliability level, authenticity, and priority in comparative codicology. Their research examines the prescription of the quadruple substitutions of corrected *Nafsatol Masdur*, using Expert Choice 11, that was developed out of the suggestions of Bengel and Griesbach, and based on the categorization of Yazdgerdi substitutions in his edition, and paired scales and comparisons adjusted, according to the expertized suggestions of Bengel and Griesbach and their criteria. Khazanedarloo and Soltani have concluded that the quadruple prescriptions of this edition are derived at least out of two different origins (7).

Habibizadeh & Borjsaz through their research "Regret for the Past as Dominant theme of Resistance Literature in Nafsatol Masdur" find out that this book is an intertwined collection of cultural codes and gestures in which, the motif of "Regret for the Past" is one of the main ones that implement the narrative nature of the text (61).

Discussion

Bayhaqi's *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*

Abul-Fazl Mohammad ibn Hossein Bayhaqi was born in Bayhaq province, a small town in Khorasan in 995. He earned a position in the Ghaznavid secretariat (*divân-e resâlat*) almost in the middle of the reign of Sultan Mahmud (reg. 998–1030). This was a suitable position to create a history book[1] (Melville 126). He implemented a method as a historian by linking a secretary's standards of writing and approaches toward the history with the secular and philosophical aims in Islamicate historiography. Bayhaqi's materials are drawn from different

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[1] . For background authority and identity in medieval Islamic historiography, especially Persian histories, See: Hanaoka, 2016.

historical and non-historical origins. He put his material together in a conscious though not rigid structure and with specific standards in mind (Waldman 51; also *See*: Savory 90-120), that gave him the chance of being the head of that office. His death was in 1077. He spent the best of his life to prepare his *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi.*

Bayhaqi was in a notable position because he was allowed to listen to the conversations of the government. He would record the events daily in some kind of diary, so his history is supplied with many instances of such discussions and copies of royal documents. There are various letters in Persian and Arabic. Also, Bayhaqi absorbed what can be called the *esprit de corps* of the scribal bureaucracy, which he expresses in his history through the person of his mentor Abu-Nasr.

The original text of Bayhaqi's history, as an eleventh-century CE history book, reportedly involved thirty volumes. It treated the whole era from Saboktagin to Ibrahim, down to the time of Bayhaqi's death. Regrettably, just a small piece of Bayhaqi's history remains today. The surviving text fills all or part of only five of the thirty books, which are presented as annals, with year by year accounts of events from 1030 till 1039 (Melville 127, also *See*: Daniel 126-127).

Zeidari's *Nafsatol Masdur*

Shahab al-Din Mohammad Zeidari Nasavi was a poet, writer and historian of the 13th century from Shirvan, modern Khorasan. He spent his life there and studied hard. After years of endeavour, He got a position in secretariat (*divân-e resâlat*) of Jalal- al-Din Kharazm-Shah in 1225, and this position was his until 1233. Jalal- al-Din was the last king of his dynasty. The Mongol invasion put an end to Kharazmian and Zeidari's comfortable life. Finally, the wandering royal historian was quartered at the court of Mas'ud Malek, the king of Ayoubian as a refugee and composed his autobiography there, before his death in 1250.

Zeidari's *Nafsatol Masdur* is the real story of the author's escape from Mongols when they invaded territories and killed so many people. They tried to find the governor and his courtiers. The anguish that Zeidari experienced as he was running away from death at the hands of the Mongols, provided the adventures of his autobiography. The main subject of the book is the complaint of the sad, difficult days and nights before he settled at Ayyubi governor's place, which is expressed in a rhetorical language (Mehraban 144-150; Sadeghi & Mirzaee 12-18). Zeidari created his masterpiece through interior monologues, which are supported by a remarkable imagist narrative language (Jamali & Riahizamin 10-15).

Narratology of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*
Who-Analysis

Generally speaking, the same person is the author and the narrator of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*. He employs both the overt and covert strategies based on the situations; that is, in some cases, he overtly refers to himself in the first person and addresses the narratee directly or indirectly. Such a strategy allows Bayhaqi to offer reader-friendly exposition whenever it is needed. Also, in the anecdote of Bubakr-e Hasiri, which like most of Bayhaqi's anecdotes was structured around the ideal king and vizier motif, a first-person narrator who is the author himself is employed. Bayhaqi observes the limitations of this type of narrator and does not narrate the events within the house of Vizier Ahmad since he is not present there. However, the narration becomes complete through the next day from Bunasr Moshkan's point of view (Ibid, 505, 509). On the other hand, there are some cases in which Bayhaqi employs a covert strategy and has a non-distinctive voice and style. In such cases, he does not intrude or interfere, and allows his story events to discover in their natural order and pace. For example, through the story of "The execution of Amir Hasanak, the vizier", King Mas'ud consults Bunasr who gives a full account of the charge against Hasanak; King Mahmud says to the caliph:

Someone ought to write to this senile caliph [the sultan said] that – for the sake of the greatness of the Abbasids – I have stretched my hand to all corners of the world, searching for Qarmatians. And whoever is found and proven is hanged from the gallows. And if I were convinced that Hasanak was a Qarmati, the commander-of-the-faithful would have learned of what would have been done to him. I have raised him myself, and he is equal to my children and my brothers; and if he is a Qarmati, then I, too, am a Qarmati" (Bayhaqi, 226, Tran. Katouzian).

Genette's theories can be implemented and another classification based on the narrator's relationship to the story is available that can be applied to *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, as follows. In this history, Bayhaqi narrates various events. In some of them as a homo-diegetic narrator is also the protagonist or another character (Bayhaqi 629). The prefix 'homo-' suggests that Bayhaqi as the narrator is within the level of action (Jahn N3.1.5.). On the other hand, there are other cases in which Bayhaqi is a hetero-diegetic narrator, for example, throughout the dialogue between Bunasr Moshkan and Bol-Hassan Bulani and his son (Bayhaqi 511). He describes the experiences of the characters that appear in the stories, but the narrator has no participation. There is no story of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* in which, the author is also the protagonist of his narration, so *the auto-diegetic* narrator has no place there.

What-Analysis

One of the most famous stories of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* is "The execution of Amir Hasanak the vizier" (Katouzian 250-259; also, Waldman 166–76). In this story, structural elements of the plot, such as opening, complication, crisis, development, suspense, climax, denouement, and ending are almost perfect and distinct. Hereabouts comes the plot of this story, by considering the cause and

effect relationship, as the fundamental, distinguishing feature that makes a difference between the two elements: story and plot as Forster has stated (45). Primarily, it is to be considered that the main subject of this story is the adventures of some major courtiers, especially Hasanak and Busahl. The theme is the malice of some politicians. The subject and theme of a story clears its narratibility (or tellability) that makes a story worth telling; an answer to the question of "What's the point?" According to Wildman, as a holistic approach, "the narrative material in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* begins with the last days of Amir Mohammad's reign, including an unusual amount of material on Mas'ud's affairs during this period, then soon, begins Mas'ud's reign proper, with a long flashback to his life before his accession, up to the beginning of the last year of his reign" in 1040 A.C. However, some striking features about the focus, scope, selectivity, and emphasis of the contents of this material should be considered (Waldman 63). As it is predictable, mirroring the events of an important portion of a nation's history has the potential of narrating by itself. This is while the method of Bayhaqi, which is narrating a reliable history, by employing a rhetorical language, adds more span to it. Also, Bayhaqi does not only record the history, but he assembles the selected historical events to obtain political, economic, and moral advice for his readers, along with great information about the way people talk, wear, behave, and in one word, live in that period.

Waldman believes that Bayhaqi should not be considered as a systematic thinker. His motifs and themes intertwine and ramify without hierarchical or geometric resolution. However it does not mean that the motifs, themes, issues, and problems with which he deals have no pattern, since all the dominant themes raised by the materials in Bayhaqi's history are classifiable into two interdependent categories: "morality and responsibility", and "government", while each of which has a number of subdivisions (Ibid, 79-80).

The next element to investigate is setting. Generally, the main setting of Bayhaqi's work is the court of King Mas'ud Ghaznavi. The tone of Bayhaqi is mostly courtly regarding different characters. For example in the same story,

Busahl completely loses his temper and asks how come the Lord speaks thus to this Qarmati dog whom they will hang on the orders of the commander-of-the-faithful?" (Katouzian 256). The atmosphere of Bayhaqi's stories are generally serious rarely involved with a sense of scoff, lampoon, and irony (Amirsoleimani 243-259), for instance, in the story of "Hatia and Zabarqan" (Bayhaqi 285, also *See* 30, 49, 236).

Bayhaqi declares: "I write a history of fifty years that needs several thousand pages and there are the names of several great persons" (Ibid, 190), and again, "I have no other way but to finish up this book to save the names of these great persons alive" (74). These quotes show that characterization is a critical element to him as the author of his history book.

Scholars believe although Bayhaqi refers to real historical persons and is limited in creating his ideal personages, he, as a professional novelist pictures living tangible characters for his readers by showing the internal and external characteristics of people like Ahmad Hassan Meimandi, Hasanak, and Bunasr, so that the readers cannot be cold and neutral toward them (Razi 107). Bayhaqi's prominent method of characterization is a description that involves details as needed. However, he also tries to introduce his characters through their acts and words. For example, instead of directly declaring that Mas'ud Ghaznavi was ingenious, understanding, and cautious, Bayhaqi writes that King Mas'ud did not pass the ministry to any other person before Ahmad passed away (Bayhaqi 144), or instead of directly saying how Mas'ud would think of religion, Bayhaqi describes that the king drank wine happily as much as twenty-seven cups; then he asked for water and a tub and made ready for saying his prayer by washing his mouth (700).

In *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* some characters oppose one another, for example, the sons oppose their fathers. Yet, Bayhaqi's characters are more static and not changing. It means that if Bunasr is a moderate, temperate man, he is always like

that in any condition, and if Busahl is a cheater, he will not change through the story.

Bayhaqi employs a very effective style of opening. He begins his narration by addressing the readers. He let us know what has happened to the characters that involve the events of his story, and writes: "today that I am beginning this story… out of people, that I will speak about, are one or two alive, isolated in a corner (of the world) and it is some years that the vizier, Busahl Zozani has passed away and is enfettered by his acts. We have nothing to do with him. Although, I dislike him anyway" (256). This opening not only connects the reader's mind with what the author is narrating and inspires them to continue reading but also furnishes them with some feeling of faith and certitude and makes them believe that they are reading about something real. The most assuring maybe his naming of those people who had been involved and were still alive and available at the time of writing *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*.

The complication is a disturbance in a previously arranged condition within the story. In *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, the set condition had been Hasanak's position in Ghaznavid's reign. His dignity was disturbed by king Mahmud's death, and passing of the power to prince Mas'ud instead of Mohammad. Busahl, as the antagonist of the story, seeks to make the condition more dangerous for Hasanak. This is the initiation of the crisis, where the conflict of Hasank's life reaches a turning point, in which, Hasanak, Busahl, and king Mas'ud, as the opposing forces of the story meet and make the conflict most intense. In *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, the crisis of the story is attached to its climax and is the result of the crisis, which is the execution of Amir Hasanak.

Also, what creates the suspense and makes the readers uncertain about the outcome, is the dominant governmental characters' endeavours to prevent Hasanak's execution, opposing Busahl and his fellows' effort to take him to the gallows. The denouement of this story is Busahl's success inconvincing Mas'ud to confiscate Hasanak's estate and finally getting Hasanak hanged.

Bayhaqi creates a graceful and appealing ending for his story. He adds Hasanak's mother as a new character of his story just trough the ending. Despite a short role, this character is a heroin herself, because she reacts to her son's execution in such a brave manner that affects the readers' feelings toward Hasanak.

How-Analysis

Through this section, we investigate the elements such as the tense, speed, order, and point of view. Two major narrative tenses are the narrative past and the narrative present. The tense of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, as a whole, depends on the current point in time of Bayhaqi's speech act, while the tense used in each character's discourse is related to the current point in time in the action of the story that is going on.

Since Bayhaqi does not compose his historical stories at the same time as their real happening, the narrative time of the stories is generally past. However, the narrative time for each character's speech is different. For instance, in a story, Harun al-Rashid, Caliph of Baghdad, visits two pious ascetics, Abd al-Aziz, and Ibne Sammak with his vizier, Fazle Rabi to get some pieces of divine advice and giving them some gold, as acknowledgment in order to improve their poor lives. Both ascetics give advice to Harun, but the first one accepts the gold and the second one does not due to his piety (Bayhaqi 385-386). The narrative time of this historical story is past tense, while according to different characters, both present and past narrative time are employed.

Another subject of concern is speed or time. By analysing this element, we care about "when", "how long", and "how often" questions. Genette declares that order relates to the treatment of the chronology of the story; duration treats the proportioning of story-time and discourse-time; and frequency refers to possible

manners of presenting single or repetitive action units (Genette 33-85, 87-112, 113-160).

According to Charles Melville most Persian historians have organized their histories chronologically since they try to narrate events in the sequence of occurrence (xliii). Generally the chronological order of events in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* includes the years, from 1030 until 1041, except for the Kharazm section. It is the period between King Mahmud's decease to the end of Mas'ud's reign. Here we must exclude the supplementary anecdotes, that their profusion chiefly accounts for the notable bulk of Bayhaqi's history and they mostly deal with incidents from Abbasid history, earlier periods of Ghaznavid or Samanid history (See: Melville 130).

However, Bayhaqi does not narrate all the details of the period between 1030 and 1041, since a historiographer, especially when telling a story, selects the moments that best suit to the narrative nature of his writing. He notes the most suitable ones and ignores whatever is unimportant or not fitting his story.

It is believed that Bayhaqi, contrary to other historians, describes the impressing events that permeate his readers' spirits perfectly and details in a way that the reader is moved from the history finding himself reading a novel (Sahba 95-96). Such a case can be found in the story of "*Bunasr Passes away*". He writes: "the next day he came to the court and the king entered and it was a cold day… an hour passed and he was shivering, had palsy and heart attack. It was a Friday. The state authorities told the king about the case" (Bayhaqi 928). According to the previous and subsequent pages of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, time markers such as the next day, an hour and Friday all refer to the calendar but have been used as the story timing because of the author's sympathy and affection to the event.

On the contrary, there are stories in Bayhaqi's book involving the events that last a long time in the real world, but a few minutes in narrative time, such as the interior monologue of the judge Ahmad in "*Afshin and Budolof*" story, in which,

he narrates years from the period of Afshin's entering a room till sitting on a chair (Bayhaqi 223-226; Also *See*: Vahidi et al. 65-66)

Some other Bayhaqi's stories, like "the execution of Amir Hasanak the vizier," although based on real history, enjoy a form of deviation from strict chronology, as indicated before. The two main categories of order-deviation or anachronism, flashbacks and flash-forwards are present in such stories of Bayhaq. The same parameters are in the tale of Bubakr-e Hasiri that the natural sequence of time is deviated by flashbacks and forward (Dezfoulian & Moloudi 93-95).

The next element to be discussed under How-Analysis is mood or focalization and point of view or voice. Both voice and mood are centred by the perspective of the narrator. If we consider the voice of narration as a phenomenon that relates to the person who speaks, the mood is about the one who sees. The narrator is unlimited omniscien. There are two types of focalization, external and internal. External focalization points to the narrator as a candidate for a text's perspectival orientation (Jahn N3.2.4.). Such a point of view exists in Bayhaqi's stories, for instance, through the story of Hasanak or at the end of the story of "Bunasr Passes away" (929).

In contrast, there are a few cases in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* in which, internal focalization is employed; some of the characters narrate the events from their point of view, rather than Bayhaqi, such as descriptions by Bunasr Khalaf, the dignitary Amid Abd al-Razaq, and Bunasr Moshkan in Hasanak story (925-929). According to Jahn, four types as fixed, variable, multiple, and collective focalization are possible (Jahn N3.2.4.). Considering *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* generally, variable focalization has been employed, since we find the presentation of different episodes of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*'s stories as seen through the eyes of several viewers. The examples of this type are those already reviewed for internal focalization (Bayhaqi 925-929).

However, fixed focalization, as the presentation of narrative facts and events from the constant point of view of a single viewer has instances, if we consider each of Bayhaqi's stories separately. Whenever Bayhaqi is present in an event, he uses the first-person narrative point of view, such as: "And this year we came to Neyshabur and Busahl Zozani lodged in this house of my master. One day I went to him and found some peasants near him. They were dealing with a vast green country near this house to make in his name, gardens, and buildings" (629).

Although we found no sample in Bayhaqi's book for multiple focalization, which refers to a technique of presenting a single episode repeatedly, while each time seen through the eyes of a different internal viewer, and no instance of collective focalization which is through either plural narrators or a group of characters as Jahn states (N3.2.4.).

Narratology of *Nafsatol Masdur*
Who-Analysis

In general, the same person is the author and the narrator of *Nafsatol Masdur*. Zeidari has employed only the overt strategy and usually refers to himself in the first person and addresses the narratee directly or indirectly to offer reader-friendly exposition whenever it is needed. For example, in the opening, as he is expressing his internal mood in a desolate, devastating condition, and waiting to hear from his Lord, he declares his reasons for composing *Nafastol Masdur*, and says: "what should I do? When waiting and patience seem as long as the day of resurrection, there is no way but to compose *Nafastol Masdur* that will ease a departed friend. (Zeidari 6-7)

In this autobiography, Zeidari does not employ the hetero-diegetic or *auto-diegetic* narrator, and so the pervasive homo-diegetic narrator of events *of Nafsatol Masdur* (if each considered as a story) provides the situations in which Nasavi is always either the protagonist, such as his mission to Alamut castle (9), or another character, like his being enmeshed in the cave (57)

What-Analysis

Unlike *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, which entails several stories, *Nafsatol Masdur* is one long story. The main subject of this story is the life-events (autobiography) of Zeidari, while its main theme is loyalty, along with sub-themes, as Tatars' intrusion, escape and obstruction. The forerunner of this loyalty is Zeidari's devotion to his lord, Jalal al-Din Kharazmi. Considering the subject of the story and its theme, it becomes apparent that Nasavi is proving his own loyalty. Since Jalal al-Din is not alive anymore, and consequently, has no more power or wealth to support Zeidari, the readers can make sure that there is no probability for flattery and subservience. Thus, the story displays the artistic premise of true value of fidelity, which can deeply influence the readers' hearts. Such moral value, plus the dramatic tendency of the incidents within the story, confirm the narratibility (tellability) of *Nafsatol Masdur*.

The setting of Zeidari's story includes several places and conditions, but only a few of them are described in detail, since, even the name of the book implies the inner, not outer conditions. *Nafsatol Masdur* refers to the inner moods of people, so external data are valid only if they relate to the author's spirit. This is opposite Bayhaqi's strategy who accentuates his endeavour to explore every angle and hidden aspect of his subject (Melville 128).

Nasavi's work is an official and courtier mono-tone story, filled by rhetorical features. Such a trait, along with the most distinguished element of Zeidari's story, which is a burdensome, heart-rending, somber, and suffocating atmosphere, make it a clear mirror facing the inner mood of Nasavi.

The only exception in the courteous tone and language of this book is a few paragraphs about Ali Iraqi, who was Zeidari's enemy. According to Nasavi's view, in Amed, this man grafts the expectancies and seizes the peerage of vizier, so Nasavi describes him and the situation with abusiveness and ribaldry: "That

chancellor has jumped out of a donkey's backside and sat on the horse, he is an officiary of sudden, and boss of spontaneity" (75-76).

In Zeidari's work, characterization is a very critical factor. In general, Zeidari's statement of characterization is limited to inner details, such as spiritual, mental, psychic, and moral qualities, but there is no explanation for their externals and appearances. The characters of this autobiography can be classified into three groups. The first group includes Zeidari and the king Jalal al-Din. Considering *Nafsatol Masdur* as a monolith narration, the most important character is the author, who is the permanent protagonist, while the content primarily presumes that Jalal al-Din should be in this place. However, the king is the second important character.

According to Jung and Halland's theories, the social, artistic, adventurous, emotional, and intuitive extroverted aspects of Zeidari's character, along with the emotional introverted aspect of it, are reflected in his autobiography. Furthermore, Zeidari's balanced personality is highly inclined to extraversion. His personality types include emotionally and intuitively extroverted, while artistically, adventurously, socially, and emotionally introverted. All of these features reflect in Nasavi's *Nafsatol Masdur*. (Karimpoor & Khazanedarloo 155)

The other character of this group is Jalal al-Din. Although he abates his brother's power through bloody affairs, Zeidari offers a luminary portrayal. The author's writing about his king is more likely to be a romantic letter by a lovelorn, in a way to make the readers imagine him as a heavenly, ethereal person, who deserves worship: "to which desirous you write about the pains of separation? And to which sympathetic you tell the legend of love? Although the blood has come to the throat just like the grief, remain silent and open not your lips, since, there is no kind-hearted who deserves the story of your heart" (Zeidari 5).

The second group are Zeidari's friends. Excluding Jalal al-Din, who, to Zeidari, is far beyond a friend, we are reminded of those who like, respect and support Nasavi. Among these characters, king Ayoubi is particular. Zeidari says about Ayoubian in general: "The blessed court of Ayoubi king and the lord of a

just dynasty is the Kaaba of generosity, their Safa and Marwa are immaculacy and generosity" (115) and in particular for characterizing the king, Zeidari uses adjectives such as merciful, benevolent, clement, compassionate, and humane (116). Compendious but influential glorification for governor of Arbil is another example of this group (70).

The third group includes Zeidari's opponents and enemies. Among them is the vizier of Jalal al-Din. Nasavi characterizes him in this way: "concerning the animosity and oddness of the vizier, peace be upon him, that after … my services that I provided him devotedly, to obtain his fraternity, and some of them you have already heard about, and little of it is too much to be explainable, he is thirsty for my blood" (13). Another example is the governor of Amed, Ali Iraqi, who sends his Army to find and kill Zeidari (66).

Structural elements of the plot of *Nafsatol Masdur* such as opening, complication, crisis, development, suspense, climax, denouement, and ending are employed punctiliously. The opening of this historical story is appealing because the author involves his readers' minds by imagery and figurative language to represent the dramatic situation of the narration. It is interesting enough to persuade readers to make a start for a long story: "At this time that turbulence of the waves of insurrection have disarranged the world, and made it disturbed, and the flow of time's misery has got the head of masters as its shavings, and the storm of catastrophe has so levitated that the ship of life is to pass through the rivers of death" (1).

The first sentence of the text finishes after three pages, while there is no hint of ambiguity, crankiness or redundancy and verbiage since one interesting image after the other takes the readers in a persuasive flow of the narration. Finishing the first sentence, the reader has already studied four pages and has been involved in the story. Complication, as a plot element, will not form after reading several pages, since it is planned through the opening.

The main crisis of *Nafsatol Masdur* is regicide of Jalal al-Din, while it does not occur in a moment or described in a sentence or a paragraph. It is the provider of the central suspense that stays unrevealed approximately until the end of the story. The crisis has several representatives in Zeidari's story since the events, and their dramatic tendencies come one after the other and do not give the reader any break to decide about stopping his/her reading.

The main denouement of the story is Jalal al-Din's passing. The reader knows it after s/he has almost finished the text. However, there are several sub-stories, and each has its denouement, along with other elements. Zeidari employs the same technic for the ending of the narration as its opening. He refers to his psychological situation, and depicting his broken heart for the readers by directly addressing them. This style gives him a chance to keep his reader's heart with the story of his life.

How-Analysis

In Zeidari's narration, the general tense is past, because he is narrating the events after their occurrence. For example, he writes: "contrariwise to the natural, he (Malek Mas'ud) would hire sheriffs (to watch) over the days. So, I would walk, contrariwise to the natural, like a bat that darkness saves it, through the darkness of nights with the convoy, and throughout the daylight, like the bats, I would sit in a corner, because of fear of inclement crows" (69) However, there are a few cases in which Zeidari employs the present tense. These are the sentences to describe his situation at the time of writing *Nafatool Masdur*, such as the opening (1-8) and the ending paragraphs:

> Although there has been no favor from my Lord, I have tasted all discomforts for him, while they are vague. I have closed my mouth. And since my Lord is unkind and has sealed (the words of) all those unkindness, so, I have sealed my mouth too. My heart is a captive to sorrow. Out of his discomfiture, the heart remains in the blood, and the face remains a river for the tears. (124)

The When, How long, and How often questions, concerning Zeidari's autobiography firstly attract our attention to the chronology of the story. Generally speaking, we can claim that *Nafsatol Masdur* is based on a non-chronological order. Such a strategy is against the order of events in most Persian histories, which are in their chronological sequence (Melville xliii). Melville believes that the Mongols' arrival to Iran led to different less formal styles of understanding and mapping time, which was accorded to the alternation between summer and winter pastures. This traveling, transhumant notion of time presents no certain chronology at all, beyond the 'year' of the ruler or chief's reign, except that the movements are attached to different points to a more sophisticated sedentary or urban order (xlvii). Such system is applied to Zeidari's history, for instance we may refer to the author's description on outspread soldiers of Jalal al-Din through the summer. (Zeidari 124)

Nafsatol Masdur starts through a flash-forward since Zeidari's opening paragraphs are about the situation he is when composing his autobiography, after all those events that he has experienced, but has not narrated yet. Also, there are cases of flashback in this narration, such as the event that caused Ali Iraqi's enmity to Zeidari (75-76), the adventures of Nasavi's advice and warning to Jalal al-din regarding Tatars and their danger (38-40).

The other point is the speed of Zeidari's narration. The governing feature of time-speed in history is logically compression, since usually a time-consuming event that lasts, for example, two hours, are reported in sentences, paragraphs, or at most, some pages that are read in a few minutes. The same thing is true about *Nafsatol Masdur*. Generally, the whole autobiography of Zeidari covers more than four years, while it has been narrated in only 125 pages (in Persian).

The dominant mode of description in this book is like this: "Because in that five, six days, there remained no blackness in my eyes, except for the eyeballs... they had become white like snow" (108). This example shows that he usually

describes 5-6 narrative days in some sentences, so Zeidari's story-time is longer than his discourse-time.

In *Nafastol Masdur*, generally, it is the author who sees the events, because he is an attached courtier to the king, so he is usually present in the events of the court. For example, at the night of Tatar's attack upon Rey, Zeidari advised the courtiers and guardians that tonight all of them must stay awake and watch the events, but they do not pay attention (38-42).

There are a few cases of the external seers in this narration. One of them is in the same event (Tatar's attack), where a front-man of Jalal al-Din's military corps, who was missioned to monitor, scout, and report any of Tatar's military mobility to the court (for a suitable decision), instead of doing what he was ordered, recesses his soldiers and reports that Tatars have returned (while it was not as the front-man reports). The front-man reporting includes an external seer.

Nafsatol Masdur employs a prominent fixed teller, who is Zeidari as the author and the narrator. The first person point of view, as the single viewer (and not plural one), has several representatives in this narration (39, 51, 57, 63).

Comparative Analysis

In the two previous sections, we analyzed the narrative aspects of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* and *Nafsatol Masdur*. Now, we compare the two works of art due to their extracted narrative traits.

Item	*Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*	Notes, Examples or exceptions	*Nafsatol Masdur*	Notes, Examples or exceptions
Author	Abulfazl Bayhaqi		Mohammad Zeidari Nasavi	
Author's Period	11 Century	Ghaznavid/ Mahmud & Mas'ud	13 Century	Khwarazmian/ Qiath al-Din, Jalal al-Din
Author's Position	Courtier secretariat		Courtier secretariat	
Text Language	Persian		Persian	

Item	*Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*	Notes, Examples or exceptions	*Nafsatol Masdur*	Notes, Examples or exceptions
Genre	General History		Autobiography	
History Era Coverage	from Saboktagin to Ibrahim	Surviving Text: 1030 - 1039	from Qiath al-Din to Kharazmian Dynasty Overthrown	1225- 1237
Anthropologically Informative	Detailed & obvious		Limited & Vague	
Geographically Informative	Detailed & obvious		Limited & Vague	
Philosophical Value	Normal		High	
Socially Informative (Information about ordinary people)	Limited	The Story of Flood	Not Observed	
Ideological Codes	Infrequent		Frequent	
Language Type	Courtly Official		Courtly Official	
Politeness	High	A Few Exceptions	High	A Few Exceptions
Rhetorical Language	Yes	Semi-ornate style	Yes	ornate style
Imagery	Moderate		High	
Narration	Yes	containing several Autonomous Stories	Yes	A Monolith Story
Narrativity	Yes		Yes	
Principal Narrative Elements	Characterization & Dialogue		characterization	
Anecdote	Frequent		Infrequent	
Main Subject	General Courtly History		Autobiography of A Courtly Secretary	

Item	*Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*	Notes, Examples or exceptions	*Nafsatol Masdur*	Notes, Examples or exceptions
Main theme/s	Morality & responsibility along with government	Also Several Sub-Themes, such as Malice, Contentment, Pious-Life	loyalty	Also Several Sub-Themes, such as Tatars' Intrusion, Scape and Obstruction, Morality
Main Motif	Ideal King & Vizier		Regret to the past	
Atmosphere	Royal, Official	A Few Exceptions	Burdensome, Heart-Rending, Sombre, and Suffocating	A Few Exceptions
Order	Chronological-linear		Non-Chronological	
Flashback-Forward	Limited		Limited	
Characterization Method	description (on Their Conscience and appearance)	Exception: Characterization Through People's Acts or Words	Description(on Their Conscience)	Exception: Characterization Through People's Acts or Words
Main Character (Generally)	King Mas'ud	Temperate and Forgiving Character	The narrator, then Jalal al-Din (a Heavenly, Ethereal Character)	Emotionally and Intuitively Extroverted, While Artistically, Adventurously, and Socially introverted
Character's Traits	Steady		Steady	
Opposing Characters	Frequent		Moderate	

Item	*Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*	Notes, Examples or exceptions	*Nafsatol Masdur*	Notes, Examples or exceptions
Speed	Natural, similar level with the plot	With Exceptions	Natural, similar level with the plot	With Exceptions
Setting (Generally)	Externally Detailed & Internally moderate		Internally Detailed, Externally Vague	
Reader-friendly Strategies	Yes		Yes	
Overt/Covert	Both		Overt Only	
Voice (Generally)	First-person narrator	Some Exceptions	First-person narrator	A Few Exceptions
General Point of View Viewer	Unlimited Omniscient	Exception For Limited Omniscient	Unlimited Omniscient	
General Point of View (Teller)	Internal & External		Internal	Rarely External
Fixed Focalization	Yes		Yes	Rare Exceptions
Collective Focalization	No		No	
Multiple Focalization	No		No	
Variable Focalization	A Few Cases		No	
Homo-diegetic Narrator	Yes		Yes	
Hetero-diegetic Narrator	Yes		No	
Auto-diegetic Narrator	No		No	
Opening Strategy	Flashback and Addressing to Narratee		Flash-forward and Addressing to Narratee	

Item	*Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*	Notes, Examples or exceptions	*Nafsatol Masdur*	Notes, Examples or exceptions
Complication	Yes	According to Different Characters' Situation	Yes	According to Narrator's Situation
Suspense	Yes	Regarding Different Characters	Yes	Regarding The Narrator or His King
Denouement (Generally)	At Ending		By Foregrounding	
Ending Strategy	Denouement		Round to the Opening	
General Narrative Time	Past		Past	Present in A Few Cases

Conclusion

Tarikh-e Bayhaqi, as a general history of the eleventh century, *and Nafsatol Masdur*, as an autobiography of the thirteenth century, are instances of Persian elaborate literary texts, while both have notable narrative traits. Analyzing such features makes us better informed about the novel as the dominant genre of our time, while we will know more about the valuable past literature.

Tarikh-e Bayhaqi is anthropologically and geographically informative in a detailed and definite tone, while in Zeidari's work, such information is limited and ambiguous. The philosophical aspect of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* is regularly moderate but high in *Nafsatol Masdur*. There is limited social information (about average people) in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, but none in *Nafastol Masdur*. Ideological codes in Bayhaqi's work are infrequent but are frequent in Zeidari's. All of this data is embedded in the text of a narrative style via a courtly, formal language class, which is highly polite if a few exceptions in both works are ignored. The language of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, with modest imagery, is rhetorically in a semi-ornate style, while the language of *Nafsatol Masdur*, with much imagery, uses a twisted ornate one.

Principal narrative elements of *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* are characterization and dialogue. In Bayhaqi's narrations, the characterization method is description, through a focus on their conscience and appearance, with limited exceptions, such as the characterization by people's acts or words. However, the main character is generally King Mas'ud, as a temperate and forgiving character.

On the other hand, characterization is the most ruling element of Zeidari's narration. The same as *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, describing is the main method of characterization in *Nafsatol Masdur*, with a few exceptions, in which, characterization forms through people's actions or speeches. Unlike Bayhaqi who cares about inner properties, as well as appearances of his characters, Zeidari's characterization applies to the characters' inner fellings only.

Still, the main character of Zeidari is generally the narrator himself and then, Jalal al-Din, as a heavenly, ethereal character, that is emotionally and intuitively extroverted, while artistically, adventurously, and socially introverted. Additionally, while in both works, characters are steady, and so, do not change throughout the story, opposing characters are frequent in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* and moderate in *Nafsatol Masdur*.

Tarikh-e Bayhaqi's main subject is general courtly history. Moreover, its main themes are morality (and responsibility), along with the government, while *Nafsatol Masdur*'s main subject is the autobiography of the author, as a courtly secretary, and the main theme of this narration is loyalty. Bayhaqi's narration sub-themes are such as malice, contentment, and pious-life, while Zeidari's ones are Tatars' intrusion, scape, obstruction, and morality. Both works employ anecdote, Bayhaqi's stories frequently, while Zeidari's narration infrequently.

The main motif of Bayhaqi's work of art is ideal king and vizier, while a royal and formal atmosphere governs his narration. In Zeidari's work, regret for the past is the frequent motif, and a burdensome, heart-rending, somber, and suffocating atmosphere shadows the story. Generally, in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, the

setting is externally detailed and internally moderate, while in *Nafsatol Masdur*, it is internally detailed but externally vague. Reader-friendly strategies are employed in both works. *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* uses both overt and covert narrators, but *Nafsatol Masdur* applies overt narrator only.

Bayhaqi narrates in a chronological-linear, while Zeidari, in a non-chronological order. Both employ limited flashbacks and flash-forwards. The narrative speed is a natural one, a similar level with the plot, with a few cases of exceptions in both works. The first-person narrator sets the voice element of both works, with some exceptions in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* and a few in *Nafsatol Masdur*. The general point of view, as the seer, is unlimited omniscient in both, with exceptions in which, the limited omniscient point of view is applied. The teller is generally both internal and external in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, but internal in *Nafsatol Masdur* with a few exceptions.

Fixed focalization is exercised in both works, with rare exceptions in *Nafasatol Masdur*. Collective or multiple focalizations was not observed in both works. The homo-diegetic narrator has cases in both works, hetero-diegetic only in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi* , and auto-diegetic in none. Flashback with addressing to narratee has examples as the opening strategy of Bayhaqi's some narrations, and flash-forward with addressing to narrate in Zeidari's story.

Complications and suspense are developed in *Tarikh-e Bayhaqi*, according to different characters' situations, while regarding the narrator's situation and his king, in *Nafsatol Masdur*. Generally, Bayhaqi's denouements are at the ending section of his narrations, as his narrative ending strategy, while Zeidari's one establishes through foregrounding. Zeidari's ending strategy is returning to the opening. Finally, in both works, general narrative time is past, with a few exceptions in *Nafsatol Masdur*.

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