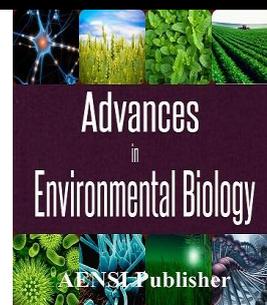




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The Study of the Simile 'Love' in Attar of Nishapur's Diwan

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ABSTRACT

Persian literature is a prolific domain for looking for sociological and mystic similarities about the concept 'love'. Considering the fact that every person loves plunging into indefinite ocean of love in order to get united with his beloved, mystics account the 'spiritual journeys' as a basis of love and have encouraged them. Attar of Nishapur was a philosopher, poet and a mystic who used various similes in his Diwan for expressing different states of his mystic love and displayed the invaluable worth of love. In the present research, significant part of Attar's similes, involving love, have been studied and explained, Similes like *ocean of love*, *fire of love*, *vortex of love*, *trap of love*, *path of love*, *lion of love*, *falcon of love*, and *peacock of love* have been discussed and analyzed. Considering the novelty and visionary nature of similes, the specifications of lover, beloved and the love itself have been extracted and analyzed.

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INTRODUCTION

In the field of poetry, expression of inner emotions has an important role in enhancing images. Poets and mystics have used different figurative poetic devices and forms in their expression of 'love'.

Attar of Nishapur, 6th and 7th(A.H.) centuries philosopher and poet, had deep interest in the concept 'love'; and had used delicate similes in his poetic works. Through his noble and delicate similes, that Attar has vastly used in his Diwan, he has depicted love to the ordinary public audience.

" 'Eshgh' (love) in Persian, originally comes from ' ashaghe' (the plant ivy), because the plant winds up around everything."

OstadMottahari believes that the meaning of 'love' is "deep interest and affection to someone or something, up to a degree that captures and dominates the whole body and soul of the person involved. (ibid)

Thus, the word 'love' (in Persian) is similar to the plant ivy. "Ivy is a plant that spins around the tree; has red flowers and is customarily called spinning plant. It is grown in India and is very famous." [5]

" Simile is likening something to another thing or an attribute. But in rhetoric, simile is pointing to the likeness and or common attribute of something to something else or to other attribute. [1]

" Simile is likening something to another on the condition of a claim or falsehood and not truth. [4]

Attar's Diwan is full of literary similes. Some of them are introduced in the following passages; and their novelty and beauty motivated the present writer to know them better and explain their literary applications.

Fire of Love:

'Love' has always been accompanied with the fervency of the fire in the heart of the lover. Considering this specification of love, Attar has widely used simile to describe the true nature of love. He has likened 'love' to 'fire' in the following poem. There, the fire resulting from love is likened to a 'lion' that has attacked fiercely to his heart and has captured it.

atasheeshgheshzegheirat bar delam

taxtanavordhamchoshir-e mast

(Attar,2011: 57)

fire of love: likened shir-e mast (drunken lion): likened to relation: swift attack

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In the above poem, Attar has likened love to fire and to the drunken lion to show the deep burning effect and swift capturing of it.

In another example, Attar speaks of his real beloved, in a very brilliant way: as someone who is dead at the bottom of the sea, comes to the surface of the water, is not alive anymore, I am so burnt in the fire of your love that I have been actually transformed into earth and smoke. Thus, he likens someone who is entangled in love and is not alive any more to someone who is dead.

*mordehcheguneh bar sar-e daryafetadzeghaer
mandarmiyanehatasheeshghatchonanshodam* (ibid: 209)

love: likened fire: likened to

relation: ardent burning and turning into ashes

lover: likened dead: likened to

relation: become smoke and light

Likening love to fire had several meanings for Attar. He believes that love, similar to fire, captures the lover; and similar to a candle gradually burns away and the lover, then, is gone.

*atash-eeshgatlaramadgard del-e ma
cho sham aztaff-e an begodaxtim* (Attar,2011: 487)

love: likened fire: likened to

relation: burst into flames

lover: likened candle: likened to

relation: melting

To Attar, love is like a fire. Someone who has fallen into a fire, will be burnt all over and there will be no remedy for the burn. Love is irremediable and the lover should tolerate the pain.

It is noteworthy that sufferings caused by love is a pleasant experience for the lover; and Attar does not say anything about the negative attributes of the pain of love.

*chondelamdaratash-eeshghuftad
mobtalay-edard-ebidarmanshodam* (ibid: 410)

eshgh: likened

fire: likened to

relation: burning

Falcon of Love:

Attar has created a relationship between love and different animals(e.g. lion, peacock, falcon etc.). As an example, likening love to a falcon, definitely, is creating an image. His melancholic heart is due to the love of the beloved.

Melancholic heart of Attar, once grasped within the claws of the falcon of love, is captured and burnt.

*baz-eeshgash chon del-e Attar darmokhallabgereft
az del-e garmashajabnabovad agar mokhallabbesuxt* (Attar,2011: 19)

Sea of Love:

Likening love to sea has long been used by different poets. But Attar, approaches sea of love from different angles; and in some of his similes, paradoxes are felt in the surface. For example, Attar, in a poem likens love of the beloved to a sea of fire, whereas fire and water are two opposite elements.

It seems that, because of its burning nature, Attar has likened love to fire. And in order to show the great depth of this feeling, he has likened it to sea. First, Attar intends to show the depth of his

internal feeling of fire, which is far beyond ordinary sensations; and second, as he presumes love as an illness and at the same time a remedy, he has juxtaposed these two opposing concepts, the same way that he has collocated sea and water. Here, too, sea can subside the burning flames of love. To this end, Attar lets himself emerge in the sea of love and at the same time face its perilous dangers.

*gereftameshgh-eruy-e to zesarbaz
hamiporsamzekuy-e to khabarbaz
che gar eshgh-e to daryayistatash
fekandamxishtanradarxatarbaz* (ibid: 333)

In another example, Attar says that the lover has no option other than burning in this sea of fire.

*eshgh-ejamal-ejanandaryay-e atashinast
garasheghibesuzizirake rah inast* (ibid: 69)

Attar thinks that the result of the experience of love is a pleasant feeling for those who have accepted its hardships. On this principle, he likens love to sea in whose bottom there are precious pearls. Attar is certain that a man can reach this pearl, if he has endured the vast hardships of the sea.

*dorr-edaryay-eeshgh an kasyaft
kebexungashtsalhayederaz* (ibid: 337)

love: likened pearls: likened to

relation: to be of great value

Attar's use of the word 'sea' is his similes, is because of its being of great and immense value and a source of life and vitality. Moreover, he likens love to the sea because of its vastness and great depth. He likens his heart to this sea of love. All of his words originate from that sea; and that is why he presumes them to be of great value, because the words are imbued with love in the sea of love.

chon del-e Attar shod daryay-e eshgh

basjavaherkazzabanaafshandeyim (ibid: 484)

Attar identifies 'love' with sea, in which the lover is being drowned; and his rescue depends on the will of the beloved. From the point of view of mysticism, Attar prefers to be drowned in the sea of divine love; and wants the unification with the beloved.

ghargey-edaryayeeshgetgashteam

dast-e man girozeshghargabambebar (ibid: 323)

love: likened sea: likened to

relation: to be drowned

Emam Khomeini, in his Diwan refers to love as a vast sea and as a boundless desert.

eshgh-eruy-e to dar in badiyehafkandmara

chetavankardke in badiyehrasahelnist (Emam Khomeini, 1374: 67)

The realm of love is similar to an endless sea; and the sufferings of the lover, caused by love, can never be felt, because of the vastness of the sea of love.

dareshghdard-exodrahargezkarannabini

zirakeeshgh-ejanandaryay-e bikaranast (Attar, 2011:63)

Trap of Love:

The way of life is an unknown one. Someone who steps in it, will be entrapped by love. From another perspective, lovers are victims of the beloved. So, someone who strives to reach the genuine love of God, will be captured in the trap of love, like a captured bird.

tadelamdar dam-e eshghetuftad

darmiyān-exunchomorghibesmelast (ibid: 63)

The Way of Love:

One of the most noted figures of speech, is the likening of love to a way. Considering the hardships of the way of love, and long expectations to reach the beloved, the way seems to be practically endless. Thus, in most cases, love has been likened to a way.

basdel-eshuridehkandarrah-e eshgh

janbedad-oruy-e janankasnadid (ibid: 306)

love: likened way: likened to

relation: hardships and obstacles

Attar considers the way of love as indefinite and endless. Thus, he believes that there is no static state in love. Love is accompanied with dynamics and the way of love is endless with great hardships.

In another example, Attar has likened love to an angry lion. This case is not compatible with Kulu's description of the specifications of love.

shir-eshghet be xashmpanjegoshad

pas be sadr-e way emtahanamkard (Attar, 2011: 155)

The Peacock of Love:

By likening love to a peacock, Attar wants to show the beauty and grandeur of love. He likens himself to the peacock of love, who can dominate his environment through his attractive words, gained by love. This likening of Attar, refers to the widespread nature and the magnificence of love that attracts all people.

takedarbagh-esoxan Attar shod tavus-e eshgh

darsoxanxorshidradarzir-e par miavarad (ibid: 165)

The Vortex of Love:

Attar likens love to a vortex for two reasons. First, a vortex has a great attraction; and love has the same power to which men are attracted. Second, someone entrapped in it will be destroyed.

Love brings such a fate to the lover.

delchodarger dab-eeshgeshuftad

tanfrudadim-odarnagorixtim (ibid: 489)

love: likened vortex: likened to

relation: attraction and destruction

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Considering Attar's literary attitudes and similes about the concept 'love' as a figurative device in his Diwan, it can be concluded that:

- 1 - The outstanding peculiarity of Attar's simile in the expression of 'love' is that within a simile another one is embedded.
- 2 - In using simile about the concept 'love', he has used, at the same time, other new literary figurative devices.
- 3 - Considering Attar's indirect similes about 'love', the full specifications of it can be deduced.
- 4 - Attar, with his novel images about the concept 'love' used in his Diwan, has made it clarified to the common people, so that someone who has no experience about love can fully be acquainted with its nature.
- 5 - Using similes in the case of 'love', Attar has used the mutual interrelationships between the nature and love.
- 6 - In similes used by Attar in the description of love, the element of warmness of love has been emphasized. This point is particularly evident in his similes the "Fire of Love" and the "Wine of Love". This warmness is due to the fact that when love is generated, by a spark, in a Man's heart, it continues to burn up till the end.

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