

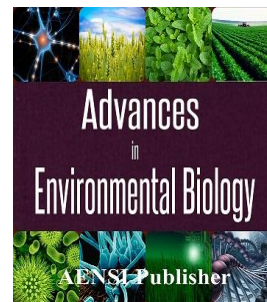


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Love and its Manifestations in the Literary Works of Safi Alishah Isfahani

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ABSTRACT

According to Sofia and mystics, love is a spiritual rapture and divine favor that is the final goal of any lover; it is something which a spirit seeks; it is the source of divine gift and sublime status. The final goal of creation and circuit of existence is based on love and love is derived from manifestation of eternal Beloved. Life with the love of God becomes meaningful. Sufis and mystics have versified and have written subjects about love from the perspective of mysticism to facilitate and accelerate way of reaching the perfection of God and achieving the truth with love. In this regard, Safi AliShah Isfahani- poet and mystic of Qajariyeh (1831-1896) - has beautifully expressed way of love in his prose and versified works through using experiences of the former Sufis and mystics that is stated in this paper.

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INTRODUCTION

According to mystics, the word "love" is the mystery of Creation and the secret of existence; love is considered as the foundation of creation and existence. We should know that love is the result of perception, cognition and knowledge and love is created from reasoning of knowledge, perception, cognition and it surrounds beauty. The more sense increases, the more love increases and the stronger understanding is, wisdom and knowledge is, the stronger and more intense love is; love is always the result of perfection and beauty rather than deficiency and ugliness. As the beauty and knowledge of God is perfect, the love of His beauty will be at the utmost. Or in other words, the eternal love is made when eternal beauty is manifested on eternal knowledge. This is the origin of love and this love is the inclusion of the lover and the Beloved. It means that God is lover due to eternal knowledge and Beloved because of the eternal beauty. And finally as the eternal existence does not accept any maxim but unity; love which is also created by loving and beloved condition won't be out of eternal existence [5]. Yes, love is mutual; a lover loves beauty of the Beloved and the Beloved loves lover's love; lover needs the Beloved's goodness and the Beloved needs lover's love. Sufi believes that the celestial hadith "I was hidden treasure and I liked to be known and thus I created creatures to be known" is a witness to this claim (same reference: 416). Professor of Shiraz (Hafez) versifies manifestation of divine beauty, creation of love, emotion and excitement in the words as:

At the beginning of creation, brightness of your beauty wanted to manifest
Love was created and set fire to the whole world [2].

Love is the creator of the entire universe and this creation is due to manifestation of eternal Beloved's beauty. Manifestation of Supreme Being created the universe, the parts of the existence started to move; the Heavenly Spheres began to turn, the sun began to shine in the sky, the moon shone in the dark nights [5]. According to mysticism, love is God's deposit. This deposit is assigned to humans rather than angels as Hafez said:

The load of deposit, the sky could not endure:

In the name of helpless me, the dice of the work, they cast [2].

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This couplet mentions to the holy verse “we offered the trust to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were afraid of it, and the human carried it. Surely, he is a harm doer, and ignorant” (Al-Ahzab, 72).

According to Safi Alishah, God’s deposit which was offered to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains, was love. As the heart is the place of "love" and due to the fact that the heart is the manifestation of the divine love, no fellow beings were capable of accepting it except human:

When carrying the burden of love was offered
The heavens and the earth refused to bear it.
Love was the portion of lover human
Love was the portion of dervish who achieved truth.
Creatures other than human had no heart
Offering sense and truth to the creatures except human was useless.
Love burdened human with love of the Beloved
It would unite human and the Beloved.
The Beloved tested the human repeatedly
Whoever devotes himself in the path of the Beloved?
Whoever ruins himself in the path of the Beloved?
To receive honor and glory from the Beloved [7].

Love is one of the main and basic elements of the mystical insight and actions. But what is the truth of love? This question cannot be answered. Because the love has a concept like the existence that is "best things" but the truth is hidden at last. As Molavi says:

Whatever I explain about the love
I am not able to do so when I want to describe the nature of love.
Although the speech and expression is enlightening
Love without descriptions is brighter [4].

Love in the creation of the world:

In a celestial tradition which is popular among mystics that the Prophet David (AS) asks God what is the motive and reason for the creation of the world and God answered: “I was hidden treasure and I liked to be known and thus I created creatures to be known” Safi AliShah Isfahani mentions to the truth of creation in a poetic interpretation of the Quran and says:

Before God created the world
And traits of God to be revealed
God was the lover of himself
And He saw the characteristics of His beauty in the mirror
For the manifestation of mirthful beauty
Love was uncovered and manifested
Love of God made the world be created
The sky and the earth was created because of God’s gift
God’s love addressed the holy prophet
Because the holy prophet was the cause of world’s creation [8].

The whole creation is the manifestation of God. The basis of creation is beauty and love of beauty. Existence of God who was both the Beloved and the Lover before the creation of the world wanted to manifest His beauty. And He made the creation as a mirror of His beauty. Therefore the God’ love of His beauty and manifestation of His beauty is the basis of creation of the universe. In fact, God is a Beloved, the Beloved of all creation. Creation is an instrument of God's manifestation [9].

Attraction and Love:

The goal of this divine rapture and God’s favor is to reach to God; it is the goal of every lover and the Sufi’s soul is seeking it; this is the enthusiasm which the mystics interpret it as God’s love and they believe it is "God’s net" that possesses the potential hearts. Mystics have accurately discerned the status and degrees of love and they have researched about lovers and degrees of love that has been mentioned in great detail in their poetry and tales. Therefore the love is the final purpose of creation and circuit of human beings. Since the human spirit seeks to return to his source and origin. Therefore he seeks God's love. Additionally any exactitude originates from the divine existence, no wonder that his love is stronger than any other stimulator. Finally, the highest degree of affection is the love and the highest degree of love is complete drowning of lover in the existence of the Beloved. And the Sufi’s love which starts from separation from the other creatures, leads to connection and unity with the Beloved [10]. In the literary works of SafiAli Shah, occasionally ecstatic love and passion- the result of his revelation of the invisible world- besot him and seizes rein of authority from him; so that he yells drunken. He discloses the secrets and mysteries in a state of drunkenness and ignorance that the eternal God has

whispered to his ear when He gave a private audience to him, but usually after he told secrets, he says: My Beloved is zealous and does not allow me more than this to reveal His secrets to those who are not confidential in this interpretation:

As I sometimes drunken, I yell cheerfully
 Drunkenness takes and brings me to the tavern
 Grateful wine-seller is over there
 He seals my mouth and says it is enough
 Don't you know our king is zealous?
 And he wants secret of love to be hidden
 Explain the holy verses of Quran through interpretation
 If you want to interpret, do with intelligence [8].

Such appeals are seen in every part of his literary works and this indicates that he is involved in ecstatic and passionate Sufis. In these charismas, a poet does not have any authority and the Beloved makes him utter the words:

Wind moves my rapture again
 If I go to him, accept and say he makes me read
 Both of the pulling forces of wind is the Beloved
 Extirpated the creation and the heart
 The Beloved's word is hidden in my tongue
 Who am I? I am both His language and His expression
 Who is a human who speaks?
 God makes me utter the words
 Whatever I say from "A" to "Z"
 The goal of those words is love although they are different
 I am alike a parrot in front of a mirror
 The Beloved pours the words in my chest
 Love came and set the fire on the wisdom
 Love blamed wisdom, speech and narration [7].

He versifies about Imam Abdullah ibn al-Hassan (AS) who was between two forces- love and feeling-and ultimately love overcame the feeling that brought him to the altar:

King of love (Imam Hussein) called Zainab
 Leave him come to the altar of love
 That king called him from outside
 From the inside (love) said; o Abdullah come
 Called him from outside; o take him
 The Saint's love attracted him from the inside
 When the extent love of God increased
 Let the prince leave Zainab
 The power of feeling has some limitations
 But the power of love has no boundary
 The force and power of the love took
 Earthly body to the heavens and decorated (same: 210)

Safi AliShah in the versified interpretation of the of the holy Qur'an and other books with beautiful writings of "rapture" flies to the sky of love and says fine and sincere words in the world of ignorance:

Describing beauty of Beloved, I was besotted
 I gave up my own attribute and took His attribute
 Think of oneself and others isn't the job of the lover
 Because duality has no way to the Beloved
 When you are behind the screen, the Beloved doesn't show His face
 If you leave the earthly screen, you will join the Beloved
 He who thinks of himself as joining to the Beloved
 He isn't allowed to see the beauty of the Beloved [8].

The necessity of keeping secrets of love in the view of Sofia:

Mysticism and Sufism at all times and among all peoples, with regard to the issue of "inwardness" and inner secrets, have long time ago made them choose specific community, groups and certain categories and they have banned them from joining to mass of people so that secrets and mysteries of religious way and spirituality wouldn't be accessible to the outsiders who do not deserve them. In Sufism, confidentiality is the obligation of religious way and disclosure of secrets is considered as blasphemy and heresy and it deserves punishment [3].

Ain alqozat says: the disclosure of the beloved in this way is the cause of the lover's destruction because in the world of spirituality "disclosure of God's secret is heresy" [9].

Molavi says:

The lovers' lips are locked while their hearts are full of secrets

Their lips are mute while their hearts are full of voice of love

The mystics who have drunk from the cup of the Beloved

Have found out the secrets but they are hidden

Those who learned the secrets of love

Their lips were sealed and they weren't let utter

According to Hafez, the secret of love mustn't be disclosed and disclosure of secrets of love isn't forgivable:

He said: "that friend by whom lofty became the head of the gibbet"

"His crime was this that clear, the mysteries of the sky, he made" [2].

In Zobdatal-Asrar and in narration of martyrdom of Hazrat Ali Akbar (AS), when he is addressed by Imam Hussein (AS), he traverses the path of religious way and he achieves the survival through martyrdom and he possess the territory of survival with the God and he is required to keep the secret of love:

When Hazrat Ali Akbar (AS) effaced himself in God

He possessed the territory of eternal survival because of his effacement

So the God sealed his mouth so that

The secrets of the lovers wouldn't be disclosed

He who learned the secrets of love

The God sealed his mouth not to disclose [7].

Or in the mystical narration of the martyrdom of Ali Asghar (AS), the poet's intention is not expressing a tragedy; rather he is intended only to express love and nothing else. Here, the poet also speaks about the necessity of confidentiality in love and said that Mansoor Hallaj revealed some of the secrets of love and was hung:

My purpose of expressing the love isn't extension

Whatever that king did in the market of love

My purpose isn't to express tragedy

And I am not allowed to describe the love

The reason of uttering these words is love

Only the love is the discoverer of my secrets

Mansoor Hallaj revealed some of the secrets of love

So he was hung on top of the gibbet (same: 53)

Reflection of Love in the literary works of SafiAli Shah Isfahani:

Safi AliShah talks about roguish and amorously vision in a beautiful and allegorical narrative and expresses love beautifully. Then he comes to this conclusion that the destruction of the love is the same as habitable state and slavery of love is the same as freedom:

Parrot of spirit ate sugar again

He uttered words through Beloved's lip and became sweet

I dreamed about roguish yesterday

Borrow an ear from the Beloved of the world

Although I am distracted because of that imagination

My heart is still asleep in watching it

That dream coquets with the hearts of one hundred thousands

It runs away of heart as if fairy runs away of us

Although the heart got full of blood due to sorrow of love

Finally it entered to His love

Although my heart's blood poured, no matter, since he was Beloved

He had authority on my heart and body

Although He ruins my body, His purpose is prosperous

Being slavery in sorrow of His love is the same as freedom

No difference exists between a slave and a free man near love

All the world is the slave of dervish (love)

Whatever I cover the love with screen

The love will uncover and reveal it

The love tears all the screens

It put an end to the work of lovers [7].

Describing love, SafiAli Shah notes that love requires merits and luck and he believes that the source of love is the God's love upon him. He thinks that the love was the creator of sea of light and the creation was appeared up to lower levels:

We came to describe the love
 For he who pays attention to love
 The first love was the God's love upon Him
 God saw his beauty in the mirror of His characteristics
 Some light glowed from that unseen beauty
 The world was created due to manifestation of His beauty
 That sea of light began to move
 Jewels came out of it without sparing
 Any being began to live
 Everything was created accordingly
 Since the cause of everything was love
 Everything was apparently connected to each other in form
 God wanted a complete manifestation
 To accept the burden of love
 Heavens and the earth refused
 Thus this thought became obligatory for human
 Because he was confident of this house (love)
 And he had seen that beauty and he was mad [8].

Safi AliShah continued to mention to choir of love which rose from the throats of the men of God and manifestation of love in the universe; he says: this doesn't mean reincarnation; rather it is a manifestation of God:

If you have perception, abridge the words
 These voices come out of one's throat
 The Beloved whom the words come from
 None-existences existed by His breath
 He breathed human due to the gift
 And He called himself human
 Although He seems alike human
 In fact human has been created by His breath
 It means that o trusted friends!
 The Beloved was manifested in the form of soil
 O ignorant person! This doesn't mean reincarnation
 Open your eyes and see the manifestation [8].
 Safi Ali Shah states about ascending of spirit and overcoming of the love in the religious way of God:
 O lover heart! Where are you? Be aware
 If you are drunk too, cover the word of love
 Lover's heart doesn't know any rule
 The law is useless for him
 Although the language clearly interprets
 The love is more expressive than language
 The moment in which love talks about the glory of the Beloved
 All the expressive and mute creatures are dumb
 O wisdom leave! Here isn't your place
 The love pays no attention to you
 Musician of love plays tune at the time of music
 Worship God in order to reach Him
 Lover doesn't pay attention to these
 There is more expressive language for them
 I have another language to express the love
 To express love without language
 While the spirit is free from the body
 Creatures' speech replaces God's speech [7].

Conclusion:

According to Sufis and mystics, love is a main essence of creation and it is the most valuable element which has been gifted to the lover by the Beloved and God; love is the source of all perfections and the secret of slavery of God is the hidden love.

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