

## Love from the View of Big Islamic Mystics

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### Abstract

This article is about love. Although love is so infinite that it can't be limited to words, it is united with human spirit and even all creatures in a way that everyone likes to taste some drops of this sea. Pure love and real lover is not very easy to know. By examining the lives of famous lovers, whose names are recorded in the history for ever, we can get interesting information about these concepts. Hallaj, Aynolghozat and Sohravardi are 3 top martyrs of love path. This article emphasizes the lives and speeches of these 3 martyrs to get a clear image of love, lover, and beloved by this means.

**Keywords:** love, lover, beloved, Hallaj, Aynolghozat, Sohravardi

### 1. Introduction

“Love sea has no shore, there in no way but dying there” (Hafez, 1988, p. 178)

Love is a secret latent in the hearts of all men and creatures from the start to the end. It seems so close that everyone thinks that he/she can describe it easily. But, running it on the tongue and including it in speech is a difficult task. What is this bitter and sweet thing without which life is meaningless and with it full of pain, a pain that lover yearns for it by heart?

Among all human features, love has the most significance. It is just human who experiences love in its real form:

“An angle doesn't know love ask the human what it is” (Hafez, 1988, p. 137)

This study explains the concept of love and its origin in human nature, lover and beloved status, and bilateral love demand in them which ends in unity. To clarify these issues, Hallaj, Aynolghozat and Sohravardi- 3 top martyrs of the love path, will be studied with scrutiny. Here, their historical or social faces are not considered, though they were important people in their time. The important facet of them here is their devotion to love which made their existence gold, shining in the history:

“Leave the copper of life like path men to find love and become gold” (Hafez, 1988, p. 137).

With a brief look at different resources, we find that few philosophers and scholars have been able to describe and define life with perfection. Many believe that this inability is for love is an internal feeling understood by heart and soul and tongue can't describe it. In other words, love can be perceptualized not woven. It also can't be described and put in words. It is like a spring breeze that can't be captured but can be felt. Ebne Arabi in “*Fotoohat*” mentions that anyone who defines love has not recognized it. Soltanololama (Bahaedinvalad) in “*Maeref*” answers the one who asked him about love nature: “If you find it what shall I say? And if you didn't find it, what shall I say?”

In this respect, Molana has the following verses:

“Whatever descriptions I give about love, when I fall in love I become ashamed of them

Although verbal interpretation is illuminating, speechless love is clearer

The pen which was writing broke when it started writing about love

Wisdom got confused like a donkey in a mud, love described love and lover by itself” (Vol. 1, pp. 112-115)

“Love can't be told and heard, it is a deep sea

Its drops can't be counted, seven seas are small against it "(Chapter 1, 2731-2732) (Zamani, 2014, p. 433)

Azizedin Nasafi (2000, p. 160) describes love in this way: Anyone who wants to talk to someone has tendency and when it increases it becomes liking and when it intensifies, kindness appears; when kindness enhances, love is born.

Khaje Abdollah Ansari (1993, pp. 341-342) separated love from liking and believes that kindness burns the lover not the beloved; but, love burns both. Plato talks about love: "Human soul has seen the truth of beauty and sheer goodness before entering this world in eternity without any barrier". So, he reminds of that real beauty since he sees the virtual and superficial goodness in this world. He misses them and is engaged with love; beauty attracts him and like a bird in cage he wants to fly towards it and love world is eagerness to see God (Sajadi, 2008, p. 285).

Love and its presence can be felt by everyone. But, the idea that love is omnipresent is very interesting. Islamic scholars have declared that existence equals love and there is no creature unless it has an essence of love. Before them, Plato had told that love is omnipresent (Zamani, 2014, p. 435). In party thesis, Plato says that love connects the whole world. Molana has the same belief about love:

"Good job to love, the big master which united all particles

Like the mud in pedestrian which became a pot by a potter" (Chapter 2, 3727-3728) (the same, p. 436)

Perhaps, the best love definition can be found in the speech of Sohrevardi:

"Eshg (meaning love in Persian) is derived from ashagha which is a plant that grows in the garden. When it raises, it turns around the tree and covers the whole tree in a way that no humidity is left among the vessels of leaves. Thus, any food that reaches the tree by water and air is consumed by that plant. This leads to flagging the tree" (Madi, 1992, p. 2).

Nevertheless, love has existed from the start of creation. Love is a divine feature that will exist for ever, manifested in the essence of man as the most salient symbol of God.

### 2.1 Love in Koran and Anecdotes

The term love is not directly mentioned in Koran, but the word "*sever passion*" has which is a kind of love been replicated a lot. For example, in Bagareh sura verse 165 it is said: "The believers in God have sever passion to him".

Although the term love is not explicitly mentioned in Koran, based on the theme of verses, love is a burden God has placed on man's shoulders: "We offered the trust to the heavens, earth, and mountains; they refused and feared it. But, the man took it since he was stupid" (Ahzab sura, verse 33).

We face the term love in many statements from Imams and Prophet Mohammad: Ahmad Jam quotes from Prophet Mohammad that any passion which governs wisdom is love. If someone abuses this passion, it won't be love; but, if it is pure love, a little bit of it will be better than worshippers' prayers (Jam, 1989, p. 210).

There is a famous anecdote (known as *kanz*) that God lovers mention and refer to it the most: "God says: I was a hidden treasure (*kanz in Arabic*) and I wanted to be known. Thus, I created man" (Foroozanfar, 1991, p. 29).

"The treasure was hidden but full and made the soil more shining than sun" (Molavi, Vol.1, 2010, p. 126).

Imam Mohammad Gazali quotes a statement from Prophet Mohammad: "God says that my creature always searches for me, asks about me, talks to anyone about me, falls in love with me and I love him" (Gazali, Vol. 2, 1979, p. 913).

Quoted from Tamhidat Aynolgozat, Dr. Sajadi mentions a statement from Prophet Mohammad: "O' dear, Prophet Mohammad said the man who loves and hides it and dies for it, is a martyr. I try to escape from love but love makes me eager and confused; so, it governs and it defeats me. How can I fight love?" (Sajadi, 2008, p. 289).

### 2.2 Love in Universe

Sohrevardi repeats the words of Ebnesina about love of all creatures to God which is the reason of their existence: look that how God gave everything perfection, eagerness, and love, either in natural form or by will (Madi, 1992, p. 236).

Referring to *kanz* anecdote, scholars mention the final goal of creation to be love. Molana says that the world is from love and for love:

"If it wasn't for love, why would I create universe?" (Vol. 5, 2739) (Zamani, 2014, p. 435)

In party thesis of Plato, Oroxy Makhos says that good and bad loves are not specific for the relation of human with beauty and has different reasons and is found in other things like animals' body. Territory of God's power is not in human but the whole universe (Madi, 1992, p. 233).

Deilami quotes from plato that kindness is not for anyone but God and everything from big to small moves towards its origin. All universal movements are for the love of creatures to the creator and their origin (the same, p. 234).

### 2.3 Love Is Bilateral

Undoubtedly, human love to God in his heart is the matrix of any love. In fact, God who is the symbol of love has given this gift to humans to be eager to him.

Examining different resources shows that this love is not unilateral and God also loves man. Hallaj not only announced love of God and man to be bilateral with no fear but also insisted that God created man in his form. In Hallaj's idea, for seeing his love in a person and talking to him, God created man who was a reflection of his nature. Thus, God admired him and created him. In other words, God created man like a mirror in which he could see his love and this love was the secret of creation (Dehgani, 1998, p. 116)

Dr. Zamani suggests bilateral love as a principal of Molana's school: "It is not that love is always from the lover and he follows the beloved while she flirts. Love between lover and beloved is bilateral. As Plato says, love seeks beauty and beauty searches for love. If there is not love of beauty, virtue of beauty does not appear. For example, every beautiful person likes to be adored. Thus, in Molana's school, beloved is lover and lover is beloved".

"Beloveds are captives of lovers, any lover you see is a kind of beloved and vice versa

If thirsties seek water in the world, the water also seeks thirsties" (Zamani, 2014, p. 444) (Vol. 1, 1739-1741)

Thus, our theosophists believe in God and men's love to each other, implying that God's love to himself led to the creation of man since only man is deserved to know God. Thus, the universe was created to help man to know God. This feature has made man popular to God. For this reason, theosophists introduce God's love to himself as the cause of creating universe and especially man. In other words, God's love to man is a kind of God's love to himself.

In this respect, Aynolgozat says: "I swear to Prophet Mohammad that people think that God makes love to men for men. But, God makes love to man for his love to himself. Since when the lover makes love to the beloved, it is for his love to himself not to the beloved. He adds that Shebelli told God in his prays: O' God, who were you for?"

God: no one.

Shebelli: who are you for?

God: no one.

Shebelli: who do you want?

God: no one.

With this answer, Shebelli fainted" (Madi, 1992, p. 200)

It means that the lover reaches a position in which his aim is just love. Aynolgozat has similar statements about his states. He is drawn in divine love and says: Start of perfect love for the lover is forgetting beloved since the lover deals with love which is the aim of his life. Life without love is death. In this state, he forgets himself. There are times that the lover suffers from love so much that he forgets unity and separation since he feels no happiness for the former and no sadness for the latter (Aynolgozat Hamadani, 1998, p. 101).

" In love the one steps forward who has no life , the one who suffers from love has no cure not everything you put finger on is love" (the same, p. 97)

As mentioned before, man's love to God is a manifestation of the same love. Theosophists who talk about God's love to the people and their love to each other refer to a verse of Koran "فسوف يأتى الله بقوم يحبهم و يحبونه" (5/54) in which God first talks about his love to men and then their love to himself (Madi, 1992, p. 201).

Perhaps, belief in bilateral love between God and his creatures is the origin of some theosophists' belief in Satan's much love to God. His love was so much that he accepted God's curse for not bowing to someone except him and bore separation with love. In their idea, when God ordered Satan to bow, Satan knew about God's will that was not to bow to anyone but him. This is also the belief of Aynolgozat and Hallaj. In Satan's case,

Aynolgozat follows Hallaj and Gazali. If we know Hallaj as the founder of honoring Satan, Aynolgozat is the extender and interpreter of this idea (Nicholson, 1995, p. 158).

#### *2.4 Love Is beyond Religions, Belief, and Atheism*

One day, in Bagdad's market, Hallaj noticed the fight of a Muslim and Jewish. The Muslim told the Jewish. You dog Jewish! Hallaj looked at Muslim with anger and told him "don't make your dog bark!". At the end, when the Muslim apologized the Jewish, Hallaj told the Muslim: "just know that Muslim, Jewish, and Christian are the same since they all have one aim (Massignon & Crows, 2004, p. 70).

In fact, in discussing religious unity, Hallaj knew himself independent of any religion and said that we should go beyond religions to recognize divine truth (Massignon, 1979, p. 25). True lovers are absorbed in divine love so much that above love there is nothing in their mind. Then, the only reason of their lives becomes love:

"Love came and entered my veins, it emptied me and filled me with my beloved

My whole body is full of my beloved, I only drag my name and inside me is my beloved" (Aboosaeed Abolkheir, 1990, p. 29)

In his book and Shams Collection, Molana mentions this point several times:

"The lover is higher than atheism and faith, they both are a cover for love and love is the core" (Molavi, Vol. 4, 2010, p. 659)

Real theosophists have nothing to do with the world or eternity and no claim for leadership. One day, Shebelli came to Hallaj and asked: O' master, what is the path to God? Hallaj said: two steps. First you should deliver this world to its lovers and second, you should give eternity to its followers (Massignon & Crows, 1994, p. 107).

True lovers were committed to performing religious ceremonies but the main principal for them has been the love which the sages can't understand.

In fact, a theosophist is an evidence of divine love, an evidence which makes him needless to reasoning and confronts feelingless justifications, proving love of God and man and loveful obey of divine orders with which superficialists disagree (Vadeh, 1993, p. 529).

#### *2.5 The End of Love Search Is Unity with Beloved*

Ekhvanosafa says: "Love is tendency to unity which is a spiritual state since in physical affairs there is no such a thing and there exist only proximity or contiguousness" (Madi, 1992, p. 54).

God's lovers believe in temporary unity to be at a specific moment in which the covers disappear and a small light from beloved comes to the lovers. But, the permanent unity is after death in the eternity.

These moments were also reflected in Hallaj's saying: "When everything was dark inside me, I trembled. I heard a voice inside. It was his but came out of my tongue. I didn't have any tongue or ears. My ears were close to all sounds around me. But, I heard only his voice since it was inside me. When it stopped, I cried and suffered for he had left me" (Zarinkoob, 2000, p. 53).

Aynolgozat has a good description of unity: I saw a light that separated from him and a light which separated from me and joined it, making a pretty face which made me astonished (Aynolgozat Hamadani, 1998, p. 403).

In another place, Aynolgozat mentions unity in divine love: "the final goal of love is removing distance between the lover and beloved. But, when the lover reaches to the end, he becomes the beloved and the beloved becomes him. This is unity" (Madi, 1992, p. 55)

Sohravardi who reached the same divine stage of Hallaj and Aynolgozat, confirms their speeches: "Unity is a kind of meeting and getting one to remove darkneses and covers" (Sohravardi, 1397 AH, p. 308).

From the sayings of all above-mentioned scholars, it is concluded that in love there is no duality and only unity exists which turns love, lover, and beloved one thing (Sagarvanian, 1993, p. 121)

Perhaps, the simplest description about unity can be Nicholson's saying in his book titled "Mysticism of Islam": If a man loves a stone he is a stone, if he loves a human, he is a human; if he loves God, I don't dare say what happens since if I say he becomes God, they may stone me (Nicholson, 1995, p. 207)

It seems that Nicholson has stated what all the martyrs of love path aimed to say in short and at the best state.

### **3. Conclusion**

Love is a wonderful power which turns the life of the lover upside down and after the ruins, he finds a valuable treasure. Love is a phoenix which burns the lover's body and creates a new existence from its ashes. Love is a

permanent sun which lightens darkness of human life. Love to God which is in-born is the right path which facilitates fact-finding about the world and the self of man. Stranger man of today can only be benefited from love to get out of the darkness he has created around him since love seeks peace and reconciliation. Love is the only true friend which takes man's hands, guiding him to what he seeks though he doesn't know well, i.e. its divine origin and peace.

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