

THE MYSTERY OF ETERNALITY OF MOWLANA (His Relations With Shams)

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After over seven centuries, Mowlana is still alive as one of the most famous Sufis and as a great leader for eternal peace, friendship and happiness. What is the secret that in spite of all changes and progress in the ways of life and thinking, in science and technology and in the world of today, his many centuries old ideas and thoughts are still valid and shining like the polar star?

Mowlana was a true sufi, leader of "erfan" (gnosticism) which started in the late second century A.H. after the sanctimonious asceticism. (Dr. Ashrafzadeh)

"erfan" which orbits around "love", and specially love of God, is one of the greatest sentimental and sensational feelings donated to man by God. Ironically, here God is all human beings and all other creatures. Erfan is the only remedy for footless, political, regional, racial, religious and cultural differences of all human beings which are destroying the whole world. (Toossi, 1999).

The centre of erfan is love of God which reflects over all God's creatures.

The roots of this way of thinking go back to the ayat of Qoran. In Baqara:30 God says. "Man is the representative (kalifa) of God on the earth. And Gulpinarily narrates a 'hadith' from Abu Harira, that God created man like himself. By becoming clear-hearted and purifying our souls we can become God-like creature. Some of the Sufis believe that man's prostration in prayers (touching the ground with our foreheads) is prostration to man, as God ordered all angels to do so. In that case if man does not serve others his prayers are not accepted by God. Nobody, then, permits himself to be rude and cruel to any other person. We must be good citizens and help others not sticking to our own profits. In fact, the real problem of human beings is that in our beliefs we think that what we think is one hundred per cent true and what others say is wrong. On the other hand we insist on our own personal ideas and think that we are preaching what was ordered by God or by law! Man always thinks about his/her own personal benefits and does not care for others.

In Masnavi of Mowlana there is the story of fire during the time of Omar, the second Calif. There was a big fire and people were not able to extinguish it by water. They went to Omar and asked for help. He said leave water and open the doors for helping people. You have been the slaves of your own profits. Think for other people as well and serve them. This fire is the signs of God's anger you cannot put it off by water.

In divan of Shams also Mowlana describes arefs as people who:

Na herse elmo honar mandeshan na herse behesht

Najuyad oo kharo oshtor ke hast shir savar

Have no greed of knowledge or art, no greed of Heavens

They are not looking for donkey and camel to ride because they are already riding Lions!

Which means their position is so high that they are not looking for knowledge and art (symbols of earthly high position) and heavens (the ultimate goal of those who prey superficially, preying for reward,

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not for love).

In the erfān of today, this is true because aref or Sufis of today cannot be ascetics, sitting in a corner of a room and prey and prey and prey! Preying should be along with fulfilling our jobs. Be sincere and true and never forget God. This is the best kind of preying. The world of today is the world of work and struggle. In the Qoran we have that working is preying. There must be a balance between our deeds, actions in the society, and our religious duties. We are responsible. We cannot leave our responsibilities in the society and go around the world with no destination.

So, this is the love that an aref talks about. Love for all human being without any discrimination for their color or religion. Unfortunately one of the main causes of wars during the long history of man has been religions, and still it is so. In fact there is no difference between religions. Each one has advocated the same rules and completed the previous one. In Baqara, the second sura of Qoran we read, "the faithful Moslem is he who believes in what has been sent to you (Mohammad) and to those before him, (II:3-6) which means Zoroaster, Abraham, David, Moses and Jesus Christ (Pbth). We Moslems believe in and highly respect holy Mary, the virgin. I do not know why there have been so many fights, wars, bloodshed and cruelties against different religions and more shamefully against different sects in one religion.

The preaching of Zoroaster which is said advocated the first religion based on believing in one God was sameness of all religions. The result was that Cyrus, the Great, 2500 years ago produced what is called the first human rights charter. About seventy years ago a clay cylinder was found in the ruins of Babel (Babilon) near Baghdad, on which is written in cuneiform that " the followers of all religions are free to worship their Gods in their own way. Nobody has the right of destroying the houses of others for their ways of thinking."

He also released 42000 Jews who were captured by Bokhtonasr, king of Babylon who were the remainders of 50000. He sent them back to their country and also gave back all the gold and silverware which belonged to them and paid for rebuilding of their temples. For this reason syrus, the Iranian emperor has been praised in the old Testament as the Great Salvtor.

An aref who has reached the heights of perfection by purifying his/her inner self, sticks to his religious beliefs and at the same time cares for and respects the believers of all other religions and other sects, looking at them with love because they are all handicrafts of God. In this way an aref believes that this kind of love is the source of security and happiness, because he/she has put behind him/her all prejudice, selfishness and ambitions that are the real cause of all man's problems.

Mowlana had reached this stage and had become perfect. He was able to look at the world from above and was able to see how cheap have been the causes of man's quarrels during the course of history, always fight for nothing! The mystery of his eternity is this. He could feel the great love of God which reflects all over the world. Mowlana himself refers to this fact:

Be happy o good - behaved love of ours / o remedy of all our problems
" shad bash ey eshghe xosh sowdaye ma " / " ey tabib jomle ellat haye ma "

In this poem he refers to love as the healer of all our troubles. That is why he was always happy. He engages in religious dance or "sama'a". Even when he was passing in streets with all the followers dancing around him. Life should be with enjoyment. When you enjoy you are happy. You are happy when you have deep self satisfaction of not having done anything wrong and there is no body unhappy with you. You become filled with joy as Hafiz mentions:

I will throw my cap like bubble (explode) with joy
If the shadow of your face reflects on the wine in my cup
hobab var bar andazam az neshat kolah / agar ze ruye to aksi be jame ma oftad
Elahi Ghomshe-ee writes:

If you open the (inner) clean eyes of love
You'll see that there is nothing that is not beautiful

The eyes which do not see with love Are unable to see the beauties of this world?

Gar dideye pake eshgh bogsha-ee naghshi na ke dar seresh ziba nist.

Ziba-eeeye in jahan koja binad chashmi ke be noore eshgh bina nist?

In masnavi of mowlana we read:

gozar kon az bashariyat fereshteh bash dela fereshtegi cho nabashad basher che sud konad? Pass the stage of being an earthly man, try to become an angel

If man has not the characteristics of an angel what is the benefits of man? (What is the difference between man and other animals?)

Angels are believed as the pure creatures with no sin. They are inhabitants of high positions in the sky. Man fell down out of heavens because of the mistake of Adam and Eve. So the earthly material body of man is dark, by developing the characteristics of angels which are the characteristics of God we become angels. Then we have left all our bad and Satanic characters. We have become God-like creatures which is the ultimate goal of all religions. Mowlana is the man. He looks at human beings as one "ummat vaheda" (one nation). Then there is no fighting, no terrorism, and no war in the whole world, forget about all shameful fights between the followers of different sects in different religions.

Hafiz says:

Jange haftado do mellat haha ra ozr beneh. Chon nadidand haghghat rahe afsaneh zadand

Forget about fights between the followers of 72 sects

As they were unable to find the truth, they started to make stories.

When men look at their religions superficially and not looking deep into the realities and the goals of religions, this is the beginnings of their troubles.

Allameh Amini mentions that reality is like an ocean. Some people walk on the sand and begin to gather pebbles. Some swim on the surface. But very few dive deep into the water for hunting pearls. The main problem of the world has always been that very few have cared for others. Caring for other has really a very high value and a high position in front of God.

If you reach this high position, you are not able to annoy even a little ant. In India there are poor people who take a pot of sugar and a spoon going around their houses and throwing sugar for feeding these little creatures of God while they themselves need that sugar.

For reaching these heights of humanity we should die in our existence.

Abdulbaki Golpinarli narrating Joneid of Baghdad mentions, "Sufism is to die in one's existence and to be born in the existence of God." (p.127)

He also refers to the fact that...real love removes all material and non-material obstacles from us and clears the road towards God. Then what is left is nothing but God:

Love is that flame that when it is lit It burns everything but the beloved

eshgh an sho'alast ku chon bar forukht har che joz ma'ashugh baghi jomleh sukht

In this case one cannot be the slave of his inner wishes (his nafs) any more:

Aval birila birolan / jomla alama tulan / boila soltanlik bolan / kollok kilasi dogol (From keibi, a Turkish poet).

He who became one with Him Will overlook at the whole world

He who receives such crown Will never become an slave

The roots of erfān go back to about eight thousand years ago to the commandments of Zoroaster in the Avesta his holy book.

It is not bad if I mention here that Avesta was the first religious book which presented one God for all human being (Albert Avy) Before Zoroaster, write Albert Avy, each tribe and each group of people worshiped an idol which belonged to their own group or even to their own family (Ibid).

Avesta is based on worshiping one almighty God, Ahura Mazda. Ahura Mazda is continuously fighting with Ahreman, the symbol of darkness and wickedness. Man should fight against wickedness and badness for becoming blessed. When you fight against anything which is wrong and bad then there is no darkness left and all people live in peace and become happy.

In the Avesta we read:

"I praise these mountains. I praise these fields. I praise all creatures because they are all made by Him..."

Baba Taher Oryan a well known mystic poet of Iran mentions:

Be darya bengaron darya te venom Be sahra bengarom sahra te venom

Be harja bengarom kuho daro dash Neshan az ghamate ra'anata venom

Looking at the sea, I see You Looking at plains I see You

Wherever I look, at the mountain, plain or sea I see nothing but Your pretty existence.

Erik Forum divides love into six categories: Love of child to parents, Love of father to child, love of mother to child, love of man and woman, friendly love and finally love of man to God. This love is creative and builds up man as a real human being. This is the love of all Gnostics, arefs, Sufis and love of Mowlana to Shams.

An Aref does not see anything which has not a sign of his love, God. In this case he/she cannot discriminate. Even his enemy is respectful. Jesus Christ (pbh) preached: If somebody slaps on your cheek, offer the other side to him.

This is the highest picks of erfān which is to be absorbed in God.

On the top of the gait of the khanghah of Abolhassan of Kharaghan, in the desert in the center of Iran it was written:

"Anybody who enters this house feed him and don't ask him about his/her creed. Because the one who has been given precious life by God, has the respect of being given food by me!"

Kharaghani was living about 900 years ago. When Europe was burning under the tyranny of Dark Ages and people were suffering under the worst kind of cruelty, a Moslem sufi in Iran was so generous that looked at people of all religions as God's creatures and as human being with no discrimination .

Mowlana also had reached to this position:

Ahle jang ra cheguneh mahrame asrar konnand?

Tarke jango mokhalefat begoo

How can you trust those who are willing to fight?

Forget about war and fighting.

The road, for purification and reaching these heights, the heights of " erfān" and becoming a real human being is very long and dangerous (Albert Avy), then you need a knowledgeable trustful guide..

Mowlana, too, agrees with this fact:

Pir ra bogzin keh bi pir in safar

Hast bas por afato khowfo khatar.

Choose your old man (pir or goja), as without him this journey

Is full of danger, fear and hazards

For reaching the high picks of becoming a real human being, i.e sufi or "aref", we need a pivot or leader (guide) who is called a "ghotb" or "old man" (pir). This pir should be the one who has already passed through the troublesome road of self clearance. And his body has become empty of all worldly desires. I should mention that this does not mean that we should leave the world. It means that we should be able to become satisfied by grater actions. You can have everything and be rich, but you will not be greedy and killing yourself for preserving them and adding to them! And not leaving your duties.

Unfortunately during the long history there have been many charlatans deceiving people and abusing their sincere feelings.

Shams of Tabriz was the real guide of Mowlana. They loved each other as the most valuable beings in the whole world. This is a kind of, so called, Plato's love between the same sex. This love means that they obey each other without any hesitation.

When Mowlana met Shams, he was 40 years old. Age 40 is called the age of maturity. It is said that Mowlana really changes after meeting Shams. Their love was so deep that Mowlana named the collections of his poems "divane Shams". (divan means collection of poems). Mowlana mentions:

We are in this corner hidden from the whole existence

O friend come and see how we have become one soul, so deep we have drunk!

(This drink in the expression of Sufis, it is the drink of love and unity with God and morid (follower) with his/her morad who is the mirror of God for him.

When an infatuated lover starts the journey towards purifying and clearing his/her inner self, he/she should not care for any obstacles and troubles which he/she faces with.

Dar biyaban gar be showghe kaabe xahi zad ghadam / sarzaneş ha gar konad khare moghilan gham maxor (Hafiz)

When walking in the desert with a heart full of love of kaaba (bare footed)

Don't worry for the troubles and injuries that thorns will make for your feet (Hafiz)

If we want to be perfect, we cannot pave the road alone. It is like trying to learn to swim in a stormy sea. We need a strong skillful swimmer to teach, guide and guard us.

Mowlana refers to shams, in this way as his morad:

Shamse mano khodaye man My shams and my God

Sufis believe that if you leave yourself in the hands of your morad or pir, you will learn to be a yielding slave of God and always show your consent to his will whatever good or bad that happens. This is the best cure for our troubles and spiritual pains, especially when we lose. The best tranquillizer is to consent to Gods will!

Sufis believe whatever happens to us it is the will of God. God is our beloved. And our beloved spouses also sometimes are unkind to us. If we really love them we do not care.

It is not bad to mention here that love has been divided into two kinds: true love (which is love of God) and false love (which is love to the other sex, to beauty and arts). This love is also praised because it is a ladder towards the real love!

The links and relationships between morid and morad manifests itself in the fullest and richest form in the relations of Mowlana and Shams.

To conclude, I should mention that it is man who himself makes his fate. We can rule over the whole universe by purifying our souls and clearing our bodies from prejudice, racism, monopolism, envy, bias and not by power and force. The real power is in the power of soule and inner power, not the superficial power by explosives and ammunitions. This power is gained by scattering our sincerity and pure love over all mankind and all creatures which are the signs and "ayat" of God. The important factor is the existence of man and not his beliefs and creed because man is the valuable God's handicraft and not mans beliefs. Man is respectful even if he is not of our religion or even if he is a heathen. No body has no right of condemning any body because of his/her beliefs and ideas,

All the gazals or sonnets of divane Shams are about love which means peace and friendship. This was the ultimate goal of Mowlana and Shams in life.

On the other hand, all the stories of masnavi, as well as the classic literature of the East, are full of wisdom and advice. In all cases those who are plain and truthful will win and wicked people and wrong doers and cruel kings and powerful rulers who do not care for justice and for their people will lose at the end. There is a proverb in Persian language which says: A load on a horse which is not balanced on both

sides will not reach the destination.

So this is the mystery of eternity of Mowlana. He gained his power through thinking about the fate of man and made himself perfect by combination with Shams as his morad.

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