

Meeting Allah in Human Mysticism

In the school of sufism and human mysticism, to reach Allah and meet Him is the last and final of the stages that a mystic treads towards the arch of ascension. According to them, at this stage, the wanderer reaches to the level of self-annihilation, joins with the Absolute existence, i.e. the existence of the Truth and loses his own existence. Now, for him, nothing remains except the existence of the Almighty. It is at this level that claims like ‘I am the Truth’ (*An al-Haqq*), ‘There is none in my robe except Allah’ (*laisa fi jubbati siwallah*), etc. are achieved.

Abdur Razzaq al Kashani says:

“Unification (*wasl*) implies returning after going away and ascending after descent. For each one amongst us has descended from the highest of stages and that is the position of *ahadiyyah* and unification with the Eternal since eternity to the lowest of positions and that is the world of elements and matter.

Then, some of us have fallen to the lowest level and remain in the pits. While others, by treading towards Allah, and in Allah, by attachment to His attributes, and through annihilation in His Being, have returned to the state of unification. Thereby, through this real unison, as it was in eternity, we shall continue to remain so in perpetuity.”¹

Explaining the term ‘*sawad al-wajhi fi al-dharain*’, he says, “To annihilate ourselves in Allah with all our existence so much so that any form of existence, apparent or concealed, worldly or of the hereafter, does not remain for the mystic. This is true poverty and returning to real non-existence. Thus, the sufis say, ‘When poverty reaches to perfection, it is Allah.’”²

Sayyed Sharif Jurjaani elucidates the three levels of annihilation as follows:

“*Mahq* is the annihilation of the servant’s existence in the Truth. *Mahv* is the annihilation of his actions while *Tams* is the annihilation of his attributes in the Truth.”³

Jami, in *Lawa’ih*, seventh *La’iha*, p. 18, writes,

*'In Your Being, make me free of my own existence,
So that I become free of my own existence as well as non-existence,
For annihilation is the method and poverty the ideology,
Neither manifestation, nor certainty, nor recognition nor religion (is right),
He went away from everything, and only God remained,
That is, 'When poverty reaches to perfection, it is Allah.'*

Sadrudin Shirazi says,

“Till the he-ness (ego) of the servant remains, he will continue to remain in the veil of his existence and being. Perfect unison is not possible for him to reach...But when he annihilates his being and destroys the mountain of his I-ness, only then will he realise the Truth with Truth. For his being immersed in Him, he becomes concealed and unknown from everything including himself, his immersion and his observation. For if he looks at his observation and gives preference to his cognition,...his observation will conceal him from the Observed one and his cognition will veil him from the Recognised one. Thus, he will not be able to achieve the desired unison.”[4](#)

Jaami is of the view that annihilation (*fana*) implies that nothing is understood except him, through domination of the apparent being of Truth over the concealed. And annihilation of annihilation (*fana-e-fana*) is that even this understanding ceases to exist. It should be known that *fana-e-fana* is within *fana*. For, if the annihilator understands his own annihilation, then he will no longer be in a state of annihilation because the attribute of annihilation and its described one is other than God, the Glorious. Thus, its comprehension will be contradictory to annihilation.”[5](#)

To sum up, the Sufis are of the view that there is no existence except that of God and He is the Absolute Existence. The existence of the creatures is a display of non-existence. It is only imagination and in reality, being is only the Truth. Apparently, the creatures possess existence but in the concealed form, 'there is none in the house except the owner of the house' (*laisa fi al-dar ghairuhu dayyar*).

These limitations and determinations are sheer imaginary and whimsical that have been imposed on the Absolute Being and conceal the mystic from the Truth. When the mystic does away with these illusory and imaginary determinations and limitations, Truth becomes manifest. Therefore, the unawareness of the mystic from the Truth, is due to the veil of I-ness, determinations and limitations. When these veils are dispensed with, unawareness turns to recognition, duality to unity and unison with Truth is achieved. Recognition of Truth is achieved with the Truth itself.

In the book '*Muhr e Taban*', at the end of the interview between the student and Allamah regarding the survival of the stable archetypes (*a'yan e thabithah*) in the annihilation of the being, the former opines:

“Annihilation of people in the Truth takes place in two ways. One is that their natural lives and material existence remains and in this very condition, they get the opportunity of annihilation. This type is achieved before death. In this form, the sincere believers, who have tread the path towards Allah,

notwithstanding their worldly lives, attain annihilation. Thus, for them annihilation is one of the various conditions which they undergo.

We can say that Zaid finds himself in a state of annihilation just as we can say that Zaid does not find himself in a state of annihilation. In this form, annihilation and non-annihilation are two distinct states of Zaid. Of course, as we said that Zaid finds himself, it is known that these states are for Zaid and his determinations and limitations. But in this form, the stable archetypes remain. The annihilation of all the creatures from the stones, trees, mountains, skies, earth, stars, etc. in the Truth is from this very category. For, by the survival of the stable archetypes and their own existence, they are in a state of annihilation and of humility and lowliness....

The second type of annihilation is for the one who loses his material life and physical existence. He will inhabit the worlds of Barzakh and Qiyamat after this world, is from the proximate and sincere ones and remains in the Being of the Truth in a state of annihilation. He has freed his body, exists sans physique, has left *barzakh* and *qiyamat*, is without any form or spirit, has entered the Essence of the Almighty and has dispensed with all the limitations and determinations.

Even his stable archetype does not exist anymore. There is no I-ness, limitation, name or form...The change and transformation to this state of annihilation is like the annihilation of a moth in a flame and the dissolution of sugar into water. Thus, this change and transformation is of essence and existential. It belongs to the being just as a dog is transformed into salt in a salt pan and there remains no sign of his being a dog. Similarly, for the one who treads the path of the Almighty, there remains no sign of his existence whatsoever after his death.”⁶

¹. Istihalat al Sufiyyah, p. 52

². Istihalat al Sufiyyah, p. 104

³. al Tarifat, p. 89

⁴. Sharh Usul al Kafi, vol. 3, p. 62

⁵. Lawa'ih, 8th La'iha, p. 19

⁶. Muhr e Taban, p. 200

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