



SPIRITUAL EMANATION IN MOULANA RUMI'S PHILOSOPHY

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Introduction

Jalal al Din Moulana Rumi is the greatest mystical poet of Islam. In the entire range of mystical literature of the whole world there is none equal to him either in depth or in comprehensiveness and extent. There have been mystics both in the East and the West whose experiences in the realm of the spirit may have equaled the spiritual perception of Moulana Rumi, but their emotional or intuitional side was not matched by an equally clear and powerful intellect. Moulana Rumi's uniqueness lies in the fact that in him reason is wedded to real and deep religious experiences.

The Muslim world has honoured him with the title of Maulawi - i - Manawi (The doctor of meaning), a religious scholar who is capable of philosophizing of penetrating into the meaning of physical and spiritual phenomena and lifting the veil of appearance to peep into the reality behind them.

Moulana Rumi as a philosopher of religion stands shoulder above all those Muslim thinkers who are called hukama in the history of Muslim thought. He compiled no systematic treatise either on philosophy or theology and made no sustained attempt to build a system of either speculative or mystical metaphysics.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

The theory of evolution is generally thought to be comparatively a modern invention and Darwin its first exponent. But the fact is not so from the Muslim world we may mention the names of Avicenna, the philosophers of the brotherhood of purity and Moulana Rumi who were the exponents of this theory.

According to professor Nicholson “Quran declares that everything in the universe obeys the command of God and glorifies Him.” Says Mullah Sadra “Glorification is inconceivable without knowledge and God’s word”, Where he wills a thing and says into it ‘Be’, it will be. All existent things are rational, and that they apprehend their Lord and know their creator and hear his speech, since obedience to the command depends on their level of consciousness, that whether animate or inanimate all existent things since they are rational, the obedience depends on hearing and understanding it in proportion to the bearer’s perceptiveness. The doctrine that all things as modes of Divine being are endowed with life and know and worship God according to the nature of each as stated by Ibnu’;-Arabi in a characteristically paradoxical way:

“Nothing in creation is higher than minerals (jamad); then plants (nabat) according to a (predestined) measure and balance; and after the plant, (animal) possessing sensation.

The whole (universe) knows its creator by mystical revelation and clairvoyance; but he who is named ‘Adam’ is fettered by intellect and thought or (subject to) the yoke of (conventional) faith.”

In Moulana Rumi’s view the ground of all existence is spiritual. Infinite number of egos emerging out of the cosmic ego constitutes the totality of existence. In this view matter is also spiritual, minerals are the highest forms of creation; after then come plants, and then animals. All these know their creator through mystical revelation. “Earth, water, air and sparkling fire are unacquainted with us, but acquainted with God. On the other hand, we are acquainted with other things besides God, but unacquainted with God and with so many prophets who have revealed about God. All the elements shrank from accepting the trust, which God offered to them and the responsibility of mixing with animality, was restricted. They responded by not accepting the life with created beings and which is dead with God, because only when one is separated from

created beings he is single and for the sake of friendship with God one must be free from any other relations excepting God.

The question is if one is moving to the world of inanimate objects then how does one understand the spirituality of the inanimate objects. If one concentrates only on the spiritual life and not its worldliness then one can hear the loud noise of the particles and activities of the inanimate world. And the glorification of God by inanimate beings becomes evident from this it follows that where existence is, there is life, perception, knowledge, reason and other qualities of a living state. With the attribute of God as omnipresent who provides with his oneness in every particle of the universe, these attributes are not manifested everywhere. They are latent, i.e. they exist potentially in minerals and plants and is known only to the mystics. Man having sensation and consciousness possesses a self 'nafs' and is consequently veiled from God by his egoism, ignorance, insecurities, aversion which is due to the exercise of his faculties, where as the mineral and in a lesser degree the plant in virtue of their external insensibility and unconsciousness, implicitly acknowledge the divine omnipotence and glorify the creator with silent communion in their 'inward state'. Hence they are superior not indeed to the perfect men, but to the great majority of mankind.

In Moulana Rumi's view, everyone glorified God in a different way, and the one is unaware of the state of another. Man does glorify the inanimate beings, but that inanimate thing is the master of worship. Everyone is revealing his own state of nature and separates his congeniality from one uncongenial to him. The ground of all existence is spiritual. It is not easy to define the meaning of the term "Spiritual" especially in the worldview of Moulana Rumi. The ground of being is akin to what we feel in ourselves as spirit or ego. Infinite number of egos emerging out of the cosmic ego constitutes the totality of existence. Therefore in this view matter is spiritual. The thinker nearest to Moulana Rumi in this respect is the German philosopher Leibnitz, who centuries after Moulana Rumi conceived of existence as infinity of egos at different levels of consciousness. As in the metaphysics of Leibnitz Moulana Rumi believed God to be a universal cosmic monad. There is nothing like lifeless matter; matter is also alive though at a lower gradation of being. "Earth and water, fire and air are alive in the view of God, though they appear to be dead to us". There must be something that persists when motion ceases, a ground of motion: this is force, or the tendency of the body to move or to continue its motion;

and force is constant in quantity. There is force in body that precedes all extension. It is owing to the force of resistance in the body that it appears as impenetrable and limited or as matter. Every unit of force is an indivisible union of soul and matter, activity and passivity it is an organizing, self-determining purposive force that also limits itself or has the power of resistance.

SPACE AND TIME

Space is conceived both by Moulana Rumi and Leibnitz as the result of the harmonious co-existence of forces. Hence, it has no absolute existence – there is no absolute space in which things exist – but it is relative to the thing and would disappear with them. Forces do not depend on space but space depends on the forces. Hence, there can be no empty space between things and beyond them; where forces cease to act, the world comes to an end.

Orthodox Islam and Christianity believes in the creation of time as a result souls are considered as immortal, but for Moulana Rumi the category of time does not apply to the realm of the spirit. For Moulana Rumi as well as for Al-Ghazali time and space are categories on phenomenal consciousness only. He says about serial time, “you think in terms of the past and the future; when you get rid of this mode of consciousness, the problem will be solved”. The concept of time is interlinked into the space, which was later developed scientifically by Einstein. Moulana Rumi says that in the realm of divine light, which is non-spatial, serial time, divisible in past, present and future does not exist. Past and future are relative to individual self. About space Moulana Rumi has mentioned in several verses in his mathnawi that in the realm of the spirit the category of space does not hold and has no relevance.

The Quranic verse about divine light, which definitely states that it is non-spatial, *la shariqiyyah wa la gharbiyyah* supports this view. As the human spirit too is basically divine, as corroborated by the Quran in which it is said God breathed his own spirit into Adam, man also diving into his own real self can realize the non spatial nature not only of his own reality but also of all existence viewed as noumena and not as phenomena. He exhorts man to realize this basic fact both about himself and the universe. “You live in space but your reality is non-spatial close this shop situated in space and open a shop on the other side to which your real non-spatial spirit belongs. The ground of this spatial universe is non-spatial; space is a phenomenal creation of that which itself is not space.” Moulana Rumi develops this thesis still further. He says that space is the basis of division and multiplicity in which the basic unity of the cosmic spirit in infinitely

pulverized and atomised. Human egos are also basically one. It is only material forms in which the selves at the biological level create the illusion of diversity. There too Moulana Rumi gets support from the Quranic teaching that there is a fundamental unity in the multiplicity of human egos. "It is he who created you of one spirit" Moulana Rumi uses similes to make his meaning clear. He says that sunlight entering houses through many windows is split up by spatial barrier but remains essentially the same.

In bringing out the divine unity in the midst of multiplicity Moulana Rumi has used similes and analogies, in the end he declares in his Mathnawi that even the human intellect is bound by spatial visualization which is relative and full of identity and contradiction he refers to the super rational spiritual experience which realizes reality as unity and conceives diversity as mere phenomenal appearance.

Moulana Rumi mentions the divinise souls whose diversity is created by wind. It is a spiritual experience in which the spirit transcends the spatially interlinked serial time and enters a dimension of Being where psychological diversity is negated, so also the separations of things and events. The timeless spirit created the categories of serial time with the illusory division of past, present and future. It is possible for the human spirit to enter this non-dimensional dimension of consciousness and reality of the knowledge and consciousness of wonder.

DOCTRINE OF EMANATION

After Aristotle the doctrine of emanation and return is found in Plotinus. We see Moulana Rumi moving only one step with Plotinus in conceding that there is emanation instead creation in time, and the universe emanates from the sun; as heat form fire; the conclusion from the axiom. God is goodness the father who desires that all things should exist. But there is a conscious desire in all thing that emanate from him to return to him. Everything is attracted to him and desires to approach him. Individuality is not the final form of existence; it is merely the passage from God, the principle of things to God, their goal; from God the infinite power, to God the absolute actuality. If the world is a system of harmony, it is because all things converge towards the same absolute. The return of being to its divine source is made possible through thought, contemplation, intuition which alone gives the soul the supreme satisfaction which it demands. To perceive to see, to contemplate, is the goal of all action, of all striving, of all movement. Each man seeks for the absolute in his own manner. There are meditative natures and practical nature

but the former are according to Plotinus, superior to the latter both aspire to the same goal. The former however seek to reach it by the most direct way, i.e. by thought the latter by endless meandering for action sometimes varies from thought and denotes a relative weakness of the understanding. Contemplation is not only the final goal of life, but life itself animals, plants, rather everything in existence are endowed with perception. Since all life is ultimately reduce to thought and since God is the creator of all things we may say with Aristotle that God is pure thought, having no other object than himself, the principle of intelligence, or the power of intuition which makes us see all things without seeing itself.

Intelligence is the first divine emanation and therefore the greatest thing in the world; the succeeding emanations are more and more imperfect. Creation is a fall, a progressive degeneration of the divine. In the intelligence, the absolute unity of God splits up into intelligence proper and intelligible world, subject and object. However the intelligence is as compound to bodies, almost an absolute unity; at any rate, the intelligible world and reason contemplating it are not as yet, separated either in time or in space; the reason being and the intelligible world are in each other. The ideas are immanent in the intellect which conceives them the intellect is inseparable from the ideas.

The passage of the divine unity into this first duality, the how of the emanation, is as much a mystery as God himself. Whatever rational explanation might be given it would still be insufficient. If the dyad, it has been said comes from the monad, then the latter contains the former in germ. But that would make a monad a dyad and not a monad in the absolute sense. Others identify the One and the All. God is anterior to the All, in dignity if not in time. We call him the All, in so far as he is in the essence if everything in existence. An attempt has been made to explain emanation by calling it a partition of the original unity. But the divine unity, which is not a numerical unity, is indivisible. It has been compared with the gleaming of a bright body, with the radiation of the sun, with a cup that eternally overflows because contents are infinite and cannot be held in it. However beautiful these figures maybe they are taken from the material world and cannot explain the immaterial. Hence, emanation is in reality a miracle like God himself.

PROCESS OF EVOLUTION

The odyssey and voyage of the ego's self discovery and its gradual enfoldment are given in Books III and IV of the 'Mathnavai' with great definiteness. "For several epochs I was flying about in space like atoms of dust without a will, after which I entered the inorganic realm of matter. Crossing over to the vegetable kingdom I lost all memory of my struggle on the matter plain. From there I stepped into the animal kingdom, forgetting all my life as a plant, feeling only an extinctive at unconsciousness towards the growth of plants and flowers, particularly during the spring time as suckling babies feel towards the mother that give them birth. Rising in the scale of animality I became a man pulled up by the creative urge of the creator whom one knows. I continued advancing from realm to realm developing my reason and strengthening the organism. There was ground forever getting above the previous types of reason. Even my present rationality is not a culmination of mental evolution. This too has to be transcended, because it is still contaminated with self-seeking, egoistic biological urges. A thousand other types of reason and other consciousness shall emerge during the further course of my ascent, a wonder of wonders!"

Leibnitz established that the world of bodies is composed of an infinite number of dynamic units or immaterial, un-extended simple units of force. We discover such a simple immaterial substance in our own inner life the soul. What is true of the soul will be true in a measure of all monads. This tendencies to action is known as "perception" and "appetition". The same principle that expresses itself in the mind of man is active in inanimate matter, in plant and animal. There is force everywhere, every part of matter is like a garden full of plants; all matter is animate, alive, even to its minutest parts.

There are different degrees of clearness within the individual monad, so monads differ among themselves in the clearness of their perceptions. In the very lowest monads everything is obscure and confused resembling sleep; they spend entire existence in a comatose state. Such dormant life we find in the plant. In animals there is perception with memory i.e. consciousness; in man consciousness becomes still clearer; here it is called apperception, being a "reflexive knowledge of the inner state" or self-consciousness.

The ego has the power of perception or representation, it perceives or represents and expresses the entire universe. In this sense it is a world in miniature, a microcosm, it is a "living

mirror of the universe”, a concentrated world, a world for itself. But each monad represents the universe in its own way, from its unique point of view, with its characteristic degree of clearness, it is limited, and individual, and has other individual outside it. The higher the monad, the more clearly and distinctly it perceives expresses or represents the world; the monad with which it is most closely associated constitute its own body and these it represents most clearly.

The monads, more over form a graduated progressive series from the lowest to the highest. The universe is composed of an infinite number of monads in a gradually ascending scale of clearness, no two monads are exactly alike. There is continuity there are no leaps in nature no breaks in the line from the lowest to the highest. There is a continuous line of infinitesimal differences from the dullest piece of inorganic matter to God. God is the highest and perfect monad, pure activity, the original monad, and the monad of monads. The principle of continuity demands the existence of supreme monad.

Every monad is in process of evolution and realizes its nature with an inner necessity. It is not determined from without; it has no windows through which any thing can enter, everything it is to be is potential or implicit in it. This follows necessarily from the principle of continuity: Nothing can be in the monad, which has not always been there, and nothing can ever come into it that it is not in now. It passes through a series of stages of evolution, unfolding what is preformed in it. The entire human race was preformed in the seed of Adam and in the ovaries of Eve. The developed individual existed in germ, preformed in miniature, in the embryo. Nothing in the monad can be lost, all is preserved in all its stages and the future stages are predetermined in the earlier ones. Hence every monad is “charged with the past” and “big with the future.”

The doctrine of the Fall of Adam is reinterpreted in Moulana Rumi’s metaphysics. The original state from which ego fell was not the traditional paradise of garden and streams but the unitary ground of divinity. The fall is concerned not only with man or the disobedience of Adam and Eve, but is a universal cosmic phenomena. One might say metaphorically that monads in the realm of matter and vegetable and animal kingdoms are all falling angels striving to return to their original divine ground. The principle that everything has a natural tendency to return to its origin, holds good in all spheres and applies to every existent. This has been mentioned earlier by the Greek philosophers that evolution of birds and beast and man having been gradually differentiated and developed from fish, due to environment changes and need of a adaptation.

The doctrine of graded existence and theory of development is found in Aristotle concept of form and matter. Inorganic matter is organized into species of plants because every plant realizes the idea of its species. The realized form serves as matter for the embodiment of a still higher entelechy until one reaches God who is pure, transcendental and not contaminated with matter.

In book III of the Mathnawi Moulana Rumi mentions the higher stages where the ego reaches back the divinity from which it had emanated, This stage goes beyond rationality in other words it is supra rational. Neither reason nor phenomenal existence applies to this state. It is not an impersonal existence which goes on moving from phase to phase like Bergson's creative evolution the process of which is without any goal. Bergson developed no concept of the self, nor is evolution for him a process of self-realization. But, for Moulana Rumi the selves or egos from the very start are perpetually engaged in self-realization.

Moulana Rumi explains this 'force' by substituting it with term love which is a fundamental urge and that which creates attraction and affinities, this force is responsible of creating heavenly bodies out of nebulae resulting in stars and planets and systems which proceeds further and generates life because love by its essence is creative. As atoms by their affinities conglomerate in molecules so in a further evolutionary urge they emerge as life cells which first appear in vegetation and then advance towards animality. Atoms are nothing but the egos that are in the process of realizing divinely rooted self-consciousness. It is this urge for self-realization that makes the ego act as they do. It is a goal seeking activity; the lower merges with the higher; it is not a process of annihilation but, assimilation with a renewed perfection at every stage. Moulana Rumi says that the heavenly movements are not blindly mechanical like in the view of Bergson but are waves in an infinite ocean of love. If cosmic love were not there, all existence would get frozen and shrink into nothingness. The inorganic would refuse to merge and emerge into vegetation and vegetation will not be lifted up into animal life nor would life ascend towards the mind and spirit. The egos like infinite swarms of locusts are flying towards the harvest of life. Thus what Leibnitz terms as force Moulana Rumi calls it love and without love nothing can move.

Moulana Rumi is one of those rare saints and mystics whose intellectual fiber and creative moral and social efforts is not weakened by subjective emotional experiences unrelated to the realities of every day life. In him spirituality, rationality and universal morality is found in

a very good synthesis. God universe and humanity are all embraced in a single all comprehensive vision, the vision of creative love

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