

G. ALLANA AND THE MYSTICAL ASPECTS OF PANTHEISM AND IMMANENTISM OF HIS ENGLISH POETRY

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ABSTRACT

This paper contains a discourse based on the two mystical aspects of G. Allana's poetry- the Pantheism and Immanentism. These two aspects have been the subject matter of the mystic thought. The followers of the Sufi path are classified in these two categories of Sufism. Some Sufis consider that Pantheism is the "unity of existence" while others consider that 'Immanentism' is the 'unity of existence' whereas pantheism 'manifestation of existence'. Thus Immanentism and Pantheism are the substitutes of the Arabic Sufi terms- Wahadat-ul-Wujood and Wahdatul Shahu respectively. Though both the aspects outwardly stand different and opposite, they to great extent stand the two sides of one coin within the systems of a monotheistic religion. The polytheistic religion having the concept of various deities, go with some other bargain. The entire discourse is based upon the concept that the reality be one only, one has to realize the Truth no matter if it has various manifestation and focus. This research study tries to make this difference clear in the perspective of an analysis and evaluation of G. Allana's mystical poems. The conclusion is given at the end.

Keywords: Immanentism- Pantheism- Unity- Diversity-Analysis- Mysticism

INTRODUCTION

Ghulam Ali Allana variably known as G. Allana has been a consummate literary figure on the horizon of Pakistani English Literature. He was both a genius poet and skillful prose writer. His knowledge ranges from politics to religion and social problems to literature; the aspects he touches through his poetry are wide enough to encompass permanence and freshness. Thus he came to be known as a literary writer of a great repute whose contribution to English and to the world literature made him stand apart from the contemporaries. Though English was not his mother tongue, he produced original poetry in modern western literary trend. His poetry has a wide range of subjects which are universal in appeal and the scope whereas there seems to have a powerful spirit flux of mysticism and philosophy in his poetry which has never been brought forth. Apart from that there is a great impact of metaphysical elements on his poetry; this element is also found in so many English poets but his

treatment, to great extent, is different from theirs. It breaks the new grounds of mystical thoughts for the researcher. His mystical poetry retains Immanentism in particular and pantheism in general. It would be wrong to concede as Saeed says: "Mysticism and Immanentism offer the only possibility of combination, and no other permutation is possible. The pantheistic view, which is especially Islamic and represents the Orthodox Islamic viewpoint, which is antipodal to the illuminist viewpoint. This view emphasizes the creation of ex nihilo and holds that the world is not the other aspect of God, who is its inner aspect" (Hakim Saeed, 1962:9). G. Allana belonging to the Ismaili community, composed poetry under the influence of Ibn-Arabi on Ismaili authors, many of whom wrote in Persian thought though their later home was to become India (Nasr: 85). His poems containing mystical aspects of immanentism and pantheism have been focused for research and the data analysis has been made in the Descriptive Method since the study at hand is qualitative one. His poetic flight is so expertly and novel that in spite of the apparent multiplicity of themes, there is an internal Uniondale a unique double theme of mystical and philosophical thoughts keeping this point to the light, such research topic has been chosen to analyze and evaluate his select poems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Immanence discusses the concept of God's presence in the world. This concept emerges from the times when God wanted to confirm the belief of Adam's off spring in Him. MC Giffert, in his article contributed to the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics defines immanence thus: In modern theology the term immanence is used to demonstrate the God's presence and indwelling in the world. The opposite to it is transcendence which denotes the apartness of God from the world or His elevation above it. The two concepts may tell that God is equally present in and above the world or they may mutually be exclusive that God is either in the world or apart from it. Giffert in this study has made it clear that God is either within or without. If He is imminent, He is within; His presence is among the people. When He is transcendent, He is without; He is apart from the material world. Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim has given a good discourse about pantheism. To him Sufism cannot be classified and understood with any definite boundaries. It cannot be grasped fully with any doctrine. He writes even Islam itself has never classed Sufism under any one heading and that explains the fact why Sufism is not regarded as a doctrine with any definite boundaries to mark it off either from orthodox Islam or from any system of metaphysics. Pantheism is derived from the Greek, Pan = all + theos = God which denotes any system of

belief or speculation that includes the teaching “God is all, and all is God”. Pantheism, in other words, identifies the universe with God or God with the universe.

These mystical elements are found in almost all works based on Sufism such as: Dr. H.M Gurbakhshani’s Muqqadma (Preface) to Shah-Jo-Risalo and Mysticism in Early Nineteenth:

Century in: England, F.C.Happold’s Mysticism – A study and Anthropology, Annemarie

Schimmel’s Mystical Dimension of Islam – Ali Hujweri’s Kashfal Mehjoob and Muhammad.

Mahmood Ali Qutbi’s “Fragrance of Sufism” can also be referred.

METHODOLOGY

The study underhand is a qualitative research method. The contents analysis method has been used. The historical approach including primary and secondary sources of document collection has been adopted. In the primary source the original works of the author such as: *The Silent Hour and The World Within* have been referred where as in the secondary source the previous critical work done on the author, history books and articles have been referred. The APA format of citations has been featured.

ASPECT OF PANTHEISM AND IMMANENTISM IN HIS POETRY

G. Allana has composed this poem in the perspective of immanentism and pantheism. The poem consists of ten lines focusing the single concept of ‘oneness’ and ‘unity’ of God’s power. The poem reads thus:

In the mansion of your soul dwell I; and to your prayers listen I
The songs of your heart hear I; neither seen nor heard am I
In the dark temple of your thought the lamp of light enlighten I
Through the veil of the clouds from above at you look I
Within your conscience and your intellect host of discoveries awaken I
On the sorrow clouded mountain of life for a while you shed your tears.
Then the world of the sun and moon and stars heavenwards lift you I
There you will breathe the free and unpolluted air of other worlds;
There, O pilgrim, again your guide and friend and philosopher will be I
Abide for a time here below in the realms of Eternity for you wait I.

The poem suggests the single theme of ‘oneness’ and ‘non-duality’. It suggests that only God is real and that the manifest experiential universe is illusory. Realization of the Truth is the goal of life. One has to realize the self Haq, Allah or Truth. Gajwani writes in this regard thus:

“One must arise and awake in the Absolute; the ego must be annihilated and the goal cannot be attained unless one surrenders one’s head; this can be done only when one abandons the self or gives up false identification with the illusory body and realizes that He is Haq, the Truth the universal being. He has to attain firm stability in the faith of Oneness. For this he has recommended the path of divine love or *Ishq haqiqi*” (Gajwani, S.L., 2000:20).

Gajwani emphasizes the annihilation of ego, remembrance of God, stability in the faith of oneness, recommendation of path of Divine Love, for these elements take one to the supreme goal.

The poem frequently suggests *ana-al-Haq*, I am Truth. I am God. He had attained to that state. Life without *nam* (remembrance of God) is a waste. Forgetfulness is the cause of wanderings, ignorance and false identification. One has to realize what one truly is. So intro-vision is repeatedly suggested. Duality is lost with the method of ‘La’ or negation or what in Vedanta is called *neti, neti*. He says God is nearer than the nearest. He is nearer than the skin of the nail. One has only to realize that.

PANTHEISM / UNITY AND DIVERSITY

In the mansion of your soul dwell I; and to your prayers listen I.

This line suggests the concept of God within along with the power of fulfilling the desires of His creatures. Here it is going to be clear that man consider God within and without his self. Happold defines the term pantheism: “With the exception of pure soul – mysticism, mystical experiences may take several analogous forms. They may be (1) *pan-en-henic*, i.e. the sense of the all in an undifferentiated non-dual one and this one is the all; or (2) *pan-en-theistic*, i.e. the sense that all is in God and God is in all; or (3) *pan-theistic*. In this latter either Deity or the ‘divine’ is felt as being ‘contained’ within creation, or that, to quote from the Upanishads, there is nothing in the world which is not God (Happold, F.C., 1986:43). Happold elaborates the concept of pantheism that clarifies unity and diversity, and tries to differentiate between terms.

God permeates everywhere and thus gives evidence of realization of the identity of one and many, of unity and diversity. It is the Universal One that permeates everything, everywhere and all the time. The individual entities are not separate from independent of the One. One has to engage oneself in unceasing endeavor under strict guidance of the precept to realize the goal. The material wealth does not go with one after death. It is only the endeavor for Truth that helps one after death. He then urges cultivation of divine love, *ishq haqiqi*, or what in other words is also called *prema bhakti*. Saeed has made it clear that pantheism is not

Wahdat-ul-Wujood. He writes: “And yet it would be wrong to concede that mysticism and Immanentism offer the only possibility of combination, and no other permutation is possible. The pantheistic view which is especially Islamic and represents the orthodox Islamic viewpoint, which is antipodal to the Ishraqi or the illuminist viewpoint. This view emphasizes creation ex nihilo and holds that the world is not the outer aspect of God, who is its inner aspect. For, God and world are discrete, just as divine duration and human duration are different. The Shahudi (or pantheistic) viewpoint was elaborated and postulated the theory of union-in-separation.....The immanentist (wahdat-ul-wujood) school, however, has dominated Islamic literature throughout (Hakim Saeed, 1962:9). Saeed this point of view is the evidence that immanentism is the real substitute term for Wahdat-ul-Wujood that shows oneness of the Absolute Truth. Saeed’s concept regarding Pantheism and Immanentism is unambiguous.

IMMANENTISM

G. Allana believes that God is Omni present; He is in everything in the world—tangible and intangible. There is nothing that may move without His will. He lives in our souls and hearts. He knows all that no one can know. He knows us; He sees us; He hears us. The merits and demerits are known to Him. He knows all the secrets and plans.

Nature mysticism is characterized by a sense of the immanence of the One or God or soul in nature. William Wordsworth in the lines from *A few miles above Tintern Abbey* has expressed it in a unique way. He puts:

A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things

Or in the lines of Allana:

That lights whose smile kindles the universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move.
In the dark temple of your thought the lamp of light enlighten I

All that knowledge and power of knowledge play the role is given by God, He Himself awakens the very doors of our mental faculties. It is His power and image that provides man with all creative arts. Our descending and transcending all depends upon His mercy. The poem shows man’s position in this world only that of a ‘pilgrim’ who has come for a short span of time. Man has quite impermanence in this world; even if he wants to possess whatever he wants, he can make no use of it; his all efforts dash to the ground. When a man dies, he leaves nothing behind

him, nor does anything belong to him after he is gone and this pilgrimage is over. God is all powerful and permanent. He is beyond the effect of time and space. He is the creator of whole universe. There is no one to share his status. From the making of universe to the acceptance of man's prayers, he is the only one to have authority. He sees and listens to the every creature in the world. G. Allana believes in unity and diversity. He considers that God is Omni present which is an evidence of realization of the identity of one and many. This poem shows the power of God behind all occurrences. This presence is objective that makes things happen. Allana feels that it is all power of God that runs the whole universe.

FINDINGS

The following findings were drawn from the contents analysis:

- It was found that G. Allana considers mysticism as interiorization and intensification of Islamic faith and practices. His objectives are same as that of the religions to have access to the reality.
- G.Allana believes that God permeates everywhere and He has very clear concept regarding Oneness and Non-duality.
- He considers that there are two different worlds the physical and the spiritual one. God's being in this world shows His being Immanent which is the greater quality than His being Pantheistic
- The term Wahad-al-Wujood is equivalent to the Persian term 'Hama-ust' and English term Immanentism which justifies the Unity of Being
- The term pantheism does not justify the Unity of Being.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the entire discourse, it is concluded that some writers and mystics consider that pantheism is not a suitable and appropriate concept for the term Wahdat-al-Wujood; it is somehow equivalent to the Persian term 'Hama-ust' but not at least to the Arabic term because the conception of God is possible only as a relative idea, correlative with the world. So, saying 'All is God' is a contradiction in terms. To call this All as one or Absolute is more logical and hence one must acknowledge that the Arabic term describes the doctrine more exactly than its Persian equivalent. The term pantheism by its very nature does not justify the unity of being. Moreover it does not relate to the concept which the Quran offers. The Quran does not offer a basis for any type of Pantheism because the Quran, as a whole, offers theism and makes it quite clear that God the creator is different from His creation: "The universe and the

creation have a real existence” apart from God. The creation is not an illusion or a vain show; it is an earnest Reality”. Therefore, the term immanentism stands suitable substitute for the term Wahdat-al-Wujood. Whereas, pantheism befits for Wahdat-al-Shahud.

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