



Mystical Experience & Paradoxical Statement (Experience of Meeting God in Speech)

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Abstract

The present article attempts to clarify the relationship between the 'mystical experience' and 'paradoxical statement'; the first section is concerned with the main function of the said categories in the realm of language which is removing the language from the routine and spiritless mode and bringing it to life; that is, speaking in a real language and expressing what is in the heart. The second section intends to provide an answer to the following important questions: Is 'paradox' the natural characteristic of the mystical experience, and is it possible to convey the content of the mystical experience solely through the paradoxical statement, or is it possible to convey the same experience through non-paradoxical statement without loss of content? To answer the said questions, this article presents the different theories which address such subjects. According to some of these theories, the paradoxes found in mystical works are simply verbal while the rest introduce the paradoxes present in such works as the results of the incapacity of the language to express the mystical experiences. Refuting the latter, the article comes to the conclusion that the language of the mystics is paradoxical due to their experience being paradoxical, and language reflects the true image of the experience. In conclusion, it describes the last stage of the perfection of the mystical language; that is, the symbolic language which is the very experience as well as the highest rank of the mystical experience — the experience of meeting God in speech, or as it is also called the experience of Shath which is the ultimate link between the mystical experience and paradoxical statement.

Keywords: *Language; Habit-Fighting; Spiritual Experience; Shath; Paradox*

Introduction

The present article is based on two main ways of thought and two ways of viewing the world, mankind and existence, i.e. 'mystical attitude' and 'paradoxical attitude' which comprise the backbone of the history, the course of thought, understanding, and worldview of the Iranian race. Therefore, whatever effort we make to know this race and its course of thought and understanding depends on a point-by-point and deep study of the main parts and elements of the aforementioned ways. It seems that the Iranian race and its culture and thought and the 'mystical attitude' and 'paradoxical attitude' are two sides of the same equation with the Iranian race, culture and thought on one side and the 'mystical attitude' and 'paradoxical attitude' on the other side. The clearer the effect of the said two attitudes on the Iranian attitude becomes, the clearer the quality of the Iranian history, worldview and thought automatically becomes. Hence, each and every effort made to know these two ways and to discover the relation between them is viewed by those familiar and aware of the

said ways as an effort to discover and introduce the with identity of the Iranian race. The present article is an effort however small, to discover the relation between the said categories from a certain viewpoint and thus not all of them.

Paul Nwyia (1994) believes, "There is a big adventure in the religious history of the Islamic world which is of total and universal value and Elevates Islam to the high rank of real quest for the absolute; that is, the adventure of the mystics who are usually called the Sufi" (p. 2).

His judgment is based on the quality of the language of the Sufis; a language which comes to existence together with the internal experience and is based on real life, a language in which the Sufi lives and is at the same time both the language of God and the language of mankind. It is free from rhetoric and lingual habits. The said language underwent transformation during four centuries which were the era of a certain form of Sufism which could be called the Classic Sufism.

The language of the Sufis is the outcome of the confluence of spiritual experience and the recital of the Quran which are inseparable at first, for each of them shed light on the other and the language is adorned with the Quranic terms, but gradually the mystical experience gains its dependence and generates its own Specific language from the Quranic language.

He believes that what makes the Sufis different from the philosophers and Islamic orators is the difference seen in the manner in which the Sufis behave and view the language. He also introduces them as the sole representatives of realistic thought in Islam, for their thought is fundamentally a sincere effort to make a certain kind of life experience easier to understand. The Sufis attempt to introduce life, for the "Truth" resides there.

In an article under the title of "Paralysis of Philosophical Thinking in Islam", Roger Arnaldez states that the Muslim philosophers "have displayed a kind of mental incapacity when facing the real philosophical issues" (as cited in Nwyia, 1994, p. 2). According to him, their thinking is developed outside the realm of reality, for what attracts their attention while investigating is not existence and its mysteries, but the difficulties in understanding this or that saying of Plato or Aristotle or the differences among the abstract and closed systems that were totally distinct and separate from the real environment which witnessed their emergence as questions about the world. We can perhaps Say the same about verbal thinking which soon turned into a declining 'didactic school' among the Sunnis; a school which was incarcerated in a system which generated its own specific issues and derived some Solutions out of its own essence which were never related to the truth. Everybody knows these issue and the Solutions to them. It can be said that, "Their basis is the san not only in the thesis written by Baqallani in the 11th century but also in the thesis under the title *Al-Tawhid* by Mohammad Abdoh who died in the early 20th century. The fact that a certain kind of statement and language as well as a fixed problem lingered for nine centuries shows that such thinking existed out of the real time and nurtured on Its own internal Secretion while the world and its issues were changing over and over" (ibid, p. 2).

Everybody knows that the mankind lives in the vast realm of existence and time with the aid of language. Language endows identity and existence to mankind in the world and makes the world objective for him; consequently, it serves as a link between mankind and the world while the three significant categories of 'mankind', world and 'language' together make the concept of 'existence' objective and complement it. (It is not without a good reason that the Islamic stories say, "Mankind is hidden under his tongue." "How I can know what I think unless I know what I say?" (W.H. Auden, as cited in Deiges, 1987, p. 247) serves as a testimony to the fact that language is not just a means, but the integrity of thought depends on it, and thought finds the stage of its perfection in language. Fon Humboldt believes, "There will be no world without discourse" (as cited in Kafi, 1989, p. 43). Therefore, we can conclude that mankind is nothing but language, and the mind and language are the same; that is, 'language is nothing but the 'mind' and the 'mind' is nothing but 'language'. Since language and thought are scientifically two sides of the same coin, we can say that the immature mind possesses an immature language and vice versa.

Only the true Sufis who experience attachment to sincerity - that is a quest for the total truthfulness not only with God but also and in the first place with themselves and the others - are free from this imaginary thought which clouds their real objective. In fact, the Sufi bases his thought on sincerity. Sincerity as well as truthfulness demand detachment from all forms of imaginary thought, in particular rhetoric which is the enemy of the word. Speaking in a real language and uttering what is in the heart for oneself and others are the main conditions for gaining admittance to the realm of reality whose gate is the word. It is also a sign showing that the Sufi is in the said realm, for if 'existence' as repeated by the Sufis means "presence", all the mystical adventures concentrate on a Presence whose value and credit bestows it with its language of Solidarity and power of deployment. The Sufi neither boasts, nor repeats the words over and over. He does not take refuge in the abstract investigations. He is captivated by a presence on which his life is based and Speaks to express this presence, for he believes that the lack of conformity between speech and reality is the finest and worst type of idolatry (Nwyia, 1994, p. 2)

J. Berque so writes, "The Arabic discourse gives more to the human world than it is entitled to. Its essence is always quite different from the language of life" (ibid, p. 3). The Sufis' Arabic 'word' is an exception in this regard. What is the essence of their language which is not the life they experience? Undoubtedly they don't define life in the same way as the lexicographers do. Due to this, they "give a new meaning to the common words in their Society." For them, life is the One who lives in them and is called the "Truth". As long as their language is not dissolved into the truth to the point that it refutes the subject and object, the Sufis do not consider themselves as the owner of an internal sincerity, or as Heidegger calls 'Seinart' (ibid, p. 3)

Al-Hallaj warned, "Beware that the servant who magnifies God the Exalted proves himself, and that who proves himself brings about secret Shirk (secret polytheism). God the Exalted magnifies Himself through the tongue of whatever creatures He wishes" (Akhbar al-Hallaj, as cited in ibid, p. 3). This saying is based on the experience of total purification by which the language finds its initial function again which is saying the truth as one has heard it without any distortion. It so demands that man turn a blind eye to the corrupting force he possesses which is able to distort language and the deceptive interpretations which can carry the internal hypocrisy and rhetoric. Therefore, he should refrain from being a man who "catches the word and multiples it," and become a person who unites himself by uniting the word. The meaning which the Sufis consider for the Word "Tawhid" includes not only access to the abstract concept of the unity of 'Mashhud' (that who is testified to be just one) with speech, but also uniting the speech in just one word, i.e. "shahid-Mashhud which refers both to the 'Shahid' and the 'Mashhud' at the same time" (ibid, p.3).

Of course such peaks can be reached only in infrequent extraordinary times called "Shath" (statements uttered in ecstatic state which are accompanied by delusions of grandeur, as defined in Mo'ain Persian Dictionary), but the desired cause sheds light on the path which ends in such times (ibid, p. 3). As was explained, in the eyes of the true Sufi, lack of conformity between speech and truth is the finest and Worst form of idolatry, and the most important factor which removes reality from Speech and everything else is called 'habit'. The idea of an opposing relationship between 'habit' and 'truth' is One of the most fundamental mystical principles and instructions, that is, the closer we get to habit, the farther we get from the truth while by breaking habits, we can gain the truth. The biographies and sayings of the men of knowledge are brimming with 'habit-fighting'. The following is one of the many parables addressing the said point in order to clarify the extent to which 'habit' leads to the meaninglessness of the deepest and most beautiful speeches:

There is a story in Bayazid's Maqamat about a man from Bastam (Bayazid's homeland) who constantly met Bayazid. One day he told Bayazid, "O master! I have kept night Vigil Saying prayers and spent days fasting for thirty years while suppressing my fancy and lust but I do not find in my heart what you are always talking about." Bayazid said, "If you say your prayers and fast for three hundred years, but stay adamant to what I see, you will not enjoy even one iota of what I always talk about." The man asked the reason. Bayazid so answered, "Because you are clouded in the veil of our lust." The man asked, "Is there a way to take this veil off?" Bayazid answered, "Yes, but you will not accept it." The man said, "I will accept it and do whatever you say!" Bayazid ordered, "Go to the barber's right now and shave your hair, moustache

and beard off, take your clothes off, put a rug on, and hang a bag of walnuts from your neck and gather the children around you and shout as loud as you can, "I will give a walnut to those who slap me on the neck!" and walk towards the bazaar where everybody knows and respects you!" The man said, "Glory be to God! You are telling me so! You want me to do so!" Bayazid said, "That you said "glory be to God" is a sign of Shirk, for you did not glorify God saying so, but glorified and magnified yourself." Behaving in this manner, Bayazid showed the man that his saying "glory be to God" is out of habit and far from the truth. It was magnifying one's soul, not the soul of the Truth." (Shafi'i Kadkani, 2001, pp. 21-2)

One can clarify the aforementioned main principles on the basis of the following definitions, "The Sufism and mysticism is an artistic attitude towards the theology and religion." and "Mysticism is an artistic interpretation of religion and theology" (ibid, p. 12), and conclude that 'language' is the manifestation of the 'artistic attitude'. One can study the reasons behind the development and retrogression of mysticism by studying language. mysticism and sufism reach the pinnacle if the language is at its pinnacle on the one hand, and their retrogression starts from the point where the language undergoes retrogression on the other (ibid, p. 27).

The efforts the major mystics made to break 'habits' is practically what the major artists, including the painters, poets, musicians and so on have done in the realm of creativity to get rid of habits, for example Hafiz and Bayazid fight habits in poetry and prose, respectively. One of the theories introduced and underlined by the Formalists is called 'defamiliarization'.

Shklovsky believed that defamiliarization is the main function of literature, and that art and literature reorganizes our sensory perception and establishes new structures. He believed that a major part of our life is based on habit; we are habituated to the environment, things, routine daily life and all those things which familiar to us.

According to the Formalists, art changes our habits and alienates whatever surrounds us; in fact, the purpose of art and literature is to rediscover the existence of bodies, things and phenomena. In normal language, our perception of the truth becomes spiritless and 'automatic', and hence it is the function of literature to enable us to enjoy a different perception of the natural realities, things and phenomena with the aid of literary elements. Hence, our normal and static reactions towards the natural realities and phenomena get a new lease of life.

There is a myriad of methods to employ artistic defamiliarization in poetry, and all elements of poetry have a potential capacity to accept this change, but paradoxical discourse is the best method to employ artistic defamiliarization.

It is at this point where the unbreakable bond between the 'mystical attitude' and 'paradoxical statement' comes to light, for their main function in the realm of language is to release the language from the routine spiritless mode and give it a new lease of life. This is also true of the pure mystical Paradoxes which follow a certain system of thought.

"some believe that the great impact of the mystic shathiyat is formed in an artistic realm, one of which is choosing the oxymoron and paradoxical statement and the other breaking the lingual habits, which are considered as artistic treatment of language and the outcome of artistic attitude towards the theology and religion"(ibid, p. 23).

From a second viewpoint, the paradox is the natural characteristic of mystical experience, or is it possible to carry the content of the mystical experience only through the non-paradoxical statement without its losing its content.

I intend to address in brief some of the important theories among the different theories concerning the paradox. The said theories can be classified into two categories in general:

I) The theories which study the 'relationship between the mysticism and logic':

1. The Theory of Rhetorical Paradox: In this view the paradoxes are merely verbal and do not infect the thought or the experience. The same experiences could be described and the same thoughts expressed without loss of content in non-paradoxical language. The mystics have, in fact, employed a literary device.

No one can deny that the paradoxes employed by the mystics are aesthetic and rhetorical. Paradox is an important rhetorical or literary device which a writer on any subject may quite legitimately use for the purpose of gaining emphasis. For in whatever words the description is expressed, whether in poetry or in prose, whether in metaphors or in abstract language, contradiction remains in the description and thought itself. For example, both eastern and western mystics have referred to the 'unity without multiplicity of the world'. Being repeated by mystics from different orders worldwide throughout history, the said claim will not lose its paradoxical content in whatever language it is expressed; therefore, the said theory is not true about a majority of paradoxes employed by the mystics and hence is rejected. (Stace, 1988, pp. 265-68)

2. The Theory of Misdescription: According to this theory, the mystics have 'misdescribed' their experience, for if what they experience was described precisely and correctly, there would be no room for contradictions. The mystic is not, as the formulators of this theory believe, suspected of telling an untruth, but he must be making a mistake. He may be unintentionally misdescribing his experience. (For instance), he says that he experiences a light which is also darkness. Refuting this theory, Stace so argues:

Let us suppose that someone reports to us that at a certain place and time he had a visual experience which he describes as 'X'. It appears to us that 'X' is an impossible or very improbable experience for anyone to have. We suspect that what he really saw was 'Y' but that he mistook it for X. By what means could we become convinced that our suspicion is mistaken and that he really did observe 'X', as he said?

I (Stace) assume that we are not in a position to verify the experience ourselves, and that we have to rely on testimony. First, the 'X-experience' would become a little more likely if we found that our man claimed that he had had an 'X-experience' frequently, and not merely once; that he was thus quite familiar with it and was sure that he had described it correctly as 'x'. Secondly, it would become very much more likely if we found that a great many persons claimed to have had an 'X-experience'. The greater the number of witnesses who so described it, the more probable it would become that the description was correct. Thirdly, this probability would increase if we came to know that the evidence came from all over the world, and that witnesses in America, Europe, India, China, Japan, Arabia, Persia, etc, all agreed that they had an experience which was properly to be described as 'X', and not as 'Y'...., we should surely tend to be convinced that the 'X-description' must be correct. It is easy to see that these conditions of corroboration apply point by point to the descriptions of mystical experience. (ibid, p. 273)

3. The Theory of Double Location: According to which, one can point out that the contradictory predicates of the mystic's paradoxical statements refer to different objects, and thus the contradiction is resolved. For instance, in the 'vacuum-plenum paradox', perhaps the two predicates, vacuity and fullness, instead of being simply located in one and the same object, may in reality be doubly located — one in one object and one in another. If so, the contradiction disappears.

Stace argues, "The said theory may seem to be true about some paradoxes, but it is not true about a myriad of them, including the 'pantheistic' paradoxes. It is equally impossible to apply the theory to the paradox of the 'dissolution of individuality'. The 'I' both ceases to exist and continues to exist. It makes no sense to suggest that there are two individuals, one of whom ceases to exist while the other continues in existence" (ibid).

4. The Theory of Ambiguity: It suggests that the apparent contradictions uttered by the mystics are due to using one word in two different senses, so that when this is pointed out the contradiction disappears.

In this regard, Stace says, "Since the said theory cannot be applied to a majority of mystical paradoxes, it breaks down. How, for instance, could the pantheistic paradox be dissolved in this way? In the sentences "The world is identical with God" and "The world is distinct, i.e., nonidentical with God," about which one of the words used can it plausibly be suggested that it is being used in one sense in the first sentence and in another sense in the second? I see foothold here for any plausible answer to this question. And therefore therefore the attempt to apply the theory cannot even get started. The same will be found to be true the paradox of the 'dissolution of individuality'.

5. Common-sense Theories: According to this theory, the mystical paradoxes all possess a logical contradiction. In his book, *Mysticism and Logic*, Bertrand Russell (1918) so states, "Belief in a reality quite different from what appears to the senses arises with irresistible force in certain states, which are the source of most mysticism and of most metaphysics. While such a state is dominant, the need of logic is not felt, and accordingly the more thorough going mystics do not employ logic, but appeal directly to the immediate deliverance of their insight...When the intensity of emotional conviction subsides, a man who is in the habit of reasoning will search for logical grounds in favor of the belief which he finds in himself. But since the belief already exists, he will be very hospitable to any ground that suggests itself. The paradoxes apparently proved by his logic are really the paradoxes of mysticism, and are the goal which he feels his logic must reach if it is to be in accordance with insight. (P. 39)

Stace believes that the mystical paradoxes (ibid are ex , pp. 284-85), but the mystical Paradoxes are not in contradiction with logic, for there is a realm of realities and experiences into which the logic gains no admittance, and logicity is a part of the total and ultimate nature of the world. According to him, this belief is not in contradiction with logic, but with the belief common among the contemporary philosophers that no experience can violate the logical rules.

II) The theories which study the 'relationship between the mysticism and language'. This category includes the theories which introduce the contradiction of mystical works as the outcome of the incapacity of the language to express the mystical experiences;

1. The Emotion Theory: It suggests that the mystical consciousness is ineffable due to it being a deep emotion. It is harder and sometimes impossible to express deep emotions compared with the surface feelings. "Of our surface feelings we talk freely. But when the depths of human personality are stirred, we fall silent" (Stace, 1988, p. 294). Ineffability, then, becomes a matter of degree, not the matter of the difference between the kinds of consciousness.

The first objection to this theory is that it cannot explain the ineffability of mystical feelings by itself. The mystical experience is not mere emotion, nor even chiefly emotion. Its basic element is more like a perception.

The second objection is that the whole weight of the mystical tradition is against the theory and supports the view that there is some logical difficulty, (and not merely an emotional difficulty), which interferes with the mystic's free expression of his vision in words. It is the vision itself, not merely its accompanying emotions, which is said to be inexpressible (ibid, p. 293-95).

2. The Spiritual Blindness Theory: It has been said that the impossibility of communicating a mystical experience to one who has not had such an experience is like the impossibility of communicating the nature of color to a man born blind.

There are two fatal objections to this theory. Firstly, the fact that the idea of a color cannot be verbally communicated to a person who has never seen one is only a particular case of the general principle of 'empiricism' as enunciated by Hume. It is impossible to "frame an idea" of any simple impression or quality unless one has first had experience of it. The principle applies, of course, not only to color but to any kind of experience whatever, sensory or non-sensory. It therefore no doubt applies to mystical experience. But the

very fact that it applies equally to every kind of experience renders it useless for explaining the ineffability of mystical experience. For if this is all that ineffability means, then all kinds of experience — colors, smells, tastes, sounds — will be ineffable in the same Way. The second objection to this theory is that it puts the difficulty of the word barrier on the wrong side of the speaker-hearer relation. If a seeing man says to a blind man "it is red," the seeing man has no difficulty in uttering this. Nor is there anything wrong with the description. It may be perfectly accurate.

The experience of seeing red is in no sense indescribable. The difficulty of understanding what the description means lies on the side of the blind hearer. But in the case of the mystical experience, it is the mystic (speaker) who experiences the word barrier. It is he who says that the experience is unutterable and indescribable (ibid, pp. 295-96).

3. The View That Mystical or Religious Language is Symbolic: The said theory seeks to explain ineffability as being due to incapacity of the understanding or intellect to deal with mystical experience. It can be directly experienced, this theory states, but it cannot be abstracted into concepts. But since every word in language, except proper names, stands for a concept, it follows that where no concepts are possible no words are possible. Therefore, mystical experiences being 'unconceptualizable' are also 'unverbalizable' (ibid, p. 298). Stace introduces two versions of this theory which will be discussed in brief:

I) The Dionysian Theory: According to this theory, the language of the mystical experience is symbolic. It is meant a mental symbol symbolic. The relationship between the two sides of the symbol is based on causality. The said theory says that if, for instance, we use 'X' to refer to God, it means that God is the cause of 'X'.

One of the principles taught by Dionysius was that no word can be used to describe the mystical states or God, for God transcends all attributes. There are some objections to the theory:

1. If God is called the cause of all beings and the word 'cause' is literally meant, the theory contradicts itself since 'cause' must be just as inapplicable to God as any other word. But if 'cause' is like other words, i.e., if it applies to the manifestations of God and not to God Himself, then when it is used of God it must mean that God is the 'cause of the causality' which appears in the world. But then he cannot himself be the 'cause of causality' but only the 'cause of the cause causality', and so ad infinitum.

2. The theory of Dionysius makes God's (nature) ineffability absolutely ineffable. If we do this, we can never justify the use of any language whether the words are positive or negative, whether they are used literally or symbolically.

If ineffability were absolute in the way the theory of Dionysius implies, then not only should we say that he ought not to have written his book 'The Divine Names' (ibid, p. 303-04).

II) The Metaphor Theory: By metaphor, its primary sense is meant which establishes a resemblance between two things through comparison. According to the metaphor theory if the word 'X' is used of God, it means that 'X' is a metaphor for something in the actual nature of God himself or in the mystical experience.

The metaphor theory is open to the following fatal objections:

1. In the first place the theory contradicts itself. For it supposes that 'X' may be a metaphor for something in the unconceptualizable essence of God or the mystical experience. A metaphor implies a resemblance. But wherever there is a resemblance a concept is possible.

2. In the second place, metaphorical language is only meaningful and justifiable if it is at least theoretically translatable into literal language; or if, at any rate, the thing or the experience for which the metaphor is supposed to be a symbol is before the mind as a presentation — whether there happens to exist a

word for it or not. If 'A' is used as a metaphor for 'B', both 'A' and 'B' must be before the mind and so must the resemblance between them which is the foundation of the metaphor. If this is not the case, we have what is usually called meaningless metaphor (ibid, pp. 304-07).

4. The View That Mystical Language y has is Symbolic: This theory has been discussed by Poorndarian(1988) in his book, *The Mystery and the Mystical Stories*. According to this theory, the meaning and image enjoy a natural link which is hard to break. The main function of the image, in this theory, is to clarify the meaning which eludes expression rather than adorning or affecting. If we consider the image to constitute two parts, one of which is the idea and the other its container, due to whose clash, the 'meaning' is generated, the emotional clash with the subject will be harder and more intimate, and the farther the subject gets from the realms of general and normal experience, the more the two said parts amalgamate and the harder it becomes to make a distinction between them. The last stage of the amalgamation happens when the two parts become united in the symbol (pp. 22-3).

5. The View That the Mystical Language is Real: It was first suggested and defended by Stace. After uttering paradoxes in order to describe their mystical experience, most of the mystics, according to this view, feel the paradox in their speech and suspect that the language fails to express their experience correctly. It is because the mystic is, like other people, a logically minded man in his non-mystical moments. He is not a being who lives solely in the paradoxical world of the One.

Claiming that no language is able to express his experience, the mystic is, in fact, mistaken. The paradox which he has uttered has correctly described his experience. The language is only paradoxical because the experience is paradoxical. Thus, the language correctly mirrors the experience. The mystics' language is, therefore, a 'real' language describing their mystical experiences and states. It is not symbolic, and the mystic' experiences are expressible (ibid, p. 318).

6. The View Held by Paul Nwya: Paul Nwya's view about the origin of the language of Islamic mysticism, different stages of its emergence and perfection (i.e. its reaching the stage of symbolic language) and the quality of the mystical experience, from its lowest rank to its highest one, namely, the experience of meeting God in speech (the experience of Shath) will be discussed in detail in this part. It will serve as a criterion to evaluate the aforementioned theories and views and is also a statement of Nwya's view:

"We know that in Islam everything originates from the Quran, and everything should return to it, and if something is not like that, it is at least a suspicious alteration, not to call it atheism. Therefore, the language of the Islamic mysticism grows up in the Quran." (Nwya, 1994, p. 18)

As was said earlier in the article, the language of the Sufis is the Outcome of the confluence of spiritual experience and the recital of the Quran in a way that the religious terms are expanded through an interpretation which is at first the exegesis of the Quranic text, but the interpretation gradually turns into the exegesis of the suns, special experience by employing the terms derived from the Quran which carry a new meaning. The new meaning is, in fact, the old meaning which the Islamic consciousness gradually attains by returning to the source of Muhammadan revelation.

At first, the mystical experience and the Quranic exegesis are inseparable, for each of them clarifies the other, and the language of experience is limited to the Quranic terms, but the mystical experience gradually gains its independence and detaches itself from the Quranic experience and generates its own specific language.

But the mystical language, like any other language, is not restricted to the words it employs, and the new meaning gained in the experience is not the transformation of the said words, which were inspired by new meaning. The generation of the mystical experience is accompanied by the generation of not only new expressions, but also new allegories and symbols. Employing the metaphorical aspect of the mystical

language, i.e. the allegories and symbols generated in the experience, the Sufi says something about the experience which cannot be expressed by the aid of expressions.

In fact, the allegories are the descriptions by which the Sufi attempts to give a concrete form to the elements of the spiritual experience in which he has lived and from which he departs. This experience is his, yet it could also be possessed by others. This shows well the externality of the allegory in contrast with the experience. But the relationship between the symbol and the experience is different from that between the allegory and experience. The relationship, as we said earlier, is natural as the poetry is created by an inspirational nature. In fact, the symbol is generated in the same action which itself generates the experience, or in other words, the experience comes into life in the guise of the symbol and crosses the mind in the same guise, while the allegory is employed after the experience to depict and describe it with the aid of simile. The symbol covers the totality of experience and is covered by the experience at the same time. The symbol and experience are generated and grow up together and have the same content. Hence, unlike the allegory, the symbol is not an effort to depict the experience and make it possible for others to understand. It is, in fact, the experience itself and demands the same exegesis that the experience demands. It is neither brighter nor darker than the experience. It is neither more present nor more absent than that. In the eyes of the Sufi, symbol is the language through which the experience crosses his mind, and thus it is the very experience he has. (ibid, pp. 268-9)

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The peak of the symbolic language is what is known as the 'conversation between the two natures' namely God and mankind." in this conversation, the Sufis' thought shifts from talking about oneself toward talking to God. This time, it is not the mystic who talks about his experience; rather it is God who constantly addresses him in the context of the experience and manifest Himself doing this" (ibid, p. 302).

In fact, mankind is not completely alone with God; there appears a third partner between the two which tries to separate them. There is a fear that its emergence in different forms - if accepted - would distance mankind from God. What's the name of the said third partner? While it is just one thing, it disguises itself as the experience changes. In general, it is called the world which is a phenomenon outside God and mankind (ibid, p. 305). This phenomenon takes different forms which are described below: "...and He told me, "If you turn your face towards Me, you will face science; employ it in the word, for science is in the word, and as you employ it in the word, knowledge will approach you; employ it in science, for knowledge is in science, and as you employ it in science, divine remembrance will approach you; employ it in knowledge, for divine remembrance is in knowledge, and praise will approach you; employ it in divine remembrance, for praise is in remembrance, and as you do so, the word in its totality will approach you; employ it in names, as you do so, the names will approach you; employ it in names, names will approach you, employ.

Them in the name, for they are in the name, and the name approaches you; employ it in nature it , for it belongs to nature; as you employ nature, employment itself will approach you; employ it in the vision, for it belongs to its domain" (Nafarri, 1953, p. 89, as cited in Nwya, 1994 p. 305). Thus, we are not talking about the purification of means, but their omission in order to leave nothing between God and mankind except the conversation through which the meeting becomes possible. Mankind is then rescued from the quagmire of separation and becomes the epitome of "There is nothing that resembles Him", and God speaks in the language of mankind without causing the resemblance illusion. God's human language is a symbolic one, for it is only the symbol which can contain different aspects and enjoy a 'divine' content in a human form while being deeply-rooted in 'incarnation' at the peak of attachment to 'transcendence`. (ibid, p. 328)

This language is necessarily equivocal. The comparative aspect seems blasphemous to the person who is outside the language and tries to understand it thorough words. The language in which much resemblance leads to much purification is the manifestation of the major in minor, absolute in relative and divine in human. This is the highest rank of mystical experience and the language which is idiomatically called 'Shath' by the Sufis. It means that the divine 'r replaces the human 'T and the Sufi speaks as the God's

Absolute 'Shahid' in the first person singular manner as if he were God. In an important text, Qoshayri studies the state of the Sufi with the utmost of delicacy, writing, "Those who have reached the highest point (the men of highest point) face a problem; that is, they sometimes hear someone addressing them in their Sirr (hidden secret), and they are certain that it is God speaking with them out of mercy and praise, then their Sirr answers Him, and the servant hears the conversation between God and his Sirr. The servant sometimes is in the state of Haibat (Awe), and his Sirr is silent. But he sometimes hears a speech which is both addressing and answering without his being involved. Through his knowledge, the servant realizes that it is not God - as if he is asleep. But he has no doubt that this is God doing this. Therefore, if the servant is robbed of this delicate knowledge, he loses his power of distinction and becomes the plural of the plural and hence says, "The Truth I am!" or as Bayazid Bastami says, "Glory be to me!" It is, in fact, the Truth who utters this, and the servants have been dissolved in God. (Qoshayri, Tartib al-Solook, as cited in Nwya, 1994, p. 222)

In his exegesis, Imam Jafar al- Sadiq (AS) is at the center of Moses' religious experience or the experience of meeting God in speech. Analyzing Moses's meeting God in the burning bush through which Moses "saw the light in the form of fire", Iman focuses his attention on the main point of God addressing Moses, according to the Quran, saying, "O Moses! Verily I am your Lord!" (Ta Ha: 11-12). Imam Interprets the said verses as a conversation (between God) and Moses:

"Moses (AS) was asked that how he had realized that it was God addressing him. He answered, "Since it annihilated me in a way that I felt that each hair on my body was being addressed from different directions and it was answering it at the same time. When the rays of God's awe annihilated me and the rays of his honor and dignity surrounded me, I realized that it was the Truth addressing me. Since He addressed me first by "It is Me" followed by "I", I realized that nobody but God deserves to talk of Himself using two consecutive pronouns. Then I got into a panic and got annihilated; consequently, I said, "You! You are the One, who is eternal and will be eternal forever, and Moses is not in a position and does not possess the courage to talk to you unless you make him eternal through your eternity and give him an attribute of your attributes, you are both the addressor and the addressee." Then God said, "No one but Me can address, and no one can answer it, I am both the speaker and the hearer, and you are nothing but a shadow which is being addressed," (The Exegesis of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (AS), as cited in Nwya, 1967, p. 148)

Studying the principles of the emergence of the certain expressions used in Islamic mysticism inside the mystical experience, Kilabazi, on the other hand, discovers a rule which has necessarily and logically caused the emergence of the internal language. This clarifies the relationship between the two categories of mystical thought and attitude and paradoxical statement in another way.

In his book, 'Ta'arrof, he writes, "The mystical experience is a consecutive chain of Maqamat (progressive stages) and each Maqam has a beginning and an end, and there are different states among the

Maqamat; and each Maqam has its own science, and each state has its own manifestation. And the science of each Maqam is accompanied with proof and refutation. Since the Maqamat are different and each Magam has a different beginning, end and state, that which is proved in one way will be refuted in another way, while that which is refuted in one way will be proved in another way." (Bokhari, 1984, pp. 1146-48)

Therefore, the misunderstanding between the wayfarer who talks about his previous experience and the believer who cannot grasp his experience is inevitable, for the misunderstanding is the outcome of the nature of the mystical experience since this experience includes constant proof and refutation which is moving from the refutation of content of the previous experience towards the proof of the content of the current experience. (ibid, p. 1151)

Conclusion

We can come to this conclusion that the categories of 'mystical experience` and 'paradoxical statement' enjoy a firm link from some important viewpoints. First, they both remove the 'language' from routine and spiritless mode and bring it to life. Secondly, they make us conclude that the language of the mystic is paradoxical due to his experience being paradoxical; that is, language reflects the true image of the experience. Therefore, paradox is the natural characteristic of purely mystical experiences and instructions. Thirdly, Kilabazi believes that the mystical experience includes constant proof and refutation which is moving from the refutation of the content of the previous experience towards the proof of the content of the current experience.

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