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Bright Growth in the Darkness: Mysticism in Selected English and Kurdish Poems

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Keywords: <i>Mystic</i> <i>Concept</i> <i>Eastern</i> <i>Spirit</i> <i>Camps</i> <i>western</i>	Abstract Mysticism and its relevant associate, mystic, are so complicated words and concepts that dealing with them needs a very minute care and pierce look and observation. To worsen the case, eastern and western centers of knowledge differ in some aspects about the two concepts and even sometimes are at odds with each other. This study, therefore, is an attempt to clarify the bridge between the two camps in this respect and show the cases and states in which they differ as far as mystic and mysticism are concerned. The study hypothesizes some key resemblance and other disagreements due to the religious impacts on each party. It tries to reach possible conclusions through five sections that discuss the hypothesis in brief. It goes through some definitions of the concept, its origin in the east and the west, and some types of mysticism. The result is a good number of conclusions like the fact that for the English mystic poet, man is God and God is man; while their Kurdish counterparts stress that the spirit that dwells within man is divine because it is sent by God. These attempts and achievements were done thanks to a number of first hand English and Kurdish academic sources about the subject.
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التصوف في قصائد إنكليزية وكردية مختارة

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المخلص	الكلمات الدالة: -
ان كلمة "الصوفية" و متزامنتها " الصوفى " هي كلمات و مفاهيم معقدة بشكل يجعل التعامل معها بحاجة الى درجة عالية من الدقة و البصيرة. و ما يزيد التعقيد هو اختلاف مراكز المعرفة الشرقية و الغربية فى بعض الجوانب المتعلقة بهذه المفاهيم الى درجة انه فى بعض الاحيان تكون المدرستين على طرفى نقيض بهذا الخصوص. و لذلك يحاول هذا البحث توضيح الفجوة الموجودة بين المدرستين فى هذا الامر و اظهار الحالات التى يختلفان فيها. و يفترض البحث وجود بعض اوجه التشابه و الاختلاف الرئيسية بينهما بسبب تاثير المبادئ الدينيه المختلفه على كل جانب منهما. ويحاول الوصول لاستنتاجات محددة من خلال دراسة الافتراضات عن طريق تقسيم البحث و دراستها فى اطار خمسة اقسام مختصرة.	صوفى مفهوم شرقى روح جانب غربى
يبدا البحث ببعض التعاريف الخاصة بمفهوم الصوفية و اصولها فى الشرق و الغرب بالاضافة الى الاشارة الى بعض انواعها. و النتيجة عبارة عن بعض الاستنتاجات الجيدة و الابرز منها هى: بالنسبة للصوفى الانكليزى، الانسان هو الله و الله هو الانسان، بينما يعتقد الصوفى الكردى بان الروح الموجود فى بدن الانسان هو من السماء لان مصدره هو الله. و قد تم الوصول لهذه النتائج بفضل بعض المصادر الاكاديمية الكردية و الانكليزية الاصيله حول هذا الموضوع.	<u>معلومات البحث</u> <u>تاريخ البحث:</u> الاستلام: ٢٠٢٠/١٢/٢٥ القبول: ٢٠٢٠/١٢/٢٥ التوفر على النت

1. Definitions and Interpretations:

Due to the complication of the concepts and the different interpretations made to them by eastern and western thinkers, writers, critics, and philosophers; it is hard to reach an over-agreed definition and even interpretation for the two related concepts of mystic and mysticism. The obvious difference about them among the different adopters

of this religious philosophy like the Christians, Muslims, Hindus, etc., is another point of complication. Yet, some rough and general definitions are provided here and there. *The American Heritage College Dictionary* for instance, defines mysticism as "immediate consciousness of the transcendent or ultimate reality or God" (921), and mystic as "of or relating to religious mysteries or occult rites and practices" (Ibid). For *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, it is "a quest for a hidden truth or wisdom" (786). Of course there is a host of other definitions for both words and concepts in the English books, papers, and articles that tackle this aspect and it is noted that most of them share common ideas in this respect; therefore, going into more detail about definitions may not be of great help or benefit.

For the Kurdish culture, religion, and literature as well, the Arabic words 'Sufi' and 'Sufism' fill the place of the English "mystic" and "mysticism"; and they are defined and interpreted in different ways and methods according to the different writers, critics and philosophers who adopted the task. Like the case of the English, most of the Kurdish definitions in this respect agree upon some common points and ideas. The critic Dr. Ibrahim Ahmed Shwan for example defines mysticism as " a religious view towards the world which goes back to the secret rites performed in the old religions in the east and the west as well which aimed at finding a connection with the Almighty" (2001: 17); while for Amin, a mystic is a person "who is at war with himself to reach union with God" (Qtd in Shwan: 34). Other critics support the view that the word is a reference to the word "Suf" which means wool in Arabic. In this, they follow the interpretation of a large number of Arab critics and writers who believe that this word is used because the majority of the prophets and believers in God used to wear clothes made of wool. In sum, a mystic person can be defined as somebody who quits every material and non-material enjoyment in this life and tries hard to clean his soul from ephemeral things and phenomena in order to reach the state of getting close to God or getting united with Him through his soul not his body.

Although mysticism is not a philosophy neither a doctrine, yet it can be regarded as close to science and philosophy; regardless of the different methods followed by each party. In science and philosophy, the search for truth and facts follows material methods and principles and depends heavily upon what is acceptable and logical to man's mind and understanding; therefore, the method followed by the mystics is alogical, non-mental, and even paradoxical for the materialists. For the mystics and their supporters however, the story is completely the opposite. "It is achieved through science and practice. Its science is the process of blocking the obstacles of the worldly desires and getting aloof of the ill deeds until the soul is emptied from everything except the Almighty" (Shwan: 19). The Zen Buddhists also regard it as a: "knowledge of the most adequate kind, only it cannot be expressed in words" (Britannica: 786).

Man is given intellect and spirit at the same time; the material things and objects are apprehended through intellect, while the spirit is a method and tool for understanding and reaching spiritual things. In this respect, mysticism all over the world is the same or at least regarded in the same way.

II. Origins

In the same way that its definition is thankless and not quite settled, origins of mysticism is also maneuvered according to different viewpoints. Some critics regard

the Greek philosopher, Plato (424/423 – 348/347 BC) as the first European mystic, but others insist that Plato's disciple, Plotinus (A.D. 204-270) is the father of the European Mysticism. In this respect, one has to refer to the Greek mystery plays performed by trade guilds. It is believed that the name has come from the fact that the guilds thought that their trades were mystery for everybody except themselves. Hence, the similarity seems somehow obvious.

But the greatest majority of the thinkers, writers, and critics believe that the origin of the concept goes back to religions and traditions and specifically the eastern ones. In this respect, reference is made to the Indian, Chinese, and Japanese practices and religions; but a firm focus falls on Buddhism as a main eastern source for mysticism. So, the origin of the eastern mysticism seems as foggy as its western counterpart.

The interaction between the eastern and western mysticisms could be summed up in the marriage between interest in material things by the Greeks and the Eastern stress upon the soul and consciousness. Later, Christianity adapted the Greek material interest and belief into focus upon more spiritual things and ideas represented by the mystery of creation, the existence of God, and incarnation. The difference became further and wider as the concepts of love, intellect, nature, and worldly pleasure which are the clear obstacles on the way of eastern mystics towards the final goal; became the means and tools of spiritual evaluation. This western understanding to the spiritual reality was reflected in different ways and methods by different intellectuals and men of letters. For the Romantic poet, William Wordsworth (1770-1850), for instance, nature embodies the divine picture and spirit while William Blake (1757-1827) considers imagination as the only source of spirituality.

As for mysticism among the Kurds, again contradictory ideas are seen. Some critics believe in its eastern origin depending upon the views of the famous orientologists while the majority of the writers and thinkers believe that its source is Islam since they see the principles of mysticism in the holy Qura'n and in Prophet Muhammad's tradition. They further present Qura'nic examples that ask the rich people to live like the poor and criticize every worldly pleasure. (See Shwan: 29-35). The Kurdish poets led this trend and their mysticism is heavily influenced by the Islamic religion. Yet, a great deal of non-Islamic influences appear in their poetry since the other religions, especially Christianity and Judaism share a huge amount of common points with Islam in this respect.

III. The Unitive State

The unitive state is better to be considered as a process rather than a state since- in Christian and Islamic mysticism alike- it involves a number of religious stages and practices like humility, contemplation, aloofness, and commitment to God's call, and in Christianity they are carried out within three stages as the Jesuit priest, philosopher, and educator Robert J. Spitzer, S.J., says:

- * the purgative state (in which the person begins building habits of charity enabling him to resist sin and vice),
- * the illuminative state (in which a person has sufficient habits of charity and virtue to resist major temptations enabling the Lord to come to him with significant beauty, grace, and affective consolation),

* the unitive state in which, after a period of final detachment from self-called the dark night (that enables near perfect charity and purity of heart), a person enters into the fullness of divine love causing a state of unsurpassed ecstasy and union with the Absolute (1).

This unitive state which is the culmination of the hard attempts of the mystic, enables him to the state of enjoying union with the One creator and it is the ultimate stage of his pleasure. This pleasure, as critics try to explain, is impossible to anyone to enjoy unless for those who actually win it. About this state and the range of its sweetness, the 16th century mystic, St. Teresa of Avila wrote:

The loving exchange that takes place between the soul and God is so sweet that I beg Him in His goodness to give a taste of this love to anyone who thinks I am lying. On the days this lasted I went about as though stupefied. I desired neither to see nor to speak.... [I]t seems the Lord carries the soul away and places it in ecstasy; thus, there is no room for pain or suffering, because joy soon enters in (Ibid).

Mysticism for the Kurds does not differ greatly from what have been presented above since all the divine religions share these common features. In fact, the Kurdish mystics faced a great deal of opposition and contradictions because the idea of the unitive state stands at odds with the common Islamic belief that the universe includes the only God and the other creatures are no more than results of the reality of His power, the only reality that they believe in.

It is almost agreed upon that the origin of the unitive state goes back to Hinduism where Brahman is regarded as the ultimate reality and the highest universal being; yet for the Muslims (including the Kurds) Ibn Arabi is the founder of this principle in which an absolute love of God is decided by the mystic and so, the Almighty who has been away from any human characteristics, showed up in the picture of a mystic. This unusual apprehension for the public at that time brought about, as mentioned before, a series of contradiction and opposition that continues to the present time.

This point brings into mind what happened to the Persian mystic, poet, and teacher, Hussein Ibn- Mansur known as Al-Hallaj (c. 858- c. 922). He was put to death in a horrific way and most of the people who witnessed the execution at that time, celebrated it, believing that he deserved the punishment. But in reality what Al-Hallaj meant by his saying, I am the Truth (Ana 'l-Ḥaqq) was different from the accusations he faced because of it, and this fact was shown and clarified much later as one critic writes:

The recently published researches of M. Louis Massignon {Kitab al-Tawasin make it possible, for the first time, to indicate the meaning which Hallaj himself attached to this celebrated formula, and to assert definitely that it does not agree with the more orthodox interpretations offered at a later epoch by Sufis belonging to various schools. According to Hallaj, man is essentially divine. God created Adam in His own image. He projected from Himself that image of His eternal love, that He might behold Himself as in a mirror. Hence

He bade the angels worship Adam (Kor. 2.32), in whom, as in Jesus,
He became incarnate (Nicholson: 110).

This concept can well be tackled with the Kurdish mystic poets though not as clear and straightforward as Al-Hallaj's bare expression. The Kurdish mystic poets expressed this through a number of methods and techniques including love, nature, comparison and symbolism. These methods and techniques, of course, are not strange to the English mystic poems, and this is one of the main reasons for writing this humble work.

Edmund Spenser (1552/1553 –1599) for instance expresses this concept well in "An Hymn of Heavenly Beauty" here he writes: "The means, therefore, which unto us is lent / Him to behold, is on his works to look, / Which he hath made in beauty excellent". (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org>).

Spenser minutely hits the target and he is at the heart of the philosophy of mysticism in this extract and the poem at large. God, he seems to indicate, could be seen in His creatures and works and so; to be able to see Almighty God, the method and way is easy; just look at what He created, animate or inanimate. As a result, man as one of God's creatures is no more than part and particle of Him, hence, the unitive state between man and the Creator.

In the Kurdish poetry as well, the concept of the unitive state exists, albeit with a rather hesitant pulse. The reason seems to be the low level of the public consciousness about this concept and philosophy. Yet, poets like Mallai Jizziri (1567- 1640) and Mawlavi (1806- 1882) tackled this aspect courageously without much regard to what they may be accused of. Mallai Jizziri for example refers to it through the dark and bright phases of life:

Till there is darkness, you are far from Love's light,
When shade fades it is light, after melting, only God.
There is no more than unity, diversity dream,
'tis repeating of the One, dreams of other numbers.
(Mudarris & Mulla Kareem: 5).

As far as man is in the darkness of this world, he stays deprived of the everlasting light of God's love. He, therefore, is in need of getting washed of that shade and dirt and to melt into God's unlimited existence. Once it is done, then his spirit melts into God and they become one. The second couplet is just a reiteration of this unitive state. For the poet, there is only one entity and any reference to multitude is a kind of dream and hallucination. The poet is clearly following Ibn Arabi's understanding of the concept and in this, he does not seem to differ a bit from the European Unitive state.

Another Kurdish poet known for his clear mystical ideas is Said Abdul-Raheem Malla Saeed, better known in the world of the Kurdish poetry as Mawlavi (1806-1882). Like Jizziri, his expression of the unitive state is bald and obvious:

Every existence borrows thy light,
Thou doth exist, others just tracker.

Uncovered, yet thy unity shown,
Just to teach us this advent displayed.
(Mudarris: 54).

For the poet, the only light in the universe belongs to the Almighty and so, man without it is just a tracker and shade. And it is well-known that a shade has no independent existence; rather it belongs to the thing of which it is a picture. In order for man to reach a real existence, he has to get united with the real and concrete thing. And once this is achieved, then the unitive state is reached and man becomes no less divine than the spirit from which it came into existence.

IV. Religious Mysticism

The majority of the Kurdish mystic poets and even poets in general focus upon the religious aspect in mysticism and the reasons may not be very ambiguous. Most of those poets, especially the classics got their leaning and literacy from the mosques that used to play the role of schools at that time beside its religious role as a place for praying and worship. Many of the poets even were Islamic clerics (Mulla, or Malla 'in Kurdish') and so due to the heavy impact of Islam upon them, the main focus of their mystic poetry fell upon religious aspect and worship of God, as mentioned before; leaving smaller parts where the other aspects can appear. One of those poets-clerics was Mulla Ahmed Bin Mulla Muhammad Al-Buti, better known as Mallai Jizziri (1567- 1640). He was influenced greatly by the Persian-Afghani poet, theologian, Islamic scholar, and mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, better known as Rumi (1207- 1273). He was known for his real faith of and love for Almighty God and this love was so pure that it put him beyond any doubt within the famous religious mystics in his age. In the very beginning of a poem entitled "Flower and Nightingale" he writes:

Although the inner beauty of the flower comes from nightingale
Yet the song and beauty of the nightingale is due to flower.
Listen how the wine flows noisily into the cup,
Like a nightingale it sings and tells its love state.
(Hazhar: 548).

(These two couplets and any other coming Kurdish lines are translated by the researcher himself).

The poet puts himself in the position of the faithful and famous lover, the nightingale whose life and pleasure depends to a great extent upon the beloved (the flower). Both lover and beloved, here, are interdependent and they are so strongly connected that they may not be able to live, or at least to enjoy, without each other. In the same way, the relationship between wine and a cup follows the same principle. The best enjoyable time for the wine is the instant when it flows into the cup; that is why it starts singing out of pleasure to its beloved like the song of the nightingale which is aimed at telling its beloved the range of its joy and pleasure.

The poet tries through these lines to tell his reader what kind of lover he is and how he is connected spiritually to the Beloved. Without the Beloved, he wants to show, he is nothing and cannot reach the position of the beautiful nightingale and happy wine. It is this dependence that sprinkles in him the light and brightness he enjoys as the lover of the only Beloved. The poet stresses his own consciousness in the presence of God to an extent that he lives in His presence and cannot live without that presence.

In another poem, he tries to make it clear what ways and methods people choose to reach the final destination which is love of God:

Each group of believers followed a path,
Some that of awe, some beauty, and their capital this wine.
For me only this beauty,
Behind it no other purpose sought.
(Al-Douski: 114- 115).

Some people seek the final goal of love of God out of fear and veneration of His power while others are attracted to the beauty of the Almighty and that draws them to seek His love. The poet refers clearly to the difference between the real lover of God and the one that is sought because the person is cautioned of His wrath and punishment in the judgement day; and this is the obvious difference between the two parties of the obedient and believers. Then he presents himself as the representative of the mystics since the mystics' love of God is purely due to His beauty and no other purpose. The symbolic wine the mystics seek puts them in a situation no other people can feel or understand. It is for this reason that Caroline F Spurgeon describes the situation of a mystic as "somewhat in the position of a man who, in a world of blind men, has suddenly been granted sight, and who, gazing at the sunrise, and overwhelmed by the glory of it, tries, however falteringly, to convey to his fellows what he sees. They, naturally, would be skeptical about it, and would be inclined to say that he is talking foolishly and incoherently" (5).

Another great mystic among the Kurdish poets is Mawlawi. To be the son of a cleric and get the only glimpses of learning and reading in the school of a mosque (known as Hujra); there is no surprise of becoming not only a Malla (cleric) but even a mystic. A large part of his poetry is devoted to love, but not only worldly love; rather the divine one; the spiritual relationship between himself and his creator. In the following couplet, for example, he directly addresses God:

Bargaining market, oh, Bartender,
Here is the Fana, give me the Baqa.
.....
Whatever you gave, returned one by one,
What I owe then is the Judgement deal.
(Mudarris: 339, 539).

The addressee is clearly the Almighty God and the initial capital letter in the word 'bartender' denotes this fact in advance. Within the bargain, the poet proposes handing out (Fana) for the sake of the more important and everlasting (Baqa). These two expressions are exclusive for Islamic mysticism and were thought to have come from Abū Yazīd of Bistam (804- 874). For him, Fana," is the passing away and extinction of the empirical self, which follows self-control through asceticism and contemplative techniques. The "passing away" involved the loss of the consciousness of one's own individuality and helps to explain why the Sufis sometimes spoke in terms that suggested that they became merged or identified with God" (www.encyclopedia.com). But in reality, Fana refers to the disappearance and dying out of whatever worldly things a human being possesses including his physical existence.

As for Baqa, it is directly the opposite of Fana; the state in which man has been cleaned of every worldly feature and reached the state of Godliness, that is a state in which he is more spiritual in existence than material. Some critics describe it as the purgation of the body from the dirt of this world in order to prepare the person as a pure entity ready to be with his God. Ibrahim Ahmed Shwan for instance, says that "according to the mystics, it is the beginning of the travel towards God; and this journey ends only when the person passes God's deserts and he is cleaned of the material stuffs" (2010: 62).

So, Mawlawi is seeking the last stage in the process of reaching the top of mysticism, and for this, he is trying to make a deal with his God. He prefers Baqa over Fana and this is the heart of the philosophy of Islamic mysticism.

In the last couplet, he stresses the same idea and seems as if he is sad with God because He took away whatever he was given by Him. The reference, here, is to his physical strength, his youth, his eyes (he became blind towards the end of his age), and the death of his wife whom he loved greatly. But he is never angry at or sad with God; rather he shows how sure he is when he meets his Pilot (as Tennyson says in his short poem, 'Crossing the Bar') at the day of judgement. So, he seems to be looking forward for that day in which there will be another deal; a deal in which the believers and good-doers will be rewarded while the disbelievers and ill-doers punished.

The last line above, however, could refer to his fear and horror of the day of judgement. In this respect, most of the Kurdish mystics show and even say that they feel they did not do enough good deeds to be proud of when they meet God face to face, and therefore, they show regret of the life they passed in vain and trivial things. Our poet, here, is not an exception. That is why he writes:

I know that I violated Orders,
And did not do what believers should.
I spent my age in the unconscious,
And attend the Day just with blush.
(Mudarris: 84).

What the poet writes, here, is the expression of self-effacing and an attempt to show and teach the believers that whatever good deeds they do, will not suffice in the day of Judgement. So, such lines could be regarded as didactic lines and lessons for every reader. (The word *every*, of course, refers to Muslims and believers alone). If a believer's deeds do not suffice to help him pass successfully in the day of judgement, what is to be done then? The poet provides the solution and a hopeful way out: "But you can give me your favour, / And not use my poor deeds as justification (Ibid).

For Mawlawi then, we are always indebted to Almighty and if we are judged in the Day, we will never win paradise due to our good deeds and straightforwardness; rather we should wait for God's mercy and forgiveness. So, man is blushing out of shame and embarrassment on that day, and it is only God's mercy that will save him. This line hints at the Islamic belief that God's mercy is wider and larger than the universe itself; so man should have hope of avoiding hell and gaining paradise because of that mercy.

This trend of mysticism resembles to a great extent, the English mysticism and mystical works; since English mysticism also has a long history and even there is no definite agreement about its origins.

Among the English mystic poets, William Blake (1757- 1827), the poet, printmaker, and painter comes first and foremost. His story with religion started from the early years of his life as he mentioned in more than one occasion and letter to friends. Further, critics describe him as visionary and imaginative; but whatever dream or imagination he has, it seems, he borrowed and learned from the Bible as the main source of religion for the Christians. In this respect one critic wrote:

Blake declared that "all he knew was in the Bible" and that "The Old and the New Testaments are the Great Codes of Art". This is an exaggeration of the truth that all his prophetic writings deal, in various formulations, with some aspects of the overall Biblical plot of the creation and fall of man, the history of the generations of man in the fallen world (Abrams: 1314).

In a good number of his poems, Blake makes it obvious that man's soul and spirit is no more than a part and particle of God and that the duality of good and evil is in reality from one source. He stresses this fact repeatedly and asserts that if good and evil are accepted as two; then there should be a duality and not one only God. This impression and other divine ideas are shown in a number of poems. "The Divine Image" is one of them that begins in this way:

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is Man, his child and care.
(Ibid: 1324-25).

The poem, though, simple and naïve on the surface level, connotes a great and deep philosophy about the relationship between man and God. According to religion, mercy, pity, peace, and love are characteristics to be sought and hoped for from God; and therefore, man always prays for them and asks God for them whenever he is in distress. But in some cases, man also exercises the same features of mercy, pity, peace, and love and so, in such cases man is God through the shared qualities. This means, in other words, that God is never far from man neither external to him, rather He is in his innermost as Geoffrey Keynes stresses: "There is a Throne in every Man, it is the Throne of God" (Qtd in Jose: 1).

Blake concludes this simple and short poem from his *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1789) with a very touching and humanistic quatrain:

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.
(Abrams: 1325).

According to Blake, all the human beings are embedded with God's spirit, and therefore, they should be regarded equal and they should love each other regardless of their nation, language, origin, and religion. A man who possesses God's virtues symbolized in mercy, love, and pity, Blake wants to stress, is no less divine than God Himself. Thus, according to Blake, God does not exist in the heaven; rather in the innermost of us on earth. It is not impossible, then, to be Him if you just achieve the divine features of mercy, love, and pity that are in reality His. These lines carry as well a hint at the principle of divinity in *The New Testament*. It should be such reasons that made Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772- 1834) in response to Charles Augustus Tulk's (1786- 1849) letter, describe Blake as: "He [Blake] is a man of Genius—and I apprehend, a Swedenborgian--certainly, a mystic emphatically. You perhaps smile at my calling another Poet, a Mystic; but verily I am in the very mire of common-place common-sense compared with Mr. Blake, apo- or rather anacalyptic Poet, and Painter!" (Qtd in Baulch: 8).

The word ' anacalyptic' in the quote is of interest and attention. For the first time seeing it, the glimpse of its near and religious 'apocalyptic' flashes in the mind; yet it does not seem that they are synonyms or antonyms. Further, no academic or electronic source provides an independent meaning for it. Therefore, as Michael Ferber says,

"Coleridge liked to display his erudition, but he always strove, too, for precision among his technical terms, and he knew Greek very well; here he is correcting himself and offering an unusual substitute for a common religious word" (189). So, it seems that Coleridge, out of enthusiasm for Blake's genius and apocalyptic vision, invented a new and more effective word to express what he feels about the great English poet and painter.

Another mystic among the English poets to be included here, is Francis Thompson (1859–1907). For him, as for every other mystic and religious person, the love of God is the final goal and destination of every believer. Among the most famous and anthologized of his poem is the long "The Hound of Heaven" which starts abruptly and without introductions:

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat-and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet-
'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'
(www.poemhunter.com).

This unwarranted start, and before it, the title of the poem draw a great deal of attention to the way of presenting the main idea of the poem; is it allowed to compare God to a hunting animal and man to a prey? Is it so in reality? Is not it a mere blasphemy? The metaphoric pursuit expressed in the title is an imaginative picture of the situation of man on earth. He is pursued, opposite to that of the earthly hunting case, for his benefit not destruction. The image Thompson presents, here, implies the utmost degree of worship of the creator that reaches the heart of mysticism. God is following man to save him from His wrath in The Day. What a mercy and love! But what are we doing towards it? How we receive it? The poet answers in the first lines of his poem: I fled Him, down the nights and down the days; / I fled Him, down the arches of the years; / I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways. This 'flight' of man from God's invitation is the point that makes Thompson's title interesting and meaningful. God hounds man day and night just to bring him back to the correct path because, as David Scott says:

God is "our Father in heaven" as Jesus taught us to pray for him. He is the origin and goal of our lives, and the loving sustainer of all

points in between. He put us here. He knows where we came from. Where we have been, and where we are now. And He knows where we should be heading away on the road back to him. He knows what we need even before we ask, and knows that He alone is what each of us is searching for (www.catholiceducation.org).

The imagery is thrilling; a pursuit but an unusual one. It is pictured as a competition between the divine love and the human one instead of that between Evil and Good. Further, man knows and realizes that it is Good that is pursuing him not Evil, yet he prefers, in the main, to seek refuge from the Good in the ephemeral and trivial love of the body. But what is the result? The Pursuer warns him against following whatever betrays him: 'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.' So, the only way out for eternal survival is not running away from the pursuer; rather yielding to His will and way, and this is the core of what mystics call for and warn believers against. The story is most probably an autobiography of the real story of Thompson's life, tacking into note the path of his personal biography and therefore, the persona reaches the hoped- for conclusion from the perspective of the believers and mystics. The speaker takes refuge in everything on earth and in the sky just to evade the love that pursuits him, but the solution comes as a surprise:

All which thy child's mistake fancies as lost,
I have stored for thee at Home.
Rise, clasp my hand, and come.
Halts by me that Footfall.
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
Ah, Fondest, Blindest, Weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest.
Thou dravest Love from thee who dravest Me.
(www.poemhunter.com).

In the middle of man's confusion and loss, comes the hand of hope and safety. Whatever we consider as folly and waste of time and effort, Thompson wants to emphasize, is really a great wealth kept for us at Home. The reason is simple; we have lost the correct path and therefore we went astray. Things appear to us in an opposite direction. What we are trying to do in our innermost, is no more than seeking the true path for the sure destination. That is why God, incarnated in Jesus Christ, calls us back to the right path which we do not find in the main. The only people who find and follow that path, Thompson hints at, are the mystics, the real believers who are illuminated in the middle of the huge darkness.

V. Nature and Beauty Mysticism

The Kurdish poetry is embedded with ideas that can carry the concept of love of God through natural phenomena and human beauty especially that of the woman. For a mystic poet, to indulge in a heavy description of his beloved, no doubt connotes God's love in his innermost. Al-Jazzeri, for example takes an oath in his beloved's beauty: "I swear by that black hair I worship your beauty / And secretly drink from that sweet wine" (Qtd in Al-Douski: 112). The love he is describing could well be a worldly love, a real girlfriend and beloved. Yet a deeply religious and mystic like Al-Jazzeri never drinks wine neither worships other than God. It is God's beauty, incarnated in the beauty of his beloved that he adores and worships.

The poet shows in more than one occasion, how love affected and directed him where he did not have intention neither purpose: "Beloved's beauty and Sweetness planted love in the deep / Deprived me of will, that is love's will" (Ibid: 124). No love can deprive man of will and intention unless it is beyond his reach and power. The one love out of the control of the lover should necessary be God's love that drives man into a psychological situation that even sometimes called madness. (In the Islamic mysticism, some mystics carry out a process called Zuhd in which he leaves every worldly pleasure including sex, food, enjoyment, ect. for forty days. During that period, the mystic chooses alienation and does not mix with people. He also passes his time in prayer and contemplation about God and His creatures).

Abdul-Raheem Mawlawi, another famous Kurdish mystic poet, focuses in his mystical expressions and ideas upon the beauty of nature and women as the incarnation of God's beauty and spirit. In the following extract, nature and his beloved's beauty (most probably his wife's beauty) are mixed to produce the pleasure he missed:

Spring returned, pleasure's spring,
Breeze scent from freedom's bud,
Pleasure, passion, and lust surround my heart,
Now, it is void of every melancholy.
It is the pleasure of meeting you again,
Power of the smell of your black balmy hair.
So, pour me from that tasty drink,
And re-bear my nice dead points.
(Mudarris: 61-2).

The extract mixes nature and beauty in a symbolic way to draw more attention. The spring which is normally accompanied by concepts of rebirth, happiness, and new hope, is for the poet an abstract one, symbolized by a new chance to meet his beloved. So, the metaphorical spring with all its beauty and elegance shows itself in the picture of the beauty of one individual girl or woman. It is the source and cause of getting rid of sorrow and melancholy. All these wonders are normal and expectable in a love poem at any case; yet the cunning poet does not lose the opportunity of showing that his is a different and deviant kind of love.

In the Kurdish mysticism, it is believed that there are five positions in man's chest where God's light can glow. The poet shows in the last line that his five positions are

dead and so he asks the butler for wine that could regain the lost light into them. Again, metaphorically speaking, the butler should be his beloved who was the source of his renewed pleasure or merely memoire. Consequently, it could be concluded that God's beauty is incarnated in his beloved and that is the very reason of the power her beauty has upon the mystic lover.

Elsewhere in his oeuvre, the poet stresses upon beauty in a highly ornamental way but does not deviate from his well-known strategy of relating every beauty to that of Al-Mighty God's:

Oh, the bright sun of the beauties' skies,
Sorrow-bringer for deer-eyed pretty ones.
City- door of beloveds' beauties,
The eye-sight of Jacob's innermost.
God bequeathed you tree of heaven stature,
And only you worth such heavenly stature.
(Ibid: 206-7).

It is not only the rich metaphorical description of the beloved's beauty that attracts attention, rather the dense diction and the serene thought of the poet at the time of composing these lines is of real note. The beloved's beauty, is interestingly compared to the brightness of the sun's rays; yet, using conceit, the beloved becomes a real source of sorrow instead of pleasure and gladness as is expected. The poet wants to show that his beloved is so pretty and beautiful that whatever women or girls see her, feel envious of her beauty and this is the reason of their misery and wretchedness.

Again the poet draws attention to the real beauty he means though on the surface, the addressee is his beloved (most probably his wife). According to the holly Qur'an, Joseph's brothers from Jacob's second wife were jealous of Joseph and therefore, they arranged a plan to get rid of him, they threw him into a deep well and when they returned home, they told Jacob that a wolf ate Joseph. They even put fake blood on his clothes to prove that to their father. Then because of his great longing for Joseph, Jacob became blind since he loved Joseph and his brother who were from a different wife, more than his other sons. Yet, after many years, his sons went to Egypt for trading and found Joseph there. They brought Joseph's shirt with them back and gave it to their father. Jacob instantly regained his eyesight.

According to the poet, the beloved's beauty is as effective as Joseph's shirt that brought back Jacob's eyesight. The religious allusion certainly is not just to stress her beauty; rather to link his story, as a mystic, to religion, otherwise, the poet was not so easy-got that he could not stress that beauty in any other way.

Among the beauty and nature mystics in the English poetry, the father of the English Romantic Movement, William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850) occupies a sure and obvious position. His fame and popularity as a mystic could almost be equated to that of his

Romanticism or somewhat less. His mysticism shares most of its features with those of the other English mystics; yet his focus in this respect upon nature is quite obvious and unforgettable. His belief in the divine origin of the human being is one of the most significant aspects which he shares with the other prominent English mystics like William Blake whose mysticism is explained earlier in this section.

The supposedly simple style of his poetry is surely misleading, since it hides within it a philosophical concept and understanding about life and the universe at large. The simplicity a reader touches in "The Solitary Reaper" for instance, gives him the impression that Wordsworth is easy to read and understand. He is a poet of nature and this is quite clear for everybody. Yet, his vision is quite larger and deeper. For him, everything we see in nature is actually living and breathing as he expresses in "Lines Written in Early Spring":

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths,
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.
(Abrams: 1373).

Such lines and poems draw attention to the fact that for Wordsworth, the beauty of nature is not the source of pleasure and enjoyment; rather it is the life that he feels and touches in natural scenery and phenomena that make him indulge in the real source of that ecstasy. He seems to tell us that there is no difference between man and other living creatures on earth on the one hand, and the other aspects of nature on the other hand. Both groups, Wordsworth tries to stress, belong to one source of creation, and so God's hand is as clear and powerful in every bit of nature as it is in man. To him, the other creatures and natural sites are more obedient and submissive than the rebellious man:

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?
(Ibid).

So, for him nature as the incarnation of the spirit of God is not equal to man; rather higher and more purified than him since the atrocities made by man against his likes is completely absent in nature that has a 'holy' plan. The problem is that man is unaware of all these clear incarnations of God' power and spirit and it is just here that the significance of Wordsworth's philosophy comes to the surface. There should necessarily be a man among men who is aware of these incarnations and react to them. The one supposed man should be the mystic poet himself who draws attention to such philosophical and deeply religious ideas. In this respect, Spurgeon beautifully gives it a mouth:

He believed that we are in something the same attitude towards Nature as an illiterate untrained person might be in the presence of a book containing the philosophy of Hegel. To the educated trained thinker, who by long and arduous discipline has developed his mental powers, that book contains the revelation of the thought of a great mind; whereas to the uneducated person it is merely a bundle of paper with words printed on it (35).

Like the 'educated trained thinker', it is only the mystic who realizes and comprehends what the natural sites and all creatures mean in reality. His strong insight helps him look into the depth of such sites and discern their essence which carries clear messages to man on earth. For others, on the other hand, the sites mean what they are used to mean because the majority of the people can realize only the outer parts, parts that they see and touch.

Elsewhere throughout his poetic career, he digs deeper in the concept of the outer and inner perceptions and so seems more philosophical and, to some critics, even ambiguous. The following extract from "Tintern Abbey" is an example in case:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interested,
Whose dwelling is the light of the setting sun,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.
(Ferguson: 766).

The disturbing presence should be the stage of perception that he reached and that causes him the uneasiness which may not have even been thought of by others. It is a matter of unity between his innermost or spiritual being and nature because both share one original source and producer. The feeling of unity with nature could only come from perceiving the beauty and the harmony created by God in nature, as if it aims at directing man to the correct path towards spirituality. For Wordsworth, as Stephen Prickett stresses: "The mind is seen through symbols taken

from nature" (95). The light of the setting sun is the resting place for his soul because he does not interpret it as just a source of natural beauty in the way most of us do; rather it is , along with other natural sceneries remind him of the bright light he long ago perceived within himself. He sees the reflection of his spirit in all things and objects worldwide. This perception, for sure, cannot be touched and seen unless in those men who developed through the three stages that he thinks man should pass on the way towards unity with God.

Conclusions

The tiresome study came out with some concluding points the most obvious ones of which could be listed as follows:

1. A great deal of resemblance can be discerned between the English and Kurdish mystic poems and poets though there are disagreements as well.
2. Both English and Kurdish extracts in the paper stress the love relationship between man and God.
3. Both Kurdish and English sample extracts focus upon God's boundless mercy towards His creatures on top of whom is man, of course.
4. The English and Kurdish mystic poets share the common idea that man's origin is divine since the spirit of God dwells in his innermost.
5. For both English and Kurdish mystic poets, nature and the creatures in it are higher and better than man because they are completely obedient to God's orders; while man is simply rebellious against God and His rules.
6. For most English mystic poets, man is God and God is man because they share the same spirit; while the Kurdish mystics seem more logical and straightforward. They stress that the spirit that dwells within man is divine and so, man is as well divine.
7. While the English mystic poets stress openly the concept of the unitive state; their Kurdish counterparts-though believing in that concept- could not give it a clear mouth in order to avoid Al-Hallaj's destiny.

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