

Dyeing the Soul in Red: Mystical Union in the Poetry of Hussain

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This paper examines the place of Punjabi Sufi poet Shah Hussain as a mystic of Divine love into world literature. Mysticism is the truth found through love the acquisition of which beautifies the soul. This love intelligence is expressed by the signification of red ceremonial colour in the poetry of Punjabi mystic poet Shah Hussain. The dyeing imagery into red colour of love and union runs parallel to self-annihilation in the poetry of Hussain. Love has transformed the poet so deeply that his separate self is submerged in mystical union with Divine Beloved and by demolishing his gender identity he considers himself as bride of God clad in red wedding dress. Hussain dyes his soul in the colour of love to see the universe in broader spectrum through his reflective consciousness. It is pertinent to mention that he describes the world usually in three colours, Red, Black and White; he dyes his soul in red to implement his mystical philosophy in black and white. This paper explores love, mystical union, self-annihilation and self-actualization in the poetry of Hussain through the lens of Gafni's (2011) Love Intelligence and Unique Self enlightenment.

Introduction

It is transcending the world of multiplicity to reach unity.
It ends up in witnessing her beloved
in all forms. There remains no otherness.

(Dr. ShehzadQaiser)

Love is the dominant theme in mystic poetry of all ages and lands irrespective of their linguistic, ideological, and cultural variances. Punjabi Sufi poetry carries a long tradition of Divine Love explicit in mystical metaphors, cultural imagery and folk human persona. In Punjabi Sufi poetry, stretching from Baba Farid to the most recent poets, the love and desire for union with the Divine/God has been described

symbolically and metaphorically using cultural images and folk characterization. Human love relationship -- bride and groom, husband and wife and usually that of folk love characters *Hir* and *Ranjha* -- are employed by Punjabi Sufi poets to express the Divine Love ties between soul and God. Bride, Wife and *Hir* symbolize soul of a man, which is constantly yearning to be reunited with its Divine Beloved (God) who is symbolized by the metaphors of groom, husband or *Ranjha*. Symbolic signifiers in Sufi poetry serve not only as tools for linguistic embellishment but they also connotatively allude to some metaphysical reality which cannot be stated otherwise. Hussain is a mystic of humanity and although he is considered a staunch Muslim scholar, his mystical doctrines are of non-scholastic in nature. Hussain was influenced by Hindu mysticism and he revived the influences of Hindu "Bhakti Movement" into Islamic school of mysticism. This interfaith harmony in the mystical poetry of Hussain speaks to the trans-cultural and pluralistic character of mysticism. He received influences from various traditions of mysticism and blended them into his own Islamic ideology to promote Islam as a religion of humanity that was beyond dogma. His advocacy for the ideology of love, beauty and truth gives his mystic poetry a universal appeal, which can be followed by all human beings regardless of cultural, ethnic, racial and dogmatic traditions. Symbols employed by Shah Hussain in his poetry explicitly define the intricacies of Divine Love with signification of folk social and cultural images. Hussain creates an entire universe of Love with the movement of spinning loom which the poet has '*painted Red*' with the color and texture of Love. The spinning loom in the poetry of Hussain, symbolizes various aspects of human desire, passion and creation. Hussain's Soul Bride is the Damsel in Distress who is parted from her Divine Groom; her spinning loom is the only source of solace for her in the gloomy days and dark nights of separation. Love surges, an ebb and flow, while the Soul Bride weaves her woes and anxieties. Symbols always stand as lofty images of intricate and sublime signified. Love in itself is the metaphysical expression of Divine signified. Love in both the perspectives, terrestrial as well as celestial has to deal with spiritual spectrum; it is not an ordinary passion and it requires highly sophisticated and subtle symbols and images to define it. A symbol is not a mere artificial construction of the mind, rather its seeds are in the soul and spiritual endeavor is needed to cultivate it. In the poetry of Hussain, symbolic patterns play a vital role in constructing,

deconstructing and reconstructing a philosophy of Divine Love. Symbols or signifiers used by Hussain in his love poetry make the transcendent signified quite translucent to the soul of the poet, which is waiting for their Divine Beloved. This transparent vision of love attests it to be a mode of emergent evolution of self because a symbol is not the artificial construction of mind; it needs specifications other than reason to construct and define it. In the words of Henri Corbin (1980):

The symbol is not an artificially constructed sign; it flowers in the soul spontaneously to announce something that cannot be expressed otherwise; it is the unique expression of the thing symbolized as of a reality that thus becomes transparent to the soul, but which in itself transcends all expression. To penetrate the meaning of a symbol is in no sense equivalent to making it superfluous or abolishing it, for it always remains the sole expression of the signified thing with which it symbolizes (p, 30).

Divine Love has been connotatively discussed by describing feelings of earthly lovers. The dominant theme in the poetry of Hussain is love and he describes it as a mode of Unique Self enlightenment through Love Intelligence to submerge in the entity of Divine Beloved. Love, for Hussain is the cause of transformation of his soul which eventually is enlightened by a vision of Divine Beloved.

Hussain is widely acknowledged as a mystic poet who tries to heal the sufferings of common man with love and mystical union. He believes that the union with one's fellow man is the way towards union with God. He loves mankind without any discrimination of color, caste and creed. Hussain considers love as religion and throughout his life he never hesitated from preaching the religion of love in an orthodox society of his time. Hussain merges his self with love, beauty, and truth through mystical union to promote a pluralistic and inclusive religion that demolishes ethnic, dogmatic and linguistic differences between men. Gill (2012) maintains:

It is at this moment of an obvious alienation that Shah Hussain constitutes the universe of hope and happiness of ultimate union with the ultimate Love. In this union, the Actor and the Acted, the Subject and the Object, the Being and the Other, all merge in the absolute unity of the most transcendent truth from where

there is no going beyond. The normal space and time lose their identity and there is perfect union of the lovers (p, 154).

For him, love, beauty and truth are not ordinary human emotions; he associates them with attributive reality of man, universe and God. His yarn dyed in the beautiful scarlet color of love is the essential truth of existence. Hussain considers that the reality of love, beauty and truth is reflective in one another; love enables a person to see beauty and the vision of beauty leads towards the ultimate truth of the universe and God. Gafni (2011) is of the opinion that “Evolutionary love expressed in inter subjective context is not an emotion but a perception” (p, 10). The simultaneous acquisition of these attributive passions, for Hussain, is the reflective emergence of God at the apex of human consciousness. Love, beauty and truth when experienced together, is the vision of God which leads towards mystical union. Mystics believe in love as a cosmic expression of God and His creation. According to mystic worldview, it is the basis for the existence of man and the universe. God created man to be loved by him and created the entire universe as the reflection of His self. The mystics celebrate their union with the creator as the cause of their own existence:

According to the Sufi worldview, God is not a transcendental Reality; being closer than one’s jugular vein, He is *al-Wudūd* (the Loving One), which is one of the ninety-nine attributive Divine names. The all-embracing Sufi notion of cosmic love embraces the entire universe and all the creation, and is the cause behind all causes, which brings out all existence out of nothingness. (Anjam, 2013, p, 1).

Hussain sees the world clad in the colors of beauty and his spinning wheel produces the colorful and strong thread of love that dyes the poet's soul red. After dyeing the soul in the colors of love, Hussain is able to see the white color of truth,

Black Silk can never be dyed white
Who ever heard of a white crow?

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 23)

Hussain's use of Bridal metaphor to show his spiritual yearning for mystical union seems to denote love as some higher property of mental evolution instead of the result of simple man and God intimacy. His depiction of beauty with the symbol of "Spinning Wheel" painted into beautiful red color of love encompasses his spiritual philosophy of coexistence of love, beauty and truth as modes of Love Intelligence and Unique Self enlightenment which prepare him for mystical union. Red color is considered the color of love in Punjabi culture because it is associated with the bridal dress and the color of feminine love. Hussain always used to wear a red dress to assume the status of a "Bride of God" and he became known as "Lal Husain" (Husain the Red) (Krishna, 1938, p, 36). Hussain seems so immersed and clad in the Red color of love that it forms the second prefix of his name "*Lal*" (Red). The first prefix of his name derives from the name of his beloved, the Hindu boy "Madho"; his real name Hussain comes last in his full name. He has preached the religion of love so daringly that today the world knows him by the name of "Madho Lal Hussain" which figuratively connotes that Hussain has dyed his soul red in the love of Madho, a symbol of earthly as well as Divine beloved for him.

My colorful spinning wheel I painted red

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 4)

His love for a Hindu lad Madho is a great example of inclusive nature of mysticism. He follows and preaches the religion of love common for humanity, it is beyond any religious categories. Krishna (1938) commenting on the views of a few orthodox scholars about conversion of Madho to Islam by Hussain, negates any such act by saying:

Both these versions of Madho's conversion are legendary and most probably untrue and of later origin, because how could a Sufi of Husain's type who disregarded traditional precepts convert his beloved friend to Islam? Secondly, since Madho did not change his Hindu name, it is certain that he was not converted to Islam (pp, 37-38).

Like Hindu mystics Hussain draws a portrait of a masculine Divine Beloved for whose union the female soul of the poet weeps and wails in moments of distress.

Literature Review

Taheri and Aghajani (2016) in a research article, *Mystical Experience in Persian Sufism*, point out that mystical union is the core thematic affinity and universality of mysticism found in every mystic school of thought, "In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime or creed" (p. 74). The published PhD thesis of Krishna (1938) *Punjabi Sufi Poets* is considered the first English research on Punjabi mystic poets so far and is significant in the sense that it has paved way for future studies like the present one. The work covers the poets and their poetry from 1460-1900. Krishna (1938), apart from detailed discussion on life and works of Punjabi Sufi poets of subcontinent, has provided a formalistic analysis of Punjabi poetry and introduced a variety of verse forms in Punjabi language. In this work a full chapter entitled "Madho Lal Hussain" has been written on the poetry of Hussain. Krishna (1938) writes about Hindu and Persian influences on Shah Hussain:

Hussain's Sufism was of a peculiar type and presented a curious medley of Persian and Indian Sufism. In his mystic ideas and beliefs, he was more Indian than anything else, but in his daily life he followed the style of the Persian Sufis (p. 106).

Hussain was influenced by Vedantic and Persian traditions of mystic ideology and assimilated those into the Islamic school of mystical thought clearly. Mateen (1999), in his paper, *Metaphysics and Mystic Poetry of the Punjab*, maintains that Islamic mysticism came under the direct influence of Persian school of thought and was later influenced by Hindu mysticism. He writes, "In the later stages Sufism came under the influences of Vedanta and Buddhism. The various cultic practices of Sufis of later centuries of Muslim era show the extent to which they were influenced by Hindu Yogies [sic]" (pp, 65-66). Mateen (1999) goes on to argue that "Shah Hussain was the most creative spokesman who assimilated the influences of Bhakti Movement and Chishtia order. The

humanitarian Sufism of Punjab effectively expressed itself in the poetry of Shah Hussain" (p, 67). Hussain is considered a mystic poet of the masses who tried to cure the pains and pangs of humanity with love, beauty and truth. He strongly believes that fellowship with man is the pathway towards the ultimate union with God. He loves mankind without any discrimination of color, caste and creed. Sheikh (2008) in *Our Legendary Intellectuals* maintains that Hussain demolishes all the cultural, racial, national, linguistic and dogmatic boundaries between mankind to celebrate the true spirit of mysticism. He "wants to bring about a unity between different peoples and nations. His own friendship with Madhu, a Hindu boy is commemorated by the fact that Madhu forms an integral part of his name." (p, 74). Hussain considers love as the true religion; the beauty of the universe and God. Hussain can clearly be stated highly influenced by Persian mystic creed not only in his ideological doctrines but in form and content too. Like Persian mystics, he not only demolished the boundaries of dogmatic ideologies but also clearly refutes gender binaries. Ahmed, Abbas& Khushi (2013) in *Reimagining Female Role in Divine/Sufi Writings* state, "In English literature as well as Pakistani regional literature, there are many spiritual/religious/or Sufi poets who blur the typical male/female boundary and re-centre a gender role of compromised harmony. They use this binary relationship as a strategy to assert" (p,107). Hussain dyes his soul in the red color of love so flawlessly that by demolishing all the binaries of otherness including gender, race, color and creed he preached a universal religion of love and mystical union.

Theoretical Standpoint

Marc Gafni (2011) endorses the awakening of the Unique Self as an emergent in the evolutionary consciousness. In his book *Your Unique Self: The Radical Path to personal enlightenment* (2012) and a paper entitled as *The Evolutionary Emergent of Unique Self* (2011) published in *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* 6(1), he writes in detail about two distinct visions of enlightenment in human evolution: 1) eastern concept of mysticism in form of True self/inner self and 2) the western concept of enlightenment of separate self-propounded by thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke and Rosseau. Both these distinct visions of enlightenment, writes Gafni (2011) are true, but partial. As an alternative, he develops the concept of Unique Self to bridge the eastern and western concepts of

mysticism. He writes, "What do I mean by Unique Self? Unique Self is the personal face of essence, our ultimate nature----it is the unique God-spark or love intelligence that lives in you" (Gafni, 2011, p, 2). Gafni's concept of Unique Self contextualizes union with the Absolute through love intelligence. It is an unflinching love which serves as the current motive for self-enlightenment and God spark as ultimate end. "What is your Unique Self? The Unique Self is the individualized expression of the love intelligence that is the very Eros of evolution and that lives as you" (Gafni, 2012, p, 4). The Unique Self is the enlightened individuality that is attained through mystical union and for which mystical love serves as a mode. "To be a lover is to see with God's eyes, and to love God is to let God see with your eyes" (Gafni, 2011, p,10). Enlightened realization of various human emotions such as love, beauty and truth and using these as emergent modes of mental and spiritual evolution to the extent of mystical union is the thesis statement which the present study is based upon. The present study explores how the enlightened realization of love, beauty and truth serve as emergent modes of mental and spiritual evolution of the poet under study and to what an extent their enlightened self/Unique Self helps them in mystical union.

Love realizes that our small self is not isolated, alienated, and alone—it is a spark in the inferno of love and evolving consciousness that we sometimes call God. It is the force of evolutionary love that drives us to transcend our separate egoic self and move toward union with the whole (Gafni, 2011, p, 10).

Analysis

Mysticism is synonymous with Love. Love is beautiful and beauty is the vision of God; God is unconditional and undaunted truth of this universe. Love, beauty and truth, therefore, can be termed as epithets of God and tenets of mysticism as a universal discipline. Johnston (1997) in, *The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion* argues that mysticism is synonymous to love and knowledge (Truth). Johnston maintains the idea of affinity between love and mysticism leading towards knowledge/truth. "Mysticism is wisdom or knowledge that is found through love; it is loving knowledge" (p, 20). Mysticism is the knowledge of the universe and vision of God acquisition of which is strictly spiritual. As one cannot see God through physical eyes, so an

open eye of spirit is needed to see the vision of God. Mystical experience is an attempt on the part of a mystic to open that spiritual eye through love intelligence. Love, beauty and truth are inter-dependent in the poetry of Hussain. For example, love serves as mode of spiritual yearning for Divine Absolute in the poetry of Hussain but at the same time engendering love for humanity and a quest for Divine truth and beauty which makes love, beauty and truth inextricable in the mystic ideology of Hussain. Hussain mentioned red bridal color in some of his *kafis* (genre of Punjabi poetry) to describe his spiritual marriage with his Divine beloved:

My fine dress dyed red with rare pigments
 No confidant can I find. Where is my husband?
 (trans. Alam, 2016, p, 33).

Hussain sees beauty in the daily chores of rural life of Punjab and in the cultural festive life of its people. *Luddi* (folk dance of Punjab) is the beautiful ritual for Hussain which he performs to solemnize love and which helps him to beautify his soul like a colorful kite in the hands of his Divine beloved. The beauty which Hussain sees in the dance and kite flying serves as mode of mental and spiritual evolution of the poet which prepares his soul for mystical union:

Come let's dance the luddi
 Grab your string and let high your kite
 My string in my lover's hand, I'm his kite.
 (trans. Alam 2016, p, 6)

The dance of love allows Hussain to see the colors of beauty in the kite, flying high to search the eternal truth. He assumes himself to be a kite whose string is in his lover's hand. It is a unique kind of metaphor for mystical union which the poet experiences and expresses with the modes of love (dance), beauty (kite) and truth (string in the hands of lover). Use of metaphorical language in poetry is the tradition of mysticism which Hussain adheres to. The reason behind the use of symbols and metaphors is to simplify the complex metaphysical ideas and to make them more accessible to the common man and less objectionable for the orthodox sections of society. It was the dictum of Muhiyy-al Din Ibn al Arabi that the mystics should impart the "Religion

of Love” metaphorically. Nicholson (1979) quoting Ibn al Arabi writes, “Gnostics cannot impart their feelings to other men; they could only indicate them symbolically to those who have begun to experience the like” (p, 108). Hussain believes that the color of love, beauty and truth can never fade:

Black Silk can never be dyed white

(trans. Alam,2016, p, 23)

Shah Hussain’s concept of beauty is spiritual not physical. He seems to be in love with the sight of unseen Beauty for which the open eye of the spirit is required. There hardly can be located any concrete images in the poetry of Hussain to describe beauty except the “colorful spinning wheel” whom the poet has “painted red” in the color of Divine Love. Hussain’s idea of beauty is interwoven in Love and Truth using the spinning wheel as a metaphor of spirituality, of creativity and of the celestial universe. The interconnectedness of beauty with truth and love in the metaphysics of Shah Hussain has immortalized beauty, which is an otherwise ever-changing phenomenon. Hussain, like other mystics adheres to the concept of a plausible linkage between love and beauty; for him every single object which reflects love is beautiful. Beauty for Hussain is not the skin deep; it is soul dwelling and enlivens the entire existence of its occupant. Beauty enlightens the soul and prepares it for mystical union. According to Hussain, beauty lies in the skillful spinning and weaving because it trains the Soul Bride to get enough skill to please her Divine Groom. Therefore, Hussain symbolizes beauty with colorful spinning wheel. The young maiden lover weaving on spinning loom while waiting for her Divine Beloved is a paragon of beauty for Hussain not because the maiden as a physical object is beautiful but because her soul has been beautified with Love by the Divine Beloved she is spiritually wedded with.

Unique Self enlightenment develops “Love intelligence” and causes enlightened spirituality as a result connecting the theoretical assumptions of Gafni (2011& 2012) with doctrines of love and mystical union. According to Hussain, God is synonymous to love; Hussain’s longing for love, beauty and truth as modes of spiritual enlightenment by merging his small self/separate self into divinity helps thereafter his union with the Absolute/Mystical union and Unique Self enlightenment. Mystical Union is the spiritual yearning of Hussain for which he uses

Bridal metaphor considering himself Hir, a feminine lover wailing and weeping to be united with Ranjha, her masculine Beloved (God). She is so immersed in love that she has left aside her own separate identity as person to attain the level of mystical union:

I cried out my lover's name so often
 I turned into Ranjha myself
 Call me Ranjha, no one call me Hir
 The beloved I was looking for, the beloved I found
 (trans. Alam, 2016, p, 136).

This unified experience of immersion in love and beauty transforms the poet spiritually to see the vision of truth, which is the core essence of the entire universe for Hussain. For Hussain every single object which arouses the feelings of love and beauty in his heart and soul is truthful. Heidegger (2001) considering truth as the essence of art says, "Thus art is the creative preserving of truth in the work. Art then is the becoming and happening of truth" (p, 96). Schuon (2013, [1982]) writes about Beauty, "...if the intelligence directly has need for rigor, it also indirectly has need of beauty" (p, 48). Beauty and truth are inseparable in the poetic philosophy of Hussain and love is the essence of these. Without Love every existence is an illusion says Hussain, which cannot be trusted:

Dear Lal! How can this life be trusted?
 The bee becomes a stranger to the flower,
 flies off into the unknown
 This world a lie, this existence an illusion,
 Like a dewdrop mistaken for a pearl
 Those who took care of my lover
 need not fear death. Says Hussain, the Sain's fakir
 don't you worry about the body, a disposable vessel.
 (trans. Alam, 2016, p, 25)

Being in love, Hussain comes to realize his true existence as the "Bride of God", the "Lowly Fakir" (worthless seeker of God), and the "wanderer lover" wailing and searching for the Divine beloved. He sees beauty in dust and truth in that beauty; he is of the opinion that if a person frees oneself of all the worldly prides and honors, only then the

status of spiritual majesty can be attained. Hussain's philosophy of truth rests on man's quest for Divine with an interaction of his self with "Love intelligence." The true knowledge, according to Hussain is Divine knowledge the sole source of which is love. Love inspires man's intellect and soul to participate in Divine activity by considering his self a part of Divinity itself. Truth is acquired only after the soul is reunited with Divine beloved/ God. The highest point of mental evolution of man is the union of the soul with God, which Hussain mentions in his poetry with the help of different metaphors, e.g., bridal and weaving and stitching:

The needle of wisdom, the thread
of love stitches together, true friends
Says Hussein, the Sain's fakir,
thrones aren't granted upon asking.

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 71)

Hussain vocalizes the pains and pangs of suffering humanity with the truth that man must love humanity irrespective of any discrimination of caste, color and creed. He voices this humanistic aspect of love against the atrocities of ruling class towards the masses quite truthfully. This aspect of Hussain's poetry makes it inclusive in nature with inter-cultural and interfaith harmony transcending ethno-centric limitations to celebrate the true spirit of universalistic claims of mystical poetry. Hussain affirms that truth is one and eternal which cannot be sought without the help of wisdom and love. Hussain suggests that wisdom (intellect) is the needle which requires the thread of love to stitch together both lover and beloved, man and God. Intellect in the form of truth or *Logos* (logic/reason) since inception of human knowledge and philosophy has been considered a Divine attribute. Nasr (1989) in *Knowledge and the Sacred*, says, "The intellect itself is divine and only human to the extent that man participates in it" (p, 147). Truth is the apex of intellect which is Divine in itself and man aspires for truth by participating in Divine activity; by involving his mental faculties in various modes of spiritual evolution such as love, beauty and truth to acquire the universality of self where truth is transcendent and love begets the status of "Oneness of Being" or Mystical Union:

The lover's entire striving is for the One God as the beloved in whose hands he finally realizes union. It is this unity which paves the way of realizing universality. It is the love of God that manifests in Love of His creation. Hir's seeking of 'The Indivisible One and Only' in the form of Ranjha becomes more profound during her quest for him. She transcends her world of adversaries to seek her beloved. (Qaiser, 2018, p, 100).

Hussain in his poetry frequently refers to the folk characters of Hir and Ranjha metaphorically to describe his mystical doctrine of Oneness of Being. For him Hir is the soul of lover/man yearning to be reunited with his Divine beloved Ranjha. Mystical union is the highest form of evolution of self where all the racial, cultural and religious barriers among mankind demolish and man realizes his oneness with God and His creation. Hussain reaches the point of oneness of being through the comprehension of love, beauty and truth and ultimately affirms his self to be one in essence with man and God. In various *kafis*, the poet proclaims that his Beloved has dyed his soul in the color of Love. The process of dyeing the soul in love traces the fundamental role of beauty as mode of emergence in mysticism. For Hussain the errand of love is the journey of soul to the abode of the beloved *Ranjha* where the lover will have to transcend the stream of worldly existence which hampers the spiritual errand of love. Hussain sheds away his otherness to attain the level of Oneness of Being. For him his Divine beloved *Ranjha* is the healer of all his pains and pangs, anguish and sufferings:

Ranjha, my lover, known as a healer
My body suffers strange aches

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 77).

The mystic poetry of Hussain celebrates the transcendent value of love, beauty and truth to prove these as modes of Unique Self enlightenment and Love Intelligence in the spiritual errand of mystical union. Qaiser (2018) commenting on the value of love, beauty and truth further clarifies the fundamental standpoint of the present study though he traces love, beauty and truth in the poetry of another Punjabi Sufi poet Khawaja Ghulam Farid yet the overall estimate of these modes is worth mentioning to strengthen the stance of present research:

The relative distinction between truth and falsehood, beauty and ugliness, love and hate, good and evil, freedom and bondage, light and darkness, knowledge and ignorance have to be transcended by constantly keeping Truth itself, Beauty itself, Love itself, Good itself, Freedom itself, Light itself and Knowledge itself in mind as the case may be. We have to treat everyone in reference to metaphysical transcendence and universality (p.102).

Hussain treats love, beauty and truth in his poetry with reference to metaphysical transcendence. For Hussain, love, beauty and truth serve as the modes of love intelligence for the enlightened self, which in turn, causes the lover and Beloved to be united in Oneness of Being; a state of mystical union where the soul of the man is reunited with God and no otherness of identity is maintained. The path of love for Hussain is the spiritual errand of soul to seek the abode of God. During this spiritual errand, the soul of the poet is completely transformed for mystical union with the Divine Beloved. Love as a mode of Unique Self enlightenment not only enlightens but submerges, immerses and transforms the poet completely in the hues of spirituality. The soul of Hussain is dyed so flawlessly in the colors of Divine Love that even the gender identity is demolished and the poet considers himself the Soul Bride of the Divine Groom. This unique transformation is marked by considering love as a mode of enlightened spirituality and giving it a status of Divine attribute rather than that of an ordinary human passion. The love which can transform the soul of the poet to the extent of obliviousness of gender identity cannot be considered as an earthly emotion and it cannot be explained by any simple, material and mechanical activity of brain as thus. Hasker (1999) commenting on this emergent property of brain as a result of the Unique Self enlightenment explains it further by saying:

....[w]hat is needed is an emergent individual, a new individual entity which comes into existence as a result of a certain functional configuration of the material constituents of the brain and nervous system. Endowed, as we take it to be, with liberation freedom, this individual is able, in Searle's words, to "cause things that could not be explained by the causal behavior of the neurons (p, 190).

Love emancipates Hussain's vision from the bondage of physical existence "with liberation freedom" and only the realization of soul is

left behind with the poet; the soul is alive to be illuminated and embraced by the lover whom Hussain often gives the epithet of Sain:

The lover embraces, all gets illuminated,
the moment of gratitude. Says Hussein,
if you seek life, die while still alive.

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 100)

Hussain uses color imagery and cultural symbolism to define the transforming and submerging status of love. The imagery of the spinning loom, colorful wedding dress, needle and thread, stitching and weaving act as signifiers of Divine Love for the transcendent signified, i.e., God. Hussain simultaneously unfolds the anguish of separation and the bliss of union in his love poetry. He takes up his images and metaphors from the cultural festivities and rural life of Punjab to address his Indian audience. He is the poet of masses. Hussain is considered, "by far the most articulate poet of separation and union" (Gill, 2012, p, 157). Hussain uses color imagery to denote complete immersion of the soul into the transcendental union with the Divine Beloved. Red color in the cultural imagery of Punjab is the color of union as it symbolizes the red wedding dress which the Soul Bride of the poet will be wearing when she is wedded with her Divine Groom.

He calls himself one, he calls himself
many. He's a multicolored Master
Says Hussein, she is the real bride
who dyes herself in the lover's colors

(trans. Alam, 2016:58).

In another *kafi*, the condition of the poet is evident thus:

He may dye my life
into any color he likes

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 66).

Hussain uses various correlative adjectives in his poetry to exhibit his spiritual transformation as a mystic poet through love. Divine Love has enchanted and captivated the heart and soul of the poet so deeply that he feels pride to be enslaved by the Divine master. Hussain uses

various epithets for the Divine Beloved in his poetry such as Sain (master), Ranjha(lover), Shahu (groom) and Khasam (husband). All these patriarchal signifiers in the poetry of Hussain have been used positively to express the supremacy of Love which serves as mode of spiritual evolution to the extent of enlightened spirituality. The enlightenment of Love is so powerful that for Hussain, it dyes the eyes of the beholder in "Red" festive color of union:

Says Hussein, the lowly fakir,
The Sain dyes my eyes red
(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 93).

Hussain is transformed so deeply by Love that his singular identity is lost and faded away. He is no more Hussain; he is a lowly fakir, a dervish wanderer to seek like crazy the love and union of his Divine Beloved. He considers himself betrothed to the Divine Beloved like a bride who wishes to be united with his would be groom one day or the other. The self-identity of the poet matters no more. All that matters is the intended wedlock between the poet and his Divine Beloved:

Does it matter if I'm good or bad?
All that matters: I'm your woman, Master
Foolish folk call me crazy. I'm dyed
in my Master's colors
My lover has settled in my eyes
I roam the alleys, intoxicated
Says Hussein, the Sain's fakir, I am
betrothed to the most beautiful beau
(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 63).

The path of love is not straight; it is not so easy to travel this path unless the self of the lover is submerged into the Self of the Beloved. Only then the state of "Oneness of Being" can be attained. In the state of mystical union the subject and the object get one and form the status of an organic whole:

We acknowledge God as above and beyond. But unless we also intuitively enjoy His Activity within us, feeling that we are in a measure one with Him in Substance, we can have no immediate

knowledge of Causality or of God as the Source of our own existence and of emergent evolution (Morgan, 1927, p, 301).

This is the ultimate quest of the seeker and the best possible evolution of the soul which can be attained only when Love serves as mode of enlightenment in the evolutionary process of mind and soul. The path of love has been symbolized by Hussain with the image of a “needle’s eye” which is difficult to pass through unless love has changed the existent identity of the lover and transformed him into a sleek “thread” by brushing aside all the extravagant dispositions of worldly and corporeal existence:

If you were a lover, you’d earn love
The path of love is a needle’s eye
Be a thread, go through

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 15).

The beauty of spinning wheel is eternal because it immortalizes love. It adorns the Soul Bride for the intended mystical marriage:

In Sufism, the centrality of a Sufi Shaykh to one who traverses the path of Sufism cannot be overstated. For spiritual development, it is considered necessary to have complete faith in, and devotion and obedience to, one’s guide. Here one may recall a statement of Bābā Farīd (the mentor of Shaykh Nizām al-Dīn) in *Fawā'id al-Fuād* [Persian: *Morals for the Heart*], wherein he likens a Sufi Shaykh or a master to a mashshāṭa, the hairdresser of brides, who adorns and prepares them before their final meeting with the bridegroom. To Bābā Farīd, it is the Sufi master who cleanses, embellishes and beautifies the human soul, and so prepares it for its possible union with the Divine (Anjam, 2013, p, 14).

The spiritual master has a significant status in Sufism but in the case of Hussain there is a reversal of this doctrine; Hussain has found the path towards union with God by uniting his soul with his disciple Madho Lal instead his spiritual master Behlol Dariyai. So, it can be stated that it is the union of love with a person in whom God is reflective to the soul of the Sufi irrespective of his being a spiritual mentor or not.

The pathway to the mystical union lies in love not in some person. Love, therefore, serves as “mashshāṭa”, the hairdresser of brides, who adorns and prepares them before their final meeting with the bridegroom” instead of a “Sufi Shaykh or a master”. Even Hussain’s spinning wheel symbolizing love serves to adorn the soul of the poet and trains it to be united with God.

Conclusion

Divine love has so enmeshed Hussain that he leaves aside his pride and honor and prefers to be the worthless servant and slave of his true Master (Divine Beloved). He forgets his gender identity, his worldly fame and fortune and is entangled in love. Love has enlightened the soul of the poet to the extent that he can see the transcendental reality of the universe, man and God. By self-annihilating, Hussain gets self-enlightened. Self-enlightenment by self-annihilation is the dialectical doctrine of mysticism which is shared by mystics of all linguistic and cultural traditions. The poetic philosophy of all the mystic poets like Baba Farid, Guru Nanak, Bulleh Shah, Bhagat Kabir, Shah Hussain, Ameer Khusrau, Rumi, Shams Tabraiz only a few to mention from a long list of mystics of all ages has revolved around the doctrine of self-effacement through Divine Love in order to be united with God. The status of the poet reprobate is earned by Hussain with this overwhelming power of Love to transform him into a “Lowly Fakir” and “Dust of the feet of the Beloved,” but inherently the poet is illuminated with the Divine vision to the extent that no one else is recognized by him; he has forgotten all ties of worldly relationship and is tied in an eternal union with God. He knows no one except his Divine master whose slave he considers himself and for whom he is ready to sacrifice all his honor and esteem, pride and fame, existence and identity. This is the Unique Self enlightenment through love intelligence which transforms, annihilates and eventually illuminates the soul of the poet to be able to reach the state of mystical union. Weaving and spinning symbolizes good deeds a person does in this world before death takes him back to his Master. Hussain says only the skillful bride can entice her Divine groom. Hussain’s philosophy of Love is constructive; it makes the maiden skillful to be able to get love of her Beloved. Spinning loom or spinning wheel as a metaphor in the poetry of Hussain serves as constructive signifier of Divine Love; it trains the soul to get united with

God. Love as a symbol of weaving and spinning of cloth signifies the soul getting dressed in preparation for mystical union. Love serves as a tool for Unique Self enlightenment to get it ready to be united with God:

The spinning wheel is one of the most powerful literary signifiers employed by Shah Hussain. The vivid and frequent descriptions of the spinning wheel in Punjabi poetry act as frozen images of a bygone era. At the same time, the spinning wheel signifies the wheel of creation, of steady preparation for the ultimate union with God. Through the spins of the wheel are created the threads of unity of the universe. The spinning wheel or for that matter other signifiers are then no more mere anthropological units, they are transformed into the Sufi pantheistic discourse (Gill, 2012: 156).

For Hussain blessed are those who spin and weave to spend the time of separation from their beloved groom. The spinning symbolizes the entire life of a man; the spinning loom is the signifier of human creation, which goes round and round and the soul gets higher and higher with every round of the spinning loom:

Go round and round, O Handloom
 May she live the one who spins you
 May she live, the one who spools you

(trans. Alam, 2016, p, 47).

This is the enlightened spirituality which Gafni (2012) termed as "Love intelligence". By spinning and weaving love in the soul, the poet removes worldly hurdles and obstacles in the way of mystical union:

It is the carnal or bestial self, and its predilection for worldly engagements, that obstruct a union of the two. Those travelling the path of Sufism learn to overcome the hurdles and to tame the bestial self within. They are the ones who achieve the ultimate goal of union as once cleaned, their own self (which later becomes Self), achieves harmony with the Divine Self. (Anjam, 2013, pp, 4-5).

To conclude the discussion on Hussain's metaphysics of Love, it can be assumed that his philosophy of Love involved mystical inclinations. The mystical union can be referred to in the poetry of Hussain with complete immersion of the soul of the poet in Divine Beloved for which he uses various metaphoric persona and symbolical patterns by demolishing the barriers of gender identity, dogmatic variances and racial and ethnic divergences. Love has played so vital a role in the spiritual enlightenment of Hussain that the difference of "Thou and I" cease to exist. "It is the force of evolutionary love that drives us to transcend our separate egoic self and move toward union with the whole" (Gafni, 2011, p, 10). The Soul Bride of Hussain has eventually found her Divine Groom for which Love serves as a mode of Unique Self enlightenment:

I found, I found, I found my beloved
 He's settled in heaven, earth, water, air
 Each thing encompassed, he said, I was the hidden treasure
 Says Hussein, this the incantation taught by Shah Jalal
 (trans. Alam, 2016, p, 152).

Hussain's idea of beauty is not only terrestrial, it also involves a spiritual component. Beauty for him is the vision of God which can be seen only through love. The vision of beauty which is associated with Divine being cannot be taken as an ordinary phenomenon; it serves as the mode of self-enlightenment towards the mystical union. Beauty enlightens the soul and prepares it to get one with the Absolute:

It is the force of evolutionary love that drives us to transcend our separate egoic self and move toward union with the whole. In this sense, to love another human being is to perceive their true infinite and radiant nature as part of the whole. It is to perceive the infinite specialness and divine beauty of the beloved—the beloved being both our personal lover and all that it (Gafni, 2011: 10).

Only the beautified version of soul, according to Hussain is skilled and trained enough to handle the Divine Love. Beauty acts like a veil between the real and the surreal, the physical and the metaphysical, man

and God and when the veil is lifted the soul exists in complete harmony with the divine.

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