

## Survey on the Nostalgia for “Return to Origin” in Mystical Poetry (Sanaei, Attar and Mowlavi=Rumi)

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**Abstract:** Nostalgia in literature is a style of composition that a poet or a writer represents his memories in painful and regretful way. The nostalgic concepts are seen in many mystical poems but return to origin is the central element of nostalgia that forms the theme of the Persian mystical poetry. According to the mystics, human soul is imprisoned in this world and tries to return to its origin. Sanaei, Attar and Mowlavi are the eminent representatives of the mystical poetry that they have considered nostalgic feelings like love, the past memories, eternal life, pain of exile of human eternal beloved and origin, personal, childhood, social, racial and national and mythical nostalgia and objective hometown in their works. This article tries to investigate the nostalgia of return to origin in the poems of these poets. [Ali Dehghan, Hamidreza Farzi, Rostam Amani Astamal. **Survey on the Nostalgia for “Return to Origin” in Mystical Poetry (Sanaei, Attar and Mowlavi=Rumi)**. *Life Sci J* 2013; 10(1s):-] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 65

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### 1. Introduction

The word “Nostalgia” roots in two Greek words: *nosto* and *nost* which means hometown and coming back home and *aglia*, *aglos* or *log* which means suffering, desires and regrets. Based on this fact, the unbearable desire of going back hometown can be the first and initial meaning of nostalgia (Nafisi, 1992: Nostalgia part). The most common meaning of this term is “the excess longing for going back to the lost period and situation (Anvari, 2002: Nostalgia part), homesick and regret of the past” (Pourafkari, 1997: Nostalgia part). Nostalgia roots in psychology and then it is used in literature. In literature, it is called as a style of writing based on that the poet or the author painfully and regretfully pictures the past or a place as a memory (Anousheh, 1997: 1396). This regret can be about hometown, childhood, desirable political, religious and economical situation in the past and severe longing to return to the past (Ashuri, 2002: 246).

Return to origin is the central nostalgia that forms the theme of the Persian mystical poetry. According to the mystics, the human soul is imprisoned in this world and it tries to return to its real source. “Soul is eager to return to its origin; since human soul has met the beloved in the promise day and then it has suffered separation and it is imprisoned in the earthly life; but when it meets the beloved remembers that secret heard in the promise day and it returns to its eternal home” (Shamil, 2003:49). Sanaei, Attar and Mowlavi are eminent representatives of the mystical poetry that considered nostalgic feelings like love, eternal life, and pain of exile of human

eternal beloved and origin, personal, childhood, social, racial and national, mythical nostalgia and objective hometown in their works (Dehghan et al 2012). This article tries to investigate the nostalgia of return to origin in the poems of these poets.

Hakim Abou Hamed Majdod ben Adam Sanaei Ghaznavi is the poet and mystic of thirteen century. He was dissatisfied with praising Ghaznavid kings and he begun to make change in his life by eighteen years continuous journey from Ghazneh to Balkh and then Mecca, Sarakhs and finally he returned to his hometown that indicate his seeking perfection attitude” (Kakarash, 2009:4). Sanaei is the first great poet that entered mysticism into Persian poetry and his primary mysticism was perfected in poems of Attar, Mowlavi and Hafez masterpieces. Faridedin Abou Hamed Mohammad ben Abou Bakr ben Eshag Attar Kadkani Neishabouri was born in 1146 in Kadkan of Neishabour. After death of his father he continued his father occupation as a druggist. According to a legend he was changed and spent most of his life in journey as a common conduct of the mystics. He composed many poems. His poems are studied in this article. Mowlana Jalaledin Mohammad Balkhi Rumi was born in 1207 in Balkh. He migrated by his family to minor Asia (Turkey) and changed feeling of separation from his hometown (Khorasan) into nostalgia of separation of human soul from the eternal source. Love and eagerness to return to the eternal beloved are reflected in his poems in nostalgia of separation of “Shams”.

### 2. Theme and voice of return nostalgic feeling

Pain of separation of home is significant in Molana poetry .He says:

Before that there were garden, wine and grapes in this world  
We were drunken by eternal wine  
We were beating drum of spirituality  
Before creation of human  
We were pleasing in tavern of reality  
(Mowlavi, 1999:266)

He talks about the heavenly voice that calls soul to the origin where it was there for a while; and this period cannot be measured by worldly days and months (Mowlavi, 1999:901).

My soul, why do you tarry so long in the land of exile? Return From this exile; how long will you be dispersed?

I sent a hundred letters, I signaled a hundred ways; either You do not know the way or you do not read the letter.

If you do not read the letter, the letter itself reads you; and

If you do not know the way,

You are in the grip of Him who knows the way.

Return, for in this prison no one knows your worth; sit not

With the stonyhearted, for you are gems of this mine.

(Mowlavi, 1999:938)

The herald of the return does not consider the ignorance of separation feeling and forgetting of the source as the condition of loyalty. He talks about the intermediates that raise the soul to the heaven; but if the world and the cunning passion allow it: "It was called, the invitation was accepted, if it is called again I will reply, wandering is sweet for human since human has been fascinated by the world" (Mowlavi, 1999:9). Every moment the messenger calls soul for his origin and the soul asks about that origin" (ibid: 10).

In Mowlavi ghazals, God is the inviter that calls the human and he replies his invitation, the creator that he is the remedy of the created body (Mowlavi, 1999:77)

The owner of the voice knows him as a nightingale not as an owl that he must live in the orchard not in the ruined place (ibid: 19). Sanaei believes that true love is rooted in human soul and connects him to pre- creation time and this love is eternal for drunken human:

Before creation of human

The lovers were drunken by this love

(Sanaei, 2001:223)

This unexplainable feeling of love calls the inner feeling to hearing the voice of God:

My inner feeling ear become deaf if I do not hear

The voice of inviter to the origin

(ibid: 533) Everybody feels separation and strangeness by possessing of this love and hearing such voices in the temporary world. The great humans are stranger in this world like the prophet:

You are living worried in this strange world

In order to reveal calling of the creator

(ibid: 34)

In Attar opinion not only human being but also all creatures are originated from one source and all of them are eager to reach their target. Such ideology considers whole universe from one perspective:

Everything seeks its origin

And all creatures are in travel due their desire

Since whole world has one origin

It deserves to see whole world from one observer viewpoint (Attar, 1996:677).

According to Mowlana, we are particulars of whole and we are roses and basils of garden and we could not convince to being among teal (Mowlavi, 1999:16).

The secret of regret felt in this world is this separation:

If you search the whole world

I do not know anything most regretful except separation

(Attar, 1996:846)

The sensual soul is busy in this world; but the separated soul that has other essence seeks eternity, so whole essence of human being does not belong to holy origin. The feeling of exalted attraction is a good tiding that holds human hopeful to his destination:

We are from superior and rise to superior

We are from sea and go to the sea

We are from other world and go there

The proclaiming of return

Calls where we are going

Our star has not to be in motion around moon

Otherwise we go beyond

(Mowlavi, 1999:604)

Mowlana's heavenly beloved has face and lip like earthly beloved with characteristics that introduce her as the preferred beloved. The manner of Mowlana demand in these couplets indicates his memories: he wishes the shining face that he has seen her mostly:

Show your face, for the orchard and rose garden are my desire;

Open your lips, for abundant sugar is my desire.

Sun of beauty, come forth one moment out of the cloud, for

That glittering, glowing countenance is my desire

(Mowlavi, 1999:161).

### 3. Allegories indicating nostalgia

In literary terms allegory is a narrative in which there is second meaning beyond its lexical meaning. "Allegory in literary terms is a narrative that the agent and action and sometimes the setting are contrived not only to make senses

but also to signify a second action or agent and it is called the spirit of allegory" (Fotuhi, 2006:158).

The mystics have used different allegories for depicting separation of human from his origin, but following allegories have been considered by Attar and Mowlavi:

### 3.1. *Sun, particle and shadow*

Our separation from "sun" is not surprising, although we suffer painful journey (Attar, 1996:192). Shadow depends on sun.

I was a shadow fell down despised on the earth

I was disappeared when sun rose

(ibid: 407)

Molana remembers his beloved by seeing sun:

When you see sun remember the beloved face

When you see cloud remember the tears of the lover

(Mowlavi, 1999:706)

### 3.2. *Falcon and sultan*

Attar points to being temporary of this world. He considers human as a falcon that it should fly to sky in order to reach exalted position and if it is satisfied to a bone it is better to remain in stove of bath of this world.

Fly if you are an exalted falcon wanting to reach to Gabriel

Otherwise sit down in stove of bath and eat bone

(Attar, 1996:22)

According to Molana, the soul is a sultan falcon and it could not ignore invitation of sultan (Mowlavi, 1999:13) since the soil of human being is combined with heavenly intoxicating drink; so it is not wondering his every particle desires eternity in drunken way (ibid: 73). In Masnavi, this falcon is far from king and loses his way and falls on owls ruined house:

Pure, goodly soul, how long will you journey on? You are

The King's falcon; fly back toward the Emperor's whistle

(Mowlavi, 1987, book 2: 308)

The allegory of falcon and king is the narrative of separation of the noble soul that thinks about return from separation moment. The sadness of the falcon and its tears in memory of the king kindness are repeated in other story. The falcon that could not accept the kindness of the old woman cries for memory of the king:

The falcon remembers the king kindness

And cries for separation from home

(Mowlavi, 1987, book 4:434)

### 3.3. *Phoenix and affinity*

The human being is like phoenix is trapped in the world cage and he is perfected by affinity with God:

I am not in rest without you in this world

I am like a phoenix with affinity for you

And I could not bear the cage

(Attar: 1996:530)

The phoenix that was the secret of God in Attar poetry it is personified as human that it is separated from affinity that tries to return. It seems that the reason for such changes considering smallness of symbol of phoenix for God in one hand and considering great the soul of human in other hand.

Go forth into the desert, that same desert where you were;

You have wandered long enough in these ruins.

There is a tavern in your neighborhood, from the scent of its

Wine you have become intoxicated;

Seize this scent and go to the tavern, for you have become

Nimble-paced as that scent

Go to the mountain of Qaaf like the Simurgh;

Why have you are in mourning.

(Mowlavi, 1999:344)

### 3.4. *Candle and butterfly*

Do not ask me anything since I am like a butterfly

Became fearless in brightness of the candle of the friend face

(Attar, 1996:407)

### 3.5. *Sea and dew, pearl and fish*

I was lost in myself and I did not where I found myself

I was dew from sea and I was drowned in the sea

(ibid: 407)

If one day you become alone like us

Return to the sea you are the pearl of the sea

(ibid: 695)

The human far from his origin is like an alone fish. If a fish falls on the land from sea it tries to return to the sea.

O, heart why you are far from the sea

Is there anybody far from this sea?

Everybody who is far from his origin

Tries to return to the sea

(ibid: 271)

We are from the divine sea; how we could be alive far from it?

If we are far why our heart beats for its desire? Is this separation different from others? A separation accompanied by union?

Mankind, like waterfowl, are sprung from the sea of the

Soul; how should the bird that has risen from that sea make its Dwelling here?

Nay rather, we are pearls in that sea, we are all present therein;

Else, why does wave upon wave surge from the sea of the heart?

The wave of Alast(The first day) came along and caulked the body's ship;

When the ship is wrecked once more, the turn of union and  
Encounter will come.

(Mowlavi, 1999:171)

### 3.6. *Joseph and Jacob of Egypt*

If the breeze of Joseph is blown  
The blind becomes clear sighted

(Attar, 1996:272)

The God considers us "holy Joseph" and our land "Egypt", so  
it is not deserved to content with being in darkness of the  
world well:

You are holy Joseph and your land is Egypt

Try to leave world well

(ibid: 719)

### 3.7. *Flute and reed bed*

The sad voice of flute is narrative of separation of the human  
being and complains about banishment from home. He who  
abides far away from his home, he shall return. If he knows  
the sadness of separation and become interested he is like  
Mowlana, otherwise he desires to return even though he is not  
aware.

HEARKEN to the reed-flute, how it complains,

Lamenting its banishment from its home:

"Ever since they tore me from my osier bed,

My plaintive notes have moved men and women to tears.

He who abides far away from his home

Is ever longing for the day he shall return.

My wailing is heard in every throng,

In concert with them that rejoice and them that weep

(Mowlavi, 1987, book1:3)

### 3.8. *The parrot and the merchant*

This story tells the banishment of human from his home and  
imprisonment in the world cage and beautiful body that the  
aware soul is dissatisfied by this imprisonment. In this  
allegory the parrot is the secret of soul and cage is the symbol  
of the body. Death of body is primary step toward other life:

The story of the parrot of soul is such that

It was told the life of the lovers is in death

You could not reach to your beloved in the cage

The body is cage for you

(Mowlavi, 1987, book 1:97)

### 3.9. *The lawyer and the prince of Bokhara*

The lawyer of Sadr Johan ran away from Bokhara due to  
accusation of treachery. After ten years he wanted to return  
because of desire to see his hometown, since killing by Sadr  
(the king) is better than being alive in other place and he  
deiced to return.

A damsel said to her lover, "O fond youth,

You have visited many cities in your travels;

Which of those cities seems most delightful to you?"

He made answer, "The city wherein my love dwells.

In whatever nook my queen alights,

Though it be as the eye of a needle, 'tis a wide plain;

Wherever her Yusuf-like face shines as a moon,

Though it is the bottom of a well, 'tis Paradise

(Mowlavi, 1987, book 3:316)

### 3.10. *Duck and the domestic fowl*

Mowlana considers human as a duck although the domestic  
fowl, the world, is its nurse but it should not forget its mother.

"Attitude toward sea" is sign of this valuable belonging to  
holy home. It is necessary to leave the bad nurse and enter to  
the sea called "meaning world":

Although a domestic fowl may have taken thee,

Who are a duckling, under her wing and nurtured thee,

Thy mother was a duck of that ocean.

Thy nurse was earthy, and her wing dry land.

Leave thy nurse on the dry land and push on,

Enter the ocean of real being, like the ducks!

O boy, we are all of us waterfowl,

The sea knows full well our language

(Mowlavi, 1987, book 2:459)

## 4. **Nostalgic seeking of the destination and way to reaching to home**

"When human becomes complete he feels God by his heart  
and he is happy by this meeting. This affinity gradually raises  
him to a noble and exalted person and his traits become the  
same as God traits and before leaving this world meets divine  
and achieves God traits since his personality becomes the  
superior being "(Salim,1982:7).

"There is a voice that relieves every fatigue body and guides  
bird to fly. Mountains and creatures are dynamic due to this  
voice. The cut birds by Ibrahim fly to their parts of their body"  
(Attar, 1996:890).There is a sign of the beloved in every  
pleasing creature .The flower that is from other world is  
memorial of Hazrat Mohammad and yellow leaf as a sign of  
fall indicates separation of the eternal beloved:

What causes to intoxication smells the beloved

What distracted by the heart is sign of my beloved

(Mowlavi, 1999:706)

Human being has a heart and hears the song of love from left  
to right. The voice calls the soul and remembers him that  
although the tangible world is his body home but it is not  
home of his soul. He should return and observe the reality.

Every moment the voice of Love is arriving from left and right; We are departing for the skies—who has a mind for sightseeing?

We were once in heaven, we were friends of the angels; let us All return thither, for that is our city.

We are even higher than the heavens, we are greater than Angels; why should we not transcend both? Our lodging-place is Majesty.

How far is the world of dust from the pure substance! Upon What have you alighted? Load up—what place is this?

Young luck is our friend, to yield up the soul is our business  
Young luck is our friend; to yield up the soul is our business;  
The leader of our caravan is Mustafa, pride of the World.

(ibid: 463)

The soul deserves to return to his God. The soul that his owner is kind, spiritual, good natured and benevolence and observes and comprehends metaphysical world”(Pournamdariyan, 2004:59).The human should pass examinations in order to achieve that spiritual essence after physical displeasure; Molana believes that as the black soil devours God kindness and beauties and does not return except threatening ,kindness and violence of the fate our physic preserves the spiritual gift in its material darkness and God gives pain and sorrow ,fear and defects and examines us by these threats and kindnesses and force our soul to show that stolen divine essence that it is hidden in physical displeasures”(Zarrin kop,2005:382).

Attar believes that only God deserves such competence. God calls promising return voice in our ears:

You are left our home

Seek our home

(Attar, 1996:426)

Human should aware that the beloved is waiting him:

O, you ignorant know that the beloved is waiting for you  
Alas, you are not aware from banishment from home

(ibid: 759)

Imprisonment in the shore prison does not allow returning and achieving the pearl; so it is necessary to get in trouble to deserve to solve the problems:

How a falcon knows in the depth of sea

There is somebody in the shore

If it return to the depth

It will see pearl there

If it is imprisoned in the shore

It will be in trouble

There are many problems

In the confrontation of the shore

(ibid: 51)

Attar believes that falcon should gain new existence and return to the king's falcon and be royal falcon:

O falcon when you gained new existence

Return to the king as royal falcon

You have new feather to fly

Return to home

(ibid: 419)

The poet considers becoming loyal falcon as leaving self and its sadness and seeking king accompaniment and dissatisfaction with world meadow.

If you are heavenly creature

Leave passion and sadness

What do you do in the meadow?

You are particular of king

Seek accompaniment of king and do not want anything

(ibid: 279)

The remedy of our pain is leaving fascinating world. We were far away from home and we should return:

Last night I was sad about the spirituality and blasphemy

Suddenly I heard a voice in my inner

O, wanderer lover for some how your are attracted by fascination

Other day when you become alone

Return to the sea you are the pearl of the sea

(Attar, 1996:695)

Human was nothing so he should be nothing to gain everything. Attar suggests leaving sensual conducts for reaching to perfection:

You were nothing and you will be nothing and now become nothing

When you are nothing you will lose nothing

O, Attar when you are nothing you will be everything

(ibid: 683)

Human being should be lost in him and become drowned like dew in the sea. He should consider himself nothing and gain knowledge in his love. The remedy of pain of separation and banishment from home is leaving both worlds and seeking the beloved:

I was lost in myself and I did not know where I found myself

I was dew in the sea and became drowned in the sea

I was shadow inferior on the earth

When the sun rose I was lost

I did not know the reason for coming

Do not ask me anything since I am fearless

Like a butterfly due to banishment from my beloved candle

In the love quest you must gain knowledge and ignorance

Necessarily I became ignorance and knowledgably in love quest Since my body should see and became blind

It is surprising that when I became clear sighted I became blind

Since I saw the heart of Attar outside of both worlds

I became frenzied with love

(Attar, 1996:407)

Attar advises to the lovers to be homeless since the beloved does not come home. This advice seems new but indeed it is recommendation of the holy home in other words. Attar invites human to eternity by leaving earthly traits. The directionless and homelessness are repeated in metaphors like love tavern and other home.

Since the beloved never comes home

The lovers should be homelessness

(ibid: 530)

Mowlana suggests unity and drunkenness as the way of reaching home:

You should be unified in order to gain competence of reaching the beloved

If you go to the beloved become drunken

(Mowlavi, 1999:77)

You should leave sensuality and earthly pleasure for reaching God

(ibid: 508)

Death and eternity could promise meeting

On the day of death, when my bier is on the move, do not

Suppose that I have any pain at leaving this world.

Do not weep for me, say not "Alas, alas!" You will fall into

The devil's snare—that would indeed be alas!

When you see my hearse, say not "Parting, parting!" That

Time there will be for me union and encounter

(Mowlavi, 1999:300)

## 5. Conclusion

Although nostalgia as an unconsciousness construct entered to literature from psychology, but this feeling was inseparable from poetry. Childhood, exile, social, racial, national and mythical nostalgia are seen in Persian poetry. But the mind of the poet is occupied with separation of soul from spiritual world and regret about returning to this world. The poetry of Sanaei, Attar and Mowlavi is combined by nostalgia of return to home due to their context of thought, perfection of personality and poetical spirit and falling with love relative to other poets.

The stories of Masnavi, ghazals of Sanei, Attar and Mowlavi contain the pain of separation and regret about reaching home. The nostalgic context and themes of return to home are seen in the poetry of these poets. They narrated different allegorical stories in their poems for showing desire to return to origin and proposed different ways for eternal journey.

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