

## **Alchemy of Love: One of Nezami's Universal Messages**

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### **Abstract**

**One of the major problems in today's hectic world is that people have no time to think about the man and his role in the universe. They are constantly trying to move forward without paying any attention to the detail, the correctness of the step, and everything which is ahead of them.**

**It seems that previous philosophers have more time and patience in this matter and have given more attention to it. One of these philosophers and poets which has the power of language and use it to explain his lofty thoughts is Hakim Nezami Ganjavi. He has paid attention to public concerns and given recommendations for their improvement in all his five treasures which are ordered in succinct wise words. One of Nezami's pivotal thought through his works, especially in *Khusrow and Shirin* and *Leili and Majnoon*, is love, the love which exists in all particles and leads to the continued existence of the universe. The love that alters the existence of those people trapped in low intentions and aspirations and transforms them to the world of kindness. This paper discusses this issue and its impact on two poems, *Leili and Majnoon* and *Khusrow and Shirin*, as Nezami's global message.**

**Keywords: Alchemy of Love; Hakim Nezami; Wisdom and Preaching; Selfishness.**

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## **Introduction**

One of the major problems being faced by today's human society is that their preoccupation provides them less opportunity to think about themselves and the world. For example, questions such as: what or who we are? Where did we come from? what are the set issues? what role do we have? and where we are going to head at the end? And then search for their answers to reveal their duty in this world and in front of different creatures and human beings. "The fact is that science and technology have failed to solve the human problems, not only unable, but brought them to a dead end. Great men like Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and Jawahar lal Nehr, have frequently expressed their deep concern over the human future. "(Islami Nodoushan, 1961: 32)

Unfortunately, the modernism further leads to this fact. And

according to Seyyed Hossein Nasr," the basic characteristic of modernism is that it attempts to remove all traces of saints in human life. "(Nasr, 2006: 358)

According to Islami Nodoushan, humanity is suffering from the lack of spirituality... If universal spirituality, that comes neither from heaven nor science, but of human goodness, do not scatter a beam on this darkness and do not tame the profit-seeking and ferocity, we have to wait for a major disaster, the tragedy of a ruined world and also condemnation of a life in a world with minimum warmth, love, beauty, and peace. "(Islami Nodoushan, 1961: 36)

Perhaps the most important difference between scholars and philosophers and other people is that they have a deeper look. They are people with high intelligence who have studied for a long time and read

the thoughts of previous scientist and think about the world's states and peoples. Finally, the results of these studies and reflections have been left for others freely as a sacred art. They used their art with such vocation and holiness to help humans and change them.

Undoubtedly, Nezami is among those philosophers who used legendary titles and lyricist for him is according to his dignity. His works, despite the storied titles and forms, are full of divine and human wisdom. In our view, one of the most important messages in Nezami's works, is the spread of love as the unifying element among humans. Therefore, this article discusses the effects of love in Nezami's standpoint.

### **Literature Review**

If you want to search for the true history of love, it may need to go

back to creation of the universe or at least to the beginning of human creation, it means refer to the famous speech quoted from Dawood (AS) which narrated by mystics: "I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known; therefore, I created the creatures" (Forozanfar, 1987:29).

But in Islamic mysticism, it is attributed to the Rabaa Adawiya and then Shebli, Abu Bayazid, Hallaj, Ahmed Ghazali, Abu Saeed, Rouzbahan and others as its promoters. And in the same era, as love blends with mystic's speech, their words got a special attraction and there were common themes in the speech of most of them especially those who called themselves followers of the mystical love.

### **The Definition of Love and its Kind**

Love is in friendliness and is a fire which flames in the heart of the

lover of almighty and burns everybody except God. This love is from God and reachable but not learnable. (Nesfi, 2005:160)

In Sufis's idea, the ultimate love is the connection of the mystic to God and in this way it is similar to the love in the Christians and monks viewpoint and perhaps is influenced by it too. This kind of love "is something based on [appeal and stretch] and sheers the curtains from God and those who dominate the love of God are no longer the owner of himself but belong to their beloved" (Zarrinkoub, 1983:26).

In this way, human's heart is absent from the universe and unaware of the whole creatures and a heart which is captured by God will just be remained from his whole body. In this way, mystics would have mortal existence and connect to the lover, perceive God and unite with Him, the lover and beloved

blend, and a real life is implemented. (Zarrinkoub, 1983:26)

Doctor Dadbeh introduced love as an Ariyan element which connects with an Islamic-Persian Sufism. "Love, the Ariyan element of mysticism enters into this school and lays the foundation of love. In this era, characters such as Rabia, Hallaj, and Bayazid, appear and try to establish a school of love (Philosophical Magazine, p. 78).

In Sofia's idea, true love is that relationship which is between the mystic and the servant of God and He is worthy of love, but sometimes like his servants in following his love are allowed.

Among different kinds of love in Sofia's idea and everything which is mentioned above, the natural kind is just the center of our attention. Although, all kinds of love are beautiful and acceptable and would free its owner from any rascality. In

Saadi's word: "takes out his rug from the waves" and is not arrested by others.

### Love in Nezami's Viewpoint

One of the central themes in Nezami's works is love. Except Khosrow and Shirin, Leili and Majnoon, and Seven Peikar which express love in the form of allegorical love stories, Makhzan Al Asrar and Eskandarnameh also contains romantic anecdotes. However, by love, as Nezami's world message, we mean that concept which is among God and His servant which leads to a return to God and is not a limited concept which for example a person like Khosrow or Gheis love another person as laily or shirin. We mean a broad love that encompasses the whole universe. After reaching enough experience, Hakim Nezami allocated 26 parts to this matter as the central basis of his thought at the beginning of Khosrow and Shirin

story.

When the horizon of love is penetrated in the heart of Nezami, it has changed him totally. Nezami who could not tolerate oppression and oppressors of the world while composing Makhzan al Asrar, look at the world as a strict devotee and mentioned that this world be demolished and wanted from God that:

Break the hexagonal-base seat (the  
earth)  
destroy that pulpit with no basis  
(heaven)  
Kick the trick of the moon on the  
ground  
ruin Zohre with the stone of Zohal  
(destroy the earth and the heaven)  
(Makhzan Al Asrar, p 9)

Also, when composing Khosrow and Shirin a love changed him " is not a misanthrope person and not a sluggish, people thought Hakim has more experiences and was wise in the world but he is so alone who looks at the people's errors with the

eyes of love and compassion and has such kindness that meets wicked people friendly and accepts their gifts. (Zarinkob, 1983:26)

I think one of the finest Persian poetry which is much about love is covered by these 26 lines which Nezami is written in Khosrow and Shirin preface and if someone wants to know the Nezami's idea deeply in the love story of Khosrow and Shirin and Leila and Majnun, should first read these verses with contemplation and note that Hakim Nezami brought these stories with allegory and his ultimate goal was not writing something for fun but tried to bring his ideas in a form which is perceptive to everyone. Following is a revision of the literature mentioned.

### **Discussion**

In twenty-six love verses, Nezami explored several important themes.

The first topic is gravitational pull of an object into another object, which today is known as the gravitational force. The force of gravity which has been known in the name of Newton made its understanding common. Among philosophers such as Ibn Sina, this tension is "desire" that has been called love here. Philosophers interpreted any tension and attraction between creatures as desire or love. So, Nezami believes that if love appears in the heart of a stone, grasped the essence of love. He also gives another example that the tension that exists between the magnet and the iron and the amber and the straw, is because of a love bond between them if not, why just these creatures are attracted to each other (Khosrow and Shirin, p. 349).

Therefore, love, in Nezami's standpoint, is not specialized to that intense interest among people. But every gravity and tension in the

universe and all creatures is from the pull of gravity and love. Nezami then introduced the kind of the romantic tension as principal and secondary and stated that everything in the universe has a central origin that if it has any space or distance from it, still tends toward it and if even provided with everything, rushes toward it. For example, since the position of fire according to four-elements belief of ancient people is above water, wind, and in the heaven, the fire find any crept into the ground and rushes toward its divine origin and vice versa if the water as vapor left in the sky for sometimes, ultimately, will fall down toward the seas and oceans that they came from (Ibid.).

### **Love Tension and Newton's Gravitation**

The Subtle point in this theory - the principle of traction to the origin - is its difference with Newton's theory

which its basic appeal is on the ground gravity, specially in the case of fire which has high propensity toward fire. Or even the gravity of an amber and a magnet, which on each side, straw and iron move towards them although Newton theory involves heavenly bodies and planets.

In fact, the summary of this theory according to Sufi's poetry is also seen in the opening part of Mathnavi's Neynameh, the verses which are regarded as the summary of Masnavi and indicates the pain of separation which is the result of the separation of the spirit and soul of people from origin and Rumi represented it as a reed which is separated from canebrake. (Masnavi, p.3)

In Sufi's idea, this tendency is toward the center and is with wisdom and understanding and is different from the objects tendency

(Thanvy, V2. 1970).

In fact, the principle of this theory is very old and philosophers tried to find an answer for the attraction or repellent of objects. Philosophers, in defining desire, said that, "desire is a quality related to the body, able to be moved due to the intensity which theologians called it confidence and the reason for the existence of desire is that when we send a ballon under the still water, it felt up and we call it ascending tendency and if the stone in the air by force to be settled, we felt it would fell down and we call it descendent tendency" (Lakh, quoted from Nafayes al Fonon). In dictionary, the natural tendency is so-called as "desire in the ancient philosophy is the origin of the movement of objects up and down. Every physical element has a center which tends toward it, as fire leads to a natural tendency to upward and downward (Dekhoda, about desire).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in his book "The Islamic Philosophers' Idea about Nature" investigates the ideas of Islamic philosophers and even the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato about the nature and discussed Ibn Sina's idea about various natural issues, movement, and so on. He brought a summary of Ibn Sina's comments about the desire as: "The Sheikh himself believed that object receives a force which is called desire from its driver of the moving object itself and this desire provides necessary tendency for the object to move. But desire is different from driving force since the driving force may remain even after the movement is settled. Ibn Sina has described three types of desire, sensual desire, natural desire, and forced desire. Thus, he does not specialize this force to the objects but generalized it. Moreover, he looks at it the same as that love which is around the



world and like the Gnostics and other ancient philosophers, states that the reason is the love of all creatures in this universe to God. Due to the eagerness to get to Him, all heavens are constantly moving and it is the desire of all beings toward the first drive which removes all obstacles in the way of moving forward"(Nasr, 1992:28-30).

Apparently, Nezami has the same comments about the movement of the heavenly objects regarding Ibn Sina's speech. Do not you know why the moving heavens turn around the earth -as Kaaba – and what's their purpose? They are like astonishing compasses that want to know their Creators. (Khosrow and Shirin, p. 5)

Then, Nezami, regarding the philosopher's opinion, continues that among elements there is a pull (desire) which philosophers have called it love. Moreover, if one contemplates on Nezami's speech, he

could understand that the reason for the survival of the universe is nothing but love. And even there is a romantic relationship between the ground and the sky and the green and prosperous land by atmospheric effects emanating from this romantic relationship. (Ibid., p. 34)

From these explanations, the meaning of Ferdowsi's line in the introduction of Rostam and Esfandiar would be signified who stated clearly that: When cloud rolling like a lion, I do not know if flower is the lover or clouds, which wind takes its shirt and fire blame inside it. This fact is a proof of heaven's love for earth. (Ferdowsi, V 6, p. 51)

However, Nezami in these lines suggests that the ideal sanctuary of heaven is also love, and if love is not exist, world does not have any honor and prosperity. And if the soul of the universe has not love, no one and

nothing would keep survive. According to this view, if there's no love, there is no life even if one is alive; he will be regarded as frozen and dead! Little by little, Nezami sweeps away from the topic of general love and speaks about human love; it seems that all that debates were an introduction to this subject.

The person who is empty from god  
He is dead, even with hundred lives  
(Ibid, p 33)

Therefore, the speech of Hafez has a long history in the literature. Nezami goes beyond the love which is among human beings and points to the love among all creatures. He regards the pain of love as the most beautiful one and even believes that the plants and their continuous life is because of love. (Ibid, p 34)

Those who do not have love  
Say prayer for him even if alive  
(Hafez, 224)

Although, ancient people believed that human's heart the embodiment of God and the best of human creature and his existence is his heart, in a brief comparison, Nezami admits love supreme from the heart:

Look at the heart that is the king of body  
step in love since body is body  
(Ibid.)

Finally, stated that in the perspective of love, that one-way love has no place and there are no differences between Mecca, Ka'aba, and the tavern since love exists in everything and every place.

The man speak of jersey and villain  
Ka'abe is for Cost and clubs all time  
(Ibid.)

That God light that Hafiz saw in  
Moghan clubs is the same and not  
dedicated to the holy places:

I see the light of the God in Magi clubs  
Wow, see where is the light of what I see  
(Hafez, p 288)

In the verses which were

examined, it was found that the main underlying cause of creation and sustain is nothing but love. And if such love relationship emerged among humans and the nature and humans be committed to it, everything will be in its right place and everyone will love each other and everything. "I love the whole world, the whole world belongs to him." Relationships would be with friendships and no struggle and adversity would exist.

Consistent with this view, such unparalleled words are quoted from Ibn Arabic: "In the past if I found my friend not on the same religion with me, I would reject him, but today my heart welcome every things: the Deer grazing, Monks convent, Pagoda, Kaaba, distorted Quran. I accept the faith of love and I want to go where its caravans go". (Ibn Arabi, p. 8)

Accordingly, Nezami addressed

all readers of his poetry and calls toward love:

Be the slaver of love since this is the  
best thought  
this is the duty of all worlds

World is love and glamor modeling  
all are plays except love  
(Ibid., 33).

He knows that love is the only good idea. He knows love and lover as the truth of the universe and states that everything except love is trick. As such, he ordered in Makhzan al Asrar that whenever you are alive, try to be in love. Sheikh Attar says in this regard:

The pain of love was the medicine in  
every heart  
the problem did never solve without  
love  
(Ganjor Site)

Rumi in Shams lyrics refers to manner learning and the educational role of love, something that can not be achieved in any religious school:

A person will learn different kinds of  
manner from love  
that one can not find from schools

Wisdom does not know and astonished  
from the religion of love  
although being aware of all the religion

The green heart is the heart which will  
taste the water of love  
and he will be insensitive to all  
disposition  
(Rumi, 1352: 98)

Perhaps the best poem in which  
the alchemy of love and its  
properties is mentioned and the  
experience of hundreds of years of  
Persian poetry lies, is the fourth-  
paragraph refrain of Hatef Esfahani  
in which the poet ordered that the  
reader opens the eyes of heart to see  
the love and its properties:

If you be in love  
all horizons are rosary

turning around the all-sky  
which is the will of all people on the  
ground

And what you see  
will be the same as what you want  
the bagger there,

is very worthy

If you give what ever you have to love  
you would profit , if not I'm a pagan

If you give your body in the fire of love,  
love would be the alchemy of you

(Hatef, 18: 1373)

One of the most important human  
problems is that he pays more  
attention to himself and subordinates  
everything to himself and wants  
everyone in his service. If this  
selfishness does not exist, the  
selfishness, cruelty, violence, and  
thousands of other malformations  
will not exist and in fact the most  
important problems of life would be  
solved. It should be noted that this  
"I" sometimes goes beyond one's  
self, I, me, my family, my city and  
my country, etc.! which the basis, of  
course, is "I"!

Hakim Ganjavi introduced the  
way to get rid of selfishness, ego,  
and all of these problems as love:

If your love knows no charm  
will not release you from your soda

Do not be happy to eat and sleep like a donkey  
even if it is cat, love it

If the cat be in your heart  
it is like being a lion  
(Ibid, p 33)

Nezami ordered that if you want to release from yourself, try to be in love. In his idea, even if one is interested in a cat, looks better than a lion, than be trapped in his proud!

Hakim Ganjeh has shown his link to the love at the beginning and end of this verse. At the beginning, he says that nothing is in a place of love and hopes to do nothing except love until he is alive. (Ibid, 33)

At the end of the love verse, emphasizes on his death without love and has announced his decision to set up love in his stories and invites and appeals people for attending in this ceremony. (Khosrow and Shirin, p. 35)

So, as Nezami says, the love story

of Khosrow and Shirin is a table of love which he has widen and calls everybody to enjoy it. The invitation which everyone who is alive or claims of being alive, can enjoy it and if do not accept the invitation is no more than a dead. After this preface which includes the main message and is a selection of his book, Nezami has started the main story. This story is written when the poet was in love therefore this love is transformed to his whole work and to the reader when read the story.

While the local, social, political, racial, and ethnic chaos made people full of hate, Nezami has tried to inject the drug of love in his readers heart to change them. Giving the book as present to three kings and rulers of Azarbajejan: the third Seljuk Tugrul, Mohammad Jan Pahlavi, and his brother Ghezal Arsalan, besides his motivation to keep the book and fee to continue

the work, he also tries to remove hate. So, instead of competing, they interest from a stream full of love in Khosrow and Shirin which is a drug. This is the fewer things they have to understand from this worthwhile poem.

### **The Alchemy of Love in the Main Characters of Khosrow and Shirin**

We said that clean love is alchemy and will change the lover. In Khosrow and Shirin three character create the main part of the story; Shirin, Khosrow, and Farhad. Undoubtedly, the greatest hero of the story is Shirin. Nezami who has the story of Vais and Ramin and their sullied characters in the story, attempts to portray the heroes' face more desirable. In conclusion, Shirin for Nezami is not a notorious chambermaid but virtuous girl and the prince of Armanestan and even was the king after the death of his

aunt, Mihan bano. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for showing Shirin so pure and innocent is that her face remembers the poet's wife.

She was like my idol  
so I thought it was my love  
(P. 403)

From the time when Shirin fell in love by seeing Khosrow, until last moment that she was beside his body and tearing her side with knife in order not to be separated from him, Shirin did not step against her love. At the beginning and after the conversation with Shapur, she ejected all his wealth and ran all the joy and happiness of life and turned away from a peer group of girls for her desired aim. She exposed her life in danger of extinction lonely and without any reason and guide for her purpose that is reaching Khosrow.

After arriving in Iran and not getting access to Khosrow, she convinced with a "penalty place far

from the world". After the death of Mihaan Bano, since she fell in love and had the fear of unfaithful, gave the emirate of his country to someone and returned to her distant palace, awaiting for Khosrow's formal matchmaking, in hardship and loneliness for years. Farhad, the athlete and artist, who came to the palace for building a stream, fell in love with her. He established the stream and besprinkled the valuable gems, that Shirin had given him, in front of her feet to show her love. But Shirin's heart had been tied up elsewhere, Khosrow who looked at Shirin as other women because of the presence of his wife, Maryam, and then his proud, never forced Shirin to submission.

When Khosrow saw Shekar Esfahani in order to stimulate Shirin's Jealousy and tried not to flaw Shirin's decision to Mihaan Bano: "I will not be with him unless

as her lawful wife". Shirin, kind and firm, spent at the palace "world away" until finally Khosrow reached to the palace in pretense of haunting. While he thought Shirin would have broadened a red carpet for him, he faced with the closed door and eventually accepted to choose Shirin as his wife officially. Shirin accepted Khosrow and her marriage, different from common thought in love stories, did not finish her love. Even after the death of Khosrow, who had the chance to get married, she did not married with another one and held her warm blood as final things that connect her to Khosrow.

But it was hard for Khosrow, who had the most beautiful women of the world from his youth, to eject them. Therefore he could not release himself totally from these matters and firmly establish in love. Although the necessity of preserving the kingdom forced him to marry

with Maryam, even after the death of Maryam, his proud and the possibility of joy prevented him from having a pure love with Shirin.

Perhaps not forgetting Shirin during a long time and closing a contract with her, despite great opposition from grandees, and spending the time with her was the main act of Khosrow in his love. However, this amount of influence for this proud character is not a little.

But Farhad, who love Shirin vey much, cut off from the world. He even does not give up in front of a strong competitor such as Khosrow and said him boldly that the love of Shirin was more important than himself. And in response to Khosrow's speech "if one Grasp her / if even like a stone, I will show him an iron" (p. 234), he accepted all his difficult conditions and ultimately lost his life in the way of love!

Alchemy of love in this story is

amazing and this allegorical story has been considered for showing Nezami's purpose.

### **Conclusion**

While science and technology have improved in today's world and provide material well-being of humans, today's human suffer from a lake of spirituality and compassion and deserve a solution. Among the scholars and Persian poets, great ones as Hakim Nezami exist that express a summary of scholars experience in sweet language of poetry that some of these poems can even help human.

Undoubtedly, the pivotal theme of Nezami's poems is love and lovers. Contrary to what is seen in Khosrow and Shirin and Leila and Majnun, Nezami's love appears to be a very profound and pervasive one. The range of this love, which in philosopher's language is called



'desire', is so large that is in all universe and leads to durability of life and world.

Nezami's love stories are for showing true love that have emerged in the form of an apparent love and understanding. But in the same way it is such effective that freed the lover from selfishness. It Holds Khosrow, that powerful and arrogant king for many years, to his love and forced him to leave behind his pride and the elder's complained and married officially with Shirin. It riggers Shirin to forget her country and renounces her kingdom, sit down with modesty for years; pour her blood for Khosrow even after the death of Khosrow and in stead of adopting the Shiroyeh proposal for Queendom. It sends Farhad on mountains and forces him to sacrifice his life eventually. It gets Amiri Gheis mad and away from her family and relatives for years. It

teaches Leili who was surrounded by old tradition, to remain in love and purity for many years. And most importantly the alchemy of love, makes Leili and Majnun, that black male and female of Arab, such known stars that their names appear in the sky till the end of the world.

How much is worthy that love and compassion and altruism spread among humans in a modified form to slightly reduce their greed and rapacity and soften and close their heart to each other?

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## کیمیای عشق (یکی از پیام‌های جهانی نظامی)

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در جهان پر تب و تاب امروزی یکی از مشکلات عمده‌ی انسان‌ها فرصت نداشتن برای اندیشیدن درباره‌ی انسان و نقش او در عالم هستی است. انسانها دائما تلاش می‌کنند تا گامی به پیش بر دارند بدون آنکه به طور دقیق، به درستی این گام و آنچه پیش روست توجه کنند. به نظر می‌رسد حکمای پیشین فرصت و حوصله‌ی زیادتری داشته‌اند و به این امر بیشتر توجه کرده‌اند. یکی از این حکیمان که از قدرت زباناوری و شاعری برخوردار بوده و از آن در تبیین اندیشه‌های والای خود بهره برده، حکیم نظامی گنجوی است. او در تمام پنج گنج به دغدغه‌های مردم جامعه توجه داشته و توصیه‌هایی برای بهبود آنها مطرح کرده است که در قالب سخنان موجز حکیمانه به نظم کشیده شده است. یکی از محوری‌ترین اندیشه‌های نظامی که تقریباً در همه‌ی آثارش، بویژه در خسرو و شیرین و لیلی و مجنون به آن پرداخته، عشق است. عشقی که در تمامی ذرات عالم سریان دارد و مایه‌ی تداوم حیات در جهان هستی است. عشقی که چون کیمیا، وجود انسان‌های گرفتار در دست نیت‌ها و خواسته‌های کم ارزش را دگرگون می‌کند و به عالم دوستداری و مهربانی می‌کشاند. ما در این مقاله به مبحث عشق و تأثیرات آن در دو منظومه‌ی خسرو و شیرین و لیلی و مجنون به عنوان پیام‌های جهانی نظامی پرداخته‌ایم.

واژگان کلیدی: کیمیای عشق، حکیم نظامی، حکمت و موعظه، خودپرستی.

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