

## Rationality and wisdom in Mowlana's Masnavi Manavi

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**Abstract:** Wisdom and rationality are one of issues considered by the philosophers, mystics and the thinkers. Among these groups, the mystics have had especial attention to this issue. Mowlana is not exception. During cultural history of Iran, because of some important historical events, there had been formed anti-rationalism and along with it the anti-philosophy movements. Majority of had had suppressed the wisdom and reasoning so that this has led to our poets and authors' world. Prominent poets such as Khaghani, Sahib Tabrizi and even Hafiz denied wisdom. There is a unique person, who appreciated the value and place of wisdom, thinking, is Mowlana Jalal Aldin. There is a considerable difference between Mowlana and his contemporaries and the other poets before him as the result of different ways in thinking. He is closer to the truth. In this paper we tried to explain this fact that Mowlana has never been against philosophy and wisdom. However, he is a unique person who appreciated and understood the place of wisdom and emphasized its dignity.

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### 1. Introduction

One of the most important issues considered by human beings is wisdom. Quran advises people to thinking in different affairs. For example, in 80<sup>th</sup> verses of Al Momenoon, God focuses on the place of wisdom in knowing the world: He it is who gives life and causes death, and (in) His (control) is the alternation of the night and the day; do you not then understand?

In a famous Hadith, wisdom is introduced as the first creature: God created the wisdom first", "forgiveness to people in the world and the next world based on their wisdom and rationality" (Forouzanfar, 1982:150). In a Hadith, wisdom is considered as a mean for getting close to God. In Merat al Masnavi we have wisdom as a mean for getting close to God (Homaii, 1958:552). That is, when people try to be close to God, the best way is to use wisdom.

There has been variety of definitions about wisdom concept during the history. However, the origin of rationality, especially from philosophical point of view, is Greece. Some philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were the primitive thinkers and philosophers who intended towards rationalism. After connecting this way of thinking and Iranian thinkers' ideas, this wisdom-centered affected them in a considerable way. Among the primitive thinkers belonging to that period of Iran and East of earth, we can name some like Kennedy, Abouali Sina, Farabi etc. they offered new way of thinking and ideology to Islam and also a new Islamic procedure and philosophy. From the beginning, Islamic philosophy had been in conflict

with religious people and Philosophers. This conflict has continued during the cultural and religious history.

In the middle of 5th Hijri century, a prominent thinker was born: Imam Mohammad Ghazzali. He started conflict with wisdom and philosophy. The reason was that Ghazzali thought that there should be incompatibility between religious guidelines and philosophical principles and doubt. Therefore, he tried to write a book called "Tahafat al Falasef". It had an irreparable and brittle effect of philosophy and rationality. Although Ibne Rosht wrote "Tahafat al Tahafat" to reject Ghazzali's ideas, the former has had much more effect and it could not reproduce the past glory (Ghazzali, 2003:8-7).

In short, this event changed believes and ideas of literary people and even the thinkers. They suppressed wisdom and rationality in each part of their works. However, in this paper we aim to study the view and thoughts of Mowlana about wisdom and his tendency towards it. The literary background of wisdom reflection in Masnavi is available in these articles:

1. Praise and criticism of wisdom in Masnavi, Reza Shajari has tried to analyze different aspects of wisdoms introduced by Maulana in Masnavi.
2. Wisdom in Masnavi: Esmail Tajbakhsh tried to study Mowlana's tendency and view towards wisdom.
3. Terms of Mowlana in Masnavi: Ali Asghari studies the terms made by Maulana in wisdom collection.

4. "Soudaye Sabba souzi" by Khalil Hadidi and Mohammad Ali Mousazadeh who tried to explain and describe Mowlana's anti-rationalism and anti-philosophy attitudes. They came to this conclusion that Mowlana was not against wisdom and rationalism.

### Discussion

Prominent mystic of 7<sup>th</sup> century, Mowlana is one of the rare intelligent and genius people in the world. There are many reasons for his fame. One of valuable reasons for being famous refers to his deep thinking and meditation. It was not only an assigned but acquired ability. That is, he tried hard to reinforce this ability. Mowlana (the first book of Masnavi, verse 1822) says:

Do scratch and cut in this way again and again, do not stop till the last moment.

In wisdom, there are obvious differences between Mowlana and the other predecessors and successors. Mowlana's works are mainly better than the other thinkers and scholars' ideas.

Wisdom concept means stopping the diarrhea and a kind of camel's foot strap. It means wisdom, knowledge and receiving the things' attributes such as good and bad, perfection and imperfection, good and evil an ability to differentiate good things from bad ones (Dehkhoda, 1946:370). In terms of levels and types, wisdom is classified to two forms: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it starts with potential wisdom and includes actual, Mostafad and Belmalek wisdoms which is the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of theoretical wisdom. In 10<sup>th</sup> wisdom, active wisdom, the Holy Spirit finishes. Practical wisdoms consist of solution, emptying or Destruction (Ibid, 374).

A main and basic point that is considered as the differential part between Mowlana and the other thinkers is that he believed to hierarchical wisdom as we can see different levels of wisdom in creation, it starts with the first wisdom and continues to tenth one or active one. From 1960 to 1964 verses of Masnavi's fourth book we can see:

We have two kinds of wisdom: one is acquiring which is achievable through going to school

The other is Allah's forgiveness to you; it does not need any studying and trying

Mowlana knows the people's appearance as their wisdom reflection. It roots in people inside. He believes that people who have mystical mind, in spite of being engaged in physical appearance of things, wisdom save and helps them (first book of Masnavi, verses 1111-1112).

Wisdom is hidden and the appearance of the world is extended one. We are just a wave or moisture of that

What is in appearance must be used as a mean to get the deeper parts of sea.

In second book of Masnavi and 710-711 verses, Mowlana points to appearance of wisdom:

Oh you! A person loves your wisdom: person, who loves their appearance, has seen it so many times.

Your feeling is your wisdom reflection; you should know the difference between gold and copper

In the other part, he states that people's conscious perceives the phenomenon and the events. Wisdom tends to analyze the affairs and deeply think about them. People who imitate, their mind will gradually losses its ability. In second book of Masnavi and verse 2322, Mowlana says:

Worm destroys the wood; we should protect the tree in seedlings

Here the worm is appearance and wisdom is seedlings

Although your wisdom leads towards the higher levels, imitation moves towards the lower levels

### Value and place of wisdom

In verse 1109-1110 of first book, Mowlana talks about the place, endless dignity and extensity of wisdom:

- Wisdom is so extended and wide
- Our appearance in this sea seems like a bowl on the water surface.
- Mowlana, in verses 2497- 2498 of the first book in Masnavi, talks about privilege and value of wisdom and resembles wisdom to Imams:
- Imams and saints have the best wisdom.
- Look at them as the most trustable people
- In verses 2621-2622 of the first book in Masnavi, Mowlana resembles wisdom to an old guide (Murshid):
- As the result of imitation, this old man has ignored the wisdom
- In verses 2621-2622 of the first book in Masnavi, Mowlana resembles wisdom to concupiscence:
- Ego is like a women who sometimes seeks remedy, she sometimes want to be the ruler and sometime a humble person.
- Wisdom is not aware from these thoughts as it just think about God
- Mowlana believes that wisdom which lightens the darkness and be good guide, is suitable for leadership (verse 3690 of the first book in Masnavi):
- In a deep dark night which seems illusive, accept the wisdom's leadership and guide
- In verses 2960- 2961 of the first book in Masnavi, Mowlana talks about the importance of wisdom and its value and uses Prophet Mohammad's quotations:

- Get help from God to do your works. This a way that the others cannot step forward
- His shadow has covered the earth like mountain (Gaff Mountain); his spirit is so high and perfect

#### **Dogmatic and blamed wisdom**

Mowlana believes that if we want to understand the world and even the beyond that with this descended and lower level wisdom, we will definitely lose our way. He called it a dogmatic wisdom. In verse 1295 of fourth book and verse 4138 of sixth book and verse 2528 of second book and verse 463 of fifth book in Masnavi, he says:

Part of wisdom is not wisdom extraction, it needs techniques and skills

Partial wisdom is like a vulture whose feather eats the others' corpse

Your wisdom of wisdom is your brain and wisdom, animals' stomach is always skin of the barley.

Partial wisdom defamed the wisdom and the world's temptation made a man to lose the world

In other words, he uses the partial wisdom as discursive and reasoning wisdom. That is, a philosopher who works merely with partial discursive and reasoning will fail in his attempt to get perfection. In verses 1982- 1985, Mowlana in his first book of Masnavi says:

Partial wisdom rejects the love, though it looks like leader of the head

It seems so intelligent and cute but is not

It just accompany us in speaking not practically

In these verses the focus is only on one main and basic point and that is partial wisdom not general one. From Mowlana's point of view, love and wisdom are opposite each other and they contact each other when wisdom wants to know love from its lower and inferior place. We know that this kind of understanding is incomplete and imperfect. Therefore, when this partial wisdom is connected to a source of wisdom and grace and becomes perfect and complete, it will no longer have inferior level. It will be able to apprehend the objective and abstract affairs.

Again, Mowlana in his Masnavi, verses 2051-2053, admires the wisdom and blame the partial wisdom:

That fall is worthless in God's idea; wisdom and soul are like spring and endless.

If you have a partial wisdom inside yourself, try to find perfect wisdom in the world

Your partial wisdom will be completed by its help. The perfect wisdom will dominate the soul.

In fact, in Mowlana's idea, partial wisdom is derided and rejected one.

Wisdom is the one that is created by the truth, not the one brought by Mercury

You will keep predicting this wisdom till death time, till Blowing the Trumpet in the day of resurrection

This wisdom goes beyond the death and grave and never leaves it to wonders of the world

#### **Praised and perfect wisdom**

Along with partial and blamed wisdom, Mowlana talks about praised and perfect wisdom which is empyreal one. He also verifies and accepts it (verse 4075 in sixth book and verse 2188 in fourth book of Masnavi):

Wisdom is like a feather for human being which leads the person

A rational person is one who guides and helps the caravan

In verses 1986-1991 of fourth book and verse 993 in sixth book of Masnavi, Mowlana talks about faith wisdom as one kinds of praised wisdom:

Faith wisdom is the arm of justice person. He is like the ruler and police of the city

In the body, wisdom is the head of faith whose power and effect limits the sensuality

Evil can get the faith and wisdom of this fool group by giving them material things

Perfect wisdom, in Mowlana's view, is abstract one free from any materiality. The hierarchy of this world depends on طولييه wisdoms. The other meaning of perfect wisdom is the one that dominates the environment and can perceive the realities as well as possible. This kind of wisdom, as Mowlana says, is especially for Imams, prophets and God higher level creatures (Homaii, 1958:469). In verse 978 of second book and verse 1309 of fourth book and finally in verse 465 (Kolale Khavar) he says:

This world is just a thought of perfect mind. Wisdom is like a king and the others are like Prophets

Perfect wisdom is what the crew sees, the partial wisdom looks every things

Both perfect wisdom and perfect soul are God creatures. You should not think that the throne and seat are independent from him

#### **Wisdom and philosophy**

Mowlana criticized the philosophy which is superficial, inflexible, cold and lack of inner intuition. It has blind imitation, challenging and superficial reasoning. However, if it were in metaphysical and divine area of philosophy, Mowlana himself would verify that. In verses 1960-1964 of fourth book in Masnavi, Mowlana says:

We have two kinds of wisdom: one which is achievable through going to school. Another one is God's blessing which is internal land spiritual

In “Soudaye Sabasouzi” article, it is said that Mowlana prefers psychosis to wisdom. In “disagreement with reasoning” we have: Mowlana respects wisdom and value of reasoning in his territory. Without referring to wisdom hierarchy which starts with first and perfect wisdom and leads to sustenance wisdom, which is the most inferior wisdom in this hierarchy, he calls all the wisdoms imperfect.

In the other part (verses 3437-3439 of first book in Masnavi) it is said that philosophical reasoning is based on suspicion and it is also vulnerable and fragile.

It should be mentioned that Mowlana criticizes only a group of philosophers who are materialistic and had focused on physical appearance of affairs. These philosophers never studied the divine philosophy of famous people such as Molla Sadra or Sheikh Eshragh etc. The fact is that mystic’s controversial with philosopher is in beginning of mystic journey and getting philosophy. Looking carefully makes clear that wisdom essence and philosophy logic roots in intuition and inner mysticism. During promoting the ranks and going to higher levels, human beings get a place in which there will be no difference between mystic and the wise except this case that one’s speaking is based on his observation and the other’s is based on his knowledge: Like meeting of Abu Saied Aboulkheir with Abu Ali Sina. Also, while passing the academic and spiritual levels, human being gets a position in which the evolutionary book of the world equals with prophets and Imam’s book, word by word (Homaii, 1958:422).

Philosophers rejected by Mowlana, do not accept God. In most of verses by Mowlana talks about philosophy and uses interpretive letters which describe the sentence after themselves. Therefore, Mowlana rejects a philosophy that does not accept God. The rejected philosophy is limited to just this world and cannot go beyond that (first book of Masnavi, 3278-3283).

A philosophy which rejects the God’s epithet, it is far away from prophet’s senses

This philosophy talks about inferior issues, wisdom do not come out of the closet

This philosophy is never accepted in mind and thought; it says go and hit your head to that wall

Like a mouse which has a limited view, he has limited worldview

Logic which does not root in revelation, is nonsense and lives in vacuum

Science of these philosophers belongs to this world (Masnavi, fourth book, verses 1516-1517):

Details of geometry, astronomy, medicine and philosophy which root in this world, never find their way to heaven

When philosophy helps person to go to higher levels and except material world, it focuses on metaphysical aspects of life, it is considered as a ladder and a mean which help human being to get closer to God. On the whole, philosophy and philosopher in Mowlana’s view, is not a person who studies philosophy, but he thinks beyond that. He means a person who follows the partial and perfect wisdom, either an illiterate common person or educated philosopher who participate in philosophical controversies and discussions (Homaii, 1958:947).

### Conclusion

Mowlana perceived the value and place of wisdom and thinking more than the other thinkers before and after him. He focused on them much more than the others. To describe the value and privilege of wisdom, Mowlana resembles it to Imams. He believes that we must follow up the wisdom which lightens the darkness and opens the windows to person.

Mowlana states that when a person wants to know the world and even beyond that with his descended and low level wisdom, he will definitely lose the way. He calls it “Partial Wisdom”. In other words, he believes that partial wisdom is equal with reasoning one. In the way that if a philosopher wants to get perfect reasoning through partial reasoning, he will definitely lead to failure.

From Mowlana’s view, wisdom and love are opposite each other and they will contact when wisdom tries to know the around world and love from lower and inferior level.

Perfect wisdom, which is an abstract, far from the material things and aligns with perfect self, is in abstract world and the hierarchy of existence depends on longitude wisdoms. In other words, perfect wisdom dominates everything which appropriately appreciates it. This kind of wisdom, from Mowlana’s view, is especially for prophets, Imams and some creatures Of God. We can say that he admires the perfect wisdom. Whenever he blames wisdom, he means a wisdom which is partial. About philosophy, when he blames and criticizes the philosophy, he means a philosophy which is cold, superficial and lack of intuition. This kind of philosophy is a kind of imitation and reasoning which leads to superficial negotiations and controversies. However, if it is a metaphysical and divine one, Mowlana definitely accepts and verifies it.

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