



## Good words and Pir-e Golrang

**Manizheh Abdollahi**

Associate Prof. of Persian Language and Literature  
Persian.Dept. Paramedical School, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences

Email: manijeh.abdollahi@gmail.com

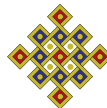
Not every poet or artist is fortunate enough to witness being widely liked and appreciated by people of their time. And Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī, known as Hafez, was one of the few poets of his time who was warmly welcomed by people – not only by poets and literary people but also by the kings and courtiers, and perhaps more important than these two groups, by the public. In fact, he was popular among people from every walk of the community. One interesting point about Hafez's poems is that it is understood and interpreted differently among different people with different mindset. Each assumes that Hafez is addressing him/her. This is true so much so that the poems bring joy and ascendancy to the mystic as they bring joy and happiness to the drinker. Hafez has repeatedly mentioned the immortality and eternity of his poems and his words, indicating his certainty that his poems would go beyond the scope of time and would be common among the people of the future. His ever-growing popularity, especially in recent decades, as well as some other evidence, is a good testament that his prediction has come true. However, the question is what the secret of the durability of his poems is and what has made him so popular.

In response to this question, scholars have provided a plethora of reasons that are summed up in three general sections: first, the opulence, along with the swiftness and elegance, of his poetic language and the various hidden layers of meaning in his poems which have excited not only non-literate readers but also the literate ones, enabling them to exploit the exultation of the lofty art, exclusive to the great artists and poets. Some others maintain that the secret of Hafez's popularity lies in his innovation in



creating novel and stunning meaning. Having unraveled its underlying meaning, the reader feels that they are empowered to discover the hidden secret of existence and to explore the human-world, human-human and human-God relation from Hafez's perspective. There is still another group who holds that the reason of widespread popularity of Hafez is due to inserting the current social and political themes as well as the public objection to the political structure into his poems. This reflects the will and pain of the public throughout the history and time. This latter view which considers Hafez as a social activist (Anti-authoritarian activist) is in vogue in recent years.

In general, all these views and suppositions are acceptable to some extent. Or, it is better to say that the secret of the everlasting popularity of Hafez can be the outcome of all these outlooks, as well as some others, which is not within the scope of this paper. However, there is a subtle point that keeps the researcher's mind occupied: Hafez is not the only poet enjoying this talent or this lofty poetic language. There



are numerous other poets with these qualities and there are some poets who have been his mentor and even inspired Hafez but still his popularity has surpassed them. Then, the question is still awaiting the answer.

Here, I would like to mention another trait of Hafez and his mindset stretching throughout his poetry. Hafez, deep in heart, has the spirit and thought of the Iranian's cogitation and thinking, woven into his words. This, if not considered as the main reason for the success of his poetry, is one of the most important factors leading to the nobility of his poetry. In this regard, a great many scholars have showed that Hafez was greatly inspired by his predecessors, in particular, Ferdowsi. In his poems, one can frequently see traces of the themes, myths and stories used in Shahnameh. Furthermore, there is some evidence attesting his attachment to Mithraism. However, most discussions, so far, have been limited to the linguistic and poetic features of his poems, together with the aesthetic analysis of stylistic devices employed. There has been scant attention paid to Hafez's tendency towards the ideological foundations of ancient Iran. For instance, he seems to have the three well-known relics remained by Zarathustra in mind. The relics contain the three basic principles for the good of humanity in general, comprising good thought, good words and good deeds. These three basic principles, like the patterns and motifs interwoven in Iranian carpets, are paradoxically woven vividly and covertly in Hafez's poems. This, along with other poetic components, contributes in presenting the reader with a harmonic picture. In the present article, an attempt is made to show one of the three Zoroastrian principles, namely good words, employed in Hafez poetry.

There is abundant evidence for the praise of speech in Hafez's Divan. In all poems, he has applauded eloquence and aesthetics of language under the title "grace of speech". But, to Hafez, good words are not restricted to speaking clearly and correctly. Rather, by this he means using the language encompassing "nice words" and believes that all the art of speech is "accepted" only when it originates

from nice and good words. The term "eloquent speaking" to Hafez's is a two-way, face-to-face conversation corresponding to the term dialogue. The meaning of nice speech, which is fairly synonymous to "good words" in Zoroastrian's belief, is used in contrast to "hard speech" in the following verses of Hafez:

Thus spoke at dawn the field-bird to the newly wakened rose:

'Be kind, for many a bloom like you in this meadow grows.'

The rose laughed: 'You will find that we at truth show no distress,

But never did a lover with harsh words his love so press.'

(2005, p. 428)

(The Divan Of Hafiz (2005). Tehran: Ahadi)

The above-mentioned verse shows how undesirable it is, to Hafez, to use hard words in his poem. It is so distasteful to him that even very simple phrase such as "You are not unique and there are many others like you." is asserted as 'hard words. Generally speaking, whatever word or phrase that hurts the reader or develops negative energy falls into the category of hard speech. The scope of good talks also is equally wide. To Hafez, any hostility and enmity, even if it is buried under the layers of time and has become the matter of past, is not worthy of saying and hearing, and the only thing that can and should be at the center of conversation is love, together with loyalty and Friendship:

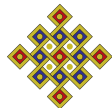
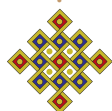
Ask me of faith and love that never dies;

Darius, Alexander's sovereignty, I sing of these no more, (2005, p. 278)

There is plenty of evidence affirming his tendency to using good speech. The following poem manifests the gist of Hafez' mindset, devoid of any stylistic devices, in a simple language:

Evil of any we utter not (2005, p. 142)

But how is it possible to bar the tongue from the longing to gossip and express viciousness? Hafez seems to firmly believe in a kind of sublime human wisdom, as a deterrent to prevent using hard words. He, symbolically, names this sublime wisdom, *pir-e golrang*





(lit. colorful wise master), who does not allow uttering any sort of hard words or bad language because this indicates one's malevolence and meanness.

My colorful wise master, in my dealings with the black robes

My meanness checked and bound, else my stories would astound,  
(2005, p. 212)

In this verse, pir-e golrang, who may be the manifestation of Hafez's high spirit, does not allow resorting to slander or harsh words in any form, or to anyone whatsoever, even to the most deceitful person. The remarkable point in this verse is that both the speaker and pir-e golrang, are quite aware of the deception and craftiness of the other party, but his strong

conviction to uttering good words refrain him from revealing that deceitfulness. This is inferred from the final section of the verse saying that if I had allowed, I could have told stories about that.

And finally, generally speaking, can we assume that wise master, who prohibits human beings from uttering hard words, is Zarathustra, who, at the dawn of the history of civilization, considers good words as one of his three principles, leading human beings to salvation, and summons everyone to observe them?

#### Reference:

Salami, Ismail (compiler and translator) (2005). The Divan Of Hafiz. Tehran: Ahadi



عکس از: امین برنجکار

#### نشریه «آینه دار جمال»

وابسته به مرکز حافظ شناسی و گرسی پژوهشی حافظ

صاحب امتیاز: مرکز حافظ شناسی | مدیرمسئول: کاووس حسن لی

سردبیر: سعیده رضازاده | صفحه آرا: محسن گل آرایش

همکاران این شماره: سمانه اسدی | مریم آذرنیا | علیرضا خاک پور | حسن ذوالفقاری

سیدمحسن حسینی وردنجانی | منیژه عبدالهی | ثمین کمالی | الهه نخعی

نشانی: شیراز، حافظیه، مرکز حافظ شناسی | کدپستی: ۷۱۴۶۶۹۱۱۳۶ | شماره تماس: ۰۷۱۳۲۲۸۸۶۱۴

وبگاه: www.hafezstudies.com | رایانامه: hafezstudies@gmail.com

hafezstudiescenter



این شماره از نشریه با همکاری سازمان فرهنگی اجتماعی شهردار شیراز چاپ شده است.

