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The Divine Wisdom of Madness and Love

(Medieval Arabic Literary Tradition and “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin”)

The paper aims to discuss the impact of the medieval Arabic literary tradition of love and madness on Shota Rustaveli's “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” from the perspective of modern literary-critical approaches and Niklas Luhmann's Sociological Theory.

In the medieval Arabic literary tradition, love and madness symbolize a close spiritual connection with the divine, paths that are closely related to each other.

Why specifically the madness? If the recognition of established norms in society is equated with common sense, then it becomes easier to see how madness turns into one of the best literary symbols of the universal rebellion. Madness is a symbol of rebellion against “common sense” and turns a madman into an almost poetic perfection. The main storyline of Arabic *adab* literature regarding the theory of love from the very beginning unconditionally considers that love is madness and a person who falls in love often - if not always - goes against all reasoning. Love is blind or makes a person blind. Lovers are considered to be particularly inclined to go mad. These works of *adab* perfectly show the public's fascination with the irrational and extravagant - those aspects of love that are beyond the worldly mind and common sense and that can reveal the best and most noble in man. This charm of the strange, extravagant, or extraordinary behaviour of those who have lost their common sense in love, and yet their usefulness for literary purposes, seems to help the public realize that in a whirlpool of such reckless action there may be undeniably deep and paradoxical wisdom, which is beyond the comprehension of an ordinary mind. For such wise madmen obsessed with love, there is no boundary between their imagination and their actions in life.

A permanent or transcendental connection with the Absolute is established only through symbolic channels. Therefore, the prototypical personality of one who has achieved such a form of union enjoys universal appeal. The path to such an union is precisely love, enveloped in divine madness, which turns love into a mystical union, an attempt to reconcile the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the irrational.

The Knight in the Panther’s Skin should also be mentioned, where the same idea is also employed:

“Such kind of courtship, such love can’t be by many ones perceived;

The tongue - explaining it – dries up, the listener’s ears get tired of it”

The theory by the sociologist Niklas Luhmann, who considers love as a communicative symbol, a social system of interpretation, is very serious and elegant. In his theory, the author considers love as a generalized symbolic means of communication that allows us to successfully communicate seemingly impossible communications.

Generalized symbolic means of communication responsible for combining motivation and choice, use semantic matrices closely related to reality, such as, for example, love. Such mediums are always managed socially - based on an agreement on communication opportunities. Love considered in this context as a medium is not a feeling but a communication code through which we can shape feelings and emotions and find an answer to all the consequences that such communication can cause.

A literary, idealized representation of love or a thematic choice is by no means arbitrary; it shows the public perception of love. Such descriptions don't need to express the real, factual side of love, yet they do help us to

describe the functional needs of the social system. Consequently, the semantics of love in each case helps us to determine the type of relationship between the symbolic means and social structures. Thus, understanding love requires not the thematic level of communication but its codification. The function of love as a communication medium is to make the unbelievable possible. Paradoxically, love can expand communication without actual communication and turn the world into a horizon of inner experiences and actions.

Even in the Middle Ages, people knew that despite viewing love as a passion, they were dealing with behavioural models that could be acted out. This factor was well thought out. In other words, the model of love was the source of knowledge.

Literature:

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