

## The Path of Love

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According to Ibnu 'Arabi, a right way to approach the God is through the path of love because "Allah is Beauty and loves beauty" (Hadits Qudsi). For him, all that beautiful in this world is a reflection of his Beauty and hence contains some sort of quasi-celestial character. All of them communicate to us something infinite, beatific and liberatic. What is the relationship between beauty and love? Love is simply a response to Beauty and "the desire for union or it is union itself<sup>1</sup>".



We may think the notion as expressed by Syech Akbar (the title for the Ibnu of Arabi) above is abundant since there are many paths toward the God: *tha'ah* path (in following His commands), *khusyu'* path (fearing of the impinge due to breaking His rules), *taqwa* path (taking a care in acting because realizing fearful consequence in eternity), and many others. For the Syech, variation in the paths toward the God indicating that Islam facilitates everybody for salvation regardless of personal tendency, mentality, intellectual capacity of a person. For sure, all these paths are parallel, reinforcing, and complying with *syari'ah*,

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<sup>1</sup> Schuon (2002:94-95): Roots of the Human Condition, World Wisdom, Inc.

all require the strength of the will to be voluntarily surrendered to His divine Will and His ordinance (or Islam).

Compared to its counterparts, the path of love requires more the strength of the heart (*qalb*). The orientation of the path is more inward (in contrast to outward for the others). The inward orientation is complying with a *hadits qudsi*: "The whole nature is incapable of holding Me except the heart of human being". This is inmost secret of the strength of love that is of especial attention for the Sufis, an elite community who strive to meet the God now here in Earth, not to wait later in *akhirah*.

Unlike most of us, the Sufis concern more on the quality not on the quantity of *ibadah*. For them, purifying the initiation (*niyah*) and improving *khusyu* in a *Salah fardhu* or an obligatory pray, for example, is more useful than a frequent *Salah sunnah* or supplementary pray (without *khusyu*).

The Sufis concern more on the beauty in the right doing (*ahsan amala*) than on its quantity. Unlike for most of us, for the Sufis, the connection between Beauty, Goodness and the divine Bliss is transparent as expressed vividly Schuon<sup>2</sup>:

As for Beauty, it stems from Infinitude, which coincides with the divine Bliss; seen in this connection, God is Beauty, Love, Goodness and Peace, and He penetrates the whole Universe with these qualities.

What is Goodness? For Schuon, it is no more than "the generous radiation of Beauty". What is the life about? It is no more than "To know the Truth, to will the Good, to love Beauty".

Wallaḥu'alam .....@

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<sup>2</sup> Schuon (2002:94): Roots of the Human Condition, World Wisdom, Inc.