

This love — O Bulleh — tormenting, unique

his love — O Bulleh — tormenting, unique
the face of the idol akin to the divine in heaven
can there be divinity without my beloved
even if I have to contest the scriptures
this love is fearless, marches to death in defiance
dances and whirls like a street prostitute,
to win a single smile from the beloved — Bulleh Shah

(Syed Abdullah Shah Qadri popularly known as Bulleh-Shah was a Mughal era Punjabi Muslim philosopher. Bulleh Shah's writings represent him as a humanist, someone providing solutions to the sociological problems of the world around him as he lives through it) describing the turbulence his motherland of Punjab is passing through, while concurrently searching for God. His poetry highlights his **mystical spiritual voyage** through the four stages of Sufism: Shariat (Path), Tariqat (Observance), Haqiqat (Truth) and Marfat (Union).

(He is known as "The greatest Sufi poet of the Punjab". Because of his pure life and high spiritual attainments, he is equally popular among all communities. Scholars and dervishes have called him "**The Sheikh of Both the Worlds**," "**The man of God**," "**The Knower of Spiritual Grace**" and by other equally edifying titles. Considered as the greatest mystic poet of the Punjab, his compositions have been regarded as "**the pinnacle of Sufi literature**.")

(Baba Bulleh Shah's poem "This love- O Bulleh- tormenting, unique" is a thought provoking poetry and is soul stirring. As the title suggests, it revolves around Love, Spiritual love, not the worldly love but the true spiritual love. But he also says that this Love is never

easy, it's tormenting yet unique. There is pain with Love. They go hand in hand. It's true there's always a bit of pain in everything that's ecstatic - relationships and love, they always come with pain.

The feeling of love never comes alone it's like a rose with thorns. But, it is this pain that enlightens the soul with the very essence required for arousing spiritual love i.e. the love of Allah Almighty.

It is rightly said, "Where there is love, there is vulnerability to pain." Love is the burning point of life, and since all life is sorrowful, so is love. The stronger the love, the more the pain. Love itself is pain.

It is also said, "The greater your capacity to love, the greater your capacity to feel the pain."

Baba-Bulleh has greatly used this theme that what is life without his beloved, what is divine without his beloved, what is love without my beloved. His beloved is the central figure around whom his life revolves, he can't imagine his life without his beloved. Here Baba Bulleh Shah is referring to the love of Allah Almighty that without His Love, Bulleh is nothing, he can't be nothing. Life has no meaning without Love of Allah Almighty. He then says that this love, this Spiritual Love is no like the common worldly love but it's different, it's fearless, bold, brave, courageous. It is impassioned, ardent and fervent. It's ferocious and so strong that it can even embrace death to achieve its goal.

Through Love all that is bitter will be sweet, Through Love all that is copper will be gold, Through Love all dregs will become wine, through Love all pain will turn to medicine.)

Rumi

Many Sufi traditions practice 'zikr', the remembrance of the name of God, often through all-night prayer circles that involve devoutly repeating the names and attributes of God. You'll find similar practices in Hinduism and Buddhism with the recitations of divine names and word formulations through mantra and japa. In Catholicism, there is the repetition of the rosary. In Eastern Orthodox Christianity, there is the Jesus Prayer

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The purpose behind all of these practices is a gentle but persistent assault on the mind. By taking the name or words that most remind you of the Divine, and repeating it over and over again, with attention and devotion, a cleansing process starts to occur in the awareness.

Bulleh Shah further explains that I can do anything for my beloved, I can cross any limit to make my beloved happy. I can surpass all the barriers even of common sense just to bring a single smile on my beloved's lips. I can even dance on streets like a prostitute, here the poet is actually using this metaphorically thus depicting that he can surpass all the limits for his beloved. This shows his strong and great love for Allah Almighty that he is able to do anything just for His "Raza".

"Love is the master key that opens the gates of happiness." - Oliver Wendell Holmes

Rhetorical Analysis:

Rhyme scheme: aabaaab

Stanza lengths (in strings): 7,

Closest metre: trochaic pentameter

Closest rhyme: no rhyme

Closest stanza type: tercets

Amount of stanzas: 1

Mood of the speaker: The punctuation marks are various. Neither mark predominates.

Bulleh Shah was an evolved soul, a perfect faqir and a true lover. Through the love for his Master he realized the Lord. In his love one finds poignancy, ardor and longing besides sincerity, sacrifice and renunciation. Under the canopy of love, he made his offerings of caste and learning. His love for his Master never wavered for a moment despite the fire of separation and longing through which he passed. His writings, as also his life, manifest transcendence of physical love (of the Master) to divine love (of the Lord). Indeed, this is the path of all true mystics, all true lovers of God.

Whosoever has attained union with the Lord has done so by traveling on this path, and whosoever will attain this union, will do so by becoming a traveler on this path of love.

Bulleh Shah's life and writings are replete with subtle secrets of the path. They do not only strengthen the love of a true lover, but also encourage him to undergo the severest hardships

for reaching the spiritual goal. The life and compositions of Bulleh Shah will serve as a lighthouse for times immemorial to true seekers of spiritual realization.

Submitted to Mam Samina Rana

Submitted by Zahida Ismat

