

Love Similes in the Poetry of Masud Sa'd Salaman

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Abstract:

This paper analyzes the impacts of the environment of prison on the love feelings of a prisoner. For this purpose, Masud Sa'd Salman (438-500) who is famous as a prison poet; has been studied. He was a well-known poet in the later Ghaznavid period who spent 19 years of his life behind the bars. The study reveals that a long period in prison did not affect his feelings as well as his thinking about love which remained intact. To prove this fact, love similes have been chosen from his poetry. Love similes are used not only skillfully but they are fresh and novices such as daffodils, tulip, spring season, almond, ruby, pearls, etc. these similes are quite different from the stinking environment of confinement which is full of darkness, loneliness, insects, dirt, and litter. After studying these similes, it cannot be depicted that these are used by a prisoner. This research emphasizes that feelings of love in a human being are natural and can never be surpassed even in horrible conditions.

Keywords: Masud Sa'd Salman, Lahore, Persian poetry, Ghaznavid period, Prison poet, Similes, love similes, conclusion

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Biography

An important poet of the later Ghaznavid period is Masud Sa'd Salman (438-500). (Rypka, 196)

There are different opinions regarding the place of birth of Masud:

From Aufi's point of view, he was born in Hamdan (Aufi, 733)

But in Aftab Ray's point of view, Masud Sa'd Ibn Salman is considered Hamdani or Jarjani, and his birth is predicted near the end of the government of Sultan Masud Ibn Mahmood. (Ray, 201)

According to Raza Zada Shafaq, he is Hamdani but his birth is in Lahore nearly 440. (Shafaq, 146)

He praised well-known court personalities of that time such as Sultan Ibrahim bin Masood (reign 451-492) Masud III (reign 492-507), and Sher Zad bin Masud(reign 511-552). He has also praised many courtiers. (Khan, 11)(Dekhoda, 410)

19 years of his life, he spent in jail because of conspiracies of his enemies. He was blamed for treachery. He remained in fortress Dahak, Su, and Nay. He has also mentioned in his poetry:

هفت سالم به کوفت سو و دهک
پس از آنم سه سال قلعه نای

(Safa, 484)

بر بندۀ مهر داشت چهل سال و هرگز او
بر هیچ آدمی دل نا مهربان نداشت
مر ترا هیچ باک نامد از آنک
نوزده سال بوده ام بندی

(Safa, 489)

He learned knowledge of astrology in jail. (Zarrinkoob, 117)

He had good command of different knowledge such as astrology (learned in prison), hippology, military affairs, and even calligraphy. (Rypka, 196)

Most contemporary poets like him Sanai, Rasheed Samarqandi, and Abul Faraj Rooni who apparently has a friendship with Masud at first, but later their relationship became hostile, Rasheed Ghaznavi (It is said that he was envious of Masud. Usman Mukhtari, Ameer Hamza, Jamaluddin Syed, Muhammad Nasir Alvi, Khaqani, Hameed Hassan, Gharabi, Kamal Bekharai, and Muhammad Khateebi considered him a big poet. (Safa, 488)

Literary work

It is said that he has three books of poetical work: Persian, Arabic, and Hindi. (Vale Daghestani, 636)

His Persian poetical book has nearly seventy thousand verses, stanzas, quatrains, and a small number of sonnets. (Anosheh, 946)

Although Masud Lahori was brought up in Lahore, he was never unaware of the Iranian poetic style at that time. Therefore, the Khorasani style is also present in his poetry. (Tameem Dari, 79)

The first reference to Masud Sa'd's body of prison poetry as the distinct category of *habsiyat* is found in the twelfth century. (Sharma, 68)

Types of Similes

Such kinds of similes are found in his poetry which are as follows:

1. Astrology
2. Court and battle

3. Lament
4. Prison
5. Rainy season
6. Spring season
7. Justice
8. Separation
9. Food
10. Ornaments
11. Nature
12. Imagery
13. Love and wine
14. Beauty
15. Happiness
16. Festivals

He faced a hard time in his life because of a long period in prison. During this period in prison, he made poetry a source of expression of his feelings and thoughts. Every creature wants freedom. It is very difficult for any living being to live in confinement. Therefore, we find heights of grief in the poetry of Masud Sa'd Salman. Every word of his poetry appears like tears from his eyes:

اگر نبودی تیمار آن ضعیف زال
که چشمہ اش چو ابرست و اشک چون باران(ص ۴۲۰)

It reveals blood drops from his eyes and the pain of prison in his body.

چشمم ز خون بسرخی چون چشم باده خوار
رویم ز غم به زردی چون روی پارسا (ص ۵)

Along with a flood of grief, we find feelings of love and spring. Love and spring are signs of hope for him. It is difficult to sing a song of love in prison which is a name of terror and unbearable miseries. It is difficult to describe the distress and suffering of such a pathetic life.

Love Similes

In this research, some verses have been described in which the poet has used love similes to explain his feelings of love. These are selected alphabetically:

ز بس که ابر هوا همچو بیدلان بگریست
چو دلفریبان بگشاد گل ز روی نقاب (ص ۳۵)

(Cloud is crying like lovers as beautiful beloved opened mask from flower face.)

In these lines, the poet has compared the tears of lovers with rain who shed their tears like rain. As after rain flowers bloom and everything looks beautiful. So, after crying for lovers, sweetheart opens her mask and shows her beautiful face which looks like a rose.

دیدار تو چو مهر منیر از نجوم چرخ
ایام تو چو فصل بهار از فصول سال (ص ۳۱۷)

(To see you as the light of the sun from astronomer sky/by luck. Days with you like spring season from other seasons of the year.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet has compared the brightness of her beloved face with the light of the sun from the sky. He also remembers the days that he has spent with his beloved and uses the simile of the spring season for those days.

باده فراز آید ای ساقیان
همچو دو رخساره آن حورزاد (ص ۱۱۶)

(O Bartender! Bring a filled wine glass as two cheeks of that beautiful beloved.)
In these lines, the poet has addressed the bartender to fill the glass of wine and bring it to him. He has compared the color of the cheeks of his beloved with the color of the wine. Because of the color resemblance of both which is red.

از روی تو حشمت همه چون نرگس چشمست
در مدح تو دولت همه چون لاله دهانست(ص ۵۸)

(All modesty or pomp of your face is like eyes of daffodils. The whole universe is in praise of you like the mouth of a tulip.)

In these lines, the poet compares the beauty of his beloved with daffodils. As daffodils have the shape of eyes and her beloved eyes are very beautiful. Poet also says that the whole universe is praising you like tulip flowers as they are mouth-shaped.

نیبد خواه ز بادام چشم دلجویی
از آنکه آمد وقت شگوفه بادام (ص ۳۴۸)

(Ask for the wine drink from almond eyes for encouragement. At the moment of her arrival almond flowers blossomed.)

In these lines, the poet has described the color of her beloved eyes which is light brown. Almonds have the same color. Therefore, the poet used the simile of almonds to describe of eyes color of his beloved. He also compares the arrival of his beloved with spring that almonds flowers also blossomed to see her.

گردان ز عشقت ای بحسن چو لیلی
گرد بیابان و کوه و دشت چو مجنون (ص ۳۹۵)

(I am revolving in your love because you are as beautiful as Laila. Wondering in the wilderness, mountains, and forest-like Majnun.)

In these lines, the poet compares the beauty of her beloved with the beauty of Laila and the condition of a lover of Laila whose name was Qais but he was famous as Majnun which means mad. In the love with Laila, he was wandering in the wilderness, mountains, and forests.

ای خلق تو چو مشک و ز مشکت مرا نسیم

وی لفظ تو چو شهد ز شهدت مرا شفا (ص۷)

(You have been created from musk and your musk is my breeze. Your word is like honey and your honey is my healing.)

In these lines, the poet emphasizes the creation of his beloved who has been created from musk. He uses the simile of must to describe the body fragrance of his beloved. He compares her words with honey because the sweetness and sweet words always produce a healing effect on any person.

خجسته مجلس تو بستان خندان باد

دور کشیده صف دلبران چو سرو چمن (ص۳۸۹)

(Your auspicious party remains smiling like a garden. The faraway long row of lovers looks like the cypress in the garden.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet prays for his beloved that her party remains joyful. He used cypress trees in the garden as a simile of a faraway long row of lovers.

ای روی تو سوسن شگفتہ

چشم تو نو دمیده عیبر (ص۲۳۰)

(O! Your face bloomed like Lilly; your eyes blew like a new tulip.)

In these lines, the poet praises the face beauty of her beloved by using the simile of Lilly flower and compares her beautiful eyes to the blowing of a new tulip.

رخ بر افروز همچو مهر سپهر
سر بر افروز همچو سرو چمن (ص ۴۵۹)

(Illuminate your face like the sun in the sky. Bright your head like a cypress of the garden.)

In these lines, the poet describes the facial glow of her beloved with the light of the sun in the sky. Similarly, he mentions her head by using the simile of a cypress tree in the garden.

دو رخت لاله است و در وی توده بیینده مشک
دو لب لعل است و در وی رسته سی و دو درر (ص ۲۰۵)

(Your both cheeks are tulip and the fragrance of your breath is like musk. Your two lips are ruby and your thirty-two teeth are pearls.)

In these lines, the poet describes the beauty of cheeks and breathing of her beloved and he uses very technically the simile of tulip and musk. For praising the beauty of her red lips, he compares them to ruby. From the poet's point of view, the beautiful white teeth of her beloved are like pearls. The pearls are a metaphor for teeth.

باشد هرگز که باز بینم و بوسم
دو رخ گلگون یار و دو لب میگون (ص ۳۹۵)

(Is it possible that I see again and I kiss two rosy cheeks and two wine-colored lips?)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet expresses his wish that there is any possibility to see and kiss again to rose-colored cheeks and wine-colored lips of her beloved because he is in prison. He is in prison but he is missing his beloved and her beautiful cheeks and lips. It appears that he still has feelings of romance.

زلف تو چون مشک در مجر مگاه سوختن
چشم تو چون نرگس اندر باغ در وقت سحر (ص ۲۰۴)

(Your lock likes musk in firebox burnt. Your eyes are like tulips in the garden in the morning time.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet praises the fragrance of the lock of his sweetheart. He compares the fragrance of the lock with the musk burnt in the firebox. Then he uses the simile of a tulip in the garden in the morning for the eyes of his beloved.

زلفین تو ریحان دل عشاق تو جنت
دیدار تو خور دیده عشاق تو خاور (ص ۲۴۲)

Your locks are like sweet basil; the heart of your lovers is like paradise. Your confrontation likes the rising of the sun from the east.

In these lines, the poet admires the locks of his sweetheart whose fragrance resembles the fragrance of basil. The hearts of her lovers is like paradise and to see her is like the rising of the sun from the east. She is like the sun for the eyes of her lovers.

تیر جادو گه نگار سخن
شود از نوک کلک توحیران (ص ۳۸۰)

(Sometimes sweetheart your words are like magical arrows. The nib of your pen is shocking.)

In these lines, the poet uses the simile of magical arrows for the words of his sweetheart. She also knows romantic deceits which are shocking for the poet.

در چاه چو معشوق زلیخایم ازین عشق
ای خوبی تو خوبی معشوق زلیخا (ص ۱۷)

(Because of this love, I am like a lover of Zulekha in well. O beauty! Your beauty is like the heartthrob of Zulekha.)

The poet compares his love with the love of Hazrat Yousaf and Hazrat Zulekha. He compares attributes of her heartthrob of Zulekha.

ز آب عارض دارد بتم ز آتش رخ
نه بس شگفت بود بر صنوبر آتش و آب (ص ۲۳)

(The cheeks of my beloved have shone like water. That statue has a fire face. It is not surprising if water and fire are united on a pine tree.)

In the above lines, the poet describes the shining cheeks of his beloved which are like water. She is like a statue and her cheeks are as hot and red as fire. He is trying to say that it is impossible that fire and water to unite on a pine tree.

آن روشن و تیره عارض و زلفش
چون روی پری و رای اهریمن (ص ۳۹۲)

(Those bright cheeks and her dark locks are like fairy face and devil's pride.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet appreciates the cheeks and locks of her beautiful mistress. He uses the simile of a fairy face. His beloved is also proud due to her beauty. He compares her pride with the devil's pride. The technique of oxymoron has also been utilized which is bright and dark.

شرطی کردم که تا بر تو نیایم
بوسی ندیم بر آن عقیق چو شکر (ص ۶۲۰)

(I bet that I worship you. To kiss that agate friend like sugar.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet is ready to bet that he worships his beloved. He compares the sweetness of her kiss with sugar. He also used the metaphor of agate for the lips of his sweetheart.

بهار از نباشد مرا باک نیست

که قد تو سرو سست و روی ارغوان (ص ۴۰۳)

(Spring is not if my friend is not. Because your height likes cypress and face judas-tree, purple.)

In these lines, the poet compares the presence of his beloved with the spring season. In absence of his beloved; spring has no meaning for him. Because the height of his beloved is like tall cypress trees and her face resembles a Judas tree which has a purple color.

تاروی بتان باشد چون چشم سمن سرخ

تا پشت سمن باشد چون زلف بتان خم (ص ۳۶۵)

(Your face should be statue-like red eyes of Jasmine. Your lock should be curved like the back of Jasmine.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet compares the red eyes of his beloved with the Jasmine flower. He also uses the simile of Jasmine curve with his beloved locks.

دلشاد زی بدانکه بود او را

لب قند و روی سیب سمرقندی (ص ۵۲۸)

Make merry to know about her; sugar lips and face like Samarqand's apple.)

In these lines, the poet finds the pretext of remaining happy by thinking about her beloved who has sweet lips like sugar and a red face like the apple of Samarqand.

می خواه بوبیا چو رنگین عقیقی

بته خواه زیبا چو خرم بهاری (ص ۴۹۰)

(Wish wine smells like agate-color; wish statue beautiful like cheerful spring.)

In these lines, the poet uses the simile of agate for wine due to color resemblance. He uses the metaphor of a beautiful statue for her beloved who is as colorful as spring.

اندر برو کنار وی آن سرو لعنتی
اندر بهار بزم چو بلبل زند نوا (ص۴)

(Go inside her lap that cypress like beautiful woman. Inside is spring party as nightingale melodious song.)

In the above-mentioned lines, the poet advises himself to go inside the lap of that beautiful woman who is tall like a cypress tree. Because inside is the party of spring with melodious songs of the nightingale.

Conclusion

To sum up the whole discussion, we can say that a person in prison has the same feelings of love or romance as a free person. Every human being has feelings of love instinctively. The situation and environment cannot affect them. The similes used by Masud Sa'd Salman for the description of the beauty of his beloved and his own feelings are fresh. It is shocking fact that a person in a stinking environment of prison is talking about fragrances and flowers. For example, for the description of the face, he uses similes of flower, tulip, fairy face, Judas tree, and Samarcand's apple. For the color of cheeks, he uses similes of wine, tulip, roses, and for illumination moon. The similes of lips color are ruby, wine, agate and for taste is sugar. The shape of the eyes has been compared with daffodils, almonds, tulips, and the eyes are red like tulips and light brown like almonds. He calls her teeth to pearls. He also portrayed the locks of her beloved by comparing their fragrance with musk and basil. Her locks are curled which is compared with curled tulip and jasmine. Her mouth

shape is also like a tulip. Similarly, she has been created from musk. For the sweetness of her words, honey as a simile is used and the effect of her words on the heart of the poet is liked magical arrows. Her sight has been compared with the sight of a fairy, nymph, and brightened sun. To describe her height, the cypress tree is used as a simile and her pride has been compared with the pride of the devil. From the poet's point of view, she is as beautiful as Laila and the poet is like the sweetheart of Zulekha.

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