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**ABSTRACT**

*Ghalib has been regarded as a towering and celebrated figure in Urdu and Persian poetry for the last one hundred and fifty years. His poetry has multidimensional approaches, besides conventional issues of love and romanticism. The poetry includes meta-physical, philosophical, theological and mystical elements. Moreover, the universality of vision, deviation from the conventional ordinary themes, versatility of thoughts, all have given his poetry an everlasting fame and recognition. Due to these qualities, Ghalib's poetry has been a source of inspiration for all types of intelligentsia belonging either to romantic poetry or philosophy, theology, mysticism etc. His rich imagination, using of metaphors, paradoxes, irony, depths of thoughts, hinting the combination of Persian and Indian literary customs and culture, focusing the problems of the Self in transitory life and existence, deliberations on the mysteries of death and here-after, have given him unique place not only among the contemporaries but a status of lighthouse for the coming generations of poets. The objective of this research paper is to discover, in his general poetry such metaphysical thoughts, theosophical issues, mystical, epistemological revelations which elevated him from the rank of just a poet and has given him everlasting fame and 'Ghalib' on others.*

**Keywords:** Epistemology, Existentialism, Fatalism, Metaphysics, Ontology, Pantheism, Pantheism, Theology

**Introduction**

Ghalib is the pen name of Mirza Asad Ullah Khan (27 December 1797 – 15 February 1869). He has been celebrated as a poet of emotions, romance, wit and insight. He had been praised for the aesthetic elegance, linguistic mastery, romantic expressionism and lofty thoughts. His poetry is explicit masterpiece of lyrical beauty, versified sentiments, personification of metaphysics, elaboration of epistemological inquiries, and demonstration of ontological mysteries. Beneath the surface of his *ghazals*, there are profound engagements with metaphysical thoughts, mystic apprehensions, theological or Divine concerns and ontological perplexities. Thus '*Ghalib is Ghalib*' (*Ghalib is dominant*) is common phrase used in the literary gatherings by the persons having lofty sense of poetry.

**Deviation from Conventional Poetry**

Before Ghalib, there was conventional poetry possessing the themes of love, praise for the beauty of beloved, hate for the rival, the cruel nature of the sky or fate, complaints to the God,

desire for intimacy etc. Ghalib, though he frequently addressed such themes yet he had unique vision which distinguished him and marked his sublimed status among others. Besides general themes, he versified his metaphysical ideas in a very inspiring and insightful mode. He, in a mystical way proclaimed that the foundation of the loftiness and subtleness of his poetry *is due to reason that the subjects which he expressed, are revealed to him through the angel from beyond.*

آتے ہیں غیب سے یہ مضامین خیال میں  
غالب صریحاً خامہ نوائے سروش ہے

### Selectiveness of Reader

The main characteristic of his poetry is layer upon layer and layer beneath layer. Every layer unfolds itself according to the insight of the reader and reveals its meanings as per understanding and affiliation of the reader. He himself said: *We sell ourselves, with our own treasure of kalam, to the buyer but after measuring the buyer's temperament. In the second he said, the lightning of revelation had fallen on us, nor on the Toor mountain because we deserve for it, in the like manner we give the wine of knowledge, to the drinker by inspecting the depth of the insight of the seeker as drinker.*<sup>1</sup>

بک جاتے ہیں ہم آپ، متاعِ سخن کے ساتھ  
لیکن عیارِ طبع خریدار دیکھ کر  
گرنی تھی ہم پہ برقِ تجلی، نہ طور پر  
دیتے ہیں بادہ، ظرفِ قدحِ خوار دیکھ کر

### Gnostic Layers of Meanings

Ghalib is difficult to understand because every piece of poetry at first glance shows common meanings and casts impacts on the reader emotionally and lyrically. But in the other mood or in the contemplative state, the same verse enchants the reader's personality with the depths of insight and at any other occasion the same verse becomes enigmatic and mystical intuitive revelation. As he himself said that: *Every word which takes place in my poetry, consider it a talisman of profound meaning:*<sup>2</sup>

گنجینہ معنی کا طلسم اس کو سمجھیے  
جو لفظ کہ، غالب، مرے اشعار میں آوے

Ghalib's poetry reveals its meaning step by step to its readers. The first stage is for general readers who are interested in conventional themes, the next stage is for those who reflect and have insight. This selectiveness of readers gives his poetry the metaphysical touch which remains hidden from common people and they regard his poetry as difficult. But for the second group, it reveals the treasure trove of meanings about the metaphysical problems of human beings. The meanings open themselves to the reader layer by layer to the selected people. Then they would be able to comprehend Ghalib's metaphysical views, his philosophy of life-after life and the meanings of existence etc.

نہ پوچھو وسعت مے خانہ جنوں غالب  
جہاں یہ کاسہ گردوں ہے ایک خاک انداز

The poetry envisions a lot of common topics and subtle metaphysical issues. The literary scholars have written much on Ghalib's poetry and it is their business to view his literary characteristics. Consequently, in this brief article, the focus is not evaluation of the poetical or literary features of Ghalib's poetry. But the main objective is to highlight his metaphysical approach that how he has viewed and explored such topics which are not generally the part of the poetry but they are grave and perplexing metaphysical problems and have relation to either to philosophy, epistemology, ontology, mysticism or theology. Thus here, only the main metaphysical themes of his poetry will be explored to demonstration Ghalib's philosophical insight towards the metaphysical ideas on epistemological basis which he addressed in his poetry as imaginative issues and *he aspired to expressed if possible such meanings of the treasure trove of latent mysteries of which his heart and brain is full:*

آتش کدہ ہے سینہ مرا راز سے  
اے وائے اگر معرض اظہار میں آوے

Though he was neither a philosopher like Plato, Aristotle, al Farabi, ibn Sina nor a mystic like Ibn Arbi, Al-Hallaj, nor a theologian like Al-Ghazal, Averroes but he was a poet with broader vision about the human life having latently theological, philosophical, mystical perspectives. He himself evaluates his insight that: *when the mountain streams found no way to flow, they flooded and gush out from the brinks, in the same manner when I feel arrest of thought and expression, something unique way I found to express.*<sup>3</sup>

پاتے نہیں جب راہ تو چڑھ جاتے ہیں نالے  
رکتی ہے مری طبع تو ہوتی ہے رواں اور

He had not authored any book on philosophy or mysticism. But his poetry is full metaphysical metaphors, imaginations and reflective issues which are traditionally addressed by philosophers and mystics and theologians alike. Ghalib's worth is to deal with such critical and grave question in his poetry with delicacy and deep insight. That is why he said: *there are a lot of excellent man of letters, but it is recognized that Ghalib's manner is unique:*

ہیں اور بھی دنیا میں سخنور بہت اچھے  
کہتے ہیں کہ غالب کا ہے انداز بیاں اور

This paper seeks to identify, discuss and evaluate the key metaphysical themes which recur within Ghalib's poetry and to give due worth to his works keeping in view of his philosophical dimension of the *magical treasure trove of meanings* (گنجینہ معنی کا طلسم) as resource for metaphysical inquiry in the poetic tradition.

Before approaching Ghalib's metaphysical thoughts and prior to make analysis of their nature and importance, it is convenient to understand the meaning of metaphysics and relevant themes philosophically in the light of Ghalib's poetry. Ghalib had discussed such as themes: *Metaphysics, Cosmology, Ontology, Epistemology, Mysticism, Pantheism, Panentheism, Existence and Nothingness, The Divine, relationship between the God, Universe, status of Human Beings,*

*problem of Justice and liberty, Fatalism, Desire, Absurdity, The Burden of Being: Metaphysical Anxieties, Death, Love, Selfhood, meaning of Suffering, Existential conditions, Time, Identity, and Mortality, Psychology. He embedded all these themes within in versified forms as lyrical ghazals as his sublimated poetry. Thus he said for himself Ghalib is addressing in a very particular manner and it is open call for the critics:*

ادائے خاص سے غالب ہوا ہے نکتہ سرا  
صلائے عام ہے یاران نکتہ داں کے لئے

Only the selected themes are being explained here with Ghalib's own poetry in relation to metaphysical paradigm.

### What is Metaphysics?

The term Metaphysics (*Ta meta ta phusika*) generally means 'above physical things'. This term was coined for Aristotle's works which were related to first principles or ultimate causes of things or *un-sense-able* realities and which were not in the domain of scientific investigations. Aristotle called it *Sophia* or *Wisdom*. He sometimes called it *Being Qua Being* (the study of being as it is), or theology because it dealt with such especial kind of being which was called God.<sup>4</sup> Metaphysics is philosophical investigation of the structure, nature and constitution of reality. Traditionally its domain is non-physical realities such as God.<sup>5</sup> Metaphysics includes Philosophy, Theology, Ontology and Mysticism. In Ghalib's poetry these metaphysical concept are here:

نہ تھا کچھ تو خدا تھا، کچھ نہ ہوتا تو خدا ہوتا  
ڈبویا مجھ کو ہونے نے، نہ ہوتا میں تو کیا ہوتا  
اسے کون دیکھ سکتا، کہ یگانہ ہے وہ یکتا  
جو دوئی کی بو بھی ہوتی تو کہیں دو چار ہوتا

Who can see Him? He is the One and Only. If there would have been any shadow of Duality, we would have come across to Him anywhere.

ہم موحد ہیں ہمارا کیش ہے ترک رسوم  
ملتیں جب مٹ گئیں اجزائے ایماں ہو گئیں  
اے جہاں آفریں خدا کے کریم  
صنائع ہفت چرخ، ہفت اقلیم  
کس سے ہو سکتی ہے مداحی ممدوح خدا  
کس سے ہو سکتی ہے آرائش فردوس بریں

### Cosmology of Miraz Ghalib:

The term '*cosmology*' (Greek: *kosmos*: the universe+ *Logos*: theory or study) means the knowledge of the cosmos or universe as a whole with structure, constitution and composition.<sup>6</sup> It is knowledge about the origin and growth of cosmos (not just the world or the earth). There were many mythological and theological explanations among the Babylonians, Egyptians and Greeks about the genesis of the cosmos.<sup>7</sup> But the main feature of philosophical cosmology was

that its basis was rational rather than any supernatural forces or Divine. All these philosophical cosmologies assumed that there is a fundamental unifying principle of the origin of the cosmos. Earlier philosopher found it as any one material element latter philosophers assumed many primordial matters. Since Pythagorean concept of 'Numbers' and Parmenides' concept of 'The Being' there appeared the Idealism or non-material element. The new idea of dualism took place which Ghalib refused to accept. He proclaimed the Idealistic ideas which claimed the reality of the world is ideals or the ideas as Plato and Hegel propagated. Ghalib said:

جُز نام نہیں صورت عالم مجھے منظور  
جُز وہم نہیں ہستی اشیاء مرے آگے

But he never forgot or ignored the importance of matter yet he thought it secondary.

لطافت بے کثافت جلوہ پیدا کر نہیں سکتی  
چمن زنگار ہے آئینہ باد بہاری کا  
اسدا ان ساری تشبیہوں کو رد کر کے یہ کہتا ہے  
سویدا اس کو سمجھے اُس کو ہم نور خدا سمجھے  
نقش معنی ہمہ خمیازہ 'عرض صورت  
سخن حق ہمہ پیانہ ذوق تحسین

Philosophically, cosmology is rational investigation coupled with scientific evidence and substantial speculations. Since earlier philosophers who were not only rationalists but also the predecessors of scientific explorations. Thus cosmology had been main concern of philosophy, science, theology and Sufism. Modern cosmology greatly concerned with observation and empirical evidences which are related to natural sciences e.g. physics but metaphysics is the main objective. Modern cosmology embraced the aspects of the genesis, development, size, possibilities of discovery of other universes, nature of matter, time, space, energy etc.<sup>8</sup> as he elaborated:

ھے کہاں تمنا کا دوسرا قدم یا رب  
ہم نے دشت امکاں کو ایک نقش پایا  
باز بچہ اطفال ہے دنیا مرے آگے  
ہوتا ہے شب و روز تماشا مرے آگے  
اک کھیل ہے اور نگِ سلیمان مرے نزدیک  
اک بات ہے اعجازِ میحاً مرے آگے  
مہرباں ہو کے بلا لوجھے، چاہو جس وقت  
میں گیا وقت نہیں ہوں کہ پھر آ بھی نہ سکوں

اے پر تو خورشید جہاں تاب ادھر بھی  
 سائے کی طرح ہم پہ عجب وقت پڑا ہے  
 سب کہاں؟ کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئیں  
 خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہوں گی کہ پنہاں ہو گئیں  
 نمود عالم اسباب کیا ہے؟ لفظ بے معنی  
 کہ ہستی کی طرح مجھ کو عدم میں بھی تامل ہے

### Ontological Ideas of Mirza Ghalib:

The word 'ontology' is from the Greek. (*ontos*: something existing + *logia*: a study). It is the central domain of metaphysics. It deals with the nature of being and philosophical analysis of existence or reality.<sup>9</sup> (Latin: 'ex' means out of + 'sistere' means cause to stand) means *something there*.<sup>10</sup> Ontological problems of existence are the basic theme of metaphysics and philosophy. This word 'Existence' entails the question that what is there? If there is something then how it was created? By whom it was created? How the transitory things come into existence or lost existence? Is there any permanent substance? How these transitory existences can be known? Either only the known things exist or are there something which are not known but they do exist? So the '*that is*' (existence) and '*what is*' (essence) are main metaphysical issues which belongs to Ontological and epistemological domains of metaphysics. It also deals with such existences like mind, persons, universals facts, and numbers. Whatever things are there, whether they exist necessarily or contingently and why there is something instead of other something else? This also discusses religious creeds relating to Divine.<sup>11</sup>

Ghalib frequently reflects on the mysteries of 'existence' and also on 'nothingness'. He asked questions about the nature of 'existence'. 'Existence' and 'Nothingness' are his prominent subjects. He deals with them epistemologically as well as psychologically. He suspects that whatever is there: whether they really exist? Is existence has any meanings or it is just an illusion and there is just absurdity and nothingness? Ghalib highlighted these issues very frequently as an elevated visionary mind but not replied to these questions because he was not a philosopher but an insightful poet. He described his ontological questions as: He inquired about the transitory nature of things as:

نقش فریادی ہے کس کی شوخی تحریر کا  
 کاغذی ہے پیر ہن ہر پیکر تصویر کا

He commented on the very crucial and prominent problem of Muslim Philosophy i.e. the problem of the 'Necessary Being' (*wajib al wajood*) nature of God and the 'Possible existence' (*mumkin al wajood*) nature of the existences including his being and also other things:

نہ تھا کچھ تو خدا تھا، کچھ نہ ہوتا تو خدا ہوتا  
 ڈبویا مجھ کو ہونے نے، نہ ہوتا میں تو کیا ہوتا

He regarded all 'existence' as just illusion and favoured '*Nihilism*' which means 'nothing exists' or 'one's mind or body or the external world had ceased to exist'.<sup>12</sup>

نقش معنی ہمہ خمیازہ 'عرض صورت  
 سخن حق ہمہ پیمانہ ذوق تحسین  
 ہستی کے مت فریب میں آجایو آسد  
 عالم تمام حلقہ دام خیال ہے  
 ہستی ہے، نہ کچھ عدم ہے، غالب  
 آخر تو کیا ہے، اے نہیں ہے؟  
 ہاں، کھایو مت فریب ہستی  
 ہر چند کہیں کہ "ہے"، نہیں ہے  
 ہرزہ ہے نغمہ زیروم ہستی وعدم  
 لغو ہے آئینہ فرق جنون و تمکین

Sometimes he stressed on his own being as source of all knowledge as Protagoras has said "*Man is the measure of all things, of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not*"<sup>13</sup>. Ghalib describes:

اپنی ہستی ہی سے ہو جو کچھ ہو  
 آگہی گر نہیں غفلت ہی سہی  
 مری ہستی فضائے حیرت آباد تمنا ہے  
 جسے کہتے ہیں نالہ وہ اسی عالم کا عنقا ہے

To the issue of Existence the corollary problem is 'Nothingness', which Ghalib focused as (عدم). He addressed the problem:

پوچھے ہے کیا وجود و عدم اہل شوق کا  
 آپ اپنی آگ کے خس و خاشاک ہو گئے  
 میں عدم سے بھی پرے ہوں، ورنہ غافل! بارہا  
 میری آہ آتشیں سے بالِ عنقا جل گیا  
 نالے عدم میں چند ہمارے سپرد تھے  
 جو واں نہ کھنچ سکے سو وہ یاں آ کے دم ہوئے  
 ہے عدم میں غنچہ محو عبرت انجام گل  
 یک جہاں زانو تامل در قفائے خندہ ہے

He elaborated the Greek philosopher Zeno's idea of *Dialectics* which latter Karl Marx used as *Thesis, Anti-thesis and Synthesis*. In his poetry Ghalib used this method of argumentation in his cosmology and in the problem of *Existence and Nothingness*. He dialectically expressed:

ہستی ہماری اپنی فنا پر دلیل ہے  
یاں تک مٹے کہ آپ ہم اپنی قسم ہوئے  
مری تعمیر میں مضمحل ہے اک صورت خرابی کی  
ہیولی برق خرمن کا، ہے خون گرم دہقاں کا  
نظر میں ہے ہماری جادہ رِ راہ فنا غالب  
کہ یہ شیرازہ ہے عالم کے اجزائے پریشاں کا

Sometimes he treated this epistemologically on the psychological basis as:

انتہائی مجھ کو اپنی حقیقت سے بعد ہے  
جتنا کہ وہم غیر سے ہوں پیچ و تاب میں  
لیتا ہوں مکتبِ غم دل میں سبقِ ہنوز  
لیکن یہی کہ رفت گیا اور بود تھا

This is psychological condition in which a person probably in the state of depression denies one's own existence and this very often leads to suicidal attempts.

#### Epistemology of Mirza Ghalib:

The word '**epistemology**', (Greek *episteme* means *Knowledge*) is such branch of philosophy that deals with such questions as what is the source of knowledge?<sup>14</sup> What is the criterion of valid knowledge? What place occupies Reason (Rationalism), the Experience (Empiricism) or the Intuition (Revelation), Insight (Gnosticism), ESP (Extra Sensory Perception) in investigations about realities? What is the truth and what are the manners to verify the truth? What is the place of belief in knowledge? How doubt can be skipped? How certain knowledge can be achieved? Which one among the traditional sources of knowledge i.e. Experience, Rational, Intuition etc. is reliable?

This Epistemological investigation relied sometimes on any one or at other times on combination of any of the followings i.e. perception, proofs, memory, evidence, belief, certainty,<sup>15</sup> doubt, Mystic Experience, Gnosticism, etc. Ghalib investigates the epistemological question in various ways. He occasionally pointed out the source Divine source of Intuition:

آتے ہیں غیب سے یہ مضامین خیال میں  
غالب صریر خامہ نوائے سروش ہے

**Empiricism:** He considered the source of knowledge as '*empirical*', he endeavoured and thought that knowledge can be attained only by the person who himself has borne and gone through experiences he described that:



ان کو کیا علم کہ کشتی پہ مری کیا گزری  
 دوست جو ساتھ مرے تالاب ساحل آئے  
 آگ سے پانی میں بجھتے وقت اٹھتی ہے صدا  
 ہر کوئی در ماندگی میں نالے سے ناچار ہے  
 شورِ پندناصح نے زخم پر نمک چھڑکا  
 آپ سے کوئی پوچھے تم نے کیا مزایا

**Scepticism:** He doubted the possibility of gaining any kind of knowledge and elaborated it:

کہہ سکے کون کہ یہ جلوہ گری کس کی ہے  
 پردہ چھوڑا ہے وہ اُس نے کہ اُٹھائے نہ بنے

Sometimes he suspects the possibility of knowledge as the Greek Sophist Protagoras had propagated that: *There exists nothing; if there is something, we can know nothing; if we know anything, we cannot communicate it.* Ghalib said:

کہ ہستی کی طرح مجھ کو عدم میں بھی تامل ہے  
 نہ رکھ پابند استغنا کو قیدی رسمِ عالم کا  
 ہر قدم دوری منزل ہے نمایاں مجھ سے  
 میری رفتار سے بھاگے ہے، بیاباں مجھ سے  
 ہم وہاں ہیں جہاں سے ہم کو بھی  
 کچھ ہماری خبر نہیں آتی  
 آتش کدہ ہے سینہ مرار از نہاں سے  
 اے وائے اگر معرض اظہار میں آوے  
 بات پرواں زبان کٹتی ہے  
 وہ کہیں اور سنا کرے کوئی  
 بک رہا ہوں جنوں میں کیا کیا کچھ  
 کچھ نہ سمجھے خدا کرے کوئی  
 شرح اسبابِ گرفتاری خاطر مت پوچھ  
 اس قدر تنگ ہو اذل کہ میں زنداں سمجھا

Sometimes he treated epistemological ineffability on psychological foundation (as the Mysticism has the same characteristic).<sup>16</sup>

پھر وضع احتیاط سے رکنے لگا ہے دم  
 برسوں ہوئے ہیں چاک گریباں کئے ہوئے  
 رونے سے اے ندیم ملامت نہ کر مجھے  
 آخر کبھی تو عقدہ دل وا کرے کوئی  
 کب وہ سنتا ہے کہانی میری  
 اور پھر وہ بھی زبانی میری  
 رہی نہ طاقت گفتار اور اگر ہو بھی  
 تو کس امید پہ کہیے کہ آرزو کیا ہے  
 غیر پھر تا ہے لیے یوں ترے خط کو کہ، اگر  
 کوئی پوچھے کہ یہ کیا ہے، تو چھپائے نہ بنے  
 اُدھر وہ بدگمانی ہے اُدھر یہ ناتوانی ہے  
 نہ پوچھا جائے ہے اُس سے، نہ بولا جائے ہے مجھ سے  
 یارب وہ نہ سمجھے ہیں نہ سمجھیں گے مری بات  
 دے اور دل ان کو، جو نہ دے مجھ کو زباں اور  
 تھا خواب میں خیال کو تجھ سے معاملہ  
 جب آنکھ کھل گئی نہ زیاں تھا نہ سود تھا

**Ascertainism:** On certain occasions he emphatically stresses his being as the vicegerent of God's knowledge which was given to Adam and he being the inheritor of that legacy has the right to know. Moses was prophet and his source of knowledge was 'Intuition' and 'Revelation' from God, he obeyed everything but Human beings have been endowed with other sources of knowledge thus he demands answers in every case therefore he clarified his epistemological position as:

کیا فرض ہے کہ سب کو ملے ایک سا جواب  
 آؤ نہ ہم بھی سیر کریں کوہ طور کی  
 محرم نہیں ہے تو ہی نواہائے راز کا  
 یاں ورنہ جو حجاب ہے، پردہ ہے ساز کا  
 پُر ہوں میں شکوے سے یوں، راگ سے جیسے باجا  
 اک ذرا چھیڑے پھر دیکھیے کیا ہوتا ہے

**Theological ideas:**

The word 'theology' has been derived, from Greek *Theos* (god) or *Logos* (knowledge). *Theology* means the knowledge about God and His relation towards and with the universe.<sup>17</sup> Some times this term covers the whole contents of religion<sup>18</sup> i.e. the concept of life, the death after life, fatalism etc. The word *Kalam* has been used for theology that means the words of Divine. It has been derived from the Greek *Logos*. The *theologians* are called *ahl e kalam* or *mutakallimun*.<sup>19</sup> Ghalib was not a theologian but as a genius he focused on the problems of life, creations and had the idea of a creator thus he versified his ideas relating to theology and had thrown light on the theological issues. He proclaimed himself as the Monist. This means the 'Creator is only One and everything else is His creation'. He said:

اسے کون دیکھ سکتا، کہ یگانہ ہے وہ یکتا  
جو دوئی کی بو بھی ہوتی تو کہیں دو چار ہوتا  
ہم موحد ہیں ہمارا کیش ہے ترک رسوم  
مٹتیں جب مٹ گئیں اجزائے ایماں ہو گئیں  
دہر جز جلوہ 'یکتائی' معشوق نہیں  
ہم کہاں ہوتے اگر حسن نہ ہوتا خود میں

His poetry engages other theological issues such as: Heaven and Hell; Prayers and Rituals; Life and Death; Faithfulness and steadfastness to faith and God; Fatalism and Freewill,

ہم کو معلوم ہے جنت کی حقیقت لیکن  
دل کے خوش رکھنے کو غالب یہ خیال اچھا ہے  
کیوں نہ فردوس میں دوزخ کو ملا لیں، یارب  
سیر کے واسطے تھوڑی سی فضا اور سہی  
جانتا ہوں ثواب طاعت وزہد  
پر طبعیت ادھر نہیں آتی  
طاعت میں تار ہے نہ مے وانگہیں کی لاگ  
دوزخ میں ڈال دو کوئی لے کر بہشت کو  
مرتے ہیں آرزو میں مرنے کی  
موت آتی ہے پر نہیں آتی  
جان تم پر نثار کرتا ہوں  
میں نہیں جانتا دعا کیا ہے؟  
ایماں مجھے روکے ہے، جو کھینچے ہے مجھے کفر  
کعبہ مرے پیچھے ہے کلیسا مرے آگے

تمہیں نہیں ہے سر رشتہ وفا کا خیال  
 ہمارے ہاتھ میں کچھ ہے، مگر ہے کیا؟ کہیے  
 تم سے بے جا ہے مجھے اپنی تباہی کا گلہ  
 اس میں کچھ شائبہِ نحوئی تقدیر بھی تھا  
 موت کی راہ نہ دیکھوں؟ کہ بن آئے نہ رہے  
 تم کو چاہوں؟ کہ نہ آؤ، تو بلائے نہ بنے  
 خانہ ویراں سازیِ عشق جفا پیشہ نہ پوچھ  
 نامرادوں کا خط تقدیر تک بھی سادہ ہے

Ghalib, in very interestingly, ironically and psychologically manner addressed the general theological issues in his poetical genius poetry.

### Mysticism of Mirza Ghalib

Form the Greek *muo* or *mysterion* the term Mysticism has been derived that means 'to shut or close the eyes or lips'.<sup>20</sup> Thus *mysticism* had its origin in the Greek mysteries and a *mystic* means the person who had been initiated into the mysterious and esoteric knowledge about the Divine.<sup>21</sup> Mystic means such a person who had a belief and practice of seeking to intimate and communion with the Deity.<sup>22</sup> This communion occurs through epistemological state named as *mystic experience*<sup>23</sup> which has the characteristics of being Ineffability, Noetic, Un-analysability, Clandestine Metaphorical Language, Incommunicability, Transiency and Transitory, Immediacy, Intimacy with the Super Ego, Passivity, Voluntary meditations, After-effects, Orison, gnosis, Illumination.

Mysticism occupied a vital portion in all religions either natural or revealed ones. Even it has two forms theistic and non-theistic.<sup>24</sup> The people following the former claimed to have closeness to God through this experience which is a granted blessing while the latter claimed that it can be induced and controlled by some something. Both of the groups accept its unique epistemology and regard it a mode of life. There are others who consider it an abnormal mode of life and said it is good topic for discussion. (برائے گفتن خوب است) In any case it has great place in philosophy as well as in poetry. It has its own paradigm of explain the cosmology, ontology and epistemology, philosophy and meta-physics. The main theme of Sufism is to describe the Divine or God and the status of the universe. This topic has been discussed by the mystics under various headings such as 'Pantheism', 'Panentheism', Deism, Emanation etc.<sup>25</sup> but the first and the second ones are the most commonly focused theories of the mystics.

Such genius like Ghalib who had his own Cosmological Ontological and Metaphysical ideas had special attachment to approach to mystical problems he said:

یہ مسائل تصوف یہ ترا بیان غالب  
 تجھے ہم ولی سمجھتے، جو نہ بادہ خوار ہوتا

### Ghalib's Mystical Cosmology: 'Pantheism' or 'Panentheism'

He contributed to Mystic cosmology of 'Pantheism' as well as 'Panentheism'. In his poetry both types of ideas are found. Here I will mention the verses from his poetry and distinguish his

adherence either to 'Pantheism' or 'Panentheism'. Some brief introduction is necessary here to understand Ghalib's point of view.

**Pantheism:** It is stated that the mystic cosmological idea of Pantheism was presented by Sheikh Muhyi Al Din Ibn-i-Arabi (1165-1240).<sup>26</sup> It is combination of two Arabic words i.e. "*Wahdat*" means *unity* and "*Wajood*" means *objects*. The literal meanings are "the unity of beings". This cosmology explains that God is the only Being who exists by virtue of His own right and the remaining other existences are just His manifestations. "*Wajood*" belongs to God alone.<sup>27</sup>

دہر جز جلوہ 'یکتائی معشوق نہیں  
ہم کہاں ہوتے اگر حسن نہ ہوتا خود میں  
اصل شہود و شاہد و مشہود ایک ہے  
حیراں ہوں پھر مشاہدہ ہے کس حساب میں  
قطرہ دریا میں جو مل جائے تو دریا ہو جائے  
کام اچھا ہے وہ، جس کا کہ مال اچھا ہے  
عشرت قطرہ ہے دریا میں فنا ہو جانا  
درد کا حد سے گزرنا ہے دوا ہو جانا  
سب کو مقبول ہے دعویٰ تری یکتائی کا  
رو برو کوئی بت آئینہ سیما نہ ہوا

**Panentheism:** That view had been presented by Mujadid Alif Thani Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi (1563-1624).<sup>28</sup> In Arabic it had been termed as "*Wah'dat-ul-Shuhood*". The difference between the terms is: *Pantheism* means "all is God" and *Pan-entheism* means "all is in God".<sup>29</sup> Consider the example: if anyone takes a piece of sponge and soak it into water. Then analyse this completely soaked piece of sponge, though it would be full of water but it would not be water itself. Both will remain separate things. Likely, the world is separate from the God but it is full of God. On the other hand, though God is in the universe but He is separate from the universe also. It is not the case that God is universe or the Universe is God. On the contrary God is in the universe as well as other than the universe.<sup>30</sup> He asserts the existence of other beings and the selves as:

گردش ساغر صد جلوہ 'رنگیں، تجھ سے  
آئینہ دارئی یک دیدہ 'حیراں، مجھ سے  
ہوں میں بھی تماشا ئی نیرنگ تمنا  
مطلب نہیں کچھ اس سے کہ مطلب ہی بر آوے

سب کہاں؟ کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئیں  
 خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہوں گی کہ پنہاں ہو گئیں  
 بوئے گل، نالہ دل، دود چراغ محفل  
 جو تری بزم سے نکلا، سو پریشاں نکلا  
 خاکیوں کو جو خدا نے دیئے جان و دل و دیں  
 تیری مدحت کے لئے ہیں دل و جاں کام و زباں  
 میں ہوں مشتاق جفا، مجھ پہ جفا اور سہی  
 تم ہو بیداد سے خوش، اس سے سوا اور سہی  
 یہ کس بہشت شائل کی آمد آمد ہے؟  
 کہ غیر جلوہ گل رہ گزر میں خاک نہیں  
 پھر اس انداز سے بہار آئی  
 کہ ہوئے مہر و مہ تماشا کی  
 دیکھو اے ساکنان خطہ خاک  
 اس کو کہتے ہیں عالم آرائی  
 ہوتا ہے نہاں گرد میں صحرا مرے ہوتے  
 گھستا ہے جبین خاک پہ دریا مرے آگے  
 سنبھلنے دے مجھے اے ناامیدی! کیا قیامت ہے  
 کہ دامن خیال یار، چھوٹا جائے ہے مجھ سے  
 ہوش اڑتے ہیں مرے، جلوہ گل دیکھ، اسد  
 پھر ہوا وقت، کہ ہو بال کشاموج شراب

The above mentioned pieces of poetry depict that Ghalib did not deny the existence of other beings and he was exponent of panentheism. But the fact is there that he expressed his ideas as pantheist also. However, occasional references to a transcendent, unknowable God reveal panentheistic undertones, suggesting a nuanced and ambiguous metaphysical vision. Ultimately, Ghalib's work exemplifies a rich poetic metaphysics where pantheistic and panentheistic elements coexist, reflecting the pluralistic nature of Indo-Persian thought. Through close textual analysis and situating Ghalib within the Indo-Persian mystical tradition, the study shows that Ghalib's metaphysics is primarily pantheistic, rooted in the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujūd* (Unity of Being). His poetry represents existence as an illusion and burden, expressing a longing for annihilation in the Absolute.

The solution to this diversity of ideas is that he was neither a philosopher nor a mystic, thus his ideas cannot be categorized in strict academic manner. He was a genius thus he expressed his ideas in poetry but if we search in him the academic philosophical disciplines and dictionary meaning, it would be our mistake but not that of Ghalib. He had multidimensional ideas whatever his imagination perceived he expressed them. In short his contribution provided a vast imaginative ground for synthesis of philosophy, metaphysics, mysticism and poetry. Those who do not belong to any above fields they can enjoy these subtle ideas in poetry of Mirza Asad Ullah Khan Ghalib.

### Conclusion

Ghalib's poetry goes beyond mere romantic sentiment and generally focused topics of common poetry. He explores the intricacies of human life and the secrets of the cosmos, questioning accepted wisdom and promoting reflection. He used symbolism, imagery, imaginations, paradox, to probe and explore challenging conventional understanding and encouraging introspection. Ghalib's poetry is deeply immersed in metaphysical issues including ontological, epistemological and existential themes. He had a sublimed sense of the Self, ability of reflective thinking, power of rich imagination, sense of asking questions about causes of existences and human condition within the frame of life-after coupled with fatalism. He explores such existential questions as epistemological investigation about the nature of Divine or God, ontological explorations of the world and hereafter, the nature of things as perceived by senses or rational, the nature of the transitory essence of life, the pursuit of meaning in a world that is frequently seen as an illusion, connection and nature between the material and spiritual worlds, human existence, life, death, the boundaries of human understanding, mysteries of the universe etc. He embraced such topics as a poet but not as an academic philosopher thus he himself said:

ہیں اور بھی دنیا میں سخنور بہت اچھے  
کہتے ہیں کہ غالب کا ہے انداز بیاں اور

### Notes and References:

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- <sup>2</sup> Mirza Asad Ullah Kjan Ghalib, *Dewan e Ghalib*, 138.
- <sup>3</sup> Sayyid Fayyaz Mahmud, *Ghalib: A Critical Introduction* (Lahore: University of the Punjab, 1969).
- <sup>4</sup> Nicholas Bunnin and Jiyuan Yu, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 429.
- <sup>5</sup> Robert Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 564.
- <sup>6</sup> Nicholas Bunnin, 147.
- <sup>7</sup> Nicholas Bunnin, 146.
- <sup>8</sup> Nicholas Bunnin, 147.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Winston Dictionary* (Chicago: The John C. Winston Company), 679.
- <sup>10</sup> Nicholas Bunnin, 236.
- <sup>11</sup> A. R. Lacey, *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1996), 206.

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- <sup>12</sup> David Matsumoto, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 154.
- <sup>13</sup> Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1996), 94.
- <sup>14</sup> Simon Blackburn, *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 118.
- <sup>15</sup> Thomas Mautner, *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 194.
- <sup>16</sup> cf. Muhammad Iqbal Shah, Ali Raza Tahir, Mahrukh and Zanaib Ali, "The Psychological Gnosticism of Mystic Experience: A Critical Evaluation of A Mystic (Al-Qush'ayri), A Psychologist (W. James) and A Philosopher (M. Iqbal)." *Al-Qamar*, Volume 7, Issue 3 (2024 July-September):65-86.  
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- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/theology>
- <sup>18</sup> Royston Pike, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Religions* (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1951), 374.
- <sup>19</sup> Cyril Glasse, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (London: Stacey International, 1989), 216.
- <sup>20</sup> F. C. Happold, *Mysticism: A Study and An Anthology* (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), 18.
- <sup>21</sup> F. C. Happold, 18.
- <sup>22</sup> Royston Pike, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Religions* (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1951), 268
- <sup>23</sup> cf. Muhammad Iqbal Shah, "The Psychological Gnosticism of Mystic Experience:  
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- <sup>24</sup> Robert Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 593.
- <sup>25</sup> Muhammad Iqbal Shah and Ali Raza Tahir, "Theosophical Cosmologies And Iqbal's Contribution: Cosmos As Sentient Entity," *Al-Hikmat*, no. 39 (2019):31-48.  
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- <sup>28</sup> Dr Abdul Khaliq, 136.
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- <sup>30</sup> Robert Audi, 460.