

Subject: Spiritual Human

Article: 8

Holistic Wisdom

Doç. Dr. Haluk Berkmen

It was Pythagoras (around 500 BC) who first coined the term "Philosophy". When asked if he is a wise man, he replied that he is "a lover of wisdom or a *Philo-sophos*". Where 'Philo' means love and 'Sophos' means wisdom in Greek. Philosophy is accepted in general as the rational investigation of questions about existence, knowledge and ethics. In ancient times philosophy was part of the study of the origin, and sometimes the development, of the universe, the creator and the created -especially the human being- a theory of everything named **Cosmogony**.

Nowadays we have split cosmogony into several independent disciplines and lost the ancient all-embracing-view of 'what and why is'. Science is only interested in questions starting with "how?", but skips questions that start with a why? Holistic Wisdom, on the other hand, does not disregard the reason behind all existent and tries to embrace the origin of existence. Human consciousness will never be satisfied if question starting with "why" are left aside.

Islamic mystics known as Sufi people have tried to live spirituality without trying to address questions starting with a "how". They were participators into existence instead of being mere observers. They knew that any approach to wisdom should first be felt deep in the soul before trying to convey such feelings and realizations to other human beings. According to the Sufi, when it comes to answer questions regarding the origin of all things one has to be a lover and not an intellectual. Here is a poem of **Mevlâna Jelaluddin Rumi** explaining the difference between an intellectual and a lover:

The intellectual is always showing off; the lover is always getting lost. The intellectual runs away, afraid of drowning; the whole business of love is to drown in the sea. Intellectuals plan their repose; lovers are ashamed to rest. The lover is always alone, even surrounded with people; like water and oil, he remains apart.

The man who goes to the trouble of giving advice to a lover gets nothing. He is mocked by passion. Love is like musk. It attracts attention. Love is a tree, and lovers are its shade. [1]

The great mystic lover, poet and wise person Mevlana was able to convey the essence of being a true human being. His wisdom has transgressed the culture of his time and has reached the present era in order to enlighten those with a receptive heart. Here are his wise advises:

Didn't I say, "Don't go there; I am your friend. In this mirage of existence, I am the fountain of life". Even if your anger takes you a hundred thousand years away, in the end you will return, for I am your goal.

Didn't I say, "Don't be content with earthly forms; I am the designer of the intimate chamber of your contentment."

Didn't I say, "I am the sea, and you are a single fish; don't strand yourself on dry land; I am your clear sea."

Didn't I say, "Don't get caught in the trap like a helpless bird; I am the power of flight, your feet and your wings."

Didn't I say, "They will waylay you and make you cold; I am the fire and your warm desire."

Didn't I say, "They will implant their qualities in you until you forget that the best qualities are here."

Didn't I say, "You do not know from what direction your affairs are put in-order." [2]

Mevlâna is not talking from his observing ego, but from his participating spirit. Even after so many intellectual achievements, the present human being is full of unanswered questions. As long as we will refuse to acknowledge such advises of wise people, we will continue to exist as split personalities; a holistic part of us participating into the energy of an engulfing Creator and an analytic part of us rejecting any reality transcending simple observation.

[1] **Love is a Stranger**, RUMI translated by Kabir Helminski, Threshold Books, 1993, page 21.

[2] Ref. 1, page 22.