

Flattery Harm in Social Interactions and its Pathology from Imam Ali's Viewpoint

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Abstract

Background and Objective: The issue of flattery and its individual and social consequences are regarded as a moral vice in many human societies and the higher degree of this trait in the society, the more regression and decline. Therefore, the aim of this study was to examine the harms of flattery in the social relations and its pathology from Imam Ali's viewpoint.

Method: This study was conducted through reviewing texts, and the authors have tried to study different dimensions and damages of the flattery in social interactions, using books and articles in the associated fields of religious sciences and psychology with an emphasis on the Nahjol-Balagheh. The researchers declared no conflicts of interest.

Results: The results showed, in the view of Imam Ali, flattery stems from stupidity and humiliation, those in power who like flattering, and the culture of fostering flattering. This is all rooted in atheism and ignorance, the ultimate goal being ego and its outcome being humiliation.

Conclusion: Based on the results, it can be concluded that flattering in humans is a relational matter and it results from the action and interaction of the strong and the weak, a social harm which dates back to long time ago, threatening social health.

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Summary

Background and Objective: Due to their important role in the fate of human and society, moral values have long been the focus of religious thinkers and leaders. This is because the moral values have removed society from any damage and show the way to victory and happiness for human (1). They are also one of the most important ways to survive and promote the health of social life (2). Given that, the growth and excellence of society depends on reforming its individual and social culture and ethics.

One of the issues that threaten social health is flattery. The concept of flattery and its individual and social consequences are regarded as a moral vice in many human societies, and in fact the higher degree of this trait in the society, the more regression and decline in the society. Taken that into account, the aim of this study was to examine the harms of flattery in the social

relations and its pathology from the viewpoint of Imam Ali.

Method: This research was a review study in nature, and the authors has tried to refer to books and articles in the related fields of religious sciences with an emphasis on the Nahjol-Balagheh and the subject-related psychology. Moreover, websites were searched using keywords including ethics, moral, flattery, hypocrisy. Then, the collection of traditions, extracts, narrations, quotes and the related texts, and different dimensions of damage of flattery in the social interactions of individuals were investigated.

Results: The results showed that flattery happens in relationship and that interactions between individuals make a society more flattering or more honest and there is always flattery on both sides, one being the agent of flattery and the other being flattered. This relational system is the product of action and interaction of the powerful and the weak of the individuals of society. The flattering behaviors fall into

four categories: high compliment, loving kindness, alignment of ideas, and pretense, issued by flattering individuals for their own benefit and for the satisfaction of people from on high. In the view of Imam Ali, the root of this damage is stupidity and humiliation, those in power who like flattering, and the culture of flattering. This is all rooted in atheism and ignorance, the ultimate goal being ego and its outcome being humiliation.

Conclusion: According to the results, it can be concluded that flattery, as one of the moral vices, causes man to depart from divine values so that material values become the criterion for his prosperity, thus commencing his captivity. Flattery is a state of weakness and a kind of human bondage that is committed against other people in order to gain profits and gain material benefits. It turns the important principle of honesty and criticism into a pretense; it takes the dynamics and freedom of thought from individuals and drives them to a mental inanition. It will also create false pride among the powerful and deprive them of long-term association with the people (3). And finally, they do a lot of damage to social health.

So it can be generally inferred that if communication in culture and social relations is not based on sound ethical standards, flattery will be used as a tool of progress. The lack of realism and meritocracy in the bureaucratic systems and the realms of power and politics, plus the lack of rationalism-driven initiatives and creativity, lead some to praise or create discipline and emotional connection with the managers of various organizations.

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Conflict of interest

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