

**AFGHANISTAN Journal ( Special Issue )**  
**published on the Occasion of the Millennium**  
**of Abdullah Ansari of Herat**



**ABDULLAH ANSARI**  
*and other*  
**SUFIS**  
*of*  
**AFGHANISTAN**

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE**  
**Department of Culture and Arts**  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY of AFGHANISTAN**

**APRIL 1976**

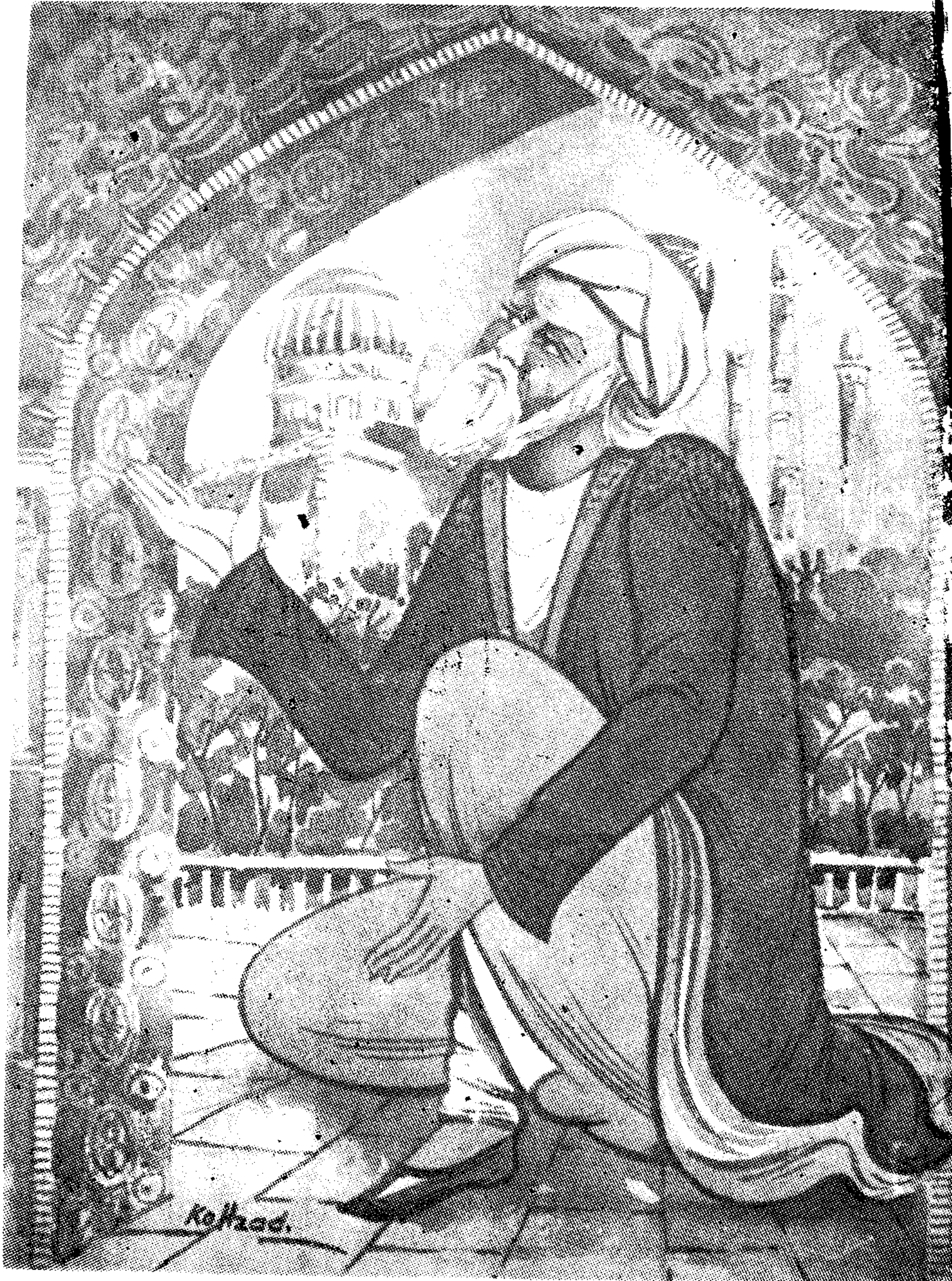
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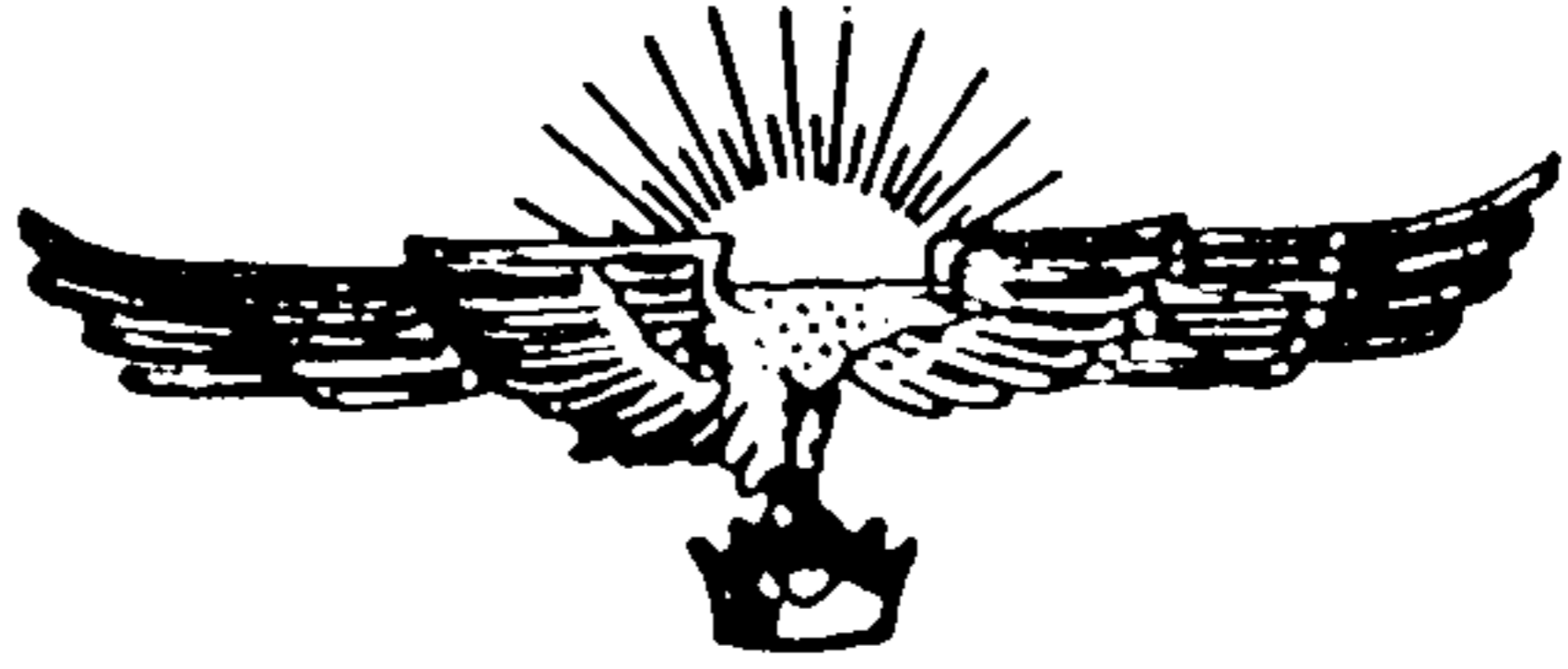


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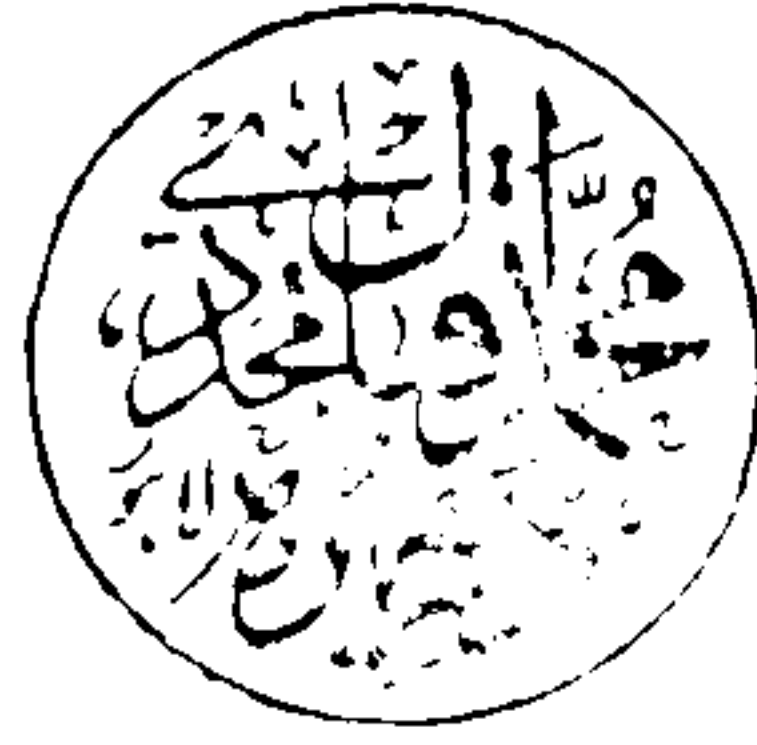
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## FOREWORD

On the occasion of the millinium of Abdullah Ansâri of Herat (396—481 H. 1006—1089 A.D.), in accordance with lunar calendar, the Historical Society of Afghanistan, is happy to provide to the readers this book being in same time a special issue of Afghanistan Journal on some Sufis from Afghanistan.

The text of a conference by Prof Dr. A. Schimmel constitutes an interesting introduction. It provides some information of general character on Sufi literature but also contains some new findings of the author, not to be read in any other source.

Three articles of Dr. S. de Beaurecueil are selected from the "conclusions" of his main works in french—on Abdullah Ansari of Herat. For the sake of those of our readers who read french language we have added a full list of Dr S. de Beaurecueil's works on Ansâri.

On Maulana Jalaluddin of Balkh (commonly called Rûmi) the begining of an article on "The Meaning of Love"- by Dr. Ravan Farhadi, together with a reprint from "Afghanistan Journal" of Prof. A. Schimmel's article on the Meaning of Prayer, provides valuable information to those not reading the original text of the great poet-sufi of Islâm.

Then come two articles on Amir-Khusrau of Balkh known as Dehlavi- by Dr. Ravan Farhâdi. The poet's quotations appear for the first times in English. They lead the reader to another article on the meaning of Love according Abdul-Rahman Jâmi of Herât another sufi-poet and of the latest of the classical period. Jami had abundantly studied Ansâri, Maulâna Jalâluddin and Amir-Khusrau.

Maulana Jalaluddin of Balkh appears once again in the book when his impact is studied on a great thinker of our times Rabindranath Tagore.

We are therefore happy that Ansari Millenium has provided to us the occasion of presenting to our readers such material on sufism containing many points much beyond generalities.

**Historical Society of Afghanistan**

**April 1976.**

# *Sufi Literature*

By Prof. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel

In the first week of October, 1974, the Afghan Government invited some German scholars to celebrate, together with their Afghan colleagues, the 700th anniversary of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi Balkhi's death. Rumi, because he settled in Anatolia then called the country of Rûm Balkhi, because he came from an old family of mystical theologians in Balkh in present day Afghanistan.

Our conference gave us the opportunity of visit various sacred places in Afghanistan, and to see the country where the oldest trends of Sufism have developed: a country which has contributed more than any other area to the development of mystical poetry in the Persian language and also in the various regional languages, like Turkish on the one hand, Pashto and to a certain extent, the languages of the sub-continent (like Panjabi and Sindhi) on the other hand.

At the same time, our journey gave us the opportunity of discussing once more the problem: what is Sufi poetry and what is Sufism? There has always been a tendency in the West to define Sufism as a kind of libertine religion, a religion—or a state of mind—which captures those people who do not conform with the establishment and which everybody tries to develop and to practice according to his own taste.

This idea is as far off the mark as is the definition of Sufism as the later development of Islamic mysticism from the 13th century onward, a development usually connected with the great Spanish—born philosopher, Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240), and usually known as WAHDAT AL WAJUD, 'unity of being.' This however is more a theosophical speculation than true mysticism in the classical sense.

If we go back to the beginnings of Sufism, we see that this movement grew out of the teachings of the Koran, when the Islamic Empire expanded and when worldliness seemed to overshadow the eschatological prophecies of the Koran. Then, a number of pious people concentrated



upon the otherworld, constantly meditating on the Koran in their daily and nightly prayers, thinking of the annihilation of the lower self, and realizing through their whole life the first and second half of the profession of faith: "there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet."

This movement which probably originated in Basra, is called TASAWWUF or Sufism because the ascetics, following the example of their Christian neighbors, dressed in woolen (SUF) garments. Although the origins of Sufism can be found in Iraq the movement very soon took roots in the mountains of present-day Afghanistan. Here, in Khurasan and the ancient area of Baktria a great ascetic movement developed during the late eighth and the ninth century. The ascetics of MARW and TALIQAN are still mentioned as model-cases in later poetry, and we can certainly assume that some of their ascetic ideals were shaped by Buddhist influences, Balkh being one of the centers of Buddhism in the first centuries of the Christian era. Khurasan is noted for the strictness of the ascetic behavior that was prevalent in this region, and particularly for the development of TAWAKKUL, the complete and unquestioning trust in God, which sometimes led to strange excesses of ascetic behavior.

It was a woman saint who introduced the element of love, the pure love of God, into this stern, austere asceticism. Her name Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya from Basra, has become the symbol of absolute love. This slave-girl is also an example of the fact that a woman can reach the same spiritual heights as a man once she wholeheartedly enters the path to God. Even today a particularly pious woman is often called 'a second Rabi'a'.

Sufism developed during the ninth century almost everywhere in the Muslim world: in Egypt where Dhu'n-Nun sang his beautiful mystical hymns and prayers in Iran and in Baghdad where the psychological method of introspection was developed. The movement culminated in the figure of a man who has become the symbol of the ecstatic lover in later literature, Husain ibn Mansur al-Hallaj. Hallaj was executed in Baghdad in 922 allegedly because he had said ANA'L-HAQQ, 'I am the Creative Truth' or, as later sources interpret it, 'I am God'. But his execution is rather to be ascribed to the fact that his teachings and his interpretation of Islam in a very personal way—his interiorization of the external duties—did not agree with the general political and social structure of the Abbasid Empire. Whatever the true reason may be, Hallaj, or, as he is usually called, Mansur, became one of the central figures for all those poets who sang of their love and longing and the final experience of unity between man and God; his name was repeated, his fate alluded to in innumerable verses in all the languages of the Islamic world.

When Hallaj was in prison a young man from Shiraz visited him three times. It was Ibn Khafif, an ascetic who was deeply impressed by

Hallaj's teachings and who noted down a number of his poems, brought them home to Shiraz and cherished his memory. This Hallajian tradition was kept alive under the surface in the city of Shiraz up to the 12th century; then, Ruzbihan—i Baqli, probably the greatest love mystic in Islam, put this tradition openly before the Sufis by writing his great commentary on the sayings of Hallaj, the *Sharh-i shat-hiyat*. This made him a commonly acknowledged hero of mystical love although the orthodox never fully accepted him.

At the time of Ruzbihan (d. 1209) however, other trends had become visible in Sufism. While the early Sufis concentrated exclusively on the pure love between man and God without any created object in between, later Sufis developed theories according to which the Divine Beauty could reveal itself through the veil of created forms. Thus they might be able to see God revealed in the face of a beautiful young human being, preferably a boy, whom they admired and loved and whose love was for them, a kind of spiritual ladder leading to the Divine Beloved as in the Arabic saying *AL-MAJAZ QANTARATU'L-HAQIQA*—'the metaphor is the bridge toward reality' (Hence, wordly love is called *'ISHQ MAJ-AZI*, metaphorical love')

At the same time, various poetical genres had developed in Iran and the concept of the revelation of God through the medium of human beauty became one of the centers of mystical poetry. The poetry now begins to acquire that oscillating character which is so typical of the verses of the great Persian poets. When you read the ghazals of Hafiz, and even of his earlier compatriot Sa'di, you will always find this kind of opalizing quality so that you never know exactly whether the addressee of the poem is the Divine Beloved or a human being; whether the wine of which the poet speaks is real or is meant as a metaphor of divine, intoxicating love; whether the taverns are the place of union with God or real drinking places, etc.

This aspect of Persian poetry caused immense confusion, especially in the minds of Western readers, when it was first translated in the 18th century. The question of whether or not to interpret the poetry of Hafiz, Jami or other great Persian language poets in a mystical or profane sense has divided orientalist for more than 150 years. I personally think that the only way to understand this kind of poetry properly is to know that behind every outward meaning there is a secret meaning hidden and that the two belong together as much as the rays of the sun and the sun itself cannot be separated. The greatest mistake we can make in translating this kind of poetry is to take its symbolism at face value and to transform Hafiz and his contemporaries and many other Persian, Turkish and Indo—Muslim poets into libertines and wild, love—intoxic-

ated characters who had nothing to do but sing about beautiful girls or boys and about very worldly pleasures in the wine—house.

On the other hand it would also be wrong to see their poetry exclusively as an expression of mystical theories so that every black curl of the beloved, which is praised and described by the poet, is intended to mean the world of phenomena; every beautiful radiant face means nothing but the uncreated beauty of God; every glass of wine is in itself the wine of love or gnosis. Later poets, unfortunately, tended to write commentaries for their own poetry explaining each and every word in a mystical and highly philosophical sense but I think this did not make their verses better.

This is the way lyrical poetry developed, mainly in Central Iran. This style reached its first apex in the poetry of Hafiz who is certainly the most delightful and most colorful of all Persian lyrical poets.

But for the whole development of mystical poetry and for the dissemination of mystical thought, epical poetry was probably even more important and here it is the eastern fringes of the Dari—speaking world, nowadays Afghanistan, which has played the most important role. The first poet ever to write didactic poetry with mystical content was Hakim Sanâyi who died about 1131 in his native Ghazni. After having been a panegyrist of the later Ghaznawids, he suddenly became converted to sufism. He wrote a mystical poem of about 10,000 verses, HADIQAT AL-HAQIQA (The Orchard of Truth), which E.G. Browne considered, unfortunately, to be the most boring poem ever written in the Persian language. I think that anyone who has really managed to go through the HADIQA will not agree with Browne's statement. On the contrary, Sana'i's slightly dry and matter—of—fact style is after a while much more attractive and lovable than the highly embellished literature which we usually connect with Persian mysticism. Sana'i's work is a storehouse of anecdotes, fables and little proverbs. It is particularly interesting since it preserves traces of the ancient dialect of Ghazni — traces which some modern scholars have interpreted as flaws in the author's versification. On the whole, the HADIQA is a most admirable work which sets the model for the greatest masterpieces of Persian epical literature.

Besides, we owe to Sana'i a number of other poetical works among which the SAIR AL-'IBAD ILA'L-MA'AD (The Journey of God's Servants to the Place of Return) belongs with the most interesting philosophical books. Although his role in Persian literature is usually underrated, he is the author of one of the most intriguing QASIDAS in early Persian, the TASBIH AT-TUYUR (The Rosary of the Birds), where he shows how every bird in the world has a special way of talking about and praising God. For instance, the dove always says "ku.ku" (Where?, Where? ) because it searches for the Beloved; the stork says LAK LAK meaning AL-MULK

LAK AL-'IZZ LAK (the Kingdom—belong to—Tree—Glorious—of—Thee) thus constantly acknowledging God's power and glory. But also the birds about it. Sanā'ī enumerates all the birds known to him and imitates their calls. This poem certainly influenced 'Attar's MANTIQ UT-TAIR (The Bird's Conversation) and its imagery and wording were also taken over by Maulana Jalaluddin. We should not forget Sanā'ī's 'Lamentation of Satan' in which the exiled angel complains of having been banished from the courts of his poetry in honor of the Prophet. Sanā'ī's 'Lamentation of the Sun' (93 'By the Morning Light' is a rhetorical and mystical poem) also deserves special mention here because one aspect of Sufi piety—the veneration of the Prophet of Islam. It was Hallaj, the martyr mentioned earlier, who first produced a hymn in honor of the Prophet, praising him as light from the Uncreated Light and as the one whose Wisdom, compared to the wisdom of everybody else, is like a drop compared to the ocean, and so on. From that time onward, Arabic, Persian and related poetry abounds with praise songs in honor of the Prophet, and they could not sing enough of his miracles and they expressed their hope for his intercession at Doomsday. It is thanks to the Sufis that the veneration of the Prophet became the center of mystical piety and of devotion in general.

Even nowadays when millions of Muslims recite the DURE'D SILMI (the prayer on the Prophet and his family) several times every day, it is certainly thanks to the Sufis who disseminated this piety everywhere so that it is now echoed in innumerable songs from lullabies to MAULIDS (the wonderful stories about the Prophet's birth which are sung in Turkey at the anniversary of a bereavement or on the Prophet's birthday to insure Divine grace). The popular veneration of the Prophet is one aspect of Islamic mystically—tinged poetry of which the Westerners are usually not aware but which colors the whole attitude of Muslims from West Africa to Indonesia.

As I said, Sana'i's "Litany of the Birds" certainly influenced 'Attar, the second of the great Khorassani mystical poets. To him we owe not only a collection of beautiful mystical lyric poetry and the TADHKIRAT AL-AULIYA the first comprehensive 'romantic' collection of stories about the lives of the saints, but also some of the finest and most artistic epics ever written in the Persian language. Among them the MANTIQ UT-TAIR (The Birds Conversation) is probably the most famous and rightly so. Alluding to a Koranic expression it tells how thirty birds, under the guidance of the hoepoe, wander through the seven valleys in search of the King of Birds. It is really a Persian version of PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. Eventually they reach the valley of poverty and annihilation and enter the dwelling—place of the King of Birds, the Simurgh, and discover that

they being thirty birds (SI MURGH), are themselves identical with the Simurgh. Thus they find the King of Birds—the Divine Reality—in themselves and inseparable from themselves. This pun on si murgh and Simurgh is certainly the most ingenious pun in Persian and the story is one of the finest allegories for the quest of the Divine which is to be found essentially in the heart of man himself.

'Attar's ILAHL-NAMA tells the story of the king and his Six Sons, each of whom has a strange wish and hope; he answers their requests by telling them numerous stories about greedy, angry and powerful personalities to divert them from their worldly goals. The book is really a treasure house of Persian tales and folklore. In 'Attar's greatest work, the MUSIB-AT-NAMA (Book of Affliction), we follow the internal way of the mystic during his forty days' seclusion. At every station he meets one of the created beings—from archangels to the wind, fire, Satan, animals and birds—until he reaches the Prophet himself. At the 39th stage, the Prophet tells the seeker to turn to the ocean of his own soul and to find God there. This whole epic is about the development of the disciple during the forty days of seclusion and at each stage the mystical guide is introduced to explain the meaning of each conversation to the disciple: for he understands that everything created is yearning for God and is on its way toward God. Everywhere in the world there is the voice of longing for God.

There is also 'Attar's USHTUR-NAMA in which the hero is a Turkish puppeteer. He takes his puppets from the 'box of nothingness', projects them on the screen, then breaks them into pieces and puts them back into the box. The adept, searching for the secret behind the play, sees all the seven veils opening one after the other, but when he witnesses everything ending again in the darkness of unqualified Unity he commits suicide. This is one of the strangest expressions of mystical experience in Persian poetry and it has been properly analyzed, as have 'Attar's other works, by Hellmut Ritter whose masterly book, DAS MEER DER SEELE (The Ocean of the Soul), is the best introduction not only to 'Attar's thought but also into the classical phase of Persian mystical poetry.

There is a legend that Jalaluddin Balkhi—Rumi, when he was a mere boy, came with his family to Nishapur and met aged 'Attar who gave him his PAND-NAMA and blessed him because he saw his future greatness. If this story is true it must have happened one year before 'Attar's death, in 1219, when Jalaluddin's family left Balkh fearing the advancing Mongols who were to destroy the city shortly afterwards.

Jalaluddin Rumi's life story is well-known. After wandering through the Islamic lands with his father, a noted mystical theologian from Balkh, the family eventually settled in Laranda, then in Konya, the capital of

the Seljukids of Rum and a center of learning and art during the early 13th century.

Jalaluddin succeeded his father in the chair of theology at one of the numerous madrassas of Konya in 1231. Later he was enraptured by an infinite love for the wandering dervish, Shamsuddin of Tabriz, and, thanks to this rapturing experience, he became a poet—the greatest mystical poet of Islam. After Shamsuddin disappeared in 1248, Maulana Jalaluddin had another experience of mysteal love—though on a different spiritual level—with the illiterate goldsmith Salahuddin Zarkub, whose daughter he married to his eldest son. After Salahuddin's death he was inspired by his disciple, Husamuddin Chalabi, to compose the MATHNAWI, the great mystical epic of approximately 26,000 verses, which has become for Persian speaking mystics second only to the Koran—HAST QUR'AN DAR ZABAN—I PAHLAVI. 'It is the Koran in Persian tongue', as Jami (d. 1492) of Herat said in the 15th century.

Rumi's life and poetry belong to the most fascinating aspects of Persian and Turkish culture and he has inherited much from his predecessors in the present Afghan area. We cannot go into detail; his work is too large and there are too many possibilities of interpretation. What we would like to stress, however, is the fact that in his more than 33,000 verses of lyrics and his more than 26,000 verses of epic poetry, Rumi never loses his relation with this world which serves as a starting point for his development of his ideas and feelings. Of course this world was, for him, a metaphor, not a reality—Reality belonging only to God. In his attitude toward the world he very much resembles Sana'i of whose work he was extremely fond—fonder than he was of the work of 'Attar. This fondness can be illustrated by the number of verses and allusions he took over from the Wise Man of Ghazni; he has inserted whole verses from Sana'i's DIWAN and HADIQA into his own work; he mentions him very often in the MATHNAWI and he wrote a beautiful elegy about Sana'i's death which is practically nothing but an elaboration of an inscription which Sana'i himself had composed for his tombstone.

Rumi uses everything created as a symbol of a higher reality. He does not shun the imagery of the kitchen, of the world of children or of sewing and weaving to express his mystical experiences. There is not a single sphere of life which he did not use to produce a mystical metaphor and it is probably this marvelous closeness to daily life and his knowledge of everything human which makes his poetry so great and thanks to which he never lost himself in vague or dry speculations or in fruitless philosophical thought.

We cannot deny that his lyrics are sometimes very difficult to comprehend because they do not fit into the general image of Persian poetry.

They are not like a beautiful Persian garden which looks as though it were made of glass or precious stones; they are rather like a wild landscape in which the strangest and most fragrant flowers appear all of a sudden and one does not know where they came from. Then the poet leaves you in complete darkness and despair telling about his agony after his beloved has disappeared. Or he describes how love is a government official who comes to confiscate everything on earth, squeezing man until the drop of egotism has disappeared; love can be a carpenter who builds a ladder to heaven or love is like a police inspector who chases away the thieves called Grief and Sorrow. There is no end of these personifications.

But the greatest attraction in Rumi's lyrics is certainly his stress on rhythm in his poetry. Since he initiated the Order of the Whirling Dervishes, it is only natural that his poetry should have been created out of a feeling of music and rhythm. Indeed, we know that he used to compose most of his lyrical poetry in a state of rapture, spinning around, clapping his hands and reciting whatever came into his mind in intensely glowing verses. If a modern reader cannot read him this way it will be difficult for him to really appreciate Rumi's poetical greatness.

Rumi's poetry greatly influenced later generations not only in the Ottoman Empire—where the best commentaries on the MATHNAWI were produced and where the Order of the Whirling Dervishes (the Mevlevi) had its home—but also in the Eastern part of the Muslim world. Iran can boast of a considerable number of philosophically oriented commentaries on his work and his new home, so to speak, became the Indian subcontinent where his work was known only a few years after his death. It became famous in the following decades not only in the Western fringe of the subcontinent but also in East Bengal. We know that in the 15th century the Brahmans of Bengal loved to recite his poetry. Rumi's influence is also visible in the literature produced in the regional languages of India and Pakistan. We cannot go into the whole question of the imitation of and the commentaries on the MATHNAWI here nor into the problem of the numerous verses taken from his poetry and incorporated into the Persian and later the Urdu literature of the subcontinent, however, his work was considered the most important ingredient of mystical life in the provinces of the Punjab and Sindh.

There is one story in which one of the mystical leaders of Sind in the 17th century possessed only three books, the Koran, the MATHNAWI and the DIWAN of Hafiz, which he, of course, interpreted mystically. We have no reason to doubt the veracity of this story because the whole of Sindhi and Panjabi folk poetry is permeated with allusions to Rumi.

With this poetry, however, we reach another field, a field which seems to be far away from classical Persian literature but in which too certainly the poets sang about the same ideas, expressed the same feelings of longing and love.

Of course the classical type of Persian poetry is still known in Indo-Pakistani literature. Its most typical expression is the *ghazal* that can be found in the works of 'Iraqi who, in the 13th century, lived for 25 years in Multan as a disciple of Bahauddin Zakaria Multani, the great Chishti wardi saint. If you go to Multan today, you will still find some Sufis sitting in front of Bahauddin's mausoleum singing the poetry of Fakhruddin 'Iraqi with sweet and melancholy voices as if the verses had been written yesterday and not 700 years ago. It is the same experience one can have in Herat where the presence of the great 'Abdullah-i Ansari (d. 1089) is still felt in G zargah and where his tender and beautiful short orisons, the *Munajat*, are still in the air just as Jami's verses seem to be alive the remnants of the Timurid mosques—as a verbal counterpart of the colorful tiles of the monuments from the time of his patron Husain Baiqara.

Besides the strong current of Persian mystical poetry which was always important for the development of religious thought in Muslim lands we find that Sindhi and Panjabi poetry have much else in common. If they come from rural, agricultural areas and in both languages the poets use a large number of images taken from daily life—especially from spinning and weaving as is natural in a cotton-growing country. Thus, the *DHIKR*, the constant repetition of God's name deep in the heart, without spoken words, was compared by many poets to the spinning of fine thread and the humming sound which the constant *DHIKR* may produce could easily be compared to the humming of a spindle. Shah 'Abdul Latif, the great test poet of the Sindh in the 18th century, used an old folk tune called *KAPAITI*, used by women for spinning songs, for his poem on the *DHIKR*. The heart becomes more and more refined just as a thread becomes finer and finer by constant and patient spinning.

One thing that is highly surprising to the reader who knows the central Islamic tradition in mystical poetry, and, particularly the Persian tradition, is the role of women in the poetry of Sind and the Panjab. From Persian or Turkish poetry we are used to the male author addressing the beloved as a male being for even though the gender is not distinguishable in Persian and Turkish, the descriptions of the beloved with down on his upper lip can be applied only to a male being. The reader, once should try to translate the object as feminine—a possibility using some of used to this usage does not find it surprising or shocking but even if he the theories of Ibn 'Arabi—the situation would still be very different



from that in the Indian tradition. For in Sindhi, Panjabi, Kashmiri and even in early Urdu as well as in the Ismaili GINANS, the soul is represented as a loving woman. Here we have a clear influence of the Hindu tradition where the soul is always the longing and loving woman who sits and waits for her husband or her beloved or goes out to seek him even under the most difficult circumstances. It is the motif of Radha longing for Krishna. It is amazing to see how the folk poets in Sind and the Panjab have used old folk tales in which the heroine always searches for her lost beloved until she dies—either on the road, in the mountains or in the floods of the Indus. It is perhaps this aspect of the folk poetry of the plains which makes it so attractive to a Western reader because, in it, he finds a symbolism which is well known to all who have enjoyed the Song of Songs in the Bible. The Sindhi and Panjabi folk poets have always used this kind of imagery and I know of few poems in the whole tradition of mystical writing in the Eastern Islamic world which can compete with the love songs of Sassui, Sohni and Marui as they have been told time and again, from the 16th century onward, by the simple and often illiterate folk poets of the Indus Valley. Even today they are as fresh as they always were.

The situation in the hill countries and in the eastern part of Afghanistan is different. There is a great difference between the popular mystical poetry of the Afghans and that of the Panjabis and Sindhis. I know of only one of the Pashto poets who expressed the same overwhelming feeling of all-embracing unity as we find it so often in later Persian and also in Sindhi and Panjabi verse. This is Mirza Khan Ansari, a descendent of Pir-i Raushan, the famous founder of the Raushaniya sect and one of the first to use Pashto in his theological — mystical works in the early 16th century. But on the whole I think it would not be wrong to say that the stern ascetic influence of the early mystics of Khurasan — and particularly the poetry of Sana'i of Ghazni—may have influenced the Pashto mystics. I am thinking particularly of Rahman Baba, certainly the most powerful writer among the earlier mystical poets of the Pashtuns. His hymns are of superb beauty but they are also very grave and full of awe in front of the majesty of God, full of the feeling of sinfulness on the one hand and the experience of the constant worship of everything created in the presence of the creator on the other hand. Their whole approach and their wording is quite different from the certainly more 'romantic' and overflowing love poetry of the plains which expresses longing, pain and, eventually, union in every new images. These differences, however, have not yet been properly studied. It is to be hoped that new investigations into the mystical language of the Pashto poets in connection with the Khurasanian mystico—ascetical movement may produce some interesting results; a comparative study of Sana'i and

Rahman Baba in their approach to God, creation and adoration would be certainly most welcome.

We may ask ourselves what the common determinant of all these poetical expressions may be, poetry to which we could add greatly not only the incredible amount of Turkish popular mystical verse preserved in the Bektashi tradition, but also other mystical orders. Why is the poetry so much alike in the whole area between Istanbul and Delhi and even farther West and East? What makes it attractive in our day and to a Western reader?

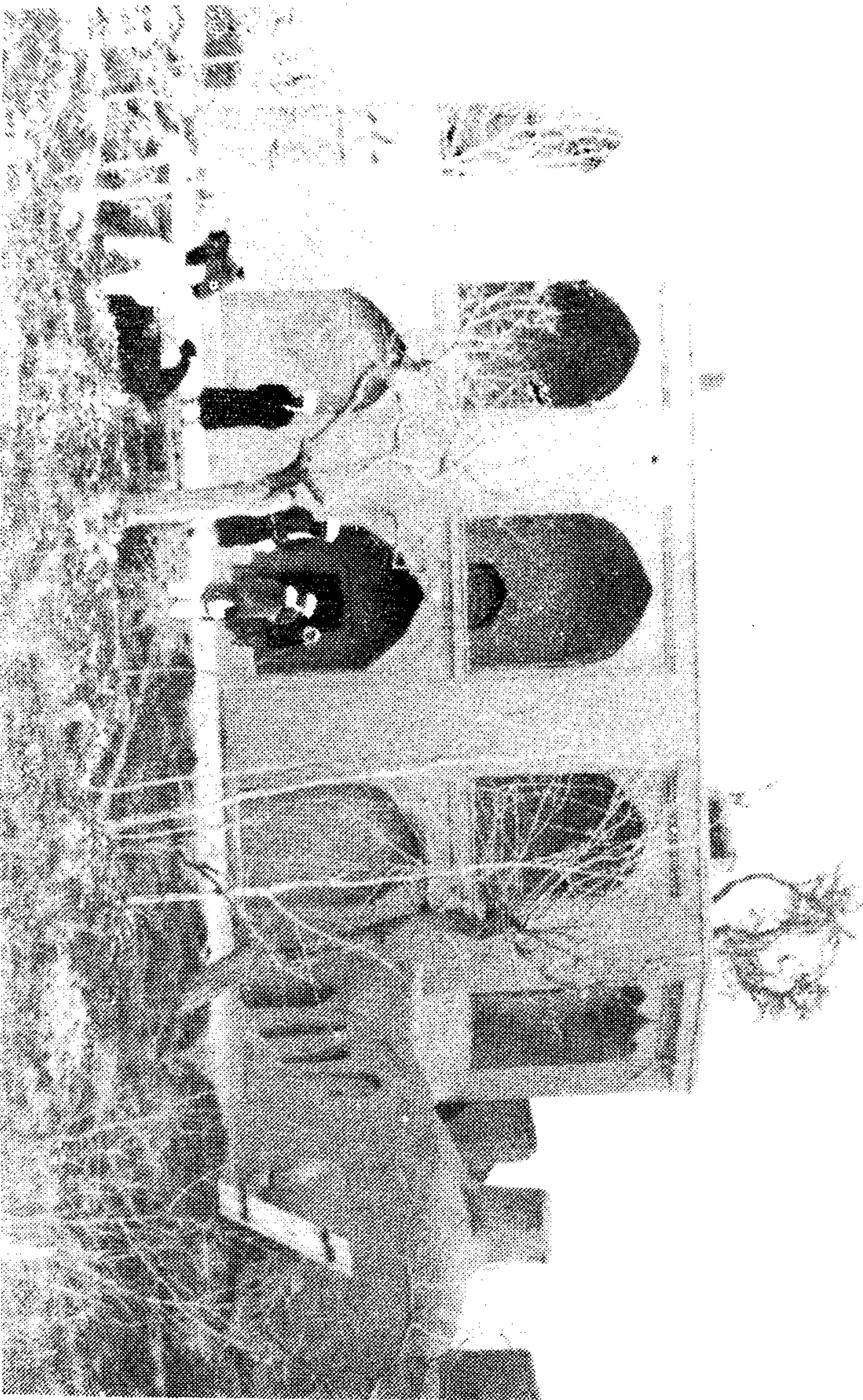
Personally, I feel that the very first figure in Islamic mysticism to impress the following generations has never lost his interest for the poets: it was Husain ibn Mansur al-Hallaj, the great lover who openly proclaimed his loving union with God, who was killed by the establishment and has remained the archmartyr of Sufism—the martyr of love. There are some Sufi orders which think that Hallaj had not reached the highest stage of union but remained at a lower level and had to be punished because he proclaimed the secret of union — a secret which must not be told to the world. The Suhrawardiyya and the Naqshbandiyya orders belong to this group. But, in general, Hallaj is considered the martyr of suffering love and the model of rebellion against what we now like to call the establishment. His name occurs almost everywhere in the poetical tradition be it in Panjabi and Pashto, in Sindhi and Urdu, in Turkish or Persian. I shall never forget the evening when I was sitting in a forlorn village in Upper Sind; the musicians sang one song after the other praising Hallaj as the great lover whose bridal bed was the gallows...

It is certainly not an accident that the last great representative of mystical poetry in Islam in the Persian-Urdu tradition, namely Muhammad Iqbal (d 1938), was infatuated with the figure of Hallaj. Iqbal, who probably would have been shocked to hear himself called a mystic, was very deeply steeped in the mystical tradition and, although he had described Hallaj in his earlier poetical works as a typical representative of pantheism, (as he had been labeled for many centuries in the poetical tradition), he later came to understand him as one of the few who had interiorized the Islamic teachings and had called people to a religion that did not consist of imitation but was the personal experience of the power of God in human life. Hallaj becomes in Iqbal's work the representative of the modern, loving Muslim who ushers in a new period of human consciousness. He also becomes the hero of the love of the Prophet, as he was indeed. One of the finest hymns ever written in Persian in honor of the Prophet was put by Iqbal into Hallaj's mouth in a touching scene in his great poem. JAVIDNAMA, published 1932.

The figure of Hallaj can be found everywhere in modern Islamic poetry. In Urdu he has become the symbol of the man who suffers for his ideals and is persecuted by the establishment; he was a key figure for all those who suffered under the British and remains a model for those who suffer for their political convictions. The same is true in Turkey. Lately in the Arab countries his fate has attracted some of the most important writers—the Egyptian Salah 'Abdas Sabur, the Iraqi 'Abdul Wahhab al-Bayati, the Lebanese Adonis and others — who have devoted highly interesting poetry to his memory.

I think that the very fact that a person such as Hallaj, who represents the highest ideal of mystical Islam — i.e. a completely interiorized and personal experience of the absolute power of God—and has expressed in his life and work the never—ending love and longing of man, the very fact that his name has survived as a mystical symbol throughout the centuries in all the lands of Islam and has been rediscovered in the 20th century, shows the innate power of Sufism. It also shows that Islam and the Islamic peoples may be able to find a new interpretation of their religious tradition when they go back to Hallaj's personality and to the tradition of those who have loved and suffered like him.

South of Khairpur where Abdul ah Ansari when 28 years old met 62 soufis.



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# *Abdullah Ansari : A Profile*

By Dr. S. de L. de Beaurecueil, O.P.

Two important periods of Ansari's life can be distinguished: a formation beginning with his birth (396 H. = 1006) up to his departure from Herat after the second attempt of Hajj pilgrimage (end of 424 H. = November 1033), and a teaching period, starting with this return up till his death (dhu—l—hijja 481 H./ March 1089). Very unequal in duration (twenty-seven and fifty-six years), the one and the other are astonishing by their density and animation. The reason is that we are in front of a rich personality, endowed with exceptional gifts, where a surprising memory, a great sensitiveness, poetical and oratorical talents combined with an ardent character, a tenacious will and to a powerful sense of his mission and of his responsibilities.

In the course of the formation period, we are struck by the strange repercussion of the least facts and encounters. The familial atmosphere leads to soufism since his early childhood. The fact that his ancestors have been masters of Hadith (traditionists) explain indeed his attachment to prophet's teachings. His success at the learned man's school will incite him to develop and to carry out his poetical talents. His father's premature departure from Herat will incite him to adopt his succeeding masters with filial fervour. This departure must also explain, in a psychological manner, the attitude of independence he shall later adopt towards the good cheikh 'Ammar who then gathered him up. Yahya ibn 'Ammar's courses will have him dream to become a master, overwhelmed with veneration and sheltered from any want, imposing respect by his appearance and dress and his suite while going to the medressa. Taqwa reading in his heart, will have him take conscience of his spiritual vocation; Ansari will always keep to his hanbalism—sunnism—the fidelity we know. His excesses as a student at Nishapur will stimulate his zeal at work and his confidence in himself. The political events of his youth will have him, his whole lifetime, mistrust those in power and keep aloof from the magnates of this world. Finally, the meeting of Kharraqani, revealing to himself the meaning of his most profound aspirations, will definitely engage him in the path that will allow him to fulfil them. He himself ad-

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The Author is thankful, for the preparation in English of these articles originally in French to Marcelle Paradis.

mits it: without his father, without Yahyâ, without Tâqî, and especially without Kharâqani, he would never have become the man that the rest of his long career demonstrates. In the course of his formation, everything is imprinted in his memory, impresses his sensitiveness, keeps a constant influence on his personality.

During the second period of his life, we are witnesses of his complex reactions of that personality gradually as his insertion goes on into a world where the master has the conscience he has a spiritual mission to fulfil.

Abdullâh Ansârî could keep away from politics, so often related to intrigues and violence, because it did not compromise faith. On the contrary the Ghaznevids as well as the Seljoukîds have been zealous to undertake the holy war outside and to struggle, in Islamic countries, against the heretics. Besides, if Herât was sometimes closely mingled to the political events, it was only by accident, the destiny of the Empire being decided upon at Ghazna or later at Ispahan. It was not the case for the theological quarrels, which touched the essential and interested the master's closest friends. On that subject, Ansari was immediately conscious to have a mission to fulfil: he had to save Islam, threatened of deviation by the Mo'tazilîts and the Ash'arîts, under the fallacious pretext to justify faith in front of the claims of the Reason. For him, nourished since his childhood in the respect of the Quran and the Hadith, faith does not have to be judged, by Reason to want justify faith is an injury, and to want to interpret its contents, is to destruct it. It was a duty for him to start the war against the "innovators", who often had on their side the support of science, piety and power. The struggle would be without mercy, he knew it, decided as he was not to surrender neither in front of discussions nor force. From that comes that atmosphere of tension we have observed throughout the whole of his long career scanned by denunciations, by his rivals, his appearances in courts and exiles. His intransigentism obliged his relatives and friends to make up their mind: being hot—tempered, some citizens of Herat were moreover asking for that. For some, Ansari will be considered a limited fanatic, with whom there is no possible explanation; by all means they will try to reduce him to silence, but without success. For others, more and more numerous, he will be the hero of orthodoxy, the indomitable defender of the Quran and of the Sunnat, enduring persecution for truth. Hated or despised by some, extolled to the skies by others, he was ready to die at his service. He will remain firm, unmoved, "monolithic," without any other evolution than the one imposed by the snares he will have to baffle and by the necessity of improving his assaults.

It is not thus in the more intimate domain of his spiritual life and of his teaching. A perceptible progress is observed whose steps are related to a series of successive shocks. The first one took place during the Nobâ-

dhân days, on which occasion Ansâri discovered the dangers of the spiritual singing "samâ". In an immediate way, it was his teaching that was affected by it: we have indeed seen him then abandon the mystic for the safer domain of hadith. But when we know to what extent the Master's teaching is related to his personal experience, we can ask ourselves if the Nobâdhân days have not profoundly marked this latter. For Ansâri, there was no reason of calling in question the authenticity of the revelations Kharâqani had told him about; but had he not been imprudent, in his enthusiasm, in believing himself arrived to summits that he had only caught a glimpse of?... Not more than his disciples, he could not pass the halting place without stopping. Nobâdhân was calling him back to humility, spiritually engaging him on a long itinerary where the trials will scand the journey. Here, the soufi life cuts back that of the polemist; the emprisonment of pushang, in 438 H., will have Ansari discover the path of love, that will for long inspire his commentary of the Coran. The exile at Balkh, in 458 H. beyond love will reveal him that everything comes from God in spiritual life. Little by little he will thus find back, by experimeting through suffering, the interior Reality on which Kharâqani had opened for him such flashing and vivid spaces. It seems as if that will be done when having become almost blind, he will dictate to his young Disciples the **BOOK OF STAGES** (manazil us Sayerin) The exile of 478 H. will still be useful to enable him to draw the ultimate consequences of his experience. He died a few years later in 481 H. (1089 A.D.) and was buried in Gazar--Gah near Herat.

Thus, in Ansâri's biography, we cannot dissociate the polemist's life from that of the Soufi's they closely condition one another. This **DE FACTO** conditioning has not happened by mere accident. It is in fact for highly spiritual motives that Ansari is opposed to the kalam, and rationalism and his soufism manages to be a deepening of the Quran and of the Sunna. As he sees them, hanbalism and soufism, far from being oposed, are in perfect accord. There is absolutely no duplicity in the master's behaviour, on the contrary of what will be the endeavouring of later soufis; no duplicity, no inner conflict.

His resolute attachment to the Quran and to the Sunna allows him to continually control his inner experience, to interprete and put it into words; besides it is through the trials endured for his virulent hanbalism that this experience is being developed. In return, the more this experience has him discover that God is all every thing in spiritual life whatever the appearances may be the more Ansari sees in his adversaries "reasonings the impious tentative of adulterating God's World by mixing into it the incoherences and the illusions of a reason that refuses to be submitted.



# *Studying Ansari of Herat*

(Text of a Conference)

By S. de L. de Beurecueil

at Sorbonne, Paris 1971

"Better late than never", says the proverb. So, have I waited twenty five years to present myself in front of you...Twenty—five years lived in Islamic countries: seventeen in Egypt and eight in Afghanistan, in this country so attractive, where khwadja 'Abdullah Ansari lived nine centuries ago, and where his tomb is still the object of popular veneration.

When I arrived in Cairo, in 1946, I chose, as field work, the Islamic mysticism, understood in its broadest meaning. To approach a subject as vast as that one, it was important to choose, and to choose well, a particular point of the same time NEW to favour personal research, INTERESTING for a better knowledge of spiritual life in Islam, and MEANINGFUL, I mean by that, capable of opening perspectives, of suggesting work trails and of eventually to put into question certain accepted ideas.

Providence then placed on my way a student of al—Azhar University who frequented our library and who was personally interested by Sufism. He was Mr. Othman Yahya, who would further on distinguish himself by the discovery and the publication of Hakim Tirmidhi's *KHATM AL—AULIYA'* and also by his vast and difficult studies on the works of Ibn' Arabi. He was the one who, for the first time, spoke to me about a small work, that he had a great deal benefited from an assiduous meditation, the Book of stages of a certain Harawi ("the man from Herat"), more known in non Arab muslim world under the name of khwadja' Abdullah Ansari, having lived at the Vth century of the hegira (11th century A. D.). Neither he nor me could suspect that such a suggestion would engage me in studies requiring a great number of years and would finally lead me in Kabul.

Consulted, the late professor Louis Massignon, who would have been happy to join us today, gave me an enthusiast answer. Just a year before, during a trip in Afghanistan, had he not passed an entire night in prayer near the old Master's tomb, in the so admirable Gazar—Gah? Shortly be-

fore his death, invited for the 1962 festivities in honour of Ansari, he had written to me "Yes, I have answered To Kabul that I will go; it would be a joy for me to find myself there again with you. I still believe that Khwadja 'Abdullah Ansari died FI IKHILAS AL TAWHID, FI 'AYN AL—JAM, as the VII Sleepers of Ephesus, (ash-hab i kahf) these christians Maccabees, protomartyrs of Islamism. Up till the end of september I "shall hold my heart", because "my carcass hangs back". His doctors refused him that "green light" he had come to Paris to ask for. He was not able to come and it is in Kabul that an Afghan friend told me that he had died.

In short the only issue was to get to work. Indeed, all was to be done. Most of Ansari's works and their commentaries could be read only through manuscripts and presented problems of critical texts. As to his biography, a short article in the ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ISLAM only gave an idea about him and his works and indicated the sources. Although I have undertaken my research simultaneously on the two battle--fronts, I shall first speak about Ansari's life and personality, whose study resulted by the publication of a book, edited in Beyrouth in 1965.

### 1. ANSARI'S LIFE AND PERSONALITY.

To study Ansari's life and personality, the difficulty did not come, as it is often the case, from the lack of documents, but, in the contrary, of their abundance. Advanced in years, the Master seems to have taken pleasure in dictating his souvenirs, fascinating for his young disciples who, for our chance, did not refrain from transmitting them and by keeping them on writing. Thus I found, especially in Dhahabi (d. 748 H./1348 AD) and in Ibn Rajab al--Baghdadi (d. 795 H./1393 A.D.), quantity of sayings and facts, dated sometimes, concerning mainly the traditionist, the exegetist, the polemist and his quarrels with the partisans of the rationalisant theology, even with the authority. On his side, Jami of Herat (d 898 H./1492 A.D.) had gleaned numerous informations on Ansari's childhood, his spiritual formation, his frequentations, his meetings and his activities as a soufi. To reconstitute the Master's biography and to get a true idea of his spiritual physionomy, it was thus necessary to make use of all the possible means and to coordinate the contribution of both Dari (persian) and Arab sources. The choices made by the historians was nevertheless a problem: was Ansari first of all a traditionist and a polemist, having been a partner in soufism in his leisure moments? On the contrary, was he most of all a soufi, hanbalite, of course, but lead nearly against his will in the doctrinal wars of his epoch? By presenting himself as the intractable defendor of the tradition against the "innovators," did he simply want to tranquillize his neighbourhood, in order to pursue in peace the esoteric formation of a few initiated persons? Some of his commentators seem to have thought so. On the contrary, were not his hanbalism

and his soufism perfectly coherent, even solidary and without possible divisions? Twenty—five years ago, the hypothesis was audacious...

The only way to see through it was to assemble the materials of his biography in a manner as exhaustive as possible, to classify them, to try to put a date on the facts, to coordinate them, to situate them in their geographical, their political, social and religious context. It was sometimes difficult but, thanks to historians such as Bayhaqi (d. 470/1077 A.D.), Ibn al—Jawzi (d. 597 H./1200 A.D.) and Ibn al—Athir (d. 630 H./1232—33 A.D.), it was possible. When, after about ten years, I began to write, I was able to follow Ansari nearly step by step, from his early childhood up to his death, through the peripeteias of a long career (more than 80 years). Likewise, I presented his biography nearly like a diary, using contemporary history only in the optic of an inhabitant of Herat and only when it was necessary to understand my personage. That is what makes the difference with my study and the wonderful work of Mr. George Makdisi on Ibn 'Aqil, another notorious hanbalite, younger than Ansari of about thirty years. Here, the lack of biographical informations was remarkably compensated by a thoroughful study of Islam's traditionalist "renaissance" at Bagdad during the XIth century. Thus, our works complete one another: in the far away Khorasan, further than the Nishapur, citadel of the ash'arism, as well as in the caliphate's capital, hanbalism conditions a certain type of austere man, honest, courageous, without compromission with the men in power, easily trouble maker when he thinks his faith injured, without confidence in human speculations, inclined to piety and good deeds, of which Ibn'Aqil has given us a quite exact description.

To retrace Ansari's life would be too long and out of purpose. I shall only make two observations, which seem important to me:

"Study men rather than doctrines". Father Chenu used to tell us as an advice—Father Chenu being one of the best scholars of the Middle—Age theology. Effectively, to come to know and understand Ansari, it is indispensable to take account of his biography. A few men have so much been dependent of the milieu pertaining to their family, of the events of their childhood, of the impression made upon them by certain masters (or scholars), of sometimes casual meetings and of vicissitudes of time. The second observation answers to the question I raised a few minutes ago concerning the relations, for Ansari, between hanbalism and soufism. No duplicity, no interior conflict. Playing on paradox, I would nearly be tempted to say: he was hanbalite because he was soufi and soufi because he was hanbalite. These two aspects of his personality interfere continually. his life and his works testify in favour of both. Is it not from a soufi, Taqi Sijistani, this "spy of hearts" as he called him, met at the beginning of his youth, that he owed his initiation and his attachment to

hanbalism? And is it not on account of his imprisonment (in 433 H.) and of his exile (50 years later), supported for the virulence of his hanbalis orthodoxy that he owed the essential turn rounds in the evolution of his spiritual teaching? Read through this light, certain passages of his works are significant: I think, for example, to chapter 91 of the MA'NAZIL concerning the MA'RIFA, word that I have chosen to translate by "Knowledge" rather than by Gnosis, and which belongs at the same time to the hanbalite vocabulary and to the soufi terminology.

## II. ANSARI'S WORKS AND WHAT IS CONNECTED TO THEM

This being said, time has come for me to briefly present my studies concerning Ansari's works and what is connected to them.

Having spoken about the Master's biography, I shall begin by the anthology which, in the edition, comes right after it. It is the result of many long year of research, presenting to the reader the passages which, at my estimation, are most significant, drawn only from the authentic works. The original text, Arab or Dari (Persian) according to the case, is accompanied of a facing French translation and of a brief introduction allowing the reader to situate it and to appreciate its value.

The chapters of the "sad Maidan" ONE HUNDRED GROUNDS and those Book of STAGES speak about the same notions (return to God, fear, hope, reserve?, unification and Love). The comparison between the two works, shows the evolution in the mind and in the manner of the author between 448 H. and 475 H., dates of their respective composition.

On account of the briefness, the rarity and of its importance, I gave in its whole the opuscle on the INHERENT DEFICIENCIES OF CERTAIN SPIRITUAL DWELLINGS whose discovery and publication had so much rejoiced the late Louis Massignon.

For the polemical works (KITAB AL-ARBA'IN FIDALA'IL AL-TAWHID and DHAMM AL-KALAM WA-AHLIH, which are essentially selections of hadith and others' maxims, I thought it better to give the exhaustive list of the chapters which give an idea of their contents and of their litigated points. I have added to them the diatrib against Ash'ari, where the indignation and the animation of Ansari are given full vent to, allowing us to imagine the harshness of the controverse.

From TAPAQAT AL-SUFIYYA, voluminous and difficult work, but so interesting because the Master freely opens his heart, constantly placing himself in reference with his predecessors, I kept many elements. First of all an excursus quite typical on the different kinds of sciences, which Jami has not kept in his NAFAHAT. And also a few original judgments on certain great soufis. Thus, in front of the report of Bistami's (d. 260 H./874) mystical ascension, which he presents as a calumnious forgery, Ansari passes to invective: "If, as you say, I WENT MORE FORWARD

AND PLANTED MY TENT IN FACE OF THE THRONE (of God), where hence have you been? Is it by affirming duality that you perform Unification? Wretched are you! you deserve to disappear, and not to arrive!"

Abu Sa'id Kharraz (d. 286 H./899) is, on the contrary, extolled to the skies: "Would the whole world be full of Kharraz, this one would still emerge", does he tell us. We understand more this enthusiasm since the recent thesis of father Nwyia, **CORANIC EXEGESIS AND MYSTICAL LANGUAGE**, which treats about him during 80 pages and gives us especially the translation of his remarkable **BOOK OF THE ATTRIBUTES (KITAB AL-SIFAT)**, recently found again, altogether with other treatises in an Istanbul manuscript.

The judgment on Rowaym al-Baghdadi (d. 303 H./916) astonishes us: "personally, says Ansari, I prefer Rowaym's one sole hair rather than one hundred Jonayds" He thus denies to that one the predominant role that is usually attributed to him in the Baghdad school. He reproaches him to be a theorician, too much subtil and too much intellectual to his taste, his preferences going to allusive expression and live experience.

As for Hallaj (d. 309 H./922), his case has manifestly tormented Ansari. After having weighed the pro and con, he suspends his judgment and invites his disciples to do the same, being altogether rather favourable to Baghdad's martyr. This prudent attitude has nothing of an escape. Listen rather:

"His torment was for Hallaj a deficiency and a punishment, not a grace, because soufism is source of life. If he had been perfect and had tried to treat men as is convenient to, that would not have happened to him. On his part, there was a fault on this point: one must say certain things only to those who are able to hear them, so that the secret of God is not misheld. If you tell them to those who are not able to hear them, you impose on them a burden that they cannot carry; as a result for you nothing else can happen than damage and punishment. Mansur Hallaj was not perfect in his sayings. If he had been, those words would have been for him source of spiritual dwelling, breathing and life; nobody would have denied him. There are, of course, things that must be kept secret for a time, without disclaiming them nevertheless. I, myself, speak with more force than he has done so: although there are there common people listening but they do not disapprove me. These words are kept a non revealed secret, because one who is not able to hear them does not understand their significance. In my words, there is a light in front of which the man who listens to me enters in what I say, and he imagines that the light belongs to him. That is not the case; It is the light of the words, I have pronounced that emerges into Life".

May I be excused for such a long quotation, but it is important. Besides a slightly fainted judgment on a delicate subject (Ibn 'Aqil knew

something about it), it gives us, indeed, precious indications on Ansari's spiritual teaching. Stronger than Hallaj! Who would have thought about it on the part of this intractable hanbalite orthodox ... Ibn'Arabi and his disciples were may be not completely wrong in considering him as a precursor. But where are these famous words? One of the best examples is probably in the famous poem that closes the Book of the Stages, that 'Ibn al-Qayyim, in his commentary, renounces to defend being satisfied in excusing it. Louis Massignon translated it thus:

"Nobody really testifies that God is Unique, for the one who tries he does denies Him.

The monotheist profession of faith of he who pronounces such an epithet, is only but a vain phrase nullified by the Unique.

Only God makes the Unique' He Himself unifies his unity. And the man who tries to do it deserves the epithet of atheist".

I also think of a quite astonishing passage of the Monajat of which the translation appears on the page 298 of my book. Here is the end:

"And so thus, the part is the Whole, and the Whole is here; in Him, the two worlds lose themselves, the soul and the world the soul animates. The Sun is there and the ray here. Between sun and ray, who has ever seen a separation? The Soufi is entirely there, and his trace is here; the man of religious science does not need to pursue his investigation. The trace is not separated from the Whole; here, there is no one but You (God), and there, there is no one but him (the soufi)".

Those texts would evidently call for a commentary, difficult, moreover, because Ansari is all the contrary of a theoretician. He only suggests, through allusions and pictures, starting with an inexpressible personal experience, and in such a way that each listener may find his benefit (or may profit by it). He does not behave as a professor of spirituality, but as a spiritual guide. He opens perspectives where each one situates himself, according to his own capacities and to his personal experience, he recognizes himself, disposed to do otherwise a few years later. This explains the divergencies in interpretation between his commentators (we may think, for example about Tilimsani and to Ibn al-Qayyim).

Just now I quoted the MONAJAT. Those prayers in rhythmic prose made Ansari's success in the Dari (Persian) literature. Difficult to understand in their concision, their archaic language, even dialectical, and even more difficult to translate ("acrobatics", Prof. de Menasce wrote to me), they have not much in common with those that are frequently presented in the persian speaking world under Ansari's name, the style of which is easy and of an afflictive roguishness.

The anthology came at the end of other studies, of which is used only the results: text editions, translations, researches more elaborated on one or another more important point such as the return to God (TAWBA).

or hope (RAJA), using commentaries, of all epochs and tendencies, most of them being manuscripts. I, myself, had two of them edited, that of 'ABD AL—MO'TI AL—ASKANDRI and that of MAHMUD AL—FIRKAWI. I had deferred the edition of the most interesting, that of ZAYN AL—DIN AL—KHWAFI (838 H./ 1435) on account of the gaps in the unique manuscript possessed. An Egyptian friend, Mr. Mohammad 'Abd 'al—Qader, professor at the Literature Faculty of Guizeh, actually prepares its publication. Besides, we must believe that the about fifteen known commentaries have not exhausted the reflexion on the book of STAGES because in 1969, Mr. Mahmoud Abou—l—Fayd al—Manoufi thought it good to write another one, published in Cairo.

From all those works, retain here only the critical edition of the MANAZIL AL—SA'IRIN. It took me many years to assemble photocopies or microfilms of about forty manuscripts dispersed throughout the world, from Princeton to Djakarta, to pick up and compare the variant readings, study the transmission links, reconstitute the original text, trace back the story of its diffusion and translate it in French. After having contested the system of the references (that chosen by Mr. Blachere, which although presents many advantages) and criticised the disposition of the text in different levels, adopted to contribute to the improvement of the structure, the rhythms and rimes, Professor Ritter told me: "A work such as this one has to be made once in a lifetime. It takes so much time, it represents so many efforts that nobody is tempted to begin over. But it enables us to understand the difficulties of those who, in turn, try the same experience". I think he was right...

In the introduction, I rashly announced the publication of a second work studying the book of stages in its structure, its means of expression, its doctrine and its purposes. For an eventual publication, it would be necessary to take everything over again and to complete it, and my life in Kabul does not give me that leisure. We can also ask ourselves if other kinds of works concerning Ansari would not be of a more immediate interest to orientalist.

At the end of this lecture, I shall only mention my Manuscripts of Afghanistan, catalogue of more than 1500 manuscripts kept in six Afghan libraries. Since 1964, date of its publication, new groupings have been made which render necessary a new inventory, and for that, I confess to have neither time nor courage.

Such are the works, Honourable Members of the Jury, that I today submit to your appreciation. Probably have they contributed to the revival of Herat's old Master, always venerated in his native city, but somewhat forgotten or unknown elsewhere. No doubt that they have also helped to put back into question certain prejudices concerning the relations between soufism and hanbalism, that "heart of believing Islam," as Louis Massignon called it.

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Fifteenth Century Behzad's Miniature of Abdullah Ansari in Amir Ali Shêr Nawayi Collection





# *Structure of Ansari's "Book of Stages,, (Manazil us Sayerin)*

By Khwadja Abdullah Ansari

By Dr S. de L. de Beurecueil, O.P.

If there is a book the structure of which seems evident, it is indeed Ansari's work entitled: THE STAGES OF THE ITINERANTS TOWARDS GOD, with its introduction and its ten sections of ten short chapters each.

The knowledge of the stages that the Itinerants towards God must go through helps the servant to advance from one degré to another, until he reaches the proximity of God, the stages are overcome one after the other until the last, which will be for one's self the dwelling of proximity. This proximity, IF ONE GOES BEYOND IT, IS A STAGE; IF ONE LINGERS, IT IS A DWELLING, as it is for the Angels in Heaven: "Among us, there is nobody who does not have a reserved place" (Qoran, S. XXXVII, 164). EACH OF THOSE THOUSAND SHELTERS IS A STAGE FOR THE ONE WHO ADVANCES AND A SHELTER FOR THE ONE WHO FINDS OUT."

To decide upon the term STAGE was thus choosing movement, continual surpassing, against cult of attitudes or of mystical states wanted for themselves. In the structure of the work, Ansari will be satisfied by speaking of chapters (abwab), showing that there is question of a simple ORDO EXPOSITIONIS.

This having been said, as we have to refrain from being dupes of an apparently rigid structure which, on the contrary of all experience, would enregiment spiritual life, we may ask ourselves what have become, in fact, during the wording or the dictation, the indications of the preface. The real structure of THE BOOK OF STAGES may differ from the apparent structure.

This is a quite long research to try to understand clearly into a problem which, at first sight, did not seem to show up!... Apparently very simple, the structure of THE BOOK OF STAGES is in reality very complex; its appearances are deceitful. On one part, Ansari yielded himself, although it was very painful for him, to the claims of his sollicitors; his statement concerning the dwellings is well structured, personal, brief, agreeable and easy to remember with its Qoranic quotations, its striking definitions, its trilogies, its figures and its assonances. But even in the

Introduction, he has advised them to beware; the systematization adopted to satisfy them allows a part of art and of arbitrary. In the reality of spiritual progress, things are not so simple: God's initiatives may overthrow the order of the logical succession of the stages; the dwellings, essentially transitory, overlap and improve one another at each step; the real stages of spiritual life are complex and moving states, which do not allow that definitions and details be given at leisure; vocations are personal and multiple.

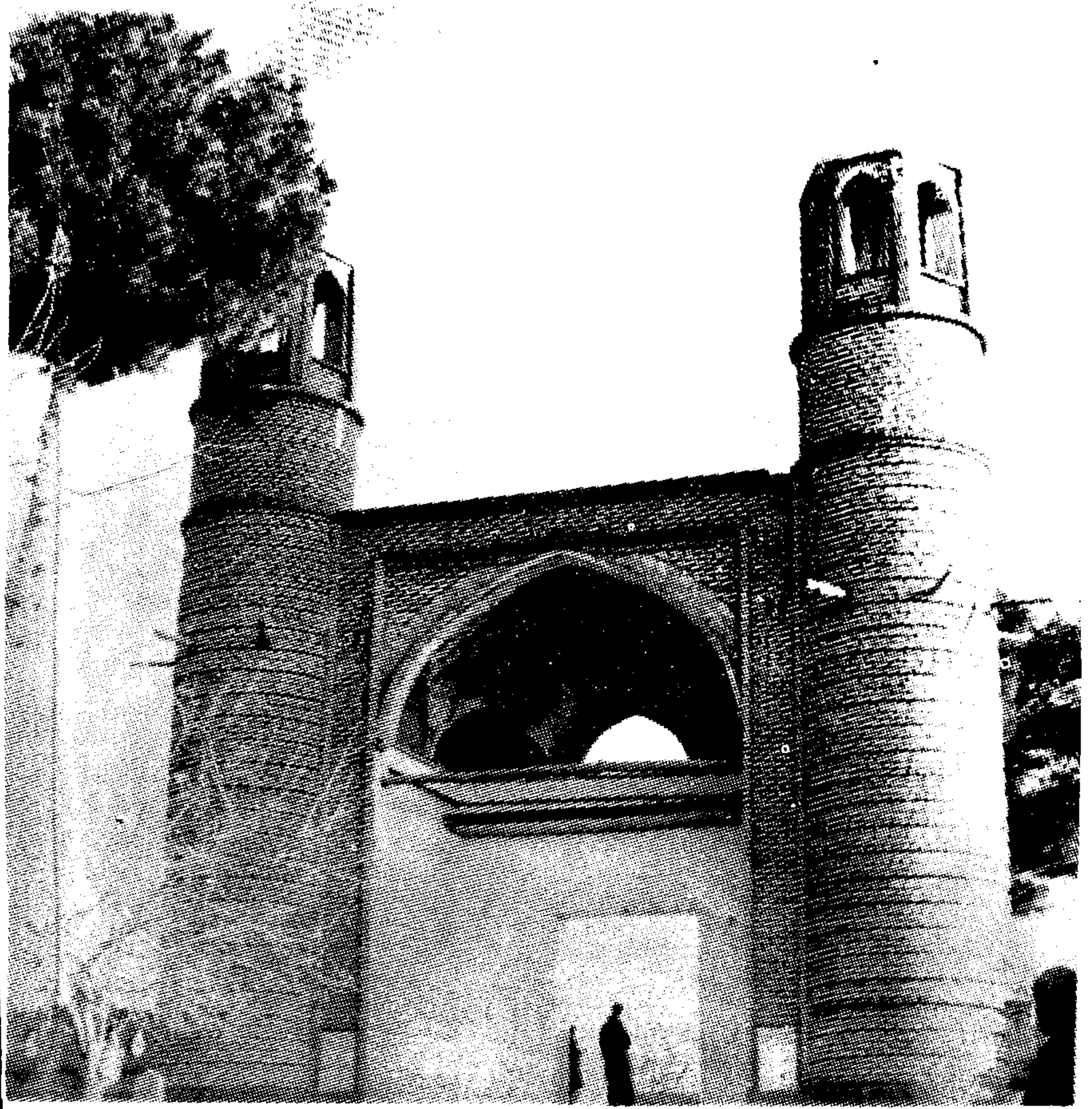
Among the commentators, those who interested themselves to the structure of the STAGES have often not perceived these faint differences; in the author's observations that aimed to give a relative character to the structure of the work by noting the difference between ORDO EXPOSITIONIS, dictated by the didactic preoccupations, and ORDO INVENTIONIS, describing the complex unfolding of the experience, they have seen only supplementary precisions, to be retraced, come what may, in the organization and the contents of the book. Dead end, in spite of the ingenious prodigies bestowed.

In reality, after having decided for a rather vague frame, corresponding in block to the development of the experience (the ten sections), Ansari has filled it with groups of dwellings: antitethic couples taken from the tradition, different aspects of a same attitude, connex notions. In those groups, key—dwellings appear, which play a particularly important role, significant of the author's real preoccupations. On the other hand secondary notions have been manifestly treated only to fill in holes.

Among the different categories of spirituals mentioned in the course of the work, we find, beyond the didactic frame, the reality of the experience in the great stages of its concrete unfolding. One can follow the Itinerant, from the fervour in the common religion up to the summits of mystical life, passing through the efforts of the active path and the surprising states of the passive path.

In short, the study of the degrees demonstrates to what extent the author was able to make use of liberty in the analysis of the different dwellings. To fidelity to all preconceived systematization, he prefers the requirements of studied reality and of the inspiration of the moment.

Soufism theorician? The diffusion of the BOOK OF STAGES and his multiple commentators' interpretations may have been the cause of such a way of thinking about Ansari. In reality, he has been thus in spite of himself, and without being caught in the game. He preferred to be the guide revealed by the TABAQAT—AL SUFTIYYA and the MONAJAT, meditating upon the sayings of his predecessors through the light of his own experience and approaching the spiritual realities by successive allusions, according to (or at the mercy of) the images and rhythms without any A PRIORI Plan nor any systematization. For those who have knowledge of it, the BOOK OF STAGES is adorned at its exact value.



Entrance of Abdullah Tâqi Mausoleum in Herat. He was Ansari's Childhood Master.



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Maulana Jalaluddin of Balkh (13th Century) Drawing in Konieh Museum





# *The Meaning of Prayer in Mowlana Jalaluddin Balkhi's Work*

*By Prof. Dr. Asim Muhammad Schimmel*

In the West, one story from the MATHNAWI has gained fame more than others: these are the touching verses in the third book of the MATHNAWI about the man who prayed the whole night until Satan appeared before him and said:

*Prithce, o garrulous one, where is the response 'Here am I' to all  
this 'Allah'?*

Thereupon the man got quiet and distressed, but in a dream Khizr appeared before him, informing him that God Most High had ordered to tell him:

*That 'Allah' of thine is My 'Here am I', and that supplication and  
grief and ardour of thine is My messenger to thee.*

*Thy shifts and attempts to find a means of gaining access to Me  
were in reality My drawing thee towards Me, and released  
thy feet.*

*Thy fear and love are the noose to catch My favour; beneath every  
'O Lord!' of thine is many a 'Here am I' from Me.*

This story has been brought to light by F.G.H. Tholuck, the first German to attempt to compile a historical survey of Sufism in his Latin booklet *SSUFISMUS SIVE THEOSOPHIA PERSARUM PANTHEISTICA*, published in Berlin in 1821. On p. 12 he quotes the last lines of Mowlana's poem under the heading: *DEUS EST QUI IN MORTALIUM PRECIBUS SE IPSE VENERATUR, SEIPSE ADORAT,* 'God is it who venerates Himself and worships Himself in the prayers of mortals', and with the heartfelt antipathy of an orthodox protestant theologian toward anything that looks like pantheistic mysticism he comments upon these words: "What more abstruse, what more audacious could be thought!"

Tholuck quoted the same verses once more in his anthology *BLUTHENLESE AUS DER MORGENLANDISCHEN MYSTIK* (1825), and thus the poem became known to all students of mysticism in 19th century Germany. As far as I can see, the first person to draw the attention of larger circles of phi-

lologists and theologians to these lines of Mathnawi was the Swedish orientalist K. V. Zetterstéen in the beginning of our century: he translated i.e. this passage from the MATHNAWI for Nathan Söderblom's collection FRAMMANDA RELIGIONSURKUNDER, the great collection of religious texts by he the pioneer of History of Religions in Europe. By that time, however, the scholars' attitude towards MATHNAWI's story had completely changed. Söderblom wrote in his introduction to his collection in 1907 about Mowlânâ:

*His is the wonderful word about prayer and the hearing of prayer whose consoling main ideas is met with once more in religious literature, i.e. with Pascal.*

The same statement was repeated by N. Söderblom in his new edition of Tiele's KOMPENDIUM DER RELIGIONSGESCHICHTE in 1931.

In the meantime, in 1914, R. A. Nicholson had inserted our story into his book THE MYSTICS OF ISLAM in order to show that 'for Jalaloddin man's love is really the effect of God's love'. Both Söderblom's and Nicholson's dicta are quoted by F. Heiler, who, in his standard work on prayer (DAS GEBET, 5th ed. 1923) cites Rumi's verses as the most beautiful proof of the fact that the ORATIO INFUSA is known not only in Christianity but also in Islam; and he repeated this statement--and often the quotation from the MATHNAWI--in his numerous later publications; he loved to recur to it in his sermons.

Through these channels, MATHNAWI's story on prayer has gained fame among theologians and historians of religion. It seems, however, that these verses were often regarded in to isolated a way. In fact, they constitute only the quintessence of Mowlânâ's innumerable sentences, verses, and whole poems on prayer which rank from simple ritual prayer and its obligations to the highest summits of mystical meditation. One of the finest examples is the story of the mystic Daqûqi leading the congregational prayer, in which the poet describes ritual prayer as man's experience in God's presence at Doomsday--the base soul is slaughtered as a sacrificial animal as soon as man utters the words ALLAHU AKBAR and the believer is totally engaged in self-examination and orisons:

*Daqûqi advanced to perform the prayer: the company were the satin robe and he the embroidered border.*

*When they pronounced the TAKBIRS, they went forth from this world, like a sacrifice.*

*O Imam, the meaning of the TAKBIR is this: "We have become a sacrifice, O God, before Thee:"*

*At the moment of slaughtering you say ALLAH AKBAR: even to (do) in slaughtering the fleshly soul which ought to be killed.*

*The body is like Isma'il, and the spirit like Abraham: the spirit has pronounced the TAKBIR over the noble body..*

One may also think of Adam's great prayer, culminating in the praise and laud of the Creator:

*O Helper of them that call for help, lead us! There is no (cause for) pride in knowledge or riches.*

*Do not let a heart stray that Thou hast guided by Thy grace, and avert the evil which the Pen has written...*

*If Thou art upbraiding Thy slaves, that is suitable to Thee, O Thou whose every wish is fulfilled.*

*And if Thou say that the sun and moon are scum, and if Thou say that the stature of the cypress is (bent) double,*

*And if Thou call the empyrean and the sky contemptible, and if Thou say that the mine and the sea are poor.*

*That is proper in reference to Thy perfection: Thine is the power of perfecting (all) mentalities,*

*For Thou art holy (and free) from danger and from non-existence.*

*Thou are He that brings the non-existent ones into beings and endows them (with existence)...*

We could add many other examples of touching, deep-felt prayers which the poet put into the mouth of his heroes in the MATHNAWI. His work comprises every aspect of prayer life. Thus, he speaks of the ritual ablutions, for:

*None with face unwashed beholds the faces of the hours; he (the Prophet) said: There is no ritual prayer without the ablution.*

Although he may spiritualize the meaning of the externals, he never denies their necessity for the correct performance of the ritual prayer. In this connection we may remember his amusing story of the poor individual who mixed up the prayer formulas to be used when washing the different parts of the body, so that he said at the time of abstersion; "O God, unite me with the scent of Paradise!" instead of "O God cleanse me from this defilement!" - a perfect model of doing the right thing in the wrong place, as well-meaning foolish people often do... Mowlânâ himself may speak of performing his ablution with his tears, as many poets and mystics have done in the course of time. The legend of Mary's bath during which she conceived Jesus, the spirit of God, is utilized as a model for the lover who should perform his ritual bath in the reil of love. But when the average Muslim leans himself of out ward impurities, lover washes his hands of speaking, purifying himself of logical speech.

**Ritual prayer can become a symbol for man's whole life:**

*Illuminate the lamp of your five senses with the light of the heart*

i.e. the opening fâteha without which no ritual prayer is complete for:

*God has put a kingdom into the fâteha, for the sincere without trouble of spear and shield.*

The FATEHA indeed opens for him the spiritual kingdom, for as Mowlânâ says on another occasion: when mean says 'Lead us the right path', God takes his hand and transforms him into light. Rumi sees the words of the FATEHA manifested even in the attitude of the trees in the garden:

*'We worship Thee' is in winter the prayer of the garden;  
In spring it says: "To Thee we ask for help".  
'We worship Thee (means): I have come to thy door,  
Open the portal of joy, don't keep me any longer distressed.  
'We ask for help': (that means) from the wealth of fruits  
I have become broken—O Helper, watch me well!*

The thought of the beloved, the absolute presence of the heart, is as necessary in prayer as the FATEHA. Somebody may boast of being engaged in prayer day and night—but what is the use, when his words are not fitting for prayer, and he lives not up to the high ideals of pious life? Prayer should leave its mark on the character - even though man can not hope to reach God's Essence by performing ritual prayer and recollection, yet it is as if he had touched a piece of musk through the lid of a box, and thus his whole hand becomes perfumed... (from the book "FIH-I-MA-FIH-I").

The outward ritual is a prerequisite for the inward approximation that is true for prayer as it is true for every aspect of life: Mowlânâ always kept the rules of etiquette and has admonished his disciples to correct behaviour, as we understand from a number of remarks in FIHI MA FIHI. And when man follows the rules prescribed in the presence of the worldly ruler - how much more must he behave correctly with all his senses and limbs when entering into the presence of the Lord of the Universe!

*Our God says "Prostrate and draw near!" (Sura 96/19)  
The prostration of our bodies became the proximity of the soul.*

To be sure, Mowlânâ may even include charming little jokes in his description of prayer: How could he perform a correct evening prayer since the face of his beloved - the Sun of Tabriz - grants him perpetual morning draught? But utterances like this lead us merely to the state when the lover - as Mansûr Hallâj had expressed it already in his famous poem - is so intoxicated by the presence of his beloved that he cannot count any longer the hours of prayer. For

*Whosoever is bewildered by Thee, keeps fasting in fasting,  
prayer in prayer.*

The intoxicated know neither time nor place in their ritual prayers. Though love may outwardly transform the ascetic's rosary into song and

poetry, and break his renunciation a thousand times, the prayer of the lovers is perpetual - FI SALAT-IN DAIMUN; for, as we understand from the story in whose context this Qorânic saying (Sûra 70/23) is inserted, ritual prayer is the deepest and most tender conversation of lover and beloved (represented in Mathnawi story by the enamoured mouse and the frog!) This definition - prayer as intimate conversation - goes back to early times of Sufi history, and Mowlânâ himself certainly belongs to those whose mystical state was deepened by the experience of ritual prayer, not to those whose high spiritual flights were interrupted when turning to the prescribed formulas of the NAMAZ, to use Hujriwi Ghaznavi's definition of the different approaches to prayer.

Feraydûn Sepahsâlâr quotes one of Mowlânâ's most enraptured prayer-poems, written in an intoxicated rhythm in which two long and two short syllables alternate:

*When at evening prayer everybody lays candle and table,  
I am there with my friend's dream image, grief and sighing and  
lament.*

*When I perform my ablution with tears, my prayer becomes fiery.  
It burns the door of my mosque, when my call to prayer reaches  
it....*

*I wonder at the prayer of the intoxicated! Tell me: is this correct?  
For he does not know time, nor is he aware of space.  
I wonder...are these two KAK'AS? I wonder: is this my fourth  
one?*

*I wonder which sura did I recite since I have not got a tongue?  
How shall I knock at God's door, since neither hand remained in  
me, nor heart?*

*Since Thou hast carried away heart and hand, o God, give pardon!  
By God, I do not know how I performed the ritual prayer,  
Whether my genuflection is finished, or who was the Imam....*

And Feraydûn Sepahsalar goes on telling that on a cold winter night - and winter in the Konya plains may be very cruel - Mowlana once performed the prayer in the mosque, and wept so profusely during his prostration that the tears froze on his cheeks and in his beard which adhered, finally, to the ground; in the morning his disciples had to dissolve the ice with hot water..... Did the master not say

*There are a hundred kinds of prayer, genuflection and prostrations  
for him who has taken the Friend's beauty as his prayer niche?*

Love is Mowlânâ's Imam, an Imam thanks to whom thousands of mosques are filled, and from the minaret comes the call "Prayer is better than sl

to man he will immediately utter the four TAKBIR i.e. the funeral prayer, over eating and sleeping.

Mowlânâ sometimes alludes to some peculiarities of prayer; the free prayers of petition must be uttered only at the end of formal prayer; during Ramadan, the prayer of the faithful is certainly well accepted, as much as prayer in early morning time at the threshold of the Living and Self-Subsistent is advisable; as to night prayer (the favourite worship of early Sûfis), though perhaps worthless in the eyes of the common people it is 'like a radiant candle' in God's eyes. Not in vain does Jalaloddin turn several times to the example of the Prophet Jonah who prayed inside the fish—man should pray at midnight in the darkness of his existence, and should again render grace when entering the morning light, rescued from the belly of the fish 'Night'.

Time and again has Mowlânâ expressed his absolute trust in the effectiveness of prayer:

*Those who have no information about us say that prayer has no result.*

He praises the formula of ISTIGHFAR, 'I ask God for forgiveness' which certainly will yield good results:

*He makes all the sins of the trespassers fall like leaves in December,*

*He inspires to the ear of those who speak ill the excuse for sins.*

*He says: "Say; O Faithful One, forgive a sin which is hidden!"*

*When the servant enters prayer, He says in secret 'Amen'.*

*His Amen is, that he grants him taste in his prayer and that He makes him inwardly and outwardly sweet and agreeable like a fig....*

Prayer is indeed 'the key of people's needs'. For Jalâloddin firmly relies upon the Qorânic word (Sûra 9/62) that God 'has tied invocation together with His promise 'I shall answer' "; man's sigh, directed to God, may serve as a rope which carries him out of the deep well of his despair. In fact, Jalâloddin believes, like most of the Sufis since at least the 9th century, that grief is a perfect means to draw man to God:

*Grief is better than the empire of the world, so that you may call unto God in secret,*

and he often repeats that most people forget their Creator in the time of happiness, but remember Him during the time of affliction—so what could be better for them than affliction, pain and grief?

The smell of burnt liver—like a burnt offering—can be felt from a lover whose liver is wounded by hundreds of sparks of grief, and will certainly be agreeable to the Lord. To a modern mind, Jalâloddin's comparisons may sound, at times, strange and even irreverent in their plain and sometimes crude anthropomorphism. He holds that God loves to test the believer by

not answering his prayers immediately because he rejoices in listening to his voice—parrots and nightingales are put into a cage because their owner loves to listen to them. Does not man likewise hesitate to give a piece of bread immediately to a lovely youth beggar whom he wants to contemplate for a while, but sends away an ugly old wratch with some pennies to get rid of her the sooner the better...? Such is the way God is thought to act. Jalâloddin seems to rely here upon a HADITH quoted by Qosheyri which tells that God orders Gabriel not to answer the wishes of His beloved servants for as sure He takes in their voices.

Perhaps, however, just some of these apparently childish stories in the MATHNAWI reveal more of the strong living relation between Jalâloddin and his Lord than high-soaring theoretical discussions about the meaning and end of prayer could do. How touching is the story of the old harp-player who eventually seeks refuge with God:

*For seventy years I have been committing sin, yet not for one day hast Thou withheld Thy bounty from me.  
I earn nothing—today I am Thy guest; I will play the harp for Thee, I am Thine...*

The destitute musician strives to thank God with his half-broken instrument and his shrieky voice; the shepherd, again, imagines his Lord to be a child for which he wants to care in order to prove his gratitude:

*Moses saw a shepherd on the way, who was saying: "O God who choosest (whom Thou wilt),  
Where art Thou, that I may become Thy servant and sew Thy shoes and comb Thy head?  
That I may wash Thy clothes and kill Thy lice and bring milk to Thee, o worshipful One,  
That I may kiss Thy little hand and rub Thy little foot (and when) bedtime comes I may sweep Thy little room,  
O Thou to whom all my goats be a sacrifice, Thou in remembrance of Whom are my cries of ay and ah!"*

Moses, full of prophetic wrath at hearing this seemingly blasphemous prayers, chased him away: "Stuff cotton into your mouth!"—but even he the great prophet, had to learn that God preferred the sincere prayer of the spiritually poor to the highflown words of the intelligent and the learned: indeed, every Divine acceptance is an act of grace, no matter who the praying person be:

*This acceptance (by God) of your praise is from (His) mercy: it is an indulgence like (that granted in the case of) the prayers of a woman suffering from menorrhagia.  
Her prayers are stained with blood, your praise is stained with assimilation and qualification....*



Of course, there is a difference between the praying humans—the beggar, i.e. the infidel, calls God for the sake of bread, the devout says 'God!' from the depth of his heart. Jalâloddin has skillfully employed a story known already from Attar's work, namely that of a dervish in Herat who was scolding God when he saw that the wordly ruler had conferred better clothes upon his servants than God had given to His faithful slave—but:

*God gave the waist and the waist is better than the belt;  
If anyone gives a crown — He has given the head!*

This is one of the very few instances in which the motif of 'Muslim Mystics' strife with God', so prominent in 'Attar's poetry, is used by Jalâloddin—he always returns to the soul's deep, loving trust in God.

Thinking of the differences between the praying people, Mowlânâ may warn his readers not to mix their prayer with that of the unworthy who will be rejected; and if one reads the FATEHA, one should know that the words 'Lead us the right path' mean:

*O God, do not mingle my prayer with that of the erring or the hypocrites!*

Jalâloddin knows that many prayers are not answered—however, God's eternal wisdom is revealed even here, for:

*Thanks be to God that this prayer was rejected: I thought it was loss but it has turned out to be gain.  
Many are the prayers which are loss and destruction, and from kindness the Holy God does not hear them.*

The only prayer which will certainly be heard and answered is that for others, be they relatives, masters, friends, or enemies—; for the true Muslim prays even for his enemies, the highway robbers, corrupters, and insolent transgressors, because:

*They wrought so much wickedness and injustice and oppression that they cast me forth from evil into good.  
I took refuge from the blows Yonder: the wolves were always bringing me back into the right way.  
It behoves me to pray for them.*

Such prayers—the prayers of true lovers—are like birds which certainly fly towards heaven. Did not the Beloved promise:

*I shall bring you beyond heaven like the prayer of the lovers?*

Therefore the loving prayer can be compared to the Simorgh, the mythical bird at the end of the world.

Such prayers—uttered by lovers and by 'dervishes with burnt heart' are answered, and Mowlânâ never ceased to urge his companions to pray, incessantly and intensely. God can turn even dried up prayer into grain and fruitful trees and give man unexpected reward, just as the dry palmtree was quick-

kened by Mary's sigh and showered down fruits upon her during her birth pangs (who not think of Paul Valery's wonderful poem LA PALME, when reading these comparisons?).

Jalâluddin claims that his prayers made even heaven lament during the time of separation—and he makes one of his heroes say:

*Thou knowest (the truth), and the long nights (know it) during  
which I was calling unto Thee with a hundred supplications.*

With an ingenious allusion to the old mystic motif of the moth and the candle, he describes himself:

*My profession is to speak prayers....*

*My prayers constantly turn around the candle (SHAM) of Thy  
hearing (SAM),*

*Therefore I possess burning prayers like the moth.*

The moth, casting itself into the flames, becomes united with it and thus gains new life: the burnt prayers of the poet's moth-like heart will certainly reach the place of union. Jalâluddin claims several times that he, who has nothing but prayer, has himself become prayer—so that everyone who looks at him wants prayers from him. This is perhaps the most beautiful self-portrait we possess of him: completely transformed into that light which—according to the Sufi saying—surrounds those who pray at night when the Lord covers them with light from His Light.

It is therefore small wonder that Mowlânâ was able to understand the prayer of everything created, as it is described so often in the Qoran, and as it was experienced by the the Sûfis throughout the centuries 'only adoration is intended in the world', and everything recites words of praise, from the moon to the fish which carries the earth (AZ MAH TA BA MAHI), the minerals the birds and the flowers; the fire stands upright in ritual prayer, and the water prostrates itself....

*The trees are engaged in ritual prayer and the birds in singing  
the litany.*

*The violet is bent down in prostration twice.*

Indeed, the trees open their arms in the gesture typical of the prayer of supplication, and particularly the plane-tree's hands are opened for prayer; the lily with its sword and the jasmine with a white shield shout the call ALLAH AKBAR as if they partake in the religious war. And once more combining the BI-BARGI 'being without means' with BARG leaf', Jalâluddin sees the leaves supplicating out of destitution, an expression inherited from Sanâ'i. Sanâ'i had also invented the 'Rosary of the Birds' TASHMIL TOYUR, a long qasida in which he interprets every sound uttered by the birds as a word of praise and prayer: Mowlânâ participated in the joy of understanding the secret language of the birds (which had been translated into epic poetry by Attâr), and he interpreted it many

times in a variety of images. For he knew that the words and acts of praise are different in the world, and that they often are not even verbally expressed. But everyone who helps building the tent of God, is engaged in praise:

*There is one praise for the rope-maker, another for the carpenter,  
who makes the tent-poles, another for the maker of the tent-  
pins, another for the weaver who weaves the cloth for the  
tent, another for the saints who sit in the tent and contem-  
plate in perfect delight (from: FIH-I MA FIH-I).*

However even in their most eloquent hymns the creatures have to aver, knowingly or unknowingly, with the Prophet's word: "I cannot reckon up Thy praise," or sing:

*If the top of every hair of mine should gain a tongue,  
yet the thanks due to Thee are inexpressible.*

Likewise the last goal of mystical prayer is inexpressible- it is not which speaks through all his limbs. God answers those unspoken prayers, and love; when even the infidels cannot endure separation from Him, how much less the faithful! Mowlânâ's *DIYAN* is replete with words of longing and hope- prayers which need not be expressed in words but are understood through the *LISAN-UL-HAL*, the lover's 'mute eloquence' which speaks through all his limbs. God answers those unspoken prayers, since He knows everything man needs. In fact, man does not know how to pray be it that he dares not speak in the presence of the Almighty, or that his words are not convenient:

*As Thou hast shown Thy power, show Thy mercy, o Thou who  
hast implanted feeling of mercy in flesh and fat.  
If this prayer increases Thy wrath, do Thou teach us to pray,  
o Lord!*

It is He who lights the candle of prayer in the darkness; it is He who makes the heart narrow, but also makes it green-fresh and rose-colored; it is He who induces you into prayer and gives you the reward of prayer, who turns the bitter dust into bread, the bread into soul, and guides the soul by the right path.

Whenever man prays in the right way, moved by God, he will hear the Amen from God who dwells in his soul, for:

*Form Thee come both the prayer and the answer, from Thee  
safety, from Thee also dread.  
If we have spoken faultily, do Thou correct it; Thou art the cor-  
rector, o Thou Sultan of speech!*

This idea, which brings our discourse back to our starting-point, is, however, not Jalâloddin's invention. A Prophetic tradition- -probably known in

and so, in a sense, is prayer:

*When the slave says: YA YA ABDI (O my Lord! God say: I ABDI)  
KA YA ABDI (then I am an obedient servant, my Lord),  
and it will be open unto Thee.*

God's love proceeds from His love that He loves to be loved. Interpreting Sura 109: He loves them and they love Him, and He is ever aware of them, we not address God unless He has been addressed first. The poet, the mystic, and the Sufi, al-Burhānī, whose work was apparently widely read in the West, and in Egypt, has uttered many a daring word about the mystery of the God's love (INFUSA) — so much — so that his modern interpreter could compare one of his MAVAQH — to Francis Thompson's HOARD OF HEAVEN: he — tells how Divine Grace follows him — wherever he may flee — just as the psalmist had expressed — this feeling — of God's unceasing activity and utter proximity — in the words of Psalm 139:

*Let us turn our heads from ourselves towards Thee, masnunet —  
Thou art nigher unto us than we,  
Even this prayer is Thy gift and lesson — else wherefore has a seed  
bed grown in an ash-pā?  
Thou madest prayer from the water, from me — now fulfill it accord-  
ding to Thy promise!*

That is what the faithful feel when submerged in prayer — and — Mowlānā has described — this mental change which — is the result — of prayer in many passages of the MATHNAWI, the most beautiful verses — among — which are probably those describing Daqūqī's prayer when — he, completely — annihilated in God, experiences — that God prays in him — and through him.

*Become silent, and go by way of silence towards non-existence,  
and when you become non-existent, you will be over and all  
praise and laud.*

This feeling — has — been expressed once more in Jalāloddin's story — of the Israilite who addressed God:

*To whom but Thee should Thy servant lift his hand? Both, the  
prayer and the answer ere from Thee.  
Thou at first givest the desire for prayer, and Thou at last givest  
likewise the recompense for prayers.  
Thou art the First and the Last, we between are nothing, a nothing  
that does not admit of expression.*

Here, prayer — is both supplication, springing from the presence — of God in the heart — and answered by God, and ZEKR, recollection, which culminates in the — absorption of the recollecting subject — in the recollected object, as Joneyd had put — it. Mowlānā knows this secret of constant recollection — (although he has never given any fixed rules pertaining to ZEKR):

*And think so intensely of God that you forget yourself), until you be annihilated in the Called One, where there is neither calling nor call.*

He has touched this problem in a passage of FIII MA FIII, which has been taken up by Feraydûn Sepahsâlar. Formal prayer, he says, has an end, but the constant prayer of the soul is unlimited, it is

*The drowning and unconsciousness of the soul so that all these forms remain without. At that time there is no room even for Gabriel who is pure spirit.*

That is what the Prophet experienced when he stood in the Divine Presence and had 'a time with God' while even the angel of inspiration had to remain outside this most intimate discourse between Creator and creature. Annihilated in the Divine Presence, the praying person par-takes of the Divine light. Jalâloddin illustrates this point with an of repeated story according to which a certain saint (allegedly his own father) was completely absorbed in prayer and so united with God that those who bore him company were facing the direction of the Ka'ba where as those, who had performed the ritual prayer without him, were seen turning their backs towards Mecca. God's light, as manifest in the praying master, is 'the soul of the Mecca-ward direction'. If someone would entrust himself and his wishes to such a saint, God fulfill his request without his uttering a word. And thus write Mowlânâ in one of his letters:

*The FAQIH knows the form of prayer, its beginning is TAKBIR, its end SALAM. The FAQIR knows the...soul of ritual prayer. The condition of the soul of prayer is to be forty years in the greatest JEHAD, to make one's eyes and soul bleed, to transgress the veil of darkness, to die from one's own existence, to be alive through God's life, to exist through God's existence.*

It is not difficult to understand that stories like those which highlight God's praying in man's heart could be interpreted in a pantheistic sense: later admirers of Mowlânâ would find here the idea that there is nothing Existent but God who prays in Himself and through Himself. Yet, Jalâlodin's own statement that faith is even better than prayer, since it is invariable, and is the very root of prayer, should be kept in mind when discussing his thoughts on prayer.

The story which we discussed in the beginning of the chapter has often been echoed in the Muslim world - we know an almost verbal paraphrasis by the Persian poet Shâh Jelânâz Hâshemi who found shelter at the court of the Arghunds in Sind (he was murdered on his way to Mecca in 1529). Other allusions are frequent in both high Dari,urdû, and popular Punjabi and Sindhi mystical poetry. In our century, Muhammad Iqbal has

once more interpreted "Rumi" 's idea of the dialogue between man and God- a God who longs to be known, loved and worshipped and therefore creates the world and what is in it; a God who teaches man how to address Him answering the way He considers in necessary for the cure and the welfare of the world. But more important; such prayers which are intimate conversations of the soul and God, cause a change in man's consciousness so that he finally, conforms to the Eternal Will in loving and obeying and experiences that his prayers-even though not answered verbally- have led him to a new level of experience, and thus yielded unexpected fruit for his spiritual life.

(Afghanistan Journal Vol. 27, No. 3, December 1974)

# *The Meaning of Love according to Mawlana Jalaluddin of Balkh*

By Dr. A. G. Ravan Farhadi

This is the translation of the first section of a paper presented in the Afghan—German seminar on Mawlana Jalaluddin of Balkh, (commonly called Rumi). The eight remaining sections translation will appear in due course.

The full Dari text may be found in *Majlis-i-Mawlana* (Kabul, Bayhaqi, 1975) containing the Dari text of the papers presented in the seminar held in Kabul, October 1974. (P. 148 to 220).

Dr. Deborah E. Klimburg—Salter has substantially assisted the author in the preparation of this translation.

Readers are recommended to study "Rumi's" work in the "classical Persian Literature" of Professor A.J. Arberry (London 1958 (P.P 214—241)).

This article will deal with the topic of "love" as found in the works of Jalaluddin of Balkh. (13th Century A.D.). His treatment of this theme is organized here into 9 groups, each of which constitutes one chapter of this article. Each group is explained by quotes from Mawlana's writings. The author has limited his own comments and interpretations in favor of Mawlana's word. The author hopes that other students will also seek to understand Mawlana through a deeper study of the poet's works and less through secondary commentaries.

This kind of first hand study of Mawlana's writing will be greatly advanced if scholars would undertake the difficult work of classifying the poems according to subject—matter. Although such a process often

involves subjective decisions, it is necessary for an intellectual understanding of Mawlana's philosophy. The manner in which Mawlana weaves themes throughout his works is reminiscent of his own idea that "the drops cannot be distinguished from the ocean". In its present state, the work of Mawlana has often been difficult for students to understand. Until a few years ago the text of the DIWAN was not fully available. In the FIHI MA FIHI and the MAJALIS-E SAB'A there are many themes that could be profitably grouped together.

The author feels that this article might be the yeast of a major study organized in this way, and made possible through the combined efforts of many students.

This article consists of the following sections:

- 1) Poems on the definition of love.
- 2) Secular love.
- 3) The struggle between reason and love.
- 4) The love for one's companion.
- 5) The impact of love on the Universe.
- 6) The impact of love on the lover.
- 7) Dedication of the lover to the beloved.
- 8) The religion of the lover.
- 9) The final goal of love.

The majority of the poems quoted in this article come from the DIWAN, others from the MATHNAWI (and few prose passages from FIHI MA FIHI. The GHAZALS are numbered according to the edition of DIWAN edited by Badi uz-Zaman Furuzanfar (Teheran). The quotations from the MATHNAWI give the number of the book and the title of the story.

Before turning to the first chapter of this article we quote the FIHI MA FIHI where the students of Mawlana record his statements on the relationship between love and "appearance".

Appearance (=from=Surat) is but an emanation of love;  
Without love, appearance has no meaning;

The emanation does not exist without its essence (asl).

Therefore God is not called an appearance (but a reality).

Because appearance is an emanation (far')

Love cannot be imagined without appearance.

From love emanates hundred thousand forms (surats).

There is no painting without the painter.

and no painter without the painting.

The painting is the emanation (far')

and the painter the source and the essence (asl).



## SECTION 1

## ON THE DEFINITION OF LOVE

Recognizing love is not easy, like the beloved, it is sometimes hidden and sometimes it appears.

Ghazal 2701:

you are like love  
apparent and hidden.  
I have never seen.  
a manifestation like you.

It is difficult to explain love in words.  
(fifth book, MATHNAWI, the story of Sheikh Ghaznawi):

Love cannot be contained in words.  
Love is an ocean with no visible bottom  
The seven seas are small, when compared to the  
ocean of love.

(fifth book, MATHNAWI, the story of Ayaz):

If I continue to tell the story of love  
100 resurrections can occur, and the story still not be finished. It  
is more difficult to explain love in writing.

Ghazal 1215:

When the pen attempted to describe the exal-  
tation of love,

the pen broke and the paper was rended  
Love itself deprives men of the possibility of expression.

GHAZAL 1615:

O love, how strange you are!!  
A prodigy, a wonder!  
How you have caught my mouth!  
my speech has been swallowed up!

If one tries to explain love, he will gain only shame.

(book one MATHNAWI, the story of the slave girl):

No matter how I explain about love  
when I reach love itself, I am ashamed.  
To explain with words  
is to make things clear.  
But speechless love is bright and luminous  
The pen was hurrying to write  
when it reached love, it cracked.

The explanation of love, is given by love itself  
when trying to describe love.

Reason kneeled down  
like a donkey in the mud.

Therefore in the explanation of love, one must return to love itself  
although love is speechless.

GHAZAL 1082:

Don't ask me about Love!

Don't ask anybody!

Ask Love itself.

The one who seeks love should know that this is a dangerous  
path which either kills man, or makes him live.

GHAZAL 2074):

The story of Love must be sought in Love itself.

It is like a mirror, speaking and silent.

On my heart, put your arms around Love's neck.

The weight of so many lives hang on this neck

and yet, Love is not afraid to pay ransom.

It possesses treasures;

it resurrects the dead, and

frees them from their shroud.

The lover who is like a worshipper of wine can't be asked to adjust  
to the reality of love and evaluate it.

GHAZAL 1475:

Don't ask me

to evaluate the truth,

I am a worshipper of wine, not

a counter of the cups.

The wine worshipper must ascertain that he has selected the true cup  
of love.

The lover who has not recognized love  
makes himself a begger, going from door  
to door.

Therefore, it is necessary not to satisfy himself by what others say:  
GHAZAL 2332:

O you who have heard the story of love,

go and see it yourself.

To hear about a subject is one thing

to see it, is another!



Love gives man means for expression like the harp and the flute

GHAZAL 741:

Through love, I have learned to play the harp  
 while no one knows how I am  
 the harp sighs  
 and complains on my behalf  
 Tremendous secrets are hidden in the melody  
 of the flute

Everything cannot be said to everybody. As Maulana says at the beginning of the MATHNAWI...

(book one MATHNAWI)

There is a secret hidden in the melody  
 If we declare it we shall destroy the universe  
 Who has seen a poison and an antidote like the  
 flute?  
 who has see a beloved and a lover like the  
 flute?

The voice of the flute, is the expression of love.

Love's fire has enflamed the flute

The boiling of love has invaded the wine

The wine tells the story of the perilous path

The wine tells the story of Majnun's love.

The melody of love is distinct from other melodies.

The melody of the lover, is distinct from other  
 melodies

Love is the astrolobe of God's secrets.

The poet's philosophy is explained by Mawlana as follows.

Love's blood is boiling

with poetry I give color to it

All the years spent without love, are years as if in a stupour and  
 have no value.

GHAZAL 1129:

Life without love, is not truly life

Love is the elixer of life

accept it in your heart and soul

When love displays its means

trees become green,

young leaves grow from the old branch.  
 you have abandoned the way of God  
 have you found another path?  
 come back to the way,  
 don't wonder idly!

Therefore, one who loves and has the spirit of sacrifice must not hesitate in giving to love his entire being, love is a lighthouse where a fire is burning.

GHAZAL 2690:

When love comes and says,  
 give me your soul  
 don't loose time, say — yes, yes!  
 when the soul encounters love's beauty, it says,  
 I am yours, please don't desert me  
 I found love like a lighthouse  
 inside the lighthouse, oh! what a glare!

\* \* \*

# *Amir - Khusrau : A Profile*

By Dr. A. G. Ravan Farhadi

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These few words are the result of a deep interest in Amir—Khusrau's poetry, crystallised in long months of scrutiny of all the works of the great poet to prepare a biography and a collection of his selected works (both published in Dari by the Baihaqi Book Publishing Department, Kabul, 1975). This is a translation of words uttered in Dari, by the author on the first day of an International Seminar on Amir Khusrau, in Mahmud Tarzi Hall in Kabul, March 1975. He was answering a question from the audience: what kind of a man was Amir—Khusrau?

Note: The Dari text of this laudation has appeared in *Majlis—i—Amir Khusrau*, published by Baihaqi Publishing House, Kabul, November, 1975.

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Seven and a half centuries ago, Amir—Saifuddin of Balkh, emigrated from Khorasan to India. God bestowed to him a son born in 1253 A. D. Amir—Saifuddin died short years after this event. Amir—Khusrau was a poet while still a child. He never stopped to be a poet and to write until the last days of his 72 year long life.\*

## **HE WANTED TO BE WORTHY.**

- A genius child, knowing poetry.
- A young man highly appreciated by his poet companions; a gem in a ring"; a faithful and compassionate friend.
- Sincerely obedient towards his mother, his mother's father, the great Imad—ul—mulk.

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\* See *Life and works of Amir—Khusrau (1253—1325 A. D.)*, a chronology; in *ADAB* (Review published by the Kabul University) Vol. 22, No. 4, Kabul 1975 by the same author, in English language.

- Later a kind father himself: A lover of his children and he addressed them not as a superior but as a friend.
- A high official, a Secretary of the Durbar of Delhi, thoughtful of his duties, punctual in his work.
- Almost always close to the State but avoiding to be involved in plots and palace conflicts; able to retire quietly when needed instead of seeking power...

#### **A LOVER OF LITERATURE:**

- Seven centuries ago, his poetical verve was such that he still continues to kindle the hearts of lovers of poetry.
- Author of 5 DIWANS containing GHAZALS and QASIDAS, each being a manifestation of a period of his life.
- Author of 5 poetical MATHNAWIS, following the path of the great Nizami of GANJA.
- Author of 5 historical MATHNAWIS describing the happenings of his time, including poignant love events.
- Author of many prose works on poetry, and autobiographical articles, chronology, personal letters. Each of his works is a manifestation of — perfection in poetry and prose writing.
- A master of Dari (Persian) poetry: in GHAZALS, QASIDAS, Quadrains, QIT'AS, narrative MATHNAWIS, chronological MATHNAWIS.
- A connoisseur of four centuries of the heritage of the Dari poetry of his time. Highly respectful of the great masters who preceded him, he was a poetry critic, one who compared a stylist.
- Appreciative of his contemporary poet and scholar friends: he asked them to read working drafts of his own poetry and other writings and give their views; he followed many of their advices.
- A master of prose, not only in half—versified MUSAJJA, but also in writing short everyday letters; not only in drafting Delhi Sultanate edicts, but in letters to close friends; not only in highly masterly guides of composition, but in humorous and satirical writings.
- As professor and master he wrote for contemporary students and future generations, manuals on composition.

#### **A LOVER OF LANGUAGES:**

- An eminent son, a torch bearer of Khorasani letters in India.
- He knew Dari (= Persian), Arabic, Turkish, Hindi, and learned Sanskrit and a few Indian spoken languages.
- Called TUTI-Y-E HIND (parrot of India), he was in fact a parrot of many languages.

- A lover of what is called today "linguistics" and even of comparative linguistics, he compared the characteristics of Arabic, Dari and Hindi. He was the first one who wrote important material on this subject.
- A lover of people's language, he used to quote popular sayings in his own writing and poetry.

#### **A LOVER OF MANKIND:**

- His beautiful and fluent verses denote not only the verse of a great poet, a master, but also the description of people's everyday life, a depiction of the characteristics and deep sentiments of human beings, a presentation of spiritual situations.
- Registering the nuances in the sociological facts and situations in different places, he compared continuously the situation in Mulk-e-Payeen (= India) with that in Mulk-e-Bala (= Khorasan) (which was known to him only through reading and the reports of other emigrant families).
- He always used to look around him and to verify his findings. He loved mankind and what are called today "social sciences". He was interested in all men, not only the Sultans, the Princes, the Rajas and the high officials; but he also studied the life of peasants, simple soldiers, artisans, craftsmen, servants and other workers.
- In his poetry and prose, we find descriptions of the realities inscribed in the hearts of the lover and beloved, son and father, daughter and mother, young and old...
- He loved animals, especially those of India, this being a supplement of his love for the humans. He loved horses and dogs.

#### **A LOVER OF INDIA:**

- Described the natural beauties of India.
- He exalted the flora and the fauna of India.
- He had vastly travelled in many parts of the sub-continent and liked to compare the different parts of India and their peoples one to the other.
- The love for Indian Studies was to him equivalent to his love for India.
- One of the first founders of writing poetry as in the spoken language of the people (in a time when almost all written poetry was



in scholarly Sanskrit or Dari); a founder of Hindi literature.

- The real founder of SABK—I HIND in both thinking and language: the Indian School of Dari (Persian) poetry. He was therefore the poetical ancestor of Fighani, Fayzi Daccani, Urfi, Bedil; Ghani Kashmiri, Waqif and Ghalib....

Qari—Abdullah in Afghanistan, Rahi Mo'ayyeri in Iran (both poets of 20th century) followed his path. He still influences a good number of eminent poets; he is inexhaustible.

- A master in Indian music, he was the first to "compose" Khorasani melodies with India raga. A creator of tunes and measures, he is a major contributor in building the greatness of Indian Music.
- While being a faithful and staunch Muslim, he learned about the religion of his Hindu countrymen. He exalted some Brahmans as his teachers of Sanskrit and Hindu thinking. He preferred righteous Hindus to aberrant "Muslims". Had great respect for Sanskrit literature and culture.
- Recognised the greatness of the spiritual teachings in the Vedas and the Upanishads.
- In the human sense, he was the creator of Indian cultural nationalism. Six centuries after him, the Indian freedom lovers reiterated the same views as the basis of Indian Nationalism, that is, the Indian right to be independent.

#### **A LOVER OF GOD:**

- Expressing repentance for his human faults was his most moving way to address the Almighty.
- He loved spiritual music (Sama'): Qawwali—singers who recognise in him an Ustad, a Guru, continue to offer their deeply moving songs to artisans, cultivators, the rich and the poor.
- A follower of the Great spiritual Sheikh Nizamuddin Sultan—ul—Awliya, a Master of the Chishti School, he considered his best moments of life those when he was listening to the Master and recording his sayings. The Master loved him and Khusrau was buried near the master's tomb (1325 A. D.).
- A sincere Sufi, conscious of the necessity of being sacrificed for the Almighty, he was called later (by an admirer, Amir—Ali Sher Nawayi of Herat) "The Salamandar of the furnace of Love."

# *The Meaning of Love According to Amir Khusrau*

By Dr Ravan Farhadi

If I write the poetry of Khusrau on Majnun's Tomb  
stone.

The soul of Majnun will come to learn the signs of  
love!

The English version of this article, originally written in Dari for the Amir Khusrau Seminar in Kabul (1975) has been prepared by author. He has tried to provide an easy translation of what he has quoted from the great poet's poems on following basis:—

1. The translation of the poems is close to the Dari text without attempting a word to word equivalent. Professor Louis Dupree has helped the Author in this task.

2. The personal pronoun "tu" of Dari has been translated as "you" (and not by archaic English "thou") with appropriate Verbs.

3. In Persian, grammar helps the identification of an ASEXUAL "beloved." In this English translation, the indiscriminate usage of "he" or "she, "him", or "her", must not suggest to the reader a real gender

## **FOREWORD**

The view of Yamin—ud—din Amir Khusrau (1253—1325 A. D.) son of Amir Saif—ud—din of Balkh, on Love, can be summarised in his advice which follows:

This world and all that it contains is nothing!  
Try to be in love in order to be something  
in this nothingness

Our main difficulty in this major study is the fact that we do not have in our hands the entire corpus of the Amir Khusrau's works and poems. Anything we write now will have to be revised one day after the comple-

tion of the publications of the critical texts of the entire works of the great poet.

The day we shall be able to read the distinct text of his five DIWANS (compiled successively in 1273, 1284, 1294, 1316, 1325 A. D.) and his other known poems, we shall be able to study his views on Love, as well as on many other interesting subjects.

For the time being, we shall adopt another method in the preparation of this study to make two chronological "sections" of his evolution of thoughts:

1 — The period when he wrote his five MATHNAWIS (from 1299 to 1302 A. D.) when he was 46 to 50 (solar) years old:

Matla'ul—Anwâr	1299 A. D.
Shirin—o Khusrau	1299 A. D.
Majnûn—o Laylâ	1299 A. D.
Ayina—y—e Sikandari	1300 A. D.
Hasht Bihisht	1302 A. D.

2 — The last years of his life when he was composing and compiling his last DIWAN: NIHAYAT-UL-KAMAL from 1317 up to 1325. A. D. (64 to great 72 solar years old) (perhaps finally compiled after his death).

Regarding the bibliography see the page 225 to page 240 on the 3rd volume of the Selected Works of Amir Khusrau (ASH'AR GOZIDA AMIR KHUSRAU BALKHI, mashhoor ba Dehlawi) published in Dari ( Persian) on March 1975 by Bayhaqi Publishing Department, Kabul; the author of this article directed the work of selection (See also the additional bibliographies published in India in 1975 and 1976).

Therefore all the poems quoted here come from KHAMSA, the five classical MATHNAWIS, or from the NAHAYAT—UL—KAMAL.

Amir Khusrau addresses himself to the beloved in these words:

My heart, the marketplace of love,  
Prosper through the pangs of seeking you,  
When my soul remembers your lips,  
The pain of love arises and grows.

He considers those people unaware of Love as stupid "vultures".

O Khusrau, do not ask the meaning of love  
from stupid folk,  
The vulture cannot teach the nightingale to sing.

Love is a gift of God. It cannot reach perfection through artificial means:

The preening, sensual seeker  
Deserves the pain of the torch.  
How can one compare the glow—worm  
With the flame—loving moth?

Love cannot be imposed through cunning,  
 But drawn to the soul by true knowledge;  
 The foolish cannot be compared  
 To those unconscious with wine.

This is why he considers the story of love as the privilege of those who are Confidants ( MAHRAM):

O Khusrau! Speak not of Love to those who are  
 For the secrets of Love are only for those who  
 share

And a privilege of the sincere ones:

A defiled garment  
 Loses purity,  
 Smoke, not fire, emerges  
 From burning, wet wood.

He says:

Only those dedicated to Love can know, Love,  
 What does the man of Ghor know of Greece?

We shall see that Amir Khusrau recognised love as a necessity to the genesis and the destiny of Man. First, we shall study, profane Love, including eroticism, by quoting the KHAMSA MATHNAWIS, where Amir Khusrau follows the path of Nizami of Ganja.

Then we shall study the love of pure-hearted and dedicated lovers.

This will be followed by a study of Lovers ready to be sacrificed.

This is a stage of SPIRITUAL LOVE leading us to the study of those "burned by the flame" (SOKHTAGAN) In this article, we do not intend to compare Amir Khusrau's conception of Love.

We hope the day will arrive when we shall have enough of published material to permit us to make a broader study of the subject with comparative material.

### Chapter 1:

#### INTRODUCTION LOVE AND MAN

Amir Khusrau, in the MATHNAWI of SHIRIN--O KHUSRAU, composed a separate chapter on "the virtues of Love." He recognised Love as necessary to Universe and Man:

Without Love, the Universe has no structure  
 With Love, the stars would not turn in the  
 sky.

He, who is deprived of Love, is no man.

Man IS Love: the rest, water and dust.

If the lamps of the Universe are Reason and  
 Religion.

Then be a Lover, for Love outshines those two.  
 Before writing SHIRIN—O KHUSRAU, in another MATHNAWI,  
 he used the chapter 8 on "the high rank of Love."

When the body of Adam was made of dust,  
 The mansion of the soul was built for the herat.  
 Man received the gift of a herat,  
 Otherwise, he would be simply water and dust.  
 The heart is not just a drop of blood,  
 Nurtured through eating and drinking.  
 If the herat were only water and dust,  
 A donkey would have a heart!  
 But — in the heart resides,  
 A fragrance of faithfulness.  
 All animals live among souls,  
 But only those with hearts know reality.  
 Even a sorrowful herat provides life,  
 But the body is but dust.  
 The mouth demands, the fingers lift the food,  
 But the mouth, not the fingers, tastes.

The beloved and Love are therefore recognised as integral parts  
 of a human being.

If Love is total,  
 The Lovers become one.  
 If Love is cut from the Lover,  
 And he feels no pain, his body is dead.  
 One hurned is the flame of Love cannot be calm,  
 How can a flame extinguish itself?  
 A heart exposed to a charming face,  
 Is like wax exposed to a flame.

This is the privilege of human beings:

Man alone can smell this fragrance,  
 He proved worthy and seized it.

Amir Khusrau explains that, in addition to beauty, the beloved  
 has grace. This attribute is not a part of the body and is rather a characte-  
 ristic of the human being, who has the privilege of being conscious of  
 Love:

The beloved who has more grace  
 Makes his lover all the more sorrowful.  
 Beauty is not simply perfect colour and fragrance,  
 But beauty is that which invades the heart.

The beautiful who cannot commune to his beauty,  
 Lacks the flame to burn the Lover's heart  
 The garden of itself does not know of beauty,  
 The flower cannot describe its charm  
 Man, when beloved, strikes at the Lover's heart  
 He is ready to conquer and be conquered  
 Man exists entirely,  
 As Lover, Beloved and Love!

This is proper of human beings, but not those unconscious people  
 overpowered by laxness.

Not all hearts are worth of Love,  
 Many are lost and unconscious

Coming back to the MATHNAVI of SHIRIN- O KHUSRAU, we  
 find the poet advising lovers to learn the way of love from idolaters:

Being in Love is idolatrous.

Like being drunk and abandoning everyday  
 existence.

In Love, the righteous behave like idolaters.

But to pray without Love is to pray with dust  
 In this world your passion must match that of the  
 Hindu wife.

Who burns herself alive on her husband's pyre.  
 Too many idolaters submit completely to the idol.

And, in resignation, watch themselves sawed in  
 half!

Amir Khusrau also observes love among the animals:

Oh you who boast of your dedication to Spiritual  
 Love,

Try to make a sign on your skin with a needle.  
 O you, afraid of a barking dog and abandon your  
 faith,

Are you not ashamed of a faith without pain?  
 Release the turtle—dove in the garden without its  
 mate,

And it will return to the cage.

The pigeon, attracted by its flirting mate,

Dives from the dark clouds towards the earth!  
 And you, stumbling over each stone of life,

Can you not stand the pain?  
 Even kindness toward animals is a sign of man's goodness:  
 If your heart is good toward a cat,  
 Perfect is your faith.  
 Your heart must be compassionate toward a cat,  
 Otherwise, feed it to the dogs, for it is dead.  
 If you do not feel mercy for a cat.  
 At least learn faithfulness from a dog.

Profane love for a human being (ishq—i majazi) is the path  
 towards ishq—i haqiqi (the spiritual Love) and Amir Khusrau says:  
 Dedicate yourself to Love, even profane,  
 Then you will find the secret of supreme joy.  
 Spiritual reality is found in profane love,  
 Which is the key to the treasures of Spiritual  
 Love.

## Chapter 2

### EROTIC LOVE (ISHK—I KAM JOYAN)

Before describing the Love of eroticism we select a typical case  
 from the MATHNAWI of MAJNUN—O LAYLA:

Layla and Qays (=Majnun) are still teenagers not yet bound to  
 eroticism. The nuances of falling in love in the case of boy and girl are  
 interesting:

He looked at her with purity,  
 And she returned the glance, bashfully.  
 He wept and the dust turned to mud,  
 And she endured her pain by absorbing her  
 tears  
 His deep sighs bruised the roof of his mouth,  
 Her heart was burned as she inhaled her angu-  
 ished sighs.  
 Love came, blood mixed with blood,  
 She wept tears of blood.  
 Intellect lost its treasure of patience,  
 Love's affliction invaded herat and eye.

The coquette is described in the person of a slave girl who sedu-  
 ced Alexander as described in AYINA—I SEKANDARI:

The Universe caught fire; she illuminated nights  
far better than the moon.

Her face blazed even more radiant than the  
sun.

A lock of her hair enchanted a hundred cities.

Her coquetry conquered the kingdoms of the  
world.

She explains herself her art of being an enchanteress:

When I comb my dishevelled hair,

I invite sleeping passions to dance.

When my veil falls, hats of heroes tumble,

And their heads roll from their bodies.

Fairies may be more attractive,

But none can ignite such explosions as I.

Men worship my enchanting body,

With its rosy cheeks, almond eyes, and my  
pomegranate boobs.

She continues to describe herself explaining that her qualities are not limited to erotic features:

In my complexion, a rose becomes a rose garden,

From my hands, wine becomes a fountain of  
youth.

Alexander, who sought the fountain of youth,

Sought only me.

He wandered in darkness, seeking the light,

But could not find light like me.

Returning home, he tasted me, the wine of his life,

What he sought in ruins, he found in his own  
backyard.

It is quite clear, that, her erotic and extra—erotic characteristics, were the source of her attractiveness.

In HASHT—BIHISHT, we find the description of bodily union, in allegorical terms:

A part of the night crept away,

The Lion entered the Gazelle's pasture.

Two moons shone light through the curtains,

Two hearts gave witness to foundness.

When the soul of the Lover saw the face of his  
Beloved,

A parched throat drank from an enchanted well.



Let us come back to AYINA—E SEKANDARI and read the description of the Loves seeking eroticism:

When he embraced and fondled her closely,  
 Villets spurted out from the tulip—coloured  
 flower.

A white hawk overcame a phoenix,  
 Rose—bud intertwined with pussy—willow.  
 She drained honey and sweets,  
 From the rose—tree branch, from the fresh  
 date palm.

He planted a coral branch in the treasure of the  
 pearl.

He pierced the pearl, and rubies spurted out;

These were a few examples from the "KHAMSA" (five MATHNA-WIS). In Amir Khusrau's GHAZALS and other poems contained in his five DIWANS. Rarely such an erotic description occurs. We read, however, of a beauty's coquetry:

With kindness,  
 She \* discreetly looks toward me.  
 But when I look at her,  
 She, coquette, looks elsewhere.

The poet lover seems to be fond of such attitudes of the beloved and gives her advice along the same line:

Listen to the lamentations of your Lover, but with  
 lofty coquetry.  
 Only answer a question now and then.

The way to ignore the lover is:

O when you met a disgraced one and asked: Who  
 is this?  
 That blood—stained nobody was but Khusrau;  
 The beloved is witty and frolicsome, but also pampered and  
 proud

I wait with mixed delight and pain  
 For the moment my gay Beloved

---

\* We translate 'she' while in Dari the pronoun has no gender.

Begins to curse me  
While looking toward another!

And he addresses himself to her:

When you walk along the way,  
Don't you fear the peril of love's path?  
Everywhere, your haughtiness stimulates,  
Tyrannizes an admirer's heart.

And the poet wishes:

A dog on a certain day,  
Visited the street where you live.  
I should like that dog to live forever in my sight,  
And see it my heart.

Delicate moments of the constantly pampered beloved's haughtiness are described:

Happy the evenings when that king of hearts  
was my guest  
She wanted me to talk to her, but did not listen.  
Happy were the moments when after drinking a  
glass of wine, she became sleepy  
She closed her eyes, wine pouring from the cup she  
held.

And here is some advice to the beloved clearly made in the interest of the lover:

Your lips gave permission to be kissed, but  
you protested  
Take it back if your permission was not given!

From the same GHAZAL:

Last evening my heart forbade me to look at the  
moon  
Because you had invaded my heart.

And:

From the souls you have martyred,  
Listen to melodies of Love you have never heard

The destiny of Love is in the hands of the beloved and not in those of the lover:

O Beloved, walk in your rose garden, drink wine,  
And purple your cheeks like judas--tree flowers.

If you want to sacrifice me, why ask?  
Do with me as you will.

It is clear that the poet wants to be oppressed by the beloved; he knows that:

Beauties with fairy faces do one thing:  
Become ill—tempered, cruel tyrants.  
To avoid being seen, they hide their rose—bud faces,  
For they, like roses, are cruelly enchanting, and  
Their entire bodies seem to be faces.

In the MATHNAWI of MATLA'—UL—ANWAR he speaks to himself and makes his own person aware of these menaces:

These silver—like beauties you see,  
Their black curls are threatening scorpions.  
They are the eyes and light of the heart,  
But the lost Love knows their fames imperil  
the heart.

They are lovely, but malignant,  
With a friend's face, they are deadly enemies.  
Their wine—touching lips menace piety,  
Their curls, looped around their ears, ensnare.  
To look sensually on beauty is prohibited,  
When sweets become wine, drink is forbidden.

This repentance and piety of the poet invites us to find what he thinks about the Love of pure—hearted ones.

### Chapter 3

#### THE LOVE OF PURE—HEARTED ONES

(ishq—i pāk—dil—ân)

In MATLA'UL—ANWAR, he explains that the eye has a right to contemplate beauty:

Gaze with pure thoughts on the tulip—like face,  
For to contemplate rose and tulip is not for-  
bidden.

It is not right to forbid people to look on the face of beauty. But with what eyes? Those of purity:

Eyes which look with less than purity  
Deserve dust instead of collyrium.

An eye without discernment is not an eye  
 The blind, deprived of sight, cannot see.  
 The almond has eye's shape but cannot see  
 Does not know the beauty of the almond tree  
 flower

They eye of the pure in heart does not seek worldly consideration,  
 otherwise the love would be un—ripe like that of Layla and Qays when  
 they were still very young:

Her mind was still unripe  
 Her heart still cared for "honor" and "name."

Layla was afraid of what, in fact, happened to her parents when  
 they learned of the intensity of her Love for Qays:

The mother, fearful of dishonour in front of others,  
 Deeply sad, took refuge in a corner.  
 The ten—alarm fire smelled of infamy,  
 She feared the blame of society.

In fact, when Love comes on with all its strength, nothing can  
 resist it, as we read in SHIRIN—O KHUSRAU:

When the stallion of love, invincible and dangerous  
 captives  
 Both the poet Khusrau and Emperor Kai—Khusrau  
 are trampled to dust  
 Love treats the ant and the elephant equally,  
 Once in the fire, what difference between fragrant  
 wood and thorny—bush?

Scandal is the normal consequence of Love:

Love is our religion,  
 O Khusrau, and scandal our destiny,  
 Shameful we shall be,  
 With our good reputation and great renown.

The Lover laments:

Love has drawn  
 Its blood—stained sword.  
 In this battlefield, Reason's leg is broken,  
 Can I escape from this calamity?

Such is the situation in most pathetic stage of Love between Layla  
 and Majnun:

The Sultan of Reason was dethroned,  
 His house and possessions utterly ruined.  
 The hurricane of Love swept up from a furnace,  
 And submerged the Universe with waves of blood.  
 The crown fell from the head of prosperity,  
 The Treasurer (= Reason), gone, the Treasury sack-  
 ed.

The shepherd's screams have lost their vigour;  
 The ewe is lame, the wolf ferocious.  
 The drunks escaped from the cabaret,  
 But broke their jars on the head of the Mohtasib  
 (= religious police).

In such a case Reason and piety become powerless. The indcision and anguish of the Lovers are described by the Lover himself in SHIRIN - O KHUSRAU:

Reason, my guide, continues to whisper to me:  
 Be careful, do not get involved in this affair!  
 But my frivolous soul tells me:  
 This is Love! Piety has no place here!  
 Love and piety cannot co—exist.  
 Do not confront piety with Love.  
 While you are chaste, I cannot fly with you.  
 The hawk is ferocious and the partridge vulnerable.

The lover says to the beloved:

O Beloved; I come to you as a pigeon  
 Who invites the hawk for a meal!

In such a situation what is the use of giving advice to Majnun and Layla:

The grief in my heart was increased  
 By the good advice of others.  
 To those burning in the flame of love  
 To talk of denial throws oil on a wild fire.  
 Tell a sick man to avoid food,  
 And his mouth will immediately partake.

This is how Layla and Majnun answers their parents:

Your advice is meant to cure us of Love  
 Bitter medicine may be the perfect remedy.

The Demon Passion has freed me from Wisdom  
The insane never listen to the sane.

Wisdom may contest Love, but in such a confrontation it has no effect:

O Khusrau, Love and Wisdom cannot co-exist  
This garden (bahb) cannot be contained in the  
home of the rebel teacher.

And we read in NIHAYAT—UL KAMAL:

When I think of you, Reason and Wisdom are lost  
Prudence and self-interest fade before Love.  
The drop of perspiration which drips from your face  
Washes away all written record of the traditional  
(manqul) and rational (ma'qul).

O you, the wise man who advises lovers,

Do not waste breath on a lost cause.

Amir—Khusrau is laughing at the carelessness of those who give advice and remain unaware of the meaning of Love:

O you who give advice, unaware of my grief,

Leave me be, because Destiny

Who bestowed happy days on you,

Has decreed sorrowful nights to me!

I met her today, and

If I die because of it, I am responsible.

Tomorrow, in the Day of Judgment,

My hands will hold my deeds.

The adviser has not fallen in love, otherwise:

If you, O adviser, meet my Love, she will charm you.

I shall call you man if you escape her net.

The effects of advice are counter—productive:

To advise me out of Pity

Is to add fuel to my flames of anguish.

He gives advice to the adviser:

O friend, add fire to my fire, so that

Nothing but ashes will remain of me.

You will be free of my sighs and groans, and

My ashes will be deaf to your advice.

Reason is a foreigner in the country of Love:

I asked Reason:

What is Love?

Reason said: I am a stranger in this land,  
And do not know its customs.

Reason, in spite of its wisdom and cleverness, is not aware of Love's dimensions:

Love can be held in a narrow heart,  
But not contained in the Universe.  
Reason, though clever and wise,  
Cannot explain this fact.

The Lover presents a report of a difficult situation of confrontation:

Reason was a foreigner  
In danger, Love was supported by the herat.

Such is the failure of Reason before Love, by the Heart. The same failure awaits piousness and religiosity. The poet has a good pretext:

I said to my heart:  
Do not abandon Love for piety.  
How can I consecrate you as a mosque  
You, who hold so many idol—like beauties?

The poet complains about the paganism of his own herat:

How can I reproach my heart about Love?  
For too long it has worshipped idols, and will  
not become Muslim.

The heart believes in other principles:

Who gave me heart a FATWA (legal decision) to  
worship idols?  
So that I am lost in Love.

The poet has recourse to the Creator, the only One who can unravel the meaning of this strange situation:

O You Who Take Care of Everyone,  
Your omnipresence satisfies all.  
Reason and Love both walk at night,  
But the thief remains awake while the police is  
almost asleep.

The Lover has his own legal status:

Blood is forbidden by religion, but to the Lover  
all is possible.  
And I have been drinking blood.

#### Chapter 4

### THE LOVE OF THOSE READY FOR IMMOLATION

(ISHQ'E JAN—BAZAN)

The Lovers reach a stage when they see only each other in the universe. Such is the situation of the Lover in SHIRIN—O KHUSRAU:

Every narcissus in the garden

Reminded him of the alluring eyes of his  
Beloved

Each branch bearing a flower

Made him sigh for his companion.

Both lovers become the same person as we read in this letter of LAYLA to MAJNUN, who is wandering, far away, among the dunes of the desert:

When my shadow walks with me,

Can you distinguish one from the other?"

If a thorn pricks your foot,

I pick it from my own heart.

When you walk and your feet blister,

Tears flow from my eyes.

If a stone hurts your body,

Here, come and see my bruises.

Here is the description of real Love:

Love cannot be a mixture of seeming worldly  
colours

Love leads Lovers at a rapid pace

Toward a Kingdom

Beyond Paradise and Hell.

\* \* \*

The white water—lily

Does not love the faraway sun

It loves the spring

Which waters its roots.



At sunset, the water—lily  
 Closes its eyes to sleep,  
 But, without the spring,  
 It would close its eyes and die.

\* \* \*

To try to explain Love  
 to the ignorant  
 Is to speak Hindi  
 to the peoples of Khotan and Kashgar.

Love requires perseverance:

A delicate, pampered body  
 Cannot endure poverty  
 Wearing silk clothes,  
 it cannot taste homespun.

\* \* \*

And whoever makes a cauldron from wax  
 engages in fancy  
 And one who makes a pitcher of paper  
 gains only regret.

\* \* \*

Be resolute and persevere  
 Each moment of faithfulness  
 Stands firm  
 like the seated handle of the stone hand—mill.

There is no way to change the heart's destiny:

When I seek morning of joy,  
 The heart will find evenings of sorrow.  
 By what strategems shall I make fortunate,  
 This ill—starred, unfortunate heart.

He sighs in this ruba'i:

Each night when I close the door,  
 And seclude myself from the world.  
 With lamentations and sighs,  
 My heart erupts with pain.

\* \* \*

Day and night, only  
 Grief exudes from my heart,  
 What can I do but complain  
 To my heart about my heart?

He describes separation as injury:

Separation has crushed me,  
And I shed tears of blood  
If the jug is broken,  
The wine flows away

This was the heart which submitted itself to love:

Love invaded the soul,  
For this, the heart is punished.  
It was thus the heart,  
Which involved me in this affair.

How difficult it is for the lover to live separated from the beloved.

I can neither cast him out from my heart,  
Nor have I a second heart to give to another.

\* \* \*

The neighbours will see my flames of anguish at  
last

I cannot continue to hide my ardent sighs.  
O Khusrau, if I could guarantee my soul  
That your ever—youthful ruby lips  
Would give in time the answer true,  
Then would my soul wait content for years to  
come.

The lovers finally discovers that love deserves sacrifice.

I know that loving someone like you  
Kindles a devastating flame.  
But such an affair as this  
Deserves one's supreme sacrifice.

The sadness of love means happiness:

O darling, heart's grief  
Is never good, I know.  
But I never wish a moment of my life  
To be free of the pain of your Love.

To try to remedy these pangs would not be worthy of a lover:

Wandering so many nights  
In your street,

I have lost my way  
 When I turned toward home.

\* \* \*

If ever I worry about my own happiness  
 When we are apart,  
 Then may I be deprived  
 Of the delicious pain of separation.

\* \* \*

In the heart of Khushrau  
 Dwells the pain of your cruelty  
 To seek relief would  
 be to turn away from you

This is why the Lover's heart submits to the flame of Love:  
 The heart becomes wax.  
 In the presence of fire one spark melts

Such dedication (taslim) and resignation (reza) is the climax of  
 Love's blessings.

Resign yourself to your fate  
 You are lost if you contest.  
 Enjoy the arrows of the Friend  
 At your eyes, or else your breast.

\* \* \*

Lovers drink tears of blood  
 From the eyes.  
 Those who drink such wine from you  
 Find final fulfilment.

Forbearance toward a Beloved's behaviour is essential, even though  
 it seems tyrannic:

Oppression from a Beloved  
 Is as sweet as his kindness  
 For the tyranny of love  
 Can only be a blessings!

The poet recognize the practice of Hindu cremation as a sign of  
 dedication:

Lovers consumed by the flames of love  
 Go to their fate like Hindus

To the fires of immolation  
 As Muslims, they can do no less  
 Love means total surrender;  
 They advise me against love,  
 What nonsense!  
 I shall be in ecstasy  
 if love cuts me to pieces;

The lover is proud and happy that his heart has been invaded by  
 the angel of love:

O Khusrau; shout the news,  
 Love is here!  
 Great Gabriel is trapped  
 In a snare built for gnats!

The lover realizes that he is the gainer in the affairs of love:  
 Love's price is a  
 hundred thousand souls!  
 But with my single modest soul  
 I bought the lot!

Those pure in heart always gain in the exchange of love:  
 Those pure in heart  
 Balance themselves against your love.  
 For a single potshered  
 They purchased a jewel!

\* \* \*

Forgive those who speak  
 With sarcastic tongues to lovers,  
 For they have never seen  
 The face of love!

\* \* \*

Dedicate your heart to love  
 And, henceforth, the flames of Majnun's passion  
 will consume you in the  
 Ghazals of Khushrau!

The lover is anxious that the beloved will not void the agreement:  
 Along the street of your love  
 I lost my life  
 Be patient with me,  
 for the game of love breeds sacrifice.

He knows the inevitable consequences of love

Beauty surrounds me,  
And I warn my heart against love.  
But as I stand in the falling rain,  
How can my heart remain dry?

\* \* \*

Tears cannot wash love from my eyes,  
Nor flames drive it from my heart  
Love is in my blood,  
close to me, my guest forever.

At this pathetic stage, the lover becomes worried: although ready for sacrifice, he is still spared:

My soul is caught in a kiss,  
half way between my heart and you  
locked in this dilemma,  
how can I kiss your feet?

The lover regrets being neither ripe and cooked (Pokhta) nor unripe and uncooked (Khâm):

Khusrau, burned by love,  
Is still "Uncooked"  
The hell with him  
Why is he not yet well done?

In the following quatrain, the lover expresses his sorrow at his in-between situation:

Although sizzling in the fires of love,  
My flaming heart gives bitter meaning  
to the puzzling saying:  
"Burned but uncooked."

The lover finally realizes that sacrifice is inevitable:

A soul without love plays on an empty stage—  
love is not a game, but a hunt for life.

He says:

Living hearts are happy  
in the pain of life.  
Meat becomes acceptable (Halal)  
after the last painful gasp.

These poems are found in Matla'ul Anwar:

A soul alone  
cannot be alive.  
Only love can give  
the spark of life!

\* \* \*

A soul without pain  
deserves to suffer  
A flameless heart  
deserves to be ashes!

If no sacrifice is involved, love is not real:  
To profess love  
And a lost heart -  
yet retain life---  
Does not mark the true lover!

Khusrau says that the soul must be sacrificed on the sword of  
love. His says on behalf of the beloved.

We sacrifice the lover  
with no shadow of mercy to comfort him.  
in the religion of beauty  
mercy is forbidden!

\* \* \*

**The lost lover, immersed in inner thoughts  
Does not exist.**  
He is only a chimera  
of his own imagination  
Not just one life, but thousands must be sacrificed:  
Your love is my executioner.

\* \* \*

Ah! if I had a thousand thousand souls,  
I would sacrifice them all  
on the altar of your consuming love.  
If anyone survives, it is because of love!  
No one survives without love.

\* \* \*

Those who do  
draw their strength  
from your own face  
egotism in anathema to love

\* \* \*

Khusrau does not seek relief.  
from the pangs of love.  
His pains become his remedy  
Long may they live!

I may love, but never myself  
 I need no satisfaction  
 but to sit in the dust  
 of my beloved's doorstep

The meaning of love and self—sacrifice is freedom from the world and its trials:

Sincere travellers  
 though the path of life,  
 leave their heart's encampment  
 outside this world of strife!

\* \* \*

Reason can no more  
 conquer ambition  
 than an ant can tackle  
 a flaming dragon!

\* \* \*

Happy are they O Khushrau,  
 who kindle the flames of love,  
 and render to hapless ashes,  
 the lies and dangers of this world.

\* \* \*

Love becomes an integral part of the soul:

Your love and my soul  
 will remain ever knit,  
 even though my soul  
 does my body quit!

The beloved and the beloved's love both dwell in the heart of the lover:

O you who sit  
 inside my hidden heart,  
 live in my soul,  
 and never part.  
 Can I afford to lose my soul  
 while you gambol there inside?

The memory of the beloved invades the soul of the beloved, with all its joys and pains:

My joys and sorrows are the same  
 they come from you  
 inside my soul

Yesterday, I rubbed my cheek  
in the dust  
on the threshold  
of your home

To think about one's beloved lightens the road of the lover even  
after death:

When my day is done,  
and my sun has set,  
just the thought of you  
will enlighten my tomb!

\* \* \*

Love is eternal, before life and beyond death;  
On the day of my birth,  
heaven linked  
your name with mine!  
Mankind shouts them together

\* \* \*

If I became dust,  
and your shadow falls on me,  
then will we be one,  
and I shall happy be!

The sacrifice of the lover does not cause him to renounce love,  
which he knows is eternal.

Though you behead him,  
and pierce him with arrows  
or he drowns in the flood of life,  
the lover will not renounce love

\* \* \*

O Khusrau, until the day of resurrection  
the lover drinks the wine of love, and he,  
blood—thirsty and gluttonous,  
still drunkard will be

The pangs of love are the means by which the lover travels to-  
ward life after resurrection:

Love lives in my soul  
and I cannot hide it  
It is written  
on my face!

\* \* \*

The pain of your love  
is stored in the trunk of my soul.



Asd after death—and life begins again—  
O how heavy it will grow!

\* \* \*

Cut out this tongue of mine,  
for I talk of love and pain,  
and cause general anxiety  
to raise its head again!

\* \* \*

Yesterday, I saw my beloved  
ravishing people's hearts.  
I asked: Why all this?  
the answer came: to lower the price of hearts!

\* \* \*

O Khusrau, I have entrusted  
my soul and heart and health.  
They will soon cease to be mine  
for a brigand guards my wealth!

To perform religious rituals without love is futile:

Without sincerity,  
one cannot approach God .  
Without love,  
no task will succeed.

\* \* \*

Words without deeds  
cannot make one devout  
ablutions without water  
are not possible with spit.

The union of honest and frank lovers is equivalent to the legendary  
Majnun and Layla:

The union of honest love  
is like that of Layla  
embracing the deceased Majnun  
in her comforting arms in her grave.

Only those legendary lovers who have submitted to sacrifice know  
the true secrets of love:

The souls of Wameq, Majnun and Wais  
will be summoned.  
only those sacrificed to love  
deserve to know the mysteries of life.

## Chapter 5

### THE LOVE OF THOSE BURNED IN ITS FLAMES (SOKHITAGAN)

The pure-hearted Lover is burned through sacrifice and becomes the flame of Love. The Beloved's eyebrows become his MIHRAB and altar:

The heart was reading the story of Love  
On the eyebrow of the Beloved.  
It was the story of Joseph,  
written on the curve of the MIHRAB.

Love, then, invades the interior of the heart. Reason sits outside the heart, and cannot control what happens inside:

Love stole my possessions.  
Reason could not be blamed.  
For, if the thief lives inside the house,  
Can the guard be accused of carelessness?

This is a chief characteristic of Love:

If a Lover dies because of Love,  
Can Love be blamed?  
If someone drowns in a river,  
Is the river shamed?

Here are the results of the tears of a sincere Lover:

If one should pick  
The rose growing from the tears  
I shed in my Beloved's street,  
Why, then, he, in turn,  
Would shed blood—red tears

\* \* \*

When we meet again.  
I shall tell my Beloved of my pains.  
We met—  
And breath left me!

Love enlightens the heart:

If your quiver is empty  
Take one of my grievous sighs,

Shoot it straight at me like an arrow,  
To pierce my heart and I die!

\* \* \*

A heart without Love  
Is deprived of light.  
A lamp without flame  
Is blind in the night.

This is the behavior of Love, not only toward the Lover, but the Universe as well, as we read in MATLA'UL--ANWAR:

Love and only Love,  
Eternally moves the sky.

We read in the same MATHNAVI, more about Love:

The soul, in the field of Love, is a stranger.  
Reason, in tilting with Love, plays the fool!

\* \* \*

One who has tasted Love will find  
The Rejuvenating source" bitter wine.

\* \* \*

Whoever tastes that bitter wine,  
Will n'er again for sweetness pine.

\* \* \*

A burning house, then,  
Destroys all within.

\* \* \*

If you cannot walk through fire,  
Boast not of Love and desire!

Man must not be a coward. He must dare all through Love, which surpasses angels:

O defeatist!  
O coward!  
Look up! The sky  
Has no ceiling for you!

\* \* \*

A Man's Love  
can outfly  
An angel's wings  
in the sky.

\* \* \*

Love is a hard teacher,  
 But teaches the pathway to the heart,  
 Though collyrium comes from stone,  
 It brightens eyes from the start!

Supreme happiness can be achieved only through continuous self-sacrifice in the flames of Love:

To me will come  
 Love's infamy and scandal,  
 To you O seeker of safety,  
 Belong Reason and Culture!

My ritual prayer words  
 Will henceforth be Love's song,  
 O musician, take my rosary thread  
 To string a violin

O Khusrau, borrow the lives  
 Of experienced Lovers,  
 You will need them to deal  
 With the sportive eyes of your Beloved!

The famous Sufi poet Farid—ud—din 'Attar of Nishapur (d. Circa 1222 A.D.), has described the great martyr, Mansur Hussain Hallaj, in the following terms: the "hero's face's make—up is blood" Hallaj was mutilated, then executed, because of his mystic utterance "ana—'l—Haq" (I am the Truth) on 22 March 922 A.D. in Baghdad.

Amir Khusrau bemoans the fact that he is not a virile hero:

Can I escape from cowardly me by moving toward  
 you?

Will I stay alive?  
 If I move back toward myself,  
 The thought of you will kill me.

\* \* \*

Love is for manly heroes,  
 I am more like a bride,  
 Tears, like jewels and pearls, pour from my eyes,  
 Will these baubles make me more blessed?

Amir Khusrau continues:

Consider me as a bride  
 With a voluptuous Love.

Consider my worries tears  
As make—up for my cheeks.

A Lover, not ready for sacrifice, is not real;

A Lover not ready for death  
Is a false passing Love.  
Yellowish cheeks, puffed with breath,  
Gilted colour, below and above.

Such a Lover deserves only a gentle smile. The poet instructs his Beloved:

With your sweet ruby lips,  
Laugh at the Lover  
Who seeks his reputation  
By covering his cheeks with blood.

The real Lover must die on the gallows like Mansur Hallaj, the dedicated Lover, admired by Sheikh Nizam—ud—din Sultan al—Auliya (as reported by Amir Khusrau in AFZAL — UL FAWAYED). Amir Khusrau says in NIHAYAT—UL KAMAL:

The Lover belongs on the gallows.  
I did not seek out that lofty place,  
But it has made me immortal.  
Because of it, I hang high in the minds of men!

Amir Khusrau considers himself the master of his destiny:

Because of my heart,  
I shall be burned in my own place.  
I must quit the town  
To live with gazelle and wild asses.

\* \* \*

I do not seek joy,  
Only the pain of Love.  
Arab culture is strange to me.  
Since I'm from the land of Ghor.

\* \* \*

The corpse of the damned  
Is punished in hell.  
But the torch of Love is enough  
To keep my grave aflame!

Lovers are advised to avoid that stupid clown, Reason:

Do not let Reason  
 Invade your character,  
 Do not let a feeble minded ninny  
 Be the master of paradise!

Those burned by the flame of Love can intercede for others:

Love slew Khusrau,  
 He seeks a new life  
 From those who understand,  
 The other martyrs of Love.

Love without self--sacrifice has no reality:

If a man or a phoney boast of being in Love  
 And offer not his head  
 Here! Take mine  
 Khusrau is more virile than both.

Such is the wish of the martyred Lover:

I prayed on the grave of a martyred Lover,  
 I asked that a Wish be fulfilled,  
 He said: Why talk of Wishes? Mention  
 The name of my Beloved, and be stilled.

Self--sacrifice brings about the union of those who are pure in heart

Beauties with sharpened swords  
 Hover high in the Universe.  
 They swoop and with bloody blows  
 Slay those heroes who are Lovers.

\* \* \*

I am an elderly Lover,  
 Take away my prayer rug  
 To place under the feet of Beauty.  
 I have no need to kneel.

\* \* \*

O artist, take my blood,  
 And with that red paint,  
 Make an image of my Love and me.  
 This will complete our union!

\* \* \*

In my own self  
 I find duality.

But between you and me, my Beloved,  
A saw cannot rip us apart!

\* \* \*

If you can extract  
The stone from the date,  
And take my soul from your life,  
Come, Beloved! Why wait?

Mansur Hallaj had said: There are two RAK'A (orison); of these the ablution (WAZU) can only be performed in blood. Amir Khusrâu says:

My heart began to worship idols,  
And got used to it.  
How can I force my heart  
To Kick the habit?

\* \* \*

An idol requires blood for ablutions.  
I wash it in my own blood,  
And prostrate myself with Love  
Before this demanding master!

The Lover desires the same fate as Mansur Hallaj, who was pilloried, beheaded, burned and his ashes dumped into the Tigris, as a warning to the populace of Baghdad not to follow his blasphemy, when he uttered: "an'-al Haq" (I am the Truth):

O men with hearts!  
Abandon life—  
And contemplate  
The face of your Beloved.

\* \* \*

Gazing at your Beloved  
Is not a game,  
But a perilous  
Way of life.

\* \* \*

O friends! For the sake of my Beloved,  
Make a martyr of me .  
Stick my head on a lance—  
And show it all over town.

Weep O friends!  
 Float my ashes  
 Toward my Beloved  
 On a flood of tears!

\* \* \*  
 I navigate toward death,  
 To steady my course,  
 Make firm sails from  
 The membranes of my heart!

Each drop of Lover's blood has the legendary destiny of the blood of Mansur Hallaj, and the ashes and atoms of Hallaj will always be associated with Love:

Each drop of my tears of blood  
 will be a gemstone in a Lover's ring.

Amir Khusrau adheres firmly to this concept. In this, he is a worthy literary companion of the great Sufi, Maulana Jalal—ud—din of Balkh (Known as "Rumi"):

As I say my ritual prayers,  
 An idol appears before me,  
 So, when finished, I repeat  
 Four "salams", instead of the usual two!

This poem remarkably resembles one in the DIWAN—I—KABIR of Maulana—Jalal—ud—din, and appears in the NIHAYAT—UL—KAMAL of Amir Khusrau. This is a happy coincidence, because Khusrau, in India, did not know of the existence of his contemporary, fellow Sufi poet, who lived in Konya (Anatolia). Let us agree with Amir—Ali Sher Nawayi of Herat that Amir Khusrau was "the Salamander of Love's Furnace" and "The Lion in the Grove of the Pains (of Love)."

If the final breath of life  
 Is aimed at death,  
 This is much better  
 Than living with no purpose.

\* \* \*  
 The old man, weary and bent from labour,  
 Has a body a hundred fold more worthy  
 Than the soft, rose—petal container  
 Of the indolent drifter through life.



A traveller following  
 The path of the heart,  
 Should be relieved  
 Of the burden of his body.

\* \* \*

To follow the path of Love,  
 Even bitter Love profane,  
 Should be the goal of all mankind.  
 But voluptuousness, disdained

\* \* \*

Poverty and Love remain  
 When Pride sinks in the tank.  
 Therefore, fell proud to be  
 In poverty's front rank.

\* \* \*

God's final secret can't hide the words,  
 As you are slain by two-edged swords.  
 E'en on the gallows, the words ring clear:  
 "I am the Truth" destroys all fear.



N. Abdul - Rahman Jami of Herat. Based on a 15th century Miniature.



# *Love in the Poetical works of Jami*

By Dr. A. G. Ravan Farhadi

The Meaning of Sacred and Profane Love  
in the Poems written between 1472 and 1485  
by a Mystical Poet of Islam:  
Abdu'r—Rahman Jami of Herat

\* \* \*

This is a paper presented to the 29th International Congress of Orientalists, Paris, July 1973 and published in French language in ADAB review (University of Kabul). The author is who, thankful to Mr. Frederick Fuller who, upon the recommendation of Mr. Rafael Salas, has done a substantial contribution in the preparation of this English version.

Among their many interesting features, the works of Jami have the virtue of combining and condensing, as it were in one ultimate affirmation, the whole of a literature—the literature of the mystical poets of Islam. A long tradition of both Arabic and Dari (Persian) classics is embodied in its entirety in the work of this great poet from Herat. Living as he did in a period of transition (1414—1493), he represented the closing stage of that classical era.

Nuru'd—Din Abdu'r—Rahman Jami wrote seven MATHNAWIS collections of couplets), each in a different metre, although he himself regarded them as forming a complete entity or cycle. In chronological order they are as follows:

- 1 Silsilatu'dh—Dhahab: The Chain of Gold (1472) (S.D.)
- 2 Salaman wa Absal: Salaman and Absal (1480) (S.A.)
- 3 Tuhfatu'l—Ahrar: The Gift of the Noble (1481) (T.A.)
- 4 Subhatu'l—Abrar: The Rosary of the Pious (1482) (Sb.A.)
- 5 Yusuf u Zulaykha: Joseph and Zulaykha (1483) (Y.Z.)

6. Layla wa Majnun: Layla and Majnun (1484) (L.M.)

7. Khirad—nama—i—Sikandari: The Book of Wisdom of Alexander (1485) (K.S.)

Jami gave this cycle, written in Dari (Persian), the title HAFT AWRANG (Seven Thrones — one of the names of Ursa Major, the constellation of the Great Bear). It includes two episodes of Greek origin (S.A. and K.S.) which contain no mystical elements; one of Judeo—Christian origin (Y.Z.) and one of Arabic origin (L.M.).

The other three are didactic treatises on ethics and on Sufism. The Chain of Gold (S.D.) also contains Arabic tales such as that of 'AYY-INA AND RAYYA, the slave lovers; Tohfa, the singer, etc.

(For the importance of Jami and bibliographical references, see ENCYCLOPÉDIE DE L'ISLAM, Leyden, 1965. Vol. II. pp. 432 / 33);

It may be mentioned that the HAFT AWRANG collection comprises only part of the writings of Jami that are concerned with love. But in my opinion the seven—part compendium is the kernel of the works — over 40 in all — of this great writer and mystical poet. There is ample room for more penetrating research than was possible within the scope of the present thumb—nail sketch which I was anxious to keep within a small compass. This paper contains the gist of a collection which is itself a condensation; its purpose is to underline the potential interest to Islamic scholars of thorough researches and comparative studies, which here would cover a wide field and would be well worth undertaking.

The present paper divides naturally into two parts, reflecting the views of Islamic thinkers and Sufis: 'ishq—i—majazi, or what all men understand as love, i.e. profane love, and 'ishq—i—haqiqi or real love, i.e. mystical or "metaphorical" love.

For many muslim mystics profane love is the first step on the rising path that leads to the second. There is no break between the two stages: they follow one upon the other, as we shall see in the following pages.

## PROFANE LOVE

Even when it has not yet attained the mystical stage, love has well—defined characteristics. Let us look in turn at the lovers themselves, the beginnings of love, the consequences of love, the effect of the social milieu and the separation, union, and death of the lovers.

The lover is invariably young and handsome. Although he enjoys outdoor life and is a keen huntsman, at heart he is a thinking man, perspicacious and eloquent, his moral qualities easily outweighing his athletic prowess.

The beloved is beautiful — which is all that is needed to attract the notice of the lover the very first time they meet. She is coy and coquettish, but once she has fallen in love she shows herself to be very intelligent, tolerant and long-suffering, and passionate.

Often it is love at first sight:

“He sets her heart on fire, as she does his” (L.M.)

In the best-known episodes (S.A. and Y.Z.) the attracted girl tries to win the man she loves; in others she mysteriously vanishes — not before she has

“Branded his heart with stigmata of love  
Like the dark stigma at the tulip’s heart”

Rayya and ‘Ayyin

Jami has a profound understanding of women. He is fond of them, and feels great sympathy towards them. At the same time he is critical of the sex, at times severely critical, complaining that they are forever unsatisfied and ever ungrateful (S.A.).

“No man can hope forever to fully satisfy a woman  
That pretty, brightly-plumed, capricious bird”  
(L.M.)

The beautiful Absal, now well past thirty, is full of wiles and stratagems: she practises the cosmetic arts, flashes her jewels as she walks along to catch the eye of the Greek boy prince Salaman, whose nurse she had once been ... if she was not his mother. She succeeds in winning his affections. The circumstances here are of course special: but woman in general beautiful by nature, takes pleasure in decking herself out and beautifying face.

Zulaykha is utterly consumed by passion:

“Like to a field of dried—up reeds on fire”  
“Thou must sate my desire, wilt thou or no”

she tells Yusuf.

A group of Egyptian beauties, the wives of notables, once they are convinced that Zulaykha is genuinely and deeply in love, goad her on to have Yusuf thrown into prison. His chaste conduct and his unswerving resolve are beyond their comprehension. What we see here is the collective, almost ritual avenging passion of womankind.

Where passion is mutual, the lovers pledge eternal fidelity. To keep this sacred vow they must be constantly on their guard: they must close their ears to the voice of spiteful envy (L.M.), but they must be ready to stand firm against family against tribe, even against the whole community.

The woman in love will use every conceivable stratagem to overcome the obstacles that impede her on every side — even bringing her message to her beloved through a melody played on the harp (S.D.).

If she is separated from her love kept under constraint, she will gaze in adoration at the portraits of him she orders to be painted and hung on her chamber walls (S.D.). Zulaykha whispers words of love to Yusuf, imagining him standing in front of her ("love on trust", as it were).

The same is true, moreover, of the lover:

"I have not drunk the cup of Layla's love  
But dally with the sweet sound of her name  
Fancying her beside me here..."

Says Majnun in his exile far away. He dotes on everything that brings her image to his mind: the doe that reminds him of the gentle expression on her face; and cherishes anything that evokes her memory, even the footmarks made in the sand by the camel on which she has ridden.

The obstacles along love's path are the outcome of social, political and tribal differences and even antagonisms, and of the ethical concepts prevailing at the time.

At first there is the fear of slanderous talk that may be damaging to the prestige of the notables, the tribe or the family.

Frequently the lovers belong to tribes at enmity with each other.

"On either side an armoury of swords  
Steeped in the blood of her kin and of thine"

Is cited by the father of Qays (Majnun) as he tries to dissuade him from seeking the hand of Layla.

But the passion of the lovers is so intense that no power on earth could vanquish it:

"We two admit the power of love alone  
For the world's hatred we care not a straw"

Thus Qays answers his father:

"The universe is my sworn enemy  
I am at war with all that is not She"

On the other hand:

"Put out the fire that on the threshold burns  
Before it reach the rafters of the house"

Says Layla's mother to her daughter, seeking in vain to explain to her the danger of a scandal which could bring dishonour on her family.

It is only in the early stages of a love affair that the lovers can still think of ways of concealing the bonds between them — like the lover who devises a plan to make his secret visit to his beloved's chamber at night seem like the intrusion of a burglar.

At a more advanced stage, when the "scandal" is at its height, no further concealment is conceivable. The lovers are fully aware that there is nothing left for them but to defy the rules of their society. Useless to

proffer advice or to remonstrate with them. It would merely make things worse: the social principles that others view with the utmost respect are scorned by the lovers

"The lover has no truck with kith or kin,  
All feeling but of love fills him with shame"  
"He knows no father, mother, family,  
Virtue and vice he has discarded both" (L. M.)

In the Arab world, the obstacles were tremendous. The existence of liaison between boy and girl had only to be whispered abroad and shame would prevent the girl's family from entertaining any suggestion on the part of the young man's family, even though made in the correct, orthodox manner, for putting the situation on a lawful footing (see the story of Rayya and 'Ayyina)

Layla gives the impression that she has taken to heart the reproaches and advice poured on her, even though her whole being is consumed with love for Qays

Her father lifts his hand against her and orders her to declare: "I renounce". She obeys his order, but only in appearance, says Jami, for in actual fact, as she utters the words her resolve is to "renounce" all and everyone but Qays.

A lover has no fear of the punitive strength of the State; Majnun  
"Writhing and twisting like a wounded snake"

When ordered by the Caliph to refrain even from uttering the name of Layla, declares that Love is his only sovereign and takes comfort in an allegory:

"The gentle does escapes the hunter's snare  
That tears the feathers from the Caliph's hawk"

Solace in the form of "departing on a long voyage or falling in love with another," or the forced marriage of the girl with another young man, are no help.

"A shoe is made to fit one foot alone"

Layla does of course submit to the marriage bonds forged for her by her parents; but her tears flow constantly. In the event, the marriage is never consummated for Layla far from submitting meekly to the rite of the marriage bed, refuses to surrender to the "husband". She swears she will commit suicide if he persists in his importuning, and tells him:

"I will be faithful always to that man  
Who sacrificed himself for me alone  
Before he ever gazed into my eyes  
Or stepped towards me, purposeful and bold"

Majnun, languishing in the desert, believes that Layla has given



her willing consent to the marriage and upbraids her from his exile for failing to keep her word to him. Yet he is still resolved that he at least shall keep his word:

"I thirst for Layla and my thirst is such  
As Zam—Zam's waters could not ever quench"

Zam-Zam being the sacred source near the Ka'ba at Mecca.

Layla writes her lover a letter, telling him of her father's reviling, her mother's unjust treatment, her grief, and the episode of the husband. She assures him that she has not submitted to her husband's embraces. She embarks on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and Majnun makes his way there to see her. At the Ka'ba she renews her vows to her beloved, calling the Eternal to witness; and the two lovers meet after the ritual of the pilgrimage. Here religious law is not regarded as taking precedence over love. In the case of Zulaykha, on the other hand, religious (pagan) faith does constitute an obstacle. Zulaykha has made an assignation with Yusuf in her bed—chamber her design being to seduce him; and before he arrives she covers the face of the statue of her pagan idol for fear it should witness an adulterous act. Yusuf, seeing what has happened succeeds in overcoming his own desire and forces himself to remain chaste, lest he disobey the commands of the One God.

The life of lovers cannot, alas, be lived without frustration and blighted hopes. The torments of Tantalus suffered by those whose desire are perpetually thwarted are described in several passages of the poem of Jami, as when Zulaykha, speaking to her nurse and confidant, bewails the plight of lovers, the man or the woman, condemned to suffer the pangs of thirst when water is at hand.

The sufferings of lovers when they are separated are as acute

"As if a snake had sunk its fangs in them"

and the sufferings increase when night falls:

"Night, the black dragon.." (L.M.)

The lovers, the youth no less than the maiden, shed tears. When they have wept until they can weep no more, their eyes fill with blood that wells up "from the heart" or "from the liver".

The woman is the one who suffers the worst constraints. Layla complains of her misfortunes:

"Majnun is free as any winged bird  
While I am shackled like a prisoner  
Pinned like the carpet on my chamber floor  
I may not see him: woe betide heart  
If he does not make haste to come to me"

And again:

"A man is free: a woman's wings are tied  
She may not choose what she shall say or do  
Man's love is virtue: woman's love a crime"

She also tells her lover:

"Thy suffering lies deep within my heart  
Tormenting me: but what can woman do?  
Even to keep a secret is a crime  
A man may keep one—yea, and tell it to

When lovers are separated, the feelings of the woman are characteristically feminine:

"Who brings thee food? Who, when the day is done,  
Plucks out the thorns that lacerate thy feet?"

Asks Layla in her letter to Majnun, exiled in the desert.

When Layla's husband dies broken—hearted, she mourns, ostensibly for the departed spouse, but in reality she is lamenting her own misfortune that keeps her cut off from her lover in his desert exile. It is a ruse to silence spiteful tongues.

"A knot of poignant grief lay on her heart,  
Mourning was pretext to undo the knot"

The woman in particular is endowed with telepathic perception. The forsaken Zulaykha senses that the cortege passing through one of the quarters of the city is that of Yusuf, who had become the Pharaoh's steward. Layla's "heart tells her the news" of the death of Majnun—a hundred leagues away in the desert, far from human contact. Zulaykha, even before becoming acquainted, with Yusuf, was overcome by a strange melancholy one day when, far away in another country, her future love was being thrown into a well by his brothers who were jealous of him. Thus the effects of love can miraculously pre—exist, even before the love comes into being.

What happens to Majnun, separated from his loved one, is typical. He makes friends with the beasts of prey and other denizens of the wild. The wolf and the tiger, the stag and the hind, share his company in a touching mood of sympathy where all creatures live side by side in peace. When Majnun sees in the eyes of a gazelle caught by a huntsman a look that reminds him of Layla's eyes, he buys the animal, "covers it with a thousand kisses", then sets it free.

In the Arab tales, a band of kind—hearted knights are generously ready to do all in their power to reunite the lovers. Examples are the Arab nobleman Mut'mar in the tale of AYYINA and PAYYA and NUFAL in the story of Layla and Majnun; on one occasion the Caliph himself, hearing Majnun recite one of his poems, declares himself ready to make every effort to win the consent of Layla's father to the union of the two lovers. But Majnun declines such favours preferring to "wander free in the wadi (valley) of love". The King of Greece, Salaman's father, altho-

ugh adamant in his opposition to the love between his son and the captivating, bewitching woman Absal, feels pity — momentarily at least for the two lovers.

The union of lovers, so eagerly awaited, is a crucial episode. Zulaykha faints when she is finally united with Yusuf, and he has to revive her. Erotic descriptions are greatly toned down in Jami's works.' AYYINA and RAYYA.

"Cling like twin buds together all the night ,  
Waking refreshed, their petals all unclosed"

though the ecstasy of their union is to last only forty days.

Needless to say, the loved one is a virgin. This is true even of Zulaykha, who was a widow, but her husband had been impotent; and also of Layla, likewise a widow, who had rejected her husband's advances. In the other tales, the women have not been married up to the time of intimate union with the man they love. The case of Absal, at one time the nurse of her future lover, is an understandable exception.

The love act at this moment of intimate union is often described in metaphorical language:

"Piercing with diamond cutter the bright pearl"

From the outset, love mounts within the lovers

"As in the goblet mounts the ruby wine"

It reigns

"Over the very membranes of the heart"

remaining

"Etched on the heart and on the very soul"

There can be no renunciation of love, for its dominion is absolute. Its effects are miraculous. There is the allegory of the dove whose mate has disappeared and may have been devoured by the hawk. The dove's despairing cry of anguish

"Is strong enough to pierce the very rock" (L.M.).

Suffering can also have amazing effect on the words spoken by the lover (Y.Z.).

"The passionate desire to reach the goal"

invades the lover's whole being. Majnun although he knows that his love for Layla is hopeless, worships the ground where her caravan has encamped and every—where traces her name in the sand. He forswears the flesh of the wild ass and the stag, and seeks their companionship. They become his companions: they are submissive and share in his grief.

"Drowned in the ocean of his hopeless love"

he is uncomprehending, returning to his senses only when the name of Layla is uttered. One day, when Layla is ill and has to undergo a blood—letting, Majnun, a hundred leagues away, finds that his own blood is flowing out in sympathy, drop by drop!

The outstanding feature of love is that it is utterly exclusive. The

lovers pay no heed to anyone except each other. Their hearts, already bereft of all desire, especially any desire for another human being, are filled with mutual love.

The death of one of the lovers is the harbinger of the death of the other:

"I was the body, Qays the inmost soul"  
says Layla to her mother:

"How could I learn to live deprived of him?  
Death is the only rescue from this grief  
Then let me lay my head at his dear feet  
And like a martyr, rest forever so  
The breeze that gently whispers through my bones  
Shall play a tune for him, as on a flute  
Till on the Day of Judgement we may wake  
And walk in bliss together, hand in hand  
To Paradise, or Hell, it matters not!"

When highwaymen murder the young hero 'Ayyina, his beloved laments that it was not her they slew. She lays her cheek against her lover's cheek and breathes her last.

The episode of the slaves in love with each other, told in two of the stories (S.D. and S.A.) is similar. The young slave—girl, after playing a heart—rending melody before the Caliph on the banks of the River Tigris, runs from the royal encampment and flings herself into the river in her despair. Her lover, himself a slave, plunges into the water to die with her, clasping her in his arms in a last embrace.

The tale of the wealthy Christian girl who falls in love with a young Muslim ends in the same way. The girl does not become a convert while her lover is alive; and he is not ready to marry her. When the young man dies of fever, she too pines away and dies in solitude; but before she dies she writes on the wall: "I wish to become a convert to Islam, that I may be with my beloved in the next world" (S.D.)

Zulaykha prostrates herself on Yusuf's grave and dies. She is buried by the side of her beloved. Thus, as with Rayya and 'Ayyina, the lovers:

"Together lie till Resurrection Day"

The graves of the lovers in the poems become places of pilgrimage for lovers of all times and from every land. They make the pilgrimage to pledge eternal fidelity to each other, and the miracle of love is perpetuated. The knight Mu'tamar, riding by the tomb of Rayya and 'Ayyina seven years after their death, discovers a miraculuous tree streaked with strange yellow lines signifying a grief—torn human face and red lines signifying tears mingled with blood.

## MYSTICAL LOVE

From pre—eternity (azal) onwards the Beauty of the One Being has halways existed. The Will of the One Being has deigned to make this Beauty manifest (tajalli). Thus the Will was the basis of Creation, which coming from nothingness into existence aspires to adore Beauty. This Will merges therefore with the origin of Love, which is timeless, having neither beginning nor end (Sb. (Sb. A, S.D.).

Everything is therefore dependent on Love; creation, the movements of the heavenly bodies and the sky, the blooming of the flowers, etc.

With regard to the relationship between the profane and the sacred, clearly no—one is devoid of passion. But according to circumstances passion is focused on different objects. Some have a passion for gold, others for power, others again for women. Happy the man, we read in Layla and Majnun, in love with someone possessed of beauty, delicacy sensibility; sincerity and purity. Happy too is He who obeys a (mystical) "guiding spirit" that has itself recognized a guide leading to Love.

The lover crosses the bridge that leads the human being to real (i.e. mystical) love, which is the "pearl in the diadem of life," the "treasure of eternity" "the elixir."

Love then cannot be carnal pleasure, which moreover is not consonant with the rules of ancient wisdom in daily life. The King of Greece did not accept the idea that his son Salaman should be brought into the world through the agency of a woman, and he ordered the Wise Man (hakim) to find a means whereby his son could begin life without being born of woman. The Wise Man carried out the order. Jami tells us that the King is the symbol of Primal Reason. The Wise Man or hakim symbolises the Gift from on High (faiz—i bâlâ). Thus Salaman is the Human Being in Himself, having no mother. A charming nurse (symbolizing the Body) is appointed to take care of him. When the prince reaches maturity, his one—time nurse falls in love with him and seduces him. The King is greatly troubled when from afar, in a magic mirror, he sees his offspring, in the company of this woman, shipwrecked in the sea (i.e. Sensual Delight). He exhorts his son time and time again to renounce this passion which robs him of honour ("the delights of Reason"). The young prince pays no heed. The Wise Man, acting on the King's orders, "heavenly virtues", as Jami explains) is sought to distract Salaman's attention. The seductive Absal, the siren who has led the royal prince into debauchery in her company, is first made to lose her charms, and then she is disposed of and disappears forever.

There we have a tale of Greek origin remodelled and cast in the mould of Islamic thought. Its subject is not yet sacred love; but even here, the King warns the prince that he cannot hope to reach the throne so long

as he remains under the domination of carnal pleasure. This is the Islamic writer's interpretation of the wisdom of Greece.

Elsewhere again we find Muslim monarch, the King of Termez, who has fallen in love with a slave girl from whom he cannot bear to be separated for a single moment, praying to God in a passing moment of repentance to deliver him from his devouring passion. One day as he is sailing on the Oxus, captivated by the charms of his beloved and drunk with passion, a great wave rises up and overturns the bark. The King swims to safety, but the lovely slave disappears forever beneath the waves. As he stands on the shore helpless to rescue the one he adores, he realizes that his momentary prayer has been answered (S.D.).

Thus we must not confuse lust (hawas), described as "cloud without rain", "bark caught in a whirlpool", "sinister shadow", with desire (shawq), a true and sincere emotion which "shortens the road" and

"Makes heavy weight of pain seem but a straw"

Thus Joseph (Yusuf) is momentarily tempted to accept the favours of Potiphar's wife (Zulaykha); but chastity restrains him. Marriage itself is recommended only when the bride possesses all the qualities desired (Book of the Wisdom of Alexander).

Once carnal desire has been eliminated, the union of two lovers becomes a manifestation of the bond that has existed between them since pre-eternity (azal). When Yusuf takes the decision to wed Potiphar's widow the swish of wings of the Archangel Gabriel is heard as he announces:

"Your marriage was ordained in Heaven above"

This intervention of fate can even influence past events. While still a little girl, and long before meeting Yusuf, Zulaykha used to play with two dolls which she called the "lover" and the "loved". Thus even as a child she knew only the game of love. In other words, "real" love leaves its stamp even in childhood on someone who is destined for love.

Love implies suffering. But suffering purifies the heart; it is a test that lovers must undergo to make them worthy of each other. The lover sheds all possessions, even reason itself, for:

"The phoenix comes, the sparrow flies away"

Reason after all, aims only at "artifice" (hila—sazi). Love invades the heart, freeing it from the cares of "both world" by

"Burning up reason like a bale of hay"

Qays (Majnun) goes to visit Layla riding a female camel. It refuses to move desiring to suckle its calf that has been left behind. The episode teaches Qays the greatest object lesson of his life: it is impossible to divide one's energies between two things. One must sever all links with everything except love. Desire must be single-minded.

Unfortunately, in daily life there are already a thousand obstacles to be overcome, for humans are not, as angels are, free of all trammels.

Men fear many things, including Hell and desire many others — Heaven, for example. The lover must renounce the Beyond. The allegory of the skull is pertinent to this. A skull was discovered with the inscription on it:

“Deprived of this world and of that beyond”

The Muslims took it to be the skull of some miscreant. But the great Sufi Bistami embraced the skull, wept over it and said: “It is the skull of a Sufi who has renounced the two worlds for the Lord” (S.D.).

The lover never speaks of “I” or “me”. Hence the allegory of the furnace-keeper whom love has made impervious to fire (S.D.); or that of the two slave lovers drowned in the Tigris but joined forever thereafter:

“This is the end of Thee, the end of Me,  
Of all duality, such is love’s law” (S.D.)

To retrace our steps for a moment, there are, then, several kinds of love: there is that which sees only the appearance (sourat) and is unaware of the reality; there is the love conscious of the reality but still drinking from the cup of appearance; there is the love which is infatuated with the appearance but discards it and dedicates itself of true beauty; and finally, there is the love which seeks only absolute beauty, even through all the manifestations of form and substance.

Side by side with all this there are essential intermediate stages: first of all the lover seeks the beloved for himself; then he desires her for her own sake and finally he devotes himself to her in the name of Love. At this point there is no more duality, no further distinction between the two lovers:

“Nothing is left to them save Love alone,  
Love reigns supreme until the end of time” (S.D.  
and L.M.)

Everything is governed by their unified will, and the question of free will and fate is thus resolved.

In the course of these intermediate stages, a series of miracles take place. We may recall the allegory of the Egyptian maid transfixed in a state of love—struck wonder, standing upright no—one knowing whether she is alive or dead; and we may recall that Majnun, as he awaits the arrival of Layla who is due to pass by, remains spell—bound on the spot for years and years, motionless, till the birds come and alight on his head.

The burning love of Zulaykha overtakes Yusuf only after their marriage. And by the time he

“Cannot endure her absence for an hour”

she has already attained the stage of sacred love which love for the app-

earance had prevented her from reaching for many years. She is manifestly happy to be united with Yusuf and at the same time to have received God's blessing. They beget children and their children have children, but it is evident that in such cases physical union is a mere non-essential aspect of real Union.

Zulaykha rightly says to Yusuf:

"I have a sovereign power over thee,  
For didst thou not come to me in a dream?"

That is true of love generally. Real love is merely the reflection of the love that comes from the Creator:

"His Love is Being, ours emptiness" (S.D.)

So the young Sufi was taught in his novitiate: "Thy heart is a human egg from which a divine hawk is hatched."

The Egyptian Sufi Zou'l—Nun, walking near the Ka'ba, listens as the young Tohfa, formerly a singer, musician and woman of the town, complains to the Lord, saying:

"I have rights over Thee, Thou art my Friend

I charge Thee then, forgive my trespasses" (S.D.)

Although love is mutual, its real originator is the Lord alone. Jami explains the mystical meaning of a verse from the Koran: the faithful follow the Prophet because he is the intermediary between love for the Lord and the love that comes from the Lord. "The prince of lovers is jealous (ghayour), and no-one can share love with him". The life of Majnun epitomizes the life of all lovers. He drinks of the cup (Layla), is inebriated, forswears the cup, attains to real love. The heart enamoured of the Friend, desiring only His Will, fuses his own will into His.

The lover must abandon himself wholly to divine truth. This explains the dream in which Majnun is chided by the Eternal Beloved:

"Art thou not ashamed to drink Our wine  
From Layla's cup, to call Us her name  
For thirty years...?"

Let us, in conclusion, quote the verses in which Jami describes the state of things on the death of Majnun:

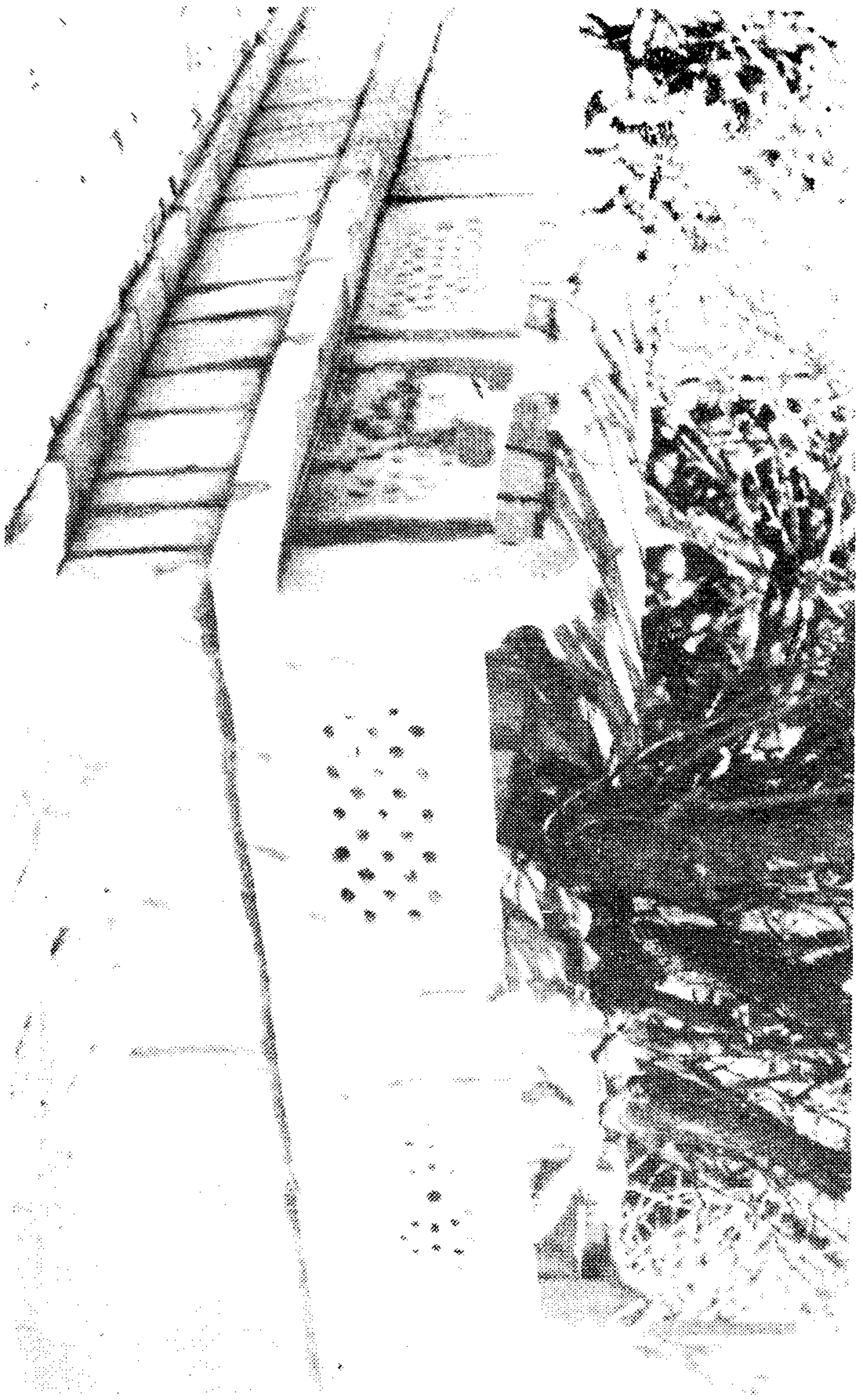
جامی بنگر ، کز آفرینش  
هر ذره ، بچشم اهل بینش  
از زخم از ل ، شکسته جامی است  
گردا گردش نوشته جامی است  
آن جام ، چه جام ؟ - جام باقی  
و آن نام چه نام ؟ - نام ساقی



از جسم به بادہ گیر آرام  
 وز نام نگر بہ صاحب نام  
 در صاحب نام ، کن نشان گم  
 د رہستی وی، شو از جہان گم  
 تا باز رہی زہستی خویش  
 و ز ظلمت خود پرستی خویش  
 جایی بر سی کز آن گذرنیست  
 جز بی خبری از آن خبر نیست  
 با تو ز جہان بی نشانی  
 گفتیم نشان ، دگر تو دانسی

"Look, Jami, ever since the world was made  
 Each atom, for all those with eyes to see  
 Is cracked cup, by the Eternal marred  
 All round the broken rim is etched a name  
 What is the cup? The cup of Permanence  
 And the name on it? His who bears the cup  
 Take the cup, quaff the nectar, be at peace  
 Then turn thy gaze on Him whose name is writ  
 In him lose all identifying sign  
 Merged in His Being, from the world withdraw  
 Till thou canst free thyself from what thou art  
 And from the Stygian darkness of self—love  
 Seek then that place whence there is no return  
 Which he alone can know who nothing knows  
 Thou hast the clue to the great clueless world  
 The rest is now for thee: bestir thyself."

Tomb of Abdul-Rahman Jami of Herat.





# *Tagore and the Sufis*

By Dr. A. G. Ravan Farhadi

Similarities between some of Tagore's Gitanjali passages with those of the Diwan of Maulana Jalal-ud-din of Balkh, known as Rumi (1207-1273 A.D.)

To the best of my knowledge, no one has yet studied the several similarities between Tagore's poems and Sufi poetry and thinking. After 13 years of work (with some interruptions) on a Dari (= Persian) translation in verse of Rabindranath Tagore's (1861-1941) GITANJALI (1911), I began in 1974, (for a quite different purpose) a new review of the DIVAN—E SHAMS of Maulana Jalal—ud—din of Balkh. Although I did not begin the review with Gitanjali in mind, I was immediately struck by the many striking similarities between the two poetic masterpieces. This short article, therefore, is a summary of my notes of the matter.

\* \* \*

Jalal—ud—din was born in 1207 in Balkh, northern Afghanistan. His father, a great Sheikh, had to emigrate to the west with his family when Jalal-ud-din was a small boy. Eventually, the family settled in Konya (now in Turkey), in a region unaffected by the Mongol invasion. The area was called Rum, formerly meaning Greece and Asia Minor. Jalal-ud-din died in Konya in 1273, and since his mausoleum is a major place of pilgrimage for the turks and other Muslims. For this reason, in the East, Jalal—ud—din is called (though not in his lifetime) the Maulana of Rum (=Rumi). European orientalists, including Reynold A. Nicholson, followed by such eminent oriental scholars as Dr. Mohammed Iqbal (d. 1938), Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim (d. 1958), and Dr. Reza Arasteh always refer to the Maulana as Rumi.

In this article I shall refer to him as Maulana Jalal—ud—din of Balkh or simply Maulana. (In Turkey the term would be pronounced Mevlana; in Iran Molana or Molavi; in Afghanistan, Mawlana).

My study entitled "Meaning of love as seen by Maulana" has not yet been translated from Dari (= Persian) into English. See: *Majlis—e Maulana* (in Dari language) being a summery of

KABUL SEMINAR ON MAULANA: ADDRESSES AND COMMUNICATIONS Baihaqi Publishing Kabul, 1975. pp. 147—220; later published in Review SOKHAN, Tehran, vol. 24, no. 5 and following issues (1975).

Chapter Four is especially important to the subject under discussion. It concerns "love towards the Spiritual Companion", in this case an elderly (60 years old) Sufi, Shams—ud—din of Tabriz, who after a meeting with the younger (37 years old) Maulana, completely changed the Maulana's spiritual life. Therefore Maulana called Shams his "Beloved", and later referred to his DIWAN as DIWAN—E SHAMS. The name of Shams appears in the last verse (MAQTA') of the Ghazals of the Diwan.

The technique of referring to a human "Beloved" permitted the Maulana to reveal his feelings towards spiritual love for in Islam, reference to Almighty God in the anthropomorphic sense is restricted. Four centuries of praising a human beloved existed as a heritage in Dari Ghazals and Qasidas, so the contemporaries of Maulana were not shocked at his graphic descriptions of apparently profane love toward his human "Beloved."

The asexual nature of the language is possible because Dari has no gender, and so, grammatically, nothing is lost. The love Maulana expresses for his human "Beloved" is basically mystical, marked by a passionate, explosive descriptions of his feelings towards his human "Beloved", who, as the DIWAN develops, becomes Super—Human while retaining all his humanity.

Tagore, however, escaped the limitations as imposed by Bhagavata Purana and Vedanta by following the admirable sacred love poems of the Vaishnavites

(Among other sources, one should read: V. Rama Murthy, TAGORE'S GITANJALI. A COMMENTARY. Doaba House, Delhi—6.). Because of this Rabindranath was able to describe the love of Radha for Krishna in passionate human terms, something unknown in old Indian scriptures. Tagore, like Maulana, was obviously happy to be able to present Sacred Love in human context.

The cardinal question to be considered is : DID TAGORE DELIBERATELY FOLLOW MAULANA'S EXAMPLE? The answer to this question will be given at the end of this article

\* \* \*

We are acquainted to the sources of Tagore's religious and philosophical roots. They are varied: the ancient heritage of India (though Brahma Samaj or directly); the Vedas the Upanishads, Buddhist teaching and traditions, but also Muslim Sufis, Christian tenets, and the Western philosophers studied by Tagore. Several works and direct influences on Tagore's poetry: Ramayana and Mahabarata; the works of Kalidasa those of Jnandas (16th century) and other Bengali Vaishnavites; the sufi poetry

of Kabir Bankim—Chandra, Behari Lal; finally, Bengali folk poetry particularly that of the Baul Dervishes.

We must now try to evaluate the impact of the Muslim Sufis on the poetry of Tagore. We know that Tagore's father, the Mahārishi Devendranath, was a scholar of Dari (Persian) and well acquainted with Sufi literature. Apparently, Rabindranath failed to acquire his father's knowledge of Dari literature, but he did inherit his father's respect for the Sufis themselves. (See Tagore father's autobiography in Bengali ed. Dr. Asit K. Banerjee)

The impact of Kabir's poems, however, is certainly important. About the impact of Sufis on Hindu thinking read chap. 18 and 19 of Kshiti Mohan Sen: Hinduism.

Dr. S.A.H. Abidi, explains that Maulana inspired all mystic movements in India "directly or indirectly". Dr. Abidi refers to the impact of Maulana on Baba—Lal (a spiritual guide of prince Dara Shukoh), Swami Maharaj (1818—1878), Raja Ram—Mohan Roy (1772-1833), Mahārishi Devendra—Nath Tagore. Dr. Abidi writes: "This assimilation carried through the Brahma Samaj reached its climax in Guru—Dev Rabindra—Nath Tagore". Dr. Abidi also discusses the impact of Maulana on Swami Rama Tiratha (1873—1906) and Dr. Bhagwan Das.

(Dr. S.A.H. ABIDI.) Maulana Jalal-ul—din Rumi. His Times and Relevance to Indian Thoughts;

(In the journal of Indo—Iran society Vol. 6 No. 12, July—1974, New Delhi).

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At one point in his life while living in Kushthia, (now in Bangla Desh) Tagore came in touch with the Baul dervishes and learned the songs of Lalan Fakir, a Muslim Baul. Dr. Asit K. Bannerjee (Department of Bengali, University of Calcutta) wrote the following in a letter to the author dated 16 April 1974:

"The lasting influence of the Bauls, so far literary motif is concerned has wrought a great impact on his poetry, particularly on the trio song collections namely Gitanjali, Gitali, Gitimalya. The songs of Tagore will clearly indicate the strong mental affinity with the Bauls of Bengal who derived much of their "ideas from Sufi mysticism...".

We must remember at this point that Maulana Jalal—ud—din was not famous in India during his lifetime; Amir Khusrau (1254—1325), a contemporary, does not even mention him. In later centuries, however, Maulana became widely known in India. His MATHNAWI was printed many times in the nineteenth century, but the DIVAN was published in

India only once before Tagore composed GITANJALI. Scholars knew that Maulana came "at the end of a long and sustained development of Islamic philosophy and religious experience". It was well known by scholars that Maulana, six centuries earlier had been "heir to an immense intellectual and spiritual wealth". Recently, Dr. Abdul Hakim Khalifa rightly stated that Maulana Jalal—ud—din is interesting "not because he is the greatest mystic poet of Islam but because of the fact that in him we find a man who has left no problem of philosophical and religious life untouched."

We ARE NOT SURE. HOWEVER, WHETHER OR NOT TAGORE HAD COME INTO CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE WORK OF A MYSTIC POET WHOSE POEM HAD BEEN ONLY SCANTILY TRANSLATED INTO LANGUAGES WITH WHICH HE WAS FAMILIAR. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine that Tagore was not familiar with Reynold A. Nicholson's SELECTED POEMS FROM THE DIWAN—I SHAMS—I TABRIZ Cambridge, 1898.

We also cannot imagine Tagore's not having heard many of the Sufi sayings and poems from his Muslim friends, and all Sufis, in one way or another have been influenced by the Maulana. By the end of the 19th century, the DIWAN and especially the MATHNAWI had made major impacts on learned Indian Muslims.

Therefore, it is difficult to agree uncritically with V. Rama Murthy who in his commentary makes the case that Vaishnavite love is almost the only "basis" for the "most significant part" of GITANJALI. Vaishnavite Love, indeed, as we noticed earlier, did give Tagore an outlet of expression which was already known to a good number of his countrymen, but the author does not believe we can discount the direct or indirect parallel impact on Tagore of Sufi literature. Both Murthy and V.S. Naravane have ignored the possibility of Sufi influence on Tagore.

See V. Rama Murthy—Tagore's GITANJALI, a Commentary Doaba House Delhi—6—1972.

See V. Naravane: Rabindranath Tagore, a philosophical study. (1946) Central Book Depot, Allahabad.

Below are a few lines, comparing the poetry of Maulana and Tagore, I do not ever suggest that Maulana had any DIRECT influence on Tagore. My only purpose is to provide examples of striking similarities.

The quotations from Maulana's poetry are based on the edition by the late Professor Ferozanfar, entitled Kulliyat—i Shams, 1958—1967, Tehran (see the indexes in Vols. 9, 10). Quotations from GITANJALI are from the English version currently called the Bolpur Edition (1916), followed by subsequent English versions and by translations in many languages of the world.

Tagore:

The light of Thy music illumines the world. The life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky. The holy stream of Thy music breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes on. (G. 3)

Maulânâ:

ای نای آورده جہانی را. زیبای بانک نای و بانک نای و بانک نای

O Thou, sound of flute, sound of flute, sound of flute,  
Thou hast thrown to the ground the whole universe!

Maulânâ again:

ای نای خوشنوا ای که دلدار و دل خوشی دم می دهی تو گرم و دم سرد می کنی

O Flute, thy enchanted melody  
Warms me and refreshes me!

Tagore:

The time that my journey takes is long and the way of it long. I came out on the chariot of the first gleam of light. (G. 12).

Maulânâ:

چون ذره رسن بازم : از نور رسن سازم

As a trapeze artist, like the atom,  
I balance myself on a string of light

Tagore:

Thy words will take wing in songs from every one of my bird's nests, and Thy melodies will break forth in flowers in all my forest groves (G. 19).

Maulânâ

ای تو جان صد گلستان: از سمن پنهان شدی !

ای تو جان جان جانانم : چون ز من پنهان شدی !

O Thou, soul of a hundred roses  
Thou art hidden from the lilacs  
O Thou, the soul of the soul of my soul  
How couldst Thou hide Thyself from me?!

Tagore:

In the deep shadows of the rainy July, with secret steps, Thou walkest, silent as night, eluding all watchers... (G. 22)



Tagore:

This little flute of a reed thou hast carried over hills and dales,  
and hast breathed through it melodies eternal new (G. 1).

Maulânâ:

دلمرانالہ سر نای با یسد کہ از سر نای بسوی یار آید  
My heart yearns for the moan of the Flute  
For the Flute is the scent of my Beloved.

Tagore:

At the immortal touch of Thy hands my little heart loses its  
limits in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable. (G. 1).

Maulânâ:

سر نای توام ، مرا تو گوئی  
من در تو فرو دمم ، تو مخروش !  
I am Thy flute, and Thou sayest to me:  
"I breathe in thee! Submit thyself!"

Tagore:

When Thou commandest me to sing it seems that my heart would  
break with pride; and I look to thy face, and tears come to my eyes.  
(G. 2).

Maulânâ:

دل گفت : من نای ویسم نالان زدم های ویسم  
The heart has said: "I am His flute  
My moans from his own breath take life"

Tagore:

All that is harsh and dissonant in my life melts into one sweet  
harmony and my adoration spreads wings like a glad bird on its flight  
across the sea. (G. 2).

Maulânâ:

ای آنکہ اندر جان من ، تلقین شعر م می کنی !  
گرتن زدم خا مشس کنم تر سم کہ فرمان بشکنم

O Thou who in my soul  
Poetry doth suggest  
If, through indecision, silent I might be  
Against Thy wishes would I act

Maulânâ:

ایچا کسست پنہان  
ہمچون خیال در دل  
اما فروغ رویتس .  
ار کان من گرفتہ !

Someone lies hidden here  
Like a thought in the heart  
The radiance of His face  
Has invaded my whole being.

Tagore:

Thou hast wrapt the earth with the coverlet of sleep and tenderly closed the petals of the drooping lotus at dust. (G. 24).

Maulânâ:

عشق جو بکشاہد رخت : سبب شود ہر درخت :  
برگ جوان بر دمہ ہر نفس از شاخ پیر

When Love displays its means  
Every tree becomes green again  
From the old branches  
New leaves burst forth at every moment

Tagore:

That I want Thee, only Thee let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night are false and empty to the core (G. 38).

Maulânâ:

من از عالم . ترا تنها گزینم !

In all the Universe  
Thou art the only one whom I choose

Tagore:

When the heart is hard and parched up, come upon me with a shower of mercy.

When desire blinds the mind with delusion and dust, O thou holy one, thou wakeful, come with Thy light and Thy thunder. (G. 39).

Maulânâ:

زمین خشک لبم من، بیار آب کرم  
زمین ز آب تو یابد گل و گلستانی !

I am like a parched field.  
Let the water of generosity rain down  
The water will make out of a dry land  
Roses and rosaries....

Tagore:

Let the cloud of grace bend low from above like the tearful look of the mother on the day of their father's wrath. (G. 40).

Maulânâ:

يك شعاعى زان رخ مهتاب او در شب تاريك غم با ماستى

A reflection of His Moon Face

Accompanies us during the dark night of sorrow

Tagore:

Have you not heard His silent steps? He comes, comes ever comes. Every moment and every age every day, and every night He comes comes, ever comes. (G. 45).

Maulânâ:

پوشيده چون جان مى ووى اندر ميان جان من!

Thou art hidden like the soul

And Thou art winding Thy way through my soul

Tagore:

The day was when I did not keep myself in readiness for Thee; and entering my heart unbidden even as one of the common crowd, unknown to me, my King, Thou didst press the signet of eternity upon many a fleeting moment of my life. (G. 43).

Tagore again:

In many a morning and eve Thy footsteps has come within my heart and called me in secret... (G. 46).

Maulânâ:

هم آگه و هم ناگه ، مهمان من آمد او!

Forewarned and not forwarned

He has come as my host.

Tagore:

Let my return to myself be immediate return to Him (G. 47).

Tagore again:

When I opened my eyes, I saw thee standing by me, flooding my sleep with thy smile... (G. 48)

Thus it is that Thy joy in me is so full. Thus it is that Thou hast come down to me...

And for this Thy love loses itself in the love of Thy lover, and  
there art Thou seen in the perfect union of two (G. 56)  
Maulânâ (in Mathnavi- Book 1).

گفت یارش : کیستی ای معتمد؟  
در چنین خوانی مقام خام نیست  
سوختن باید ترا در نار تفت  
در فراق یار سو زید از شرر  
باز گرد خانه انبار گشت  
با نجنبید بی ادب لفظی زلب  
گفت: بر در هم «تو» بی ای دلستان!  
نیست گنجایش دو «من» را در سرا!

آن یکی آمد . در ساری سر د  
گفت : من کیستم ؟ بر من مقام نیست  
من در این عالم ، غریب از تو توفیق  
بم آن مسکین و سالی در سفر  
جبه کسب آن سوخته ، بس باز گشت  
حلقه زد بر در به صد ترس و ادب  
بانگ زد یارش که : بر در کیست هان  
گفت : اکنون چون ، منی ای «من» در!

The lover tapped at his Friend's door  
He asked: "Who are you, o confident"  
He answered: "It is I!" the Beloved said:  
"Go away." It is not time!

On this cloth we do not place raw dishes  
You are not rid of "yourself"  
you are still yourself!

You must be lowered in the fire of separation!"

The unfortunate pursued his way.

During his one year's travel,

Separated from his Beloved, he was burned.

Burned, he was matured and ripe.

He knocked on his friend's door

with one hundred precautions and consideration

So that no improper word would escape from his mouth.

His friend cried out: Who is at the door?

He answered: It is THOU again who art knocking

at the door, o my Friend!

He answered: Enter, since THOU ART MYSELF.

Tagore:

There came a sound in the dead of the night. We sleepily thought  
it was the distant thunder... Only some said it was the sound of wheels.  
We said in a drowsy murmur "No it must be the numbling of clouds...  
The night was still dark when the drum sounded... Some said: Lo there  
is the King's flag... (G. 51).

Maulânâ:

جمعند که : «دزد آمد»!	در نیم شبی ، خلقی ،
«دزد آمد!» و آن دزد او!	و آن دزد همی گوید:
با بانگ همه زانسان	آمیخته شد بانگش
از غلغشان يك مو !	پیدا نشود بانگش

At midnight a whole world  
gathers and cries: Thief!  
The thief, among the crowd,  
cries "Thief!" he who is himself the thief!  
His cries have mingled with  
the cries of all mankind  
His cries cannot be distinguished  
from the din of others!

Tagore:

Light, my light, the world—filling light, the eye—kissing light,  
heart—sweetening light! (G. 57).

Tagore again:

Let all the strains of joy mingle in my last song—the joy that  
makes the earth flow over in the riotous excess of the grass. (G. 58).

Tagore again:

What divine drink wouldst Thou have, my God, from this over-  
following cup of my life? (G. 65).

کانهروز ، همچون آفتاب ،	ساقیا آن لطف کو !
در ذره ها می آمیختی !	نور رقص انگیز را

O Cup—Bearer, remember, the day when Thou, like the Sun,  
Poured forth Thy light; that which invites  
The atoms to dance!

Maulânâ again:

آفتاب بام دل!	عشق چبود ؟
خام های باغ دل!	یخته ساز

What is Love?  
Sun of the heart's terrace  
Ripening the 'still--green' fruits  
of the heart.

Tagore:

Thou givest Thyself to me in love and then feelest Thine own  
entire sweetness in me. (G. 65)

Tagore again:

Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as well.  
O Thou beautiful, there in the nest it is Thy love that  
enclose the soul with colours and sounds and odours... (G. 67).  
Thy sunbeam comes upon this earth of mine with arm outstret-  
ched and stands at my door the livelong day to carry back to  
Thy feet clouds made of my tears and sighs and songs. (G. 68).

Maulana:

از محبت تنخ ها شیرین شود      از محبت مس ها زرین شود  
از محبت مرده زنده می شود      از محبت مرد زنده می شود

Love sweetens bitterness  
Love transforms brass to gold  
Love to the dead gives life  
Love transforms kings into obedient slaves

Maulana again:

امروز شا دا نیم ما      کان بخت خندان آمده  
Today we are radiant and delighted  
For an enchanted fortune has reached us

Tagore:

Keeping steps with that restless rapid music, seasons come dan-  
cing and pass away—colours, tunes, and perfumes pour in endless cascades  
in the abounding joy that scatters and gives up and dies ever moment. (G.  
70).

Tagore again:

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and  
day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures. (G. 69).

Mauláná:

غنچه گره گره شد و لطفش گره کشاست  
از تو شگفته گردد و بر تو کند نثار  
آخر چنین شو ند در ختان روح نیز  
بیدار شید درخت نگو شاخ بختیار!

The flower buds are knots  
Thy Love unties them  
The buds bloom,  
The petals spill over Thee  
Thus will be the state of the tree of the soul  
And there will appear happy branches!

Tagore:

Thy infinite gifts come to me only on these very small hands of mine. Ages pass, and still Thou pourest, and still there is room to fill. (G. 1).

Tagore again:

And when old words die out on the tongue, new melodies break forth from the heart; and where the old tracks are lost, new country is revealed with its wonder. (G. 37).

Mauláná:

گرچه من خود زعدم  
دلخوش و خندان زادم  
عشق آموخت مرا  
شکل دگر خندیدن

Even if from naught,  
I was born full of joy  
Love has taught me to laugh  
In a way which is forever new.

Tagore:

He it is Who puts his enchantment upon these eyes joyfully plays on the chords of my heart in varied cadence of pleasure and pain...

He it is the innermost one, Who awakens my being with His deep hidden touches... (G. 72).

Mauláná:

دزدید ه چون جان ، می روی  
اندر میان جان من!

Like the soul in hiding.

Thou windest Thy way through my heart

Maulānā again:

که فزون تر از جهانی ؟      و ای بی شائبه صمیمی .  
زجه نکنه می جها نی ؟      و ای بی شبهه جهانی .

Who art Thou, Thou who in my conscience act.

O Thou, above all universe

O Thou, formula of the universe

What a word Thou utter!

Tagore:

Days come and ages pass, and it is ever He who moves my heart  
in many a name, in many a guise, in many a rapture of joy and a sorrow...

Thou ever pourest for me the fresh draught of thy wine of  
various colours and fragrance, filling this earthen vessel to the brim  
(G. 72).

Maulānā:

توبه می چه جوش دادی !      به غسل چه نوش دادی !

What sparkele hast Thou given the Wine

And sweet savor to the Honey!

Tagore:

Thou art the Brother amongst my brothers (G. 77)

Maulānā:

برادری، پدری، مادری، دلا رامی !      بیا بیا که تو از نادرات ایامی

Come, Come, Thou art the rarest of all beings

Thou art brother, thou art father, thou art mother

Thou art the Beloved.

Tagore:

Mother I shall weave a chain of pearls for thy neck with my  
tears of sorrows.... (G. 83)



Mauláná:

عشق بود خوب جهان      مادر خوبان شهبان  
خاك شود گو هر از آن      فخر کند ما در ازین

Love is the ultimate good in the world  
It is the Mother of the most beautiful kings  
For love, the pearl is available like dust  
Of this the Mother is proud!

Mauláná again:

ای عشق پرده در      که تو در زیر چادری  
در حسن حوری یی تو      در مهر مادری !  
O Love, revealing all secrets but hidden behind the veil  
Thou art Hourie in beauty, a Mother in affection .

Tagore:

O many an idle day have I grieved over lost time. But it is never lost, my Lord. Thou hast taken every moment of my life in Thine own hands.

I was tired and sleeping on my idle bed and imagined all work had ceased. In the morning I woke up and found my garden full with wonders of flowers (G. 81)

Mauláná:

هر نفس نومی شود دنیای ما      بی خبر از نو شدن اندر بقا  
عمر هم چون جوی نونو می رسد      مستمری می نماید در جسد !

At every moment, at every breath the Universe  
Believing in stagnation  
we ignore this renewal  
Life is a stream where flows new waters  
Even if, in the body, it seems continuously the same.

Tagore:

O Thou the last fulfilment of life, Death, my death come and shipper to me.

Day after day have I kept watch for thee....

All that I am, that I have that I hope and all my love have ever flowed towards thee in depth of secrecy. One final glance from thine eyes and my life will be ever thine own (G. 91).

Maulânâ:

بروز میر که در عالم موت من روان باشد کمان میر که مرادرد این جهان باشد  
خدا را دعا می ، مگو فراق فراق! مرا وصال و ملاقات آنز ما نباشد

On the day of my death when the funeral procession  
marches behind my coffin

Do not believe that I shall leave this world with sorrows;  
When thou seest my funeral, sayest not "O Separation"!  
For at that moment, for me, it is the very stand the union!

Tagore:

I have got my leave. Bid me farewell. My brothers I bow to you all and take my departure. (G. 93).

Maulânâ:

نامه رسید زان جهان بهر مسافرت برم  
عزم رجوع می کنم رخت به چرخ می برم

A letter has reached me from the other world  
Ordering me to return  
I have decided to be repatriated  
And bring toward heaven all my goods

Tagore:

No more sailing from harbour to harbour with this my weather-beaten boat. The days are long passes when my sport was to tossed on waves And now I am eager to die into the deathless. (G. 100).

Maulânâ:

آز مودم ، مرگ من در زندگیست چون رهم زین زندگی ، پائیدگیست !

Truely, I have made the experience:  
Within my life is my death  
When I shall escape from this life  
Then I shall be deathless.

Tagore:

Like a flock of homesick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests let all my life take its voyage to its eternal home in one salutation to Thee. (G. 103).

Maulânâ:

برسید لك لك جان :                      كه بهار شد، كجایی ؟  
 بشگفت جمله عالم                      گل و برگ جانفزایی !

The stork of my soul has arrived  
 It is Spring! Where art Thou?  
 The flowers and leaves permeated with life  
 Are blooming through the Universe

Maulânâ again:

خلق چو مرغایان ،                      زاده ز دریای جان .  
 کی کند اینجا مقام ،                      مرغ کزان بحر خاست !

Creation, like seagulls,  
 Is born from the sea of the soul  
 The bird emanating from the sea  
 Can never survive here below!

And Maulana again:—

این دل من در هوایت ،                      همچو آب و ماهیان !  
 ماهی جانم بمیرد ،                      گربگردی يك زمان !  
 ماهیان را صبر نبود ،                      يك زمان بیرون آب ،  
 عاشقان را صبر نبود ،                      در فراق دلستان !

O' my heart desires Thee  
 Just as the fish desire water  
 The fish of my life would die  
 If for one instant Thou wouldst withdraw from me.

One single moment out of water  
 Fish are incapable of patience  
 Lovers cannot be patient  
 If for an instant they are away from the Beloved

In this short article, I have only had time to deal, with comparing a few lines of DIWAN and GITANJALI, generally omitting Maluana's MATHNAVI, the myriad other work of Tagore and the writings of other Sufi greats. Detailed studies of broader aspects of the problem can be undertaken by scholars who are acquainted with both Tagore's work in Bengali and Sufi literature.

Let us state with Dr. Asit K. Benerjee that: "Evidently, Tagore had some indirect influence of Sufis through the Baul songs of Bengal. We can add to this the role of Tagore contacts with his muslim learned countrymen .

The answer to the question posed at the beginning of this article is as follows: The similarities we discover are not mere coincidences. They often occur when poets are attacking the same subject matter using similar approaches.

In this case, both oriental poets were using Human Love to approach Divine Love. On the other hand, it must be remembered that Maulana is the greatest of all Sufi poets and has had a major impact on Indian Sufis for generations. THE INDIRECT INFLUENCE OF MAULANA JALAL—UD—DIN AND OTHER SUFIS ON TAGORE IS THEREFORE QUITE CERTAIN AND SUBSTANTIALLY IMPORTANT. Even though this influence is ignored by Tagore's scholarly biographers and commentators the Bengali—speaking Muslim masses through a sympathetic instinct of affinity seem to be secretly sure about this fact. They are attracted to Tagore not only by a common language but by deep kindred thoughts and feelings.

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(The introduction discusses the subject of this article).

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