

JALĀL AL-DĪN RŪMĪ AND HIS PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF SUFISM

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Introduction

Not long after the death of Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī (1207–1273 CE), it was said that three general things became particular to him. The term, “rhyming couplets” (mathnawī), which formerly meant any book of such verses, came to refer to the Mathnawī of Mawlānā; the title, “our master” (mawlānā), which formerly meant all religious scholars, came to refer to Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn; and the term, “tomb” (turba), which formerly meant any mausoleum, came to refer to the resting place of Mawlānā’s tomb. 1 Now, over seven centuries later, these terms continue to refer to Mawlānā. His Mathnawī is called “Mesnevi” in Turkey and “Masnavī” elsewhere, he is called “Mawlānā” in Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, “Maulavī” in Iran, and “Mevlāna” in Turkey, and his mausoleum (turba-khāna) in the city of Konya, Turkey, is the most famous Sufi tomb in the world.

The unique position of Mawlānā in Sufism is due to a very favourable combination of qualities of personal greatness (such as profound insight, soaring inspiration, eloquence, and love) together with events of history that preceded his time. The latter include, among others, the turbulent events that were in the background of his emigration from the easternmost to the westernmost of Persian-speaking regions, the patronage and adoption of Persian language and culture by the Turkish Seljuq Empire during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, the influence of earlier Sufis and “schools” of Sufism, the influence of earlier Sufi poets who preceded him, and the high degree of refinement attained by Persian Sufism up to his time. Other major factors include the influence of his two Sufi teachers, his devotion to the remembrance (dhikr) of God, his love of audition sessions (samā‘) that were accompanied by mystical poetry and music, the uniqueness of his lyrical poetry, and the greatness of his Mathnawī.

The turbulent thirteenth century

He was born in the eastern Persian region of Khurāsān, near the ancient city of Balkh. His father, Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad Walad (1153–1231), was presumably born in Balkh, where he worked as a preacher (khātib), as had his father before him. For unclear reasons, he moved his family to the town of Wakhsh, about 250 kilometres to the east. 2 Mawlānā, the youngest child in the family, was probably born there. About five years later (1212) they moved to

the northern city of Samarqand. One major reason for leaving may have been disapproval from a religious conservative, the Qādī of Wakhsh, perhaps because Bahā' al-Dīn was a Sufi; another motive may have been his wish to obtain a position in a religious college (madrasa).³ The family was in Samarqand when the Khwārazmshāh laid siege to the city (1212–1213).⁴ Within the next four years (about 1216), Bahā' al-Dīn left Khurāsān with his family and may have decided to perform the Pilgrimage (ḥajj) in Mecca and then seek divine guidance about where to live. They reached Baghdad and Mecca (about 1217), before proceeding to Damascus and Seljuq Anatolia (Rūm) that same year.⁵ They would not have heard about the Mongol conquests and massacres of the cities of Khurāsān until they had lived for about four years in Seljuq Anatolia.

The Seljuq Turks began conquering Khurāsān (1037), conquered mainland Persia, and then invaded Anatolia and defeated the Byzantine army (1071). Warfare with the Byzantines was continual during the next centuries. During the First Crusade, the Sultanate of Rūm lost its first capital, Nicaea (1097), and Konya was briefly occupied; subsequently, Konya became the new capital. There were many battles against the Crusaders in the Second Crusade. During the Third Crusade, a German army was allowed to pass through Rūm, but briefly conquered Konya (1190). Due to the expansion of the Sultanate of Rūm to the east, warfare also ensued with Georgia (1202, 1213–1214).

Then the Mongols invaded Anatolia and defeated the Sultanate (1243); it was allowed to continue as a vassal state by paying massive payments of tribute to the Mongols. As a result, the lives of its population were largely spared. Mongol soldiers occupied Konya while Mawlānā lived there (1256) and tore down the fortifications. The point here is that Mawlānā was able to flourish in Konya, the relatively safe capital city of the Seljuq Sultanate of Rūm, but only because the Sultanate was continually expanding or defending its borders from rival states and empires.

Seljuq patronage of Persian culture

The Turkic peoples who invaded the Persian Plateau beginning in the eleventh century and established the Great Seljuq Empire had no refined or literary culture of their own. So the ruling and elite classes wisely adopted Persian language and culture. Moreover, they patronised religious and spiritual knowledge and the arts, including poetry. When the Seljuqs extended the empire into Anatolia in the eleventh century, they established a Sultanate that was relatively stable. Many well-educated Persian-speaking people sought refuge there and were welcomed and honoured. The Seljuq ruler, Sultān 'Alā' al-Dīn Kay Qubād (d. 1237) invited Mawlānā's father to live and teach in Konya. He moved (1229) from nearby Lāranda, where the family had resided for about seven years, and died two years later. A year after that, Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn arrived and became Mawlānā's first Sufi teacher until about a year before his death (1241).

During the next several years, Mawlānā was on his own, which may have been the time when his Majālis-i sab'a (seven Sermons) were written down. The point here is that as a result of the

Seljuq patronage of Persian culture, it was acceptable to quote Sufi Persian poetry as part of Islamic instruction. The following is one of Mawlānā's own quatrains that he recited in a mosque, following the first part of the sermon spoken in Arabic:

I strolled with my beloved in a rose garden.

(And) from lack of awareness, I cast a glance upon a rose. (That) beloved said to me, "May you be ashamed, (For my) cheeks are here and you are looking at roses?"⁶

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The influence of earlier Sufis

Mawlānā benefited from the influence of the so-called "ecstatic" tradition of Sufism that originated in Khur ā sān that was exemplified by Abū Sa' īd ibn Abī 'l-Khayr (d. 1048). This has been contrasted with the so-called "sober" tradition of Sufism that originated in Baghdad and was exemplified by Junayd (d. 910). However, this distinction is a generalisation, since the two traditions, or schools, were more complex.

Mawlānā was not only a native of Khur ā sān, but his Sufism was clearly in alignment with that tradition; this emphasised many things: the Persian language, the appreciation of poetry, the use of poetic verses in spiritual instruction, the blame-seeking (mal āmat ī) path as a way to struggle against the self-centred ego, the use of the spiritual training house (kh ānaqāh) as a place to teach spiritual courtesy and selfless service to others, and the use of musical instruments and spiritual poetry (ghazals and quatrains) in the audition session (sam ā') as a way to intensify remembrance (dhikr) and passionate love ('ishq) of God through spontaneous bodily movements. The other major feature of Mawlānā's Sufism was mystical love (ma ḥabba) of God, a trend in Sufism that originated in Iraq with Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya of Basra (d. 185/801). She famously declared:

O God, if I am worshipping You because of fear of Hell, burn me in Hell. And if I am worshipping You with hope of Paradise, make it forbidden to me. But if I am worshipping You for Your sake (alone), do not hold back from me Your eternal beauty.⁸

Another influence was Abū Ḥāmid Mu ḥammad al-Ghaz ā l ī (d. 1111) who was one of the greatest Muslim thinkers of all time. He quit his position as an eminent religious scholar and became a Sufi. Eventually, he wrote many important books and was the first to make a formal description of Sufism and explain how it is a faithful interpretation of Qur'ānic and other Islamic principles. As a result, Sufism became accepted as a worthy part of Islam and integrated with Islamic law (shar ī'a). In order to attain full acceptance, it became expected for Sufis to follow an established school (madhhab) of Sunn ī Islamic law, which included detailed rules of religious conduct as exemplified by the Prophet Mu ḥammad. In the Persian-speaking areas of Mawlānā's

time, this was mainly a choice between the Shāfiʿī and the Ḥanafī schools. In a credible account, Mawlānā's close disciple, Sheikh Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Zarkūbī declared his wish to follow the Ḥanafī school of Islamic law as followed by his Master, instead of the Shāfiʿī school. Mawlānā replied,

No, no! What is right is that you should (continue to) be in your own school of religious law and keep it up, but (also) travel in our (mystical) way (ṭarīqa) and guide people on our path of love (jādda-yi 'ishq).⁹

In this statement, Mawlānā affirmed the first two of the three classical levels of Sufism: that the Sufī should maintain what is required by Islamic law (sharīʿat) and what is required by the mystical way (ṭarīqat) (purification of the self-centred ego (nafs), continual dhikr, spiritual states (aḥwāl—including ecstatic ones) and spiritual stations (maqāmāt), the master-disciple relationship, and so on). For some Sufis, such as Mawlānā, the master-disciple relationship is part of the path of love in which the disciple, or “lover” (āshiq) becomes immersed in spiritual love ('ishq) for the master, or human “beloved” (maʿshūq).¹⁰ This leads to the third level: realisation of divine Reality (ḥaqīqat)—direct encounter with God, “union” or nearness to God, and so on. In Rūmī's path of love, this occurs when the lover becomes immersed in

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love for the divine Beloved (God) alone. The following verses from Mawlānā's works are examples:

Love is the path and road of our Prophet.

We were born from Love and Love was our mother.¹¹

The sect of love is distinct from all religions; The sect and school is God (alone).¹²

Know truly (about) the [mystic] lover: he isn't a (common) “Muslim”.

In the school of Love there isn't belief or unbelief.¹³

We are lovers of Love, but the (common) “Muslim” is different¹⁴ The best of lives is a life in the path of the lovers [of God], (And) the wink of an eye from a beauty with a clear (promise of) union (wiṣāl).¹⁵

The influence of earlier Sufi poets

Although there is an oft repeated story that Mawlānā met Farīd al-Dīn ‘Attār at the age of ten when travelling with his family, this is regarded by scholars as a legend. 16 Mawlānā must have heard, read, and been strongly influenced by his poetry. And he must have also been profoundly affected by the poetry of Ḥakīm Sanā’ī, especially since Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn was very fond of quoting his verses. Sanā’ī (d. 1140) was one of a number of Sufī Persian poets to compose verses about the path of love prior to Mawlānā’s time. For example, he wrote:

As long as you are sober, you won’t reach the taste of (ecstatic) drunkenness. As long as you don’t submit the body, you won’t reach devotion to the soul. (And) in the path of love for the Friend, like fire and water (thrown together), As long as you aren’t non-existent of self, you won’t reach (true) existence.¹⁷ As long as you are with yourself you are far (away), even if you are with me You are very far (away as if) a mountain is between you and me.

You will not reach me as long as you don’t become one with me.

(For) in the path of love, either you exist or I! 18

And Farīd al-Dīn ‘Attār (d. 1220) wrote:

Ask me for the essence of craziness in (the path of) Love. (And) ask me for a life lost and an intellect overturned.¹⁹

The moment when my essence becomes the Ocean of Totality, The beauty of (all) the atoms becomes clear to me.

Because of that, I burn like a candle so that in the path of Love, All moments may become One Moment to me.²⁰

According to Aflākī, Mawlānā indicated that he was profoundly influenced by these poets when he said:

Whoever becomes occupied with the words of ‘Attār will benefit from the words of Ḥakīm and will come to understand the (spiritual) secrets of that speech (of his). And whoever contemplates the words of Sanā’ī with complete seriousness will become aware of the luminous secret (sirr-i sanā’ī) of our words.²¹

It was related that some of Mawlānā’s disciples had been eagerly studying the mathnawīs of these two poets and gaining much spiritual insight, when Mawlānā’s close disciple Chalabī Ḥusām al-Dīn suggested to him that many dīwāns of his ghazals had been produced that dispensed luminous mystical secrets, but perhaps he might also compose a mathnawī of his own in the form of Sanā’ī’s book and in the same poetic meter (wazn) as ‘Attār’s Manṭiq al-ṭayr

(“Speech of the Birds”) In that moment, Mawlānā was quoted as saying, “Yes, I received an inspiration from God to do so.” He then reached into his turban and handed Ḥusām al-Dīn a sheet of paper that contained the first 18 couplets of his Mathnawī: “Listen to the reed (flute), how it is complaining! It is telling about separations ...”²²

The high level of Sufism

Up to the time of the Mongol invasion, Persian Sufism had flourished. The use of quatrains in teaching was widespread, since these were pithy and easy for disciples to memorise. This method had been used very effectively in the eleventh century by Abū Sa‘īd. ²³ ‘Aṭṭār (d. 1240) had written an entire book of 2,088 quatrains in story form. ²⁴ Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 1238) composed 1,807 quatrains. ²⁵ Mawlānā did not write a prose manual of his knowledge of Sufism, but he continued the Persian Sufi custom of composing quatrains for the benefit of disciples. He composed approximately 1,827. An indication of the remarkable lofty development of Persian Sufism in the thirteenth century is the fact that a number of well-known Sufis of the time, who had attained levels of spiritual greatness, had only a mild interest in spending time with Mawlānā. Among these was Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 1274), who was the step-son and successor of Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240)—one of the greatest minds in Islamic history, who developed a kind of speculative or philosophical Sufism. He had once lived and married in Konya. Via his writings and disciples, Qūnawī became the main person who promulgated the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī throughout the Islamic world. Although Ṣadr al-Dīn was an exact contemporary of Mawlānā’s and lived in the same city, he attracted elite visitors and disciples who were eager to learn the mystical philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabī in his rather aristocratic lodge (zāwiya). In contrast, Mawlānā’s disciples (many of whom were tradesmen) were engaged in the traditional disciplines of Sufism. Over time, the two great men of Konya developed respect for each other.

Another outstanding individual was Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Irāqī (d. 688/1289), who became a famous Sufi poet. After spending years as the disciple of a sheikh of the Suhrawardī Sufi order in India, the sheikh died and ‘Irāqī went to Mecca and then to Konya. He spent a short time with Mawlānā, ²⁶ but felt much more attracted to Ṣadr al-Dīn and speculative or philosophical Sufism, of which he became a proponent. He regarded Ṣadr al-Dīn as his second Sufi sheikh. The point here is that two major lines of highly developed Sufism, one associated with Mawlānā Rūmī and the other with Ibn ‘Arabī, came into contact in Konya, but remained separate and distinct.

The influence of Rūmī’s Sufi teachers

Fortunately, there were two Sufi masters who were not veiled by their own greatness from seeing Mawlānā's potential. Sayyid Burhān al-Dīn Muḥaqqiq al-Tirmidhī (d. 1241) was the leading disciple of Mawlānā's father, who was, himself, a unique Sufi. Burhān al-Dīn had not been in contact with the Walad family for about 15 years since they left their home in eastern Khurāsān. But he travelled to Konya after hearing that Bahā' al-Dīn lived there; after arriving, he learnt that his master had died the year before. At the time, Mawlānā was not ready to succeed his father. Burhān al-Dīn questioned him and then declared:

You have surpassed your father by a hundred degrees in all the domains of knowledge of religion and certitude, but your father was complete in both verbal knowledge ('ilm-i qāl) and ecstatic knowledge ('ilm-i ḥāl). After today, I desire that you may be a seeker of

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ecstatic knowledge... This is the spiritual significance (ma'nā) that came to me from my sheikh, and you should also acquire that from me, so that you may be the inheritor of your father outwardly and inwardly and become him essentially.²⁷

Subsequently, Burhān al-Dīn assumed his master's position of sheikh and passed on the Sufi teachings of Bahā' al-Dīn Walad, especially those recorded in the latter's book, 28 to Mawlānā over a period of nine years. In addition, he sent him to the most prestigious Islamic colleges in Aleppo and Damascus, Syria. These colleges taught the interpretation of Islamic law of Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 767). After completing his various studies, and returning to Konya, Burhān al-Dīn directed him to do several 40-day spiritual retreats. He was so impressed by Mawlānā's spiritual state afterwards that he declared him to be without equal in the world in the major branches of knowledge, as well as of hidden spiritual secrets. He told him to teach and said, "Immerse the souls of the worlds in new life and unlimited compassion, and bring to life the dead ones of the world of form (ṣūrat) by means of your (understanding of) inward spiritual reality (ma'nā) and love."²⁹ It seems that he was called "our Master" (Mawlānā) even then by Burhān al-Dīn.⁶⁰ Mawlānā then became the full successor of his father, had numerous followers, and was called by his father's title, the "Great Master" (Khudāwandgār). After completion of Mawlānā's training, Burhān al-Dīn went to live Qaysarīya, where he died about a year later.³⁰

Although Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Tabrīzī has been described for more than a century as an illiterate wandering dervish who was charismatic and had antinomian or heretical tendencies, there is now much more credible information about him due to the work of scholars in editing and translating the Maqālāt (Discourses) of Shams, which consists of his teachings as recorded by his disciples.³¹ He had a solid Islamic education in the Arabic language and was a Sunnī Muslim who followed the Shāfi'ī school of Islamic law.³² He must have memorised the Qur'ān, since he taught young boys to memorise it. He married a young woman raised in Mawlānā's household named Kīmiyā and after they married they lived in Mawlānā's household.³³ According to early Mawlawī (Mevlevi) tradition, the spiritual tradition of

Mawlānā's successors, he was said to be 60 years of age. The following is what Shams said in the Discourses, about his quest:

I humbled myself before God, asking, "Grant me companionship (ham-suḥbat) with Your hidden saints!" I had a dream in which I was told, "We will grant companionship with one saint (walī)." I asked, "Where is that saint?" Another night, I dreamed that I was told: "In Anatolia (R ūm)." After some time passed, I dreamed that I was told, "Now is not the time."³⁴

In regard to what is now known about Shams, it is very significant that he placed so much importance on "following" (mut ābac at), meaning following the example of the behaviour modelled by the Prophet Mu ḥammad (called the "Sunnah"). Shams had previously rejected a number of well-known Sufi masters (contemporary and past ones) because they did not follow the example of the Prophet sufficiently (and some apparently felt they were so spiritually advanced that they had little need to).³⁵ Based on this understanding, the initial meeting between Shams and Mawlānā can be seen in a new light: Shams was searching for one of the hidden saints of God; a mystic who had a strong commitment to following the Prophet's pious way of life. This would be in contrast to other Sufis who made claims of receiving extraordinary spiritual favours from God but who had a lack of commitment to following the Prophet's example.

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In Aflā k ī's hagiography (completed 80 years after Mawlānā died) there are two versions of the famous meeting. The first account is the one generally preferred by popularising Western authors because it fits their view that Mawlānā was a mere Muslim scholar and theologian until he met Shams, who introduced him to mysticism. According to this version, Shams asked him who was greater, the Prophet Mu ḥammad or (the Sufi) Bāyazīd (al-Biṣṭā m ī). Mawlānā answered that the Prophet was greater, since he was the leader and chief of all the prophets and saints. Shams then (supposedly) asked, "Then what does it mean that Mu ḥammad said (to God), 'Glory be to You! We have not known You as You deserve to be known'" and Bāyazīd said, "Glory be to me! How great is my state! And I am the King of kings!" Mawlānā is depicted as fainting and falling from his mule from awe of that reply. After regaining consciousness, he is said to have taken Shams to his religious college for 40 days of solitude together, or for three months according to another report.³⁶

Aflā k ī's second version depicted Shams as the one who fainted, after Mawlānā explained that,

For Bāyazīd, (his) thirst became pacified by a gulp (of water), he spoke from (feeling) satiated, and the jug of his comprehension was filled by that amount... But for Muḥammad, there was tremendous thirst... and every day he became increased in his supplications for (greater) nearness (to God). And (so) of these two assertions, the assertion of Mu ḥammad is greater. For this reason he said, "We have not known You as You deserve to be known."³⁷

The following is what Shams himself said about the meeting:

However, I'm not talking about Muḥammad... But I'm saying (that) he is more superior in regard to those who (came) after him, and (therefore) how can I equate anyone with him? For that which has come to me beyond the acquisition of the knowledge (of religious learning), the intellect, and the toil and exertion (of the mind)—that (has come) with the blessings of following him. And the first words I spoke with (Mawlānā) were these: “But as for Bāyazīd, why didn't he adhere to following (mutābac at) (the Prophet's example) and (why) didn't (he) say ‘Glory be to You! We have not worshipped You’ (as You deserve to be worshipped)?” Then Mawlānā knew to completion and perfection (the meaning of) those words (of the Prophet). But what was the final outcome of these words? Then his inmost consciousness made him drunk from these (words), because his inmost consciousness was cleansed (and) purified, (and) therefore (the meaning of) it became known to him. And with his drunkenness, I (also) knew the pleasure and delight of those words—for I had been neglectfully unaware of the pleasure and delight of these words.³⁸

In sum, Shams-i Tabr īzī found the hidden saint he had long searched for, one who was advanced on the Sufi path who was devoted to following the Prophet Mu ḥammad. And Shams confirmed that, after their first words, they were in a spiritual state of (ecstatic) “drunkenness” together.

Sultān Walad also wrote about his father's first meeting with Shams:

After much waiting, he saw his (Shams') face; (mystical) secrets became as visible as daylight to him. He saw that which no one had been able to see; also, he heard that which no one had heard from anyone... He invited him to his house, saying, “O (spiritual) king, hear from this poor beggar (darw īsh): although my house is not a place worthy of you, yet I am your sincere (spiritual) lover.”³⁹

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Mawlānā wanted to spend most of his time with his newly found spiritual master. In his Discourses, Shams expressed great reluctance to share mystical secrets with anyone unless they could understand them and act on them. He told of how a conceited man came to him and said, “Tell me a secret.” Shams replied:

I am unable to tell you a secret. I am able to tell a secret only to that person in whom I do not see him, but in whom I see myself. I speak my secret only to myself. I am not seeing myself in you. I see another person in you.⁴⁰

Finally, he could share his secrets fully with Mawlānā. It also seems likely that he also transmitted ecstatic states of consciousness to Mawlānā that transformed him into an ecstatic

Sufī, who sought such states in the “mystical concert” (sam ā‘) for years after his time with Shams. Shams was well aware of Mawlānā’s greatness. He said:

The first condition (when) I came to Mawlānā was this: “I am not coming for being a shaykh.” (As for) the one who could be Mawlānā’s shaykh, God has not brought him upon the face of the earth, and he would not be a human being. Also, I am not one who may act (the part of) a disciple; that (position) has not remained for me.⁴¹

After about a year and a half, Shams left for Syria, was persuaded to come back, and then disappeared permanently about a year afterwards (1247–1248). Certainly, Mawlānā’s disciples felt jealousy that he spent so much time with Shams. But present-day scholars reject Aflā k ī’s claim that they murdered Shams as baseless. ⁴² Shams made clear hints that he would need to leave permanently in order to further Mawlānā’s development as a spiritual master. For example, in one speech recorded by his disciples, in which he appears to have addressed Mawlānā, he said:

Since I am not in the situation where I might order travel for you, I will place (the need for travel) upon myself for the welfare of your work, because separation is a cook.... What is the value of that work (of yours)? I would make fifty journeys for your welfare. My travels are for the sake of the (successful) emergence of your work. Otherwise, what is the difference for me between Anatolia and Syria? There’s no difference (if) I am at the Ka‘ba (in Mecca) or in Istanbul. But it’s certainly the case that separation cooks and refines (the seeker).⁴³

After Mawlānā made two journeys to Damascus and failed to find Shams, Sultān Walad wrote:

He did not find Shams-i Tabr īz in Syria; (instead) he found him within himself, like the clear moon. He said, “Although we are far from him in body, without (consideration of) body and spirit we both are one light. Whether you see him or me, I am him (and) he is me, (O) seeker ...” He said, “Since I am him, (for) what do I search? Now (that) I am his very substance, I may speak from my (very) self.”⁴⁴

In sum, Mawlānā benefitted enormously from the religious and mystical teachings of his two Sufī masters—and extraordinary spiritual transmissions from Shams.

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Rūmī’s devotion to remembrance of God (dhikr)

A central spiritual practice in Sufism is the remembering, recollecting, mentioning, and praising of God (dhikru All āh)—throughout the waking hours as much as possible. All Muslims are commanded in the Qur’ān to recollect the name of the Lord, to remember God often (with humility and reverence, standing or sitting or lying down), to find satisfaction in the

remembrance of God, to not be diverted from the recollection of God by buying and selling, and to know that remembrance of God is the greatest (act of worship). Muslim Sufis have specialised in this practice by developing a rich variety of dhikrs, usually Arabic words, names (of God), and phrases from the Qur’ān, or Arabic terms derived from such or from prayers in the Traditions of the Prophet Mu ḥammad (a ḥādīth). In Sufī orders, dhikr formulas may be general or unique (to a particular order) and for individual or group practice. In addition, because recitation of the Qur’ān is also a form of the remembrance of God, daily litanies (awrād) (in Arabic or translation) that usually consist of selections of verses from the Qur’ān, usually prayers, are also often read by Sufis as well.

Aflā k ī related that one day the Regent of Konya, Mu‘ ī n al-Dī n Parwāna, prefaced a question by saying:

The Sufī sheikhs of the past had some daily litanies and dhikrs, such as, “There is no divinity except God” (l ā il āha ill ā ’ll āh—Q.47:19, 37:35); and for some the dhikr of, “Except (only) God” (ill ā All āh) was sufficient; and for some dervishes of Turkestan it was, “Him, Him” (H ū H ū)... and some would count the two phrases of, “Glory (be) to God and to Him is the praise” a hundred times.

Then he asked, “I wonder what is the way of remembrance for Mawlānā?” He replied:

Our dhikr is ‘All āh, All āh, All āh’ because we are those who belong to God (m ā All āhīyān- īm) and because “we come from God and we will return to God” (Q.2:156). Just like my father, Bahā’ al-Dī n Walad—may God bless his spirit—always heard from All āh, spoke by All āh, and was a rememberer of All āh (dh ākiru All āh), since God Most High has manifested (Himself) to all the prophets and saints by a special name, and the manifestation to us Mu ḥammadans is by (the name) ‘All āh,’ which is the sum total (jāmc -i jām‘) (of names).⁴⁵

And it was reported that,

Continually, during the long nights, Mawlānā would place his blessed self against the wall of the (religious) college and unceasingly say, ‘All āh, All āh!’ in a loud voice, so that it was said that (the space) between earth and the heavens would be filled by the sound of the clamour of ‘All āh, All āh!’⁴⁶

Aflā k ī mentioned that Mawlānā recited litanies after the pre-dawn ritual prayer. Like most religious scholars, he must have memorised many. One of them begins: “O God, make for me a light in my heart...”⁴⁷ Mawlānā’s dhikr became the dhikr formula for the Mawlaw ī Sufi

Order (generally, repeated silently in the heart during waking hours; sometimes repeated softly in a group for a short duration) for the next centuries up to the present day.

Rūmī's love of ecstatic Samā'

Aflāk ī narrated many times that Mawlānā composed and recited verses during the samā'. For example: "He declared the start of samā' and started with this ghazal (that begins): 'A moon arrived that the sky has never seen (even) in a dream; he brought a fire that water has never extinguished.'" 48 And:

In (that) moment, in a state of whirling by which the wheeling sky was bewildered by such spinning, Mawlānā started (to compose) a ghazal, saying: "O dear one, if you don't sleep for a little night, what will happen? If you don't knock on the door of separation, what will happen?" 49

There are clear indications that he composed ghazals and quatrains specifically for samā' sessions. Almost a hundred years after his death, the Mawlawī/Mevlevī followers of his Sufī lineage completed a special version of his Dīwān in which all the ghazals were ordered according to their poetic meter (wazn), 23 major ones plus mixed and rare meters. 50 It is clear that these volumes were made so that the Mawlawī singers could recite aloud ghazals during samā' in the same poetic meter at length, without needing to stop and find more similar ones. It also seems very likely that it was the practice during Mawlānā's lifetime that his ghazals were sung at length during samā'. Samā' has been misunderstood for a long time. It is sometimes claimed that it is a whirling "dance" that is accompanied by music and poetry, and that Mawlānā was the originator of it. However, samā' is not, and was never intended to be, a dance; rather, it is way of prayer—a practice of the remembrance of God (dhikru 'llāh). Muslim Sufīs had been engaging in such sessions since the middle of the ninth century CE, starting in Baghdad, a practice that spread very quickly, especially among Persian Sufīs. 51 Lack of knowledge about

samā' is largely due to the fact that this centuries-old Persian Sufī practice has almost disappeared except, to some extent, in the Chishtī Order in India and Pakistan.

After the (originally Persian) Mawlawī Order became more Turkish, the samā' was changed into a choreographed ritual based on circular (dawrī) movements. It was called "Sema" (in Turkish) and is also known as the Muqābala ("face-to-face") ritual in which the dervishes walk in a circle and then whirl in a moving circle, with much bowing to the sheikh, to the chief of the whirlers, and to each other. Every movement is choreographed, so that the ritual is done exactly the same way every time. There is some variety of musical compositions, but these are performed the same way; within the compositions are verses of Sufī poetry, mostly those of Mawlānā's, which are sung (in transliterated Persian syllables, with Turkish pronunciation) by

the musicians. The only spontaneity that occurs is at the beginning, with a reed-flute solo, and sometimes at the end with another instrumental solo.

The word, *sam ā'* means "listening" in Arabic. Originally, it meant listening to the recitation of the Qur'ān by someone with a beautiful voice. It is well known that this can induce ecstatic emotions in some listeners. Later, mystical poetry and music were listened to, while imagining that the voice of God the Beloved was heard. Such sessions involved a group of men dervishes led by a Sufi sheikh. Each dervish remained still and quiet until spiritual feelings and an urge to express these feelings arose. Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), who defended the practice, said:

He should... sit with bent head as he would sit in thought that absorbed his heart, restraining himself from hand-clapping and leaping and the rest of the movements used to work up the emotions and make a hypocritical show... Then if ecstasy overcomes him

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and moves him without his volition, he is excusable in regard to it and not blameworthy. But whenever volition returns to him let him return to his stillness and to his repose ...⁵²

And Hujwīrī (d. 1071) said, "...it should not be practised until it comes (of its own accord... If it agitates, be moving; if it calms, be calm. And you must know to distinguish between a strong natural impulse and an ecstatic movement."⁵³ He also said, "Those who call it 'dancing' are utterly wrong. It is a state that cannot be explained in words: 'He who does not taste does not know.'"⁵⁴

Only spontaneous movements were allowed. Early sources mention hand-clapping, foot-stamping, hand-waving, dance-like movements (*raqs*), leaping, ecstatic shouting, whirling (*charkhīdan*), and prostration (but different in form from prostration in the ritual prayers). Such movements were allowed only if the urge to move felt compelling; planned movements (including whirling) were forbidden. The Sufī shaykh often stood up last; sometimes in a state of ecstasy he would rip his upper shirt or rip his cloak. If the latter occurred, the dervishes would rush to pick up pieces that they would later sew to their own cloaks for added spiritual blessing (*baraka*). There were extensive rules, as well as high standards for participants.

According to Aflākī, Mawlānā did not engage in *sam ā'* in his youth, but was later encouraged to do so by his wife Kerrā's mother. When he began to participate, he would mainly wave his hands (a common movement). Later, Shams-i Tabrīzī showed him how to whirl.⁵⁵ According to Sipahsālār, on the other hand, Mawlānā did not participate in such gatherings until after he met Shams, who indicated to him, "Enter into the mystical concert, for that which you are seeking will become increased in the *sam ā'*."⁵⁶ When Shams was asked about the secret of *sam ā'*, he said:

There are more (divine) manifestations and visions (than by other means) for the men of God in the sam ā‘ session. (By it) they have come forth from the world of their own existence; sam ā‘ brings them forth from other worlds and unites them in (direct) encounter with God (liqāy-i Ḥaqq).

He said, further (speaking in terms of Islamic law), that sam ā‘ is forbidden (ḥarām) (to most), who would (intentionally move and) raise a hand without the (spiritual) state of ecstasy (ḥāl); it is allowed (mubāḥ) to the people of abstinence and asceticism, whom it makes full of tears and compassion; and it is required (far ḥida) for the people of ecstatic states, for (whom) “it is an essential obligation (farḍ-i ‘ayn), such as the five (daily ritual) prayers (nam āz) and the fast of Ramaḍān.”⁵⁷

Audition sessions were held in Konya long before Mawlānā began to join them, and they were held by other Sufi groups. Little is known about his movements during sam ā‘ sessions. A review of Aflā k ī’s book yielded 64 occasions when Mawlānā participated in sam ā‘ sessions. Usually, Aflā k ī simply stated that, “A sam ā‘ took place,” without details. However, he did include some interesting information (keeping in mind his tendency to exaggerate and embellish). During the leadership of Mawlānā’s first successor, Chalabī Ḥusā m al-Dī n (1273–1284), Mawlānā’s custom of holding a sam ā‘ session after attending the Friday (mid-day) prayer in the mosque was continued, along with recitation from the Mathnaw ī after recitation from the Qur’ān 58—a custom that was carried out for the next centuries. Of course, sam ā‘ sessions were stopped and re-started so that participants could do the ritual prayers, something Aflā k ī had no need to mention this to his audience. However, there is one instance: “He (Mawlānā) was engaged in the ecstatic sam ā‘ from mid-morning time until close to the

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second afternoon prayer (time). Then he said, ‘Enough. Stop! (bas kun īd).’”⁵⁹ Sam ā‘ sessions generally started with a shout: “The ‘Hey!’ of sam ā‘ was sounded and all of the religious scholars and commanders shouted and lowered their heads and the ecstatic sam ā‘ went on until the early morning.”⁶⁰

Actions common during sam ā‘ done by Mawlānā were: stamping his feet, shouting, engaging in dance-like movements, giving away articles of clothing (such as turban cloth or robes) to the musicians, pulling someone into the sam ā‘, and whirling (seven instances). The following is an example of the latter: He would become ecstatically “drunk,” seize the musicians (qaww āl- ān), whirl, stamp his feet, and bless the Prophet Mu ḥammad and his family; (and) he would begin again. ⁶¹ Actions done that were unusual were: grabbing someone by the collar and speaking to him, bowing to musicians, and writing legal judgements (fatw ās) during the sam ā‘.⁶²

A famous story in which Aflākī claimed that Mawlānā whirled in front of a goldsmith's shop should be rejected, however, because it was based on an earlier story (by Sipahsālār) that did not mention whirling. In the earlier version, Sheikh Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn the goldsmith was sitting and working in his shop when Mawlānā suddenly appeared at the door and began the samā' by moving to the rhythm of the hammering. He continued hammering, indifferent to the risk of destroying the gold plate (from excessive pounding), until Mawlānā was finished. 63 Aflākī greatly embellished his version by depicting Mawlānā as whirling in the street and adding other people: a crowd that surrounded him, apprentice gold-beaters, and the arrival of ghazal singers. And he claimed that a miracle occurred: not only was all the gold plate preserved from destruction, but also the shop became filled with gold plates and all of the tools in the shop were transformed into gold.⁶⁴

Aflākī's story became so famous, that it was probably a major influence in the decision of the later Mawlawīs to change the spontaneous samā' into a choreographed whirling ritual. And the myth of Mawlānā as the original "whirling dervish" and the originator of samā' is based on it.

Whirling in Sufism was undoubtedly inspired (as was much of early Sufism) by mystical interpretation of verses in the Qur'ān—in this case: "Whichever way you turn, there is the Face of God" (2:115). Sipahsālār confirmed this when he wrote:

Whirling (charkh zadan) is an allusion to oneness (tawḥīd), and this is the station of the mystic knowers and affirmers of unity, because in that state they see the Beloved and Sought One in every direction, and they find a portion of His Grace on every side they rotate ...⁶⁵

Mawlānā was devoted to the whole of the ecstatic samā', not just to whirling (which cannot be maintained at a fast rate for very long). He spent an enormous amount of time engaged in samā' after Shams left Konya for the first time and, evidently, for many years afterwards. According to Aflākī, he sometimes participated all night, sometimes longer (although Aflākī's standard claim that it lasted for three (or seven) days and nights can be dismissed as an embellishment). Nevertheless, his statements that Mawlānā slept and ate little and became emaciated as a result seem credible. These immersions enabled him to express his longing sorrow of separation from his mystic friend, as well as to experience ecstatic states of consciousness.

He demonstrated a blame-risking (mal āmatī) attitude in that he did not care if people criticised this behaviour, as they did, saying, "Alas, a beloved man, prince, and religious scholar has suddenly become crazy from constant samā' sessions, austerities, and starvation!" And they blamed it on his associating with "that man from Tabrīz." ⁶⁶ The use of musical

instruments in sam ā‘ sessions had been controversial for several centuries and religious scholars regularly tried to get them banned as an alleged “innovation” in Islam. After he died, there were efforts to get the practice banned for all Sufi groups (including a claim that it was only lawful for Mawlānā), but these attempts failed.

Therefore, sam ā‘ became the food of the lovers (of God)...

The fire of love became sharp-pointed from (the sound of) melodies ...67 And (who has not) stamped (his feet) when he learned (about) this?

And (who) has not clapped hands from the power of its yearning? 68

What is sam ā‘ ‘? It is a message from the hidden saintly ones of the heart. The heart estranged from the world finds peace from their letters.69

In sum, Mawlānā was far more devoted to sam ā‘ than other well-known Sufis. He was often in an ecstatic state in these sessions, during which he also composed poetry.

The uniqueness of Rūmī’s lyrical poetry

Mawlānā was very aware of the general condemnation of poetry as an alleged “innovation” in Islam. Although he was quoted as saying that he did not care for poetry, that he composed it so that his friends would not become bored, and that among his own people in his home country “there is no occupation more disgraceful than being a poet,” 70 evidence is plentiful that he must have enjoyed composing poetry most of the time. For example, considering the vast number of verses that he composed (nearly 66,000 verses, each with two halves), he must have been composing verses very frequently for the last 27 years of his life. 71 And he must have liked the challenge of fitting words to poetic meters, since he used 23 different meters (wazn), more than any other Persian poet.

Mawlānā composed ghazals and quatrains to express his own spiritual feelings (such as longing, praise, passionate spiritual love, and ecstasy), as a way to induce such spiritual feelings in others who engaged in sam ā‘, and as an expression of his mystical path of love: in the first stage, immersion in love for the spiritual master leads to annihilation of self in the spiritual presence of the master (fan ā f ī al-shaykh), with the result that all things beautiful appear as reflections of the attributes of the beloved (who for Rū m ī was Shams-i Tabr īzī). In the final stage, immersion in love for God leads to annihilation of self in the presence of God (fan ā f ī all āh), with the result that all things appear as reflections of the attributes of the Only Beloved (ma’sh ūq). It may be said that Mawlānā was in the first stage when he composed the lyrical poems of the D īw ān (in which he frequently mentioned the names “Shams” or “Tabr īz”) and in the final stage when he composed the Mathnaw ī (in which he mentioned the name of “Shams” only four times).72

The following is an example of mystical love for the human beloved (or spiritual master) leading to “annihilation” (fan ā’) in the spiritual master:

The love through which (my) existence, (which) lacks life, has been (made) alive, This love, so exquisite and sweet—what is it from?

Is it in my body or is it outside my body?

Or is it in the glance of Shams, the (Sunlight of) Truth, of Tabr īz? 73

In this quatrain, Mawlānā described the experience of receiving a blissful state of spiritual love from the glance of Shams; the spiritual energy was so powerful that he felt almost

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replaced by another consciousness that entered his body with a new aliveness. Therefore, it was a partial disappearance of his self. The following is an example of mystical love for the divine Beloved or the Friend (God), leading to annihilation in God:

Do you want the existence of the Friend (d ūst) revealed to you?

(Then) enter the core of the marrow and leap away from the skin (p ūst). He is an Essence surrounded by veils, fold upon fold.

He is Self-submerged, and this world and the next are submerged in Him.⁷⁴

In this quatrain, Mawlānā stated that the existence of God, the divine Essence, the loving Friend, or Beloved, may become unveiled (kashf) if the mystic lover avoids the outward “skin” and enters the inwardness of the “marrow.” Here, Mawlānā expressed one of his major teachings: avoid giving importance to the outward appearance or form (ṣūrat) of something and look for the inward reality or meaning (ma‘n ā). According to a ḥadīth of the Prophet Mu ḥammad, “God has seventy veils of light” (fold upon fold) that cover the divine Essence (dh āt). God is Self-annihilated and the created universe and heavenly realms are annihilated in Him. This alludes to the mystical secret of the verse of the Qur’ān: “All that is upon it (the earth) will pass away (fān-in), but the Face of your Lord will remain forever (yabqā), full of Majesty and Glory” (55:26-27). As well as the verse: “There is no divinity but Him (H ū), (and) everything (will) vanish except His Face” (28:88). Related to these verses is the tradition, “God was (is), and there was (is) nothing other than He,” to which the Sufī master, Junayd al-Baghd ād ī (d. 910), is said to have added: “...and He is now as He was.”⁷⁵ In other words, mystically speaking, God is

infinitely One and nothing else truly exists (except in appearance) but Him: “He is Self-submerged, and this world and the next are submerged in Him.”

As was stated earlier, there is a blame-seeking or disapproval-risking (*mal āmat ī*) tendency in the *Khur ā sān* school of Sufism. Sufi teachers and poets sometimes surprise or shock listeners by statements that appear on the surface to be irreligious, heretical, or blasphemous—but which are expressions of profound wisdom when understood on a deeper level. This is, in part, due to the frustration of trying to communicate mystical understanding to those whose minds are restricted by conventional thinking. Therefore, unconventional statements may be used to open such minds to deeper truths. In the case of orthodox Sufis, like *Mawl ānā*, radical-sounding statements are consistently harmonious with religious precepts when understood at the level intended. *Mawlānā*'s place in Sufism is central in this regard. His references to things forbidden to Muslims such as wine, drunkenness, and the wine-server (*sāqī*) (his lips, cheek, eyebrow, and so on), plus idols and unbelief are not particularly provocative, in most cases, because these were commonplace images used in Persian Sufi poetry centuries before his time; these were understood to be spiritual metaphors by educated Persian listeners and readers. In sum, *Mawlānā* was impelled by a powerful spiritual fervour to compose lyrical poetry, which was unique in that it was often addressed to *Shams*.

The greatness of *Rūmī*'s *Mathnawī*

The *Mathnaw ī-yi Ma‘ naw ī* (“Couplets of Spiritual Meaning”), highly esteemed for centuries in Central Asia, the Ottoman Empire, and India, has been called in English, variously, the greatest mystical or Sufi poem of the East, of any age, or ever. It consists of six books full of interesting stories that contain deep spiritual wisdom, which is sometimes hinted at, sometimes explained. Often, a topic or story is diverted (sometimes resuming) due to an association with another topic or story. The poet has an astonishing ability to go from the

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mundane to the mystically sublime and back again with seeming ease. A major teaching is to go beyond appearances and seek the inner meanings and essential truths.

Mawlānā was a devout religious mystic. He often referred to the *ḥādīth* of the Prophet *Mu ḥammad*, and he alluded to, or quoted from the *Qur‘ān* so often that he must have memorised it when young. In this regard, some couplets were written in editions of the *Mathnaw ī* published in India during the nineteenth century: “I am not saying that one of lofty rank is a Prophet, but he has a Book (*kit āb*)... The *Mathnavī* of *Maulav ī* is a (divinely inspired) recitation (*qur‘ān ī*) spoken in the Persian language.” *Mawlānā* was well aware of the greatness of his *Mathnaw ī*, as he wrote in the prose prefaces and elsewhere:

It is not unreliable like astrology, geomancy, or dreams; it is the inspiration of God (wa ḥy-i Ḥaqq)...but Sufis call it the inspiration of the heart in their explanation, as a way of concealment from common people.⁷⁶

This is the book of the Mathnaw ī, and it is the roots of the roots of the roots of “the Religion” (al-dīn—Q.3:19) (of Islam) in regard to unveiling the secrets of obtaining connection (with God) and certainty (of the Truth)...For the possessors of stations and wonders, (it is like Paradise), “the best station and the best place of rest” (Q.25:24)... And God Most High has given other honourable titles to it.⁷⁷

This is the fifth bound volume of the books of the Mathnaw ī and the clarification of spiritual meanings, in explanation that the (Islamic) religious Law (shar ī‘at) is like a candle (which) shows the way. If you cannot bring a candle to hand, there is no travelling on the way. And when you have come onto the way, that travelling of yours is (called) the Path (ṭar īqat), and when you have arrived at the goal, that is the Truth (ḥaqīqat).⁷⁸

“Our Mathnaw ī is the store of Unity (wa ḥdat):

Whatever you see besides God the One (Wāḥid), it is an idol.⁷⁹

Notes

1 Shams al-D ī n A ḥ mad Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al- c ārif īn, ed. Tahsin Yazıcı, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959, 1961), II, 597; John O’Kane, Shams al-D ī n Ahmad-e Afl āk ī: The Feats of the Knowers of God (Man āqeb al ‘āref īn) (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 409.

2 Franklin Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West—The Life, Teachings and Poetry of Jalāl al-Din

Rumi (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000, rev. 2003), pp. 47–48.

3 Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 61.

4 Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 56.

5 Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, pp. 66–70.

6 Rū m ī, Majālis-i sabc a (haft khit āba): Mawl ān ā Jal āl al-D ī n R ū m ī, ed. Tōf īq Subḥā n ī (Tehran: Kayvā n,

1987), sermon 6, p. 111; Fur ū z ā nfar ed. quatrain 1776, vol. 8, p. 299; Ibrahim Gamard and Rawan

Farhadi, *The Quatrains of Rumi*. This is a translation of *Mawl ān ā Jal āl al-D īn Mu ḥammad mashh ūr*

ba-Maulav ī: *Kull īyāt-i shams yā d īvān-i kab īr*, vol. 8 (rub ā‘ īyāt), ed. Bad ī ‘ al-Zam ā n Fur ū z ā nfar (Teh-

ran: University of Tehran, 1242/1964, repr. 1262/1984), p. 626.

7 Here, “mystical” is defined as having to do with religious-spiritual experiences that involve states

(a ḥw āl) of consciousness that are beyond the thoughts, concepts, beliefs, memories, and fantasies

of the ordinary mind.

8 Far īd al-Dīn Mu ḥammad Nīshābū r ī ‘Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā*, ed. Mu ḥammad Istitīlām ī (Tehran:

Zawār), p. 87; A. J. Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1966), p. 57. 9 *Afl ā k ī*, *Man āqib al- c ārif īn*, p. 756; O’Kane, *The Feats of the Knowers of God*, p. 530.

10 See Gamard and Farhadi. This should not be confused with the two-volume commercial edition,

Kull īyāt-i shams-i tabr īzī (Tehr ā n: Am ī r Kabī r, 1957), which has a different selection of quatrains. 11 *Rū m ī*, *D īw ān*; Fur ū z ā nfar quatrain 49, vol. 8, p. 9; Gamard and Farhadi, 1470.

12 *Rū m ī*, *Mathnaw ī 2*: 1770; trans. R. A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalālu’ ddīn Rūmī*, vol. 2.

(Cambridge: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1926), p. 312.

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13 *Rū m ī*, *D īw ān*; Fur ū z ā nfar quatrain 768, vol. 8, p. 130; Gamard and Farhadi, 1311.

14 Rū m ī, D īvān; Fur ū z ā nfar quatrain 225, vol. 8, p. 38; Gamard and Farhadi, 1312.

15 Rū m ī, D īvān, Fur ū z ā nfar ghazal 2126, vol. 5, p. 7.

16 See Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, pp. 64–65.

17 Sanā' ī, Ḥak ī m Abū'l-Majd Majdūdd ī n Ibn Ādam Sanā' ī Ghaznaw ī, D īw ān, ed. Mudarris Razaw ī

(Tehr ā n: Kit ābkhā na-yi Sanā' ī, 1962), no. 509, 1174; Fur ū z ā nfar 1816, vol. 8, p. 305; Gamard and

Farhadī, Appendix I, 1869.

18 Sanā' ī, no. 407, 1161; Fur ū z ā nfar 1475, vol. 8, p. 248; Gamard and Farhadi, Appendix I, 1868. 19 Far īd al-D ī n Mu ḥ ammad Nīshābū r ī 'Attā r, Majmū'a-yi rubā' iyāt (Mukht ār-n āma), ed. Mu ḥ ammad

Riḍ ā Shaf ī ' ī Kadkan ī (Tehr ā n: Tū s, 1979), 43: from no. 12, p. 205; Fur ū z ā nfar 1593, vol. 8, p. 268;

Gamard and Farhadi, Appendix I, 1871.

20 'Attā r, 6: no. 73, 40; Fur ū z ā nfar, vol. 8, no. 19, p. 4; Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al- c ārif īn, p. 971; O'Kane, The

Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 680; Gamard and Farhadi, Appendix I, 1876.

21 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-'ārif īn, p. 220; O'Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 153.

22 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-'ārif īn, p. 740; O'Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 516.

23 Asrār al-tawḥīd f ī maqāmāt al-shaykh Abī Sa'id, Muḥammad b. Munawwar, ed. Muḥammad Riḍā Shafī'

Kadkanī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Agah, 1987); John O'Kane, Mohammad Ebn-e Monavvar, The Secrets of God's

Mystical Oneness or The Spiritual Stations of Shaikh Abi Sa'id (Los Angeles: Mazda, 1992).

24 Mukht ār-n āma.

25 D īw ān-i rub ā' īyāt-i aw ḥad al-d īn kirm ān ī, ed. Mu ḥ ammad Ibr ā h ī m B ā st ā n ī Pā r ī z ī (Tehran: Sur ū sh,

1987).

26 William Chittick and P. L. Wilson, Fakhruddin 'Iraqi: Divine Flashes (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist, 1982),

p. 43.

27 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al- c ārif īn, p. 58; O'Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 34; Far īdū n bin A ḥ mad

Sipahsā lā r, Zindagān ī-yi mawl ān ā jal āl al-d īn maulav ī, ed. Sac īd Naf īsī (Tehran: Iqbā l, 1983), p. 119;

Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 107.

28 Ma'ārif-i bah ā' al-d īn mu ḥammad bin ḥusayn kha ṭīb ī-yi balkh ī, ed. Bad ī c al-Zam ā n Fur ū z ā nfar (Tehran:

Ṭahur ī, 1974), 2 vols.

29 See Ma c ārif-i sayyid burh ān al-d īn mu ḥaqqiq tirmidī, ed. Bad ī ' al-Zam ā n Fur ū z ā nfar (Tehran: Mill ī-yi

Ī r ā n, 1999), p. 67.

30 For an excellent summary of Burhā n al-D ī n's Sufi teachings, see Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East

and West, pp. 98–105.

31 Thanks to the work of scholars: Maqāl āt-i shams al-d īn mu ḥammad tabr īzī (d. 'Al ī Mu ḥ ammad

Muwa ḥḥ id (Tehran: Khwā razm ī, 1998); William C. Chittick, Me and Rumi: The Spiritual Auto-

biography of Shams-i Tabrizi (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2008); Lewis, R ūm ī: Past and Present, East and

West, pp. 134–202.

32 Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, pp. 182–183; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, pp. 142–143; Chittick,

Me and Rumi, pp. 133.

33 Sipahsā lā r, Zindagān ī-yi mawl ān ā, p. 133; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 184.

34 Sipahs ā lā r, Zindagān ī-yi mawl ān ā, pp. 125–126; Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, pp. 759–760; Chittick, Me and

Rumi, p. 179.

35 See Chittick’s section, “Following Muhammad,” Me and Rumi, pp. 68–88, 33; Lewis, Rumi: Past

and Present, East and West, pp. 150, 156–158.

36 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al- c ārif īn, pp. 84–87; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, pp. 64–65.

37 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al- c ārif īn, pp. 619–620; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, pp. 425–426;

trans. and summarised by Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, pp. 159–160.

38 Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, p. 685; Chittick, Me and Rumi, pp. 209–210; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East

and West, p. 155.

39 Sulṭā n Walad, Ibtid ān āma, ed. Jalāl al-D ī n Hum ā’ ī (Tehran: Mill ī-yi Ī r ā n, 1997), p. 34.

40 Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, p. 105; Chittick, Me and Rumi, p. 237.

41 Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, p. 777; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 163, Chittick, Me and

Rumi, p. 212.

42 See Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, pp. 185–200.

43 Tabr ī z ī, Maqāl āt, pp. 163–164; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 182, Chittick, Me

and Rumi, p. 305.

44 Sulṭā n Walad, pp. 50, 52.

45 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 250; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 174.

118 Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī

46 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 251; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 174.

47 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 287; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 199.

48 Rū m ī, D īw ān, ghazal 310, Fur ū z ā nfar vol. 1, p. 188; Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 569; O’Kane, The

Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 394.

49 Rū m ī, D īw ān, ghazal 836, Fur ū z ā nfar, vol. 2, p. 166; Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 543; O’Kane,

The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 375.

50 Completed in two volumes, 1368 CE.

51 Jean During, “Sam ā’,” The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition (London: Luzac, 1995), pp. 1018–1019.

52 Al-Ghazal ī, I ḥyā’ ‘ul ūmu, ‘dd īn, 749; Duncan B. MacDonald, “Emotional Religion in Islām as

Affected by Music and Singing,” Part III, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and

Ireland (1902), p. 4.

53 Hujwī rī, Abū'l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn ‘Uthmān al-Jullābī, Kashfu al-ma ḥjūb, ed. V. Jukovski (Tehran:

Tahūrī, 1979), pp. 544–545; R. A. Nicholson, Kashf Al-Ma ḥjūb of Al Hujwiri (London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1936), pp. 418–419.

54 Hujwī rī, Kash al-ma ḥjūb, p. 542; Nicholson, Kashf Al-Ma ḥjūb of Al Hujwiri, p. 416.

55 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 681; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 471.

56 Sipahsālār, Zindagānī-yi mawlānā, p. 65; Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West, p. 311.

57 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 658; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 454; see the similar

wording in the earliest version in Muwaḥḥid, pp. 72–74; Chittick, Me and Rumi, pp. 277–278.

58 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 777; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 542.

59 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘arīfīn, p. 429; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 296.

60 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 183; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 127.

61 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 412; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 284.

62 Aflākī, Man āqib al-‘ārifīn, p. 324; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 225. See Rūmī’s

description of the samā‘ that mentions hand-waving, foot-stamping, and prostration (but not whirling), Mathnawī 2: 529–531.

63 Sipahsālār, Zindagānī-yi mawlānā, p. 135.

64 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, pp. 429–430, 709 (two versions of the story); O’Kane, The Feats of the

Knowers of God, pp. 295–296, 494.

65 Sipahs ā lā r, Zindagān ī-yi mawl ān ā, pp. 66–67.

66 Afl ā k ī, Man āqib al-‘ārif īn, p. 88; O’Kane, The Feats of the Knowers of God, p. 66.

67 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī, 4:742–744; Nicholson, vol. 4, p. 313.

68 Rū m ī, D īw ān, from Furz ā nfar quatrain 1414, vol. 8, p. 238; Gamard and Farhadi, 1276.

69 Rū m ī, D īw ān, Fur ū z ā nfar ghazal 1734, vol. 4, p. 65.

70 Rū m ī, F īhi M ā F īhi, Mawl ān ā Jal āl al-D īn Mu ḥammad mashh ūr ba-Maulav ī, ed. Bad ī ‘ al-Zam ā n

Fur ū z ā nfar (Tehran: Am ī r Kabī r, 1984), discourse 16, 74; Sipahsā lā r, Zindagān ī-yi mawl ān ā,

pp. 68–69; A. J. Arberry, Discourses of Rumi (London: John Murray, 1961), pp. 85–86.

71 See the summary of Mawlā nā’s poetic output in Lewis, Rumi: Past and Present, East and West,

p. 314.

72 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī 1:123, 142, 427; 2:1122.

73 Rū m ī, D īw ān, Fur ū z ā nfar quatrain 359, vol. 8, p. 61; Gamard and Farhadi, 144.

74 Rū m ī, D īw ān, Fur ū z ā nfar, quatrain 330, vol. 8, p. 56; Gamard and Farhadi, 1811.

75 William Chittick, The Self-Disclosure of God (Albany: State University of New York, 1998), p. 435.

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76 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī, 4:1852–1853, Nicholson, vol. 4, 375.

77 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī, Book 1, Preface, Nicholson, vol. 2, 3–4.

78 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī, Book 5, Preface, Nicholson, vol. 6, 2–3.

79 Rū m ī, Mathnaw ī, 6:1528; Nicholson, vol. 6, 343; <http://www.masnavi.net/1/50/eng/6/1528/>.