

ILLUMINATION OF THE ESSENCE OF THE CONCEPTS OF SPIRIT AND BODY IN THE RUBAIYATS OF OMAR KHAYYAM

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ABSTRACT:

The Rubaiyat is a collection of four line stanzas. Originally, it was written by Omar Khayyam, a Persian poet, but later it was translated by Edward FitzGerald into English. It is translated version of FitzGerald, established in five editions that make the Rubaiyat widely known in the world of literature, especially English literature. This study deals with the 1859 first edition. The Rubaiyat is the exposition of Khayyam's contemplation of life and Divinity, which is highly appreciated, and of great importance in the world of literature and a stepping progress to spirituality. Concerning the contemplation of Divine existence, the poet has experienced spiritual states. These spiritual states or experiences are called Ahwal in the concept of Sufism. The Ahwal are the main concern of this study. This concept is referred to the classification of Ahwal given by Qushayri (1966). There are six forms of Ahwal expressed by Omar Khayyam in the Rubaiyat. They are Wajd 'Ecstasy', Dzawq 'Taste', Fana 'Extinction', Baqa 'Permanency', 'Ishq 'Divine Love', and Sukr 'Intoxication'. Then, it is found that the six spiritual states, Ahwal, are undergone by Omar khayam and they are replected through his Rubaiyat.

Keywords: Rubaiyat, contemplation, quatrain, authenticity, hedayat, Sufism.

INTRODUCTION:

If we be two, we two are so
As stiff twin-compasses are two;
Thy Soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but does if the other do.

The Rubaiyat actually is a stanza form equal to a quatrain but the term is still known in the local use. He reflects on the frailty of human existence, the cruelty of fate and ignorance of man. All of his ideas belong to the concept of contemplation in Sufism, and these become one of the contributions to the world of literature. Therefore, it is proper for Khayyam's Rubaiyat to be remembered by means of analysis. Finally, it is hoped that this analysis gives a gleam of sufi teaching.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Khayyam's quatrains have been described as mystical Sufi poetry. In addition to his Persian quatrains, J. C. E. Bowen (1973) mentions that Khayyam's Arabic poems also "express a pessimistic viewpoint which is entirely consonant with the outlook of the deeply thoughtful rationalist philosopher that Khayyam is known historically to have been Edward Fitz Gerald emphasized the religious skepticism he found in Khayyam. In his preface to the Rubáiyát he claimed that he "was hated and dreaded by the Sufis" and denied any pretense at divine allegory: "his Wine is the veritable Juice of the Grape: his Tavern, where it was to be had: his Saki, the Flesh and Blood that poured it out for him." Hedayat states that "while Khayyam believes in the transmutation and transformation of the human body, he does not believe in a separate soul; if we are lucky,

our bodily particles would be used in the making of a jug of wine." In a later study he further contends that Khayyam's use of Sufic terminology such as "wine" is literal and that he turned to the pleasure of the moment as an antidote to his existential sorrow: "Khayyam took refuge in wine to ward off bitterness and to blunt the cutting edge of his thoughts."

ANALYSIS:

The authenticity of the poetry attributed to Omar Khayyam is highly uncertain. Khayyam was famous during his lifetime not as a poet but as an astronomer and mathematician. The earliest reference to his having written poetry is found in his biography by al-Isfahani, written 43 years after his death. This view is reinforced by other medieval historians such as Shahrazuri (1201) and Al-Qifti (1255). Parts of the Rubaiyat appear as incidental quotations from Omar in early works of biography and in anthologies. These include works of Razi (ca. 1160–1210), Daya (1230), Juvayni (ca.1226–1283), and Jajarmi (1340). Also, five quatrains assigned to Khayyam in somewhat later sources appear in Zahirī Samarqandi's *Sindbad-Nameh* (before 1160) without attribution.

The number of quatrains attributed to him in more recent collections varies from about 1,200 (according to Saeed Nafisi) to more than 2,000. Skeptical scholars point out that the entire tradition may be pseudoepigraphic. The extant manuscripts containing collections attributed to Omar are dated much too late to enable a reconstruction of a body of authentic verses.

In the 1930s, Iranian scholars, notably Mohammad-Ali Foroughi, attempted to reconstruct a core of authentic verses from scattered quotes by authors of the 13th and 14th centuries, ignoring the younger manuscript tradition. After World War II, reconstruction efforts were significantly

delayed by two clever forgeries. De Blois (2004) is pessimistic, suggesting that contemporary scholarship has not advanced beyond the situation of the 1930s, when Hans Heinrich Schaeder commented that the name of Omar Khayyam "is to be struck out from the history of Persian literature".

A feature of the more recent collections is the lack of linguistic homogeneity and continuity of ideas. Sadegh Hedayat commented that "if a man had lived for a hundred years and had changed his religion, philosophy, and beliefs twice a day, he could scarcely have given expression to such a range of ideas". Hedayat's final verdict was that 14 quatrains could be attributed to Khayyam with certainty. Various tests have been employed to reduce the quatrains attributable to Omar to about 100.

This seeming contradiction, however, can be explained by Khayyam's use of poetry to express his personal feelings about life which he did not want to frame as philosophical discourse. For Khayyam, though a devout Muslim, the painful realities of human existence could not be explained by the Quran insistence on a loving God who had created the world according to a divine plan. His beliefs brought him into conflict with devout Muslim jurists and so he tempered his public discourse and probably wrote his poems for himself. Although some scholars have claimed that Khayyam's use of wine and drunkenness is in keeping with the Sufi tradition expressed in the works of Rumi and Hafez Shiraz this is untenable in that Sufis of Khayyam's time rejected his work and Khayyam shows no affinity for Sufism in any of his writings. The Sufis regarded him as an overly scientific atheist based on his treatises and discourses. In his philosophical work, Khayyam addresses the nature of life and its various disappointments from an objective, scientific standpoint and emphasizes the importance of an educated,

rational response to human existence. One suffers – or seems to suffer – because of one's interpretation of external events which are predetermined; this is hardly in keeping with the Sufi philosophy. In the Rubaiyat, on the other hand, he laments the brevity of life, the loss of friends, and how Time robs one of youth and pleasure; none of which fits the Sufi vision either.

Khayyam's pessimism and embrace of a life of enlightened hedonism has encouraged some scholars to suggest the author of the Rubaiyat cannot be the same as the Omar Khayyam who wrote the philosophical discourses. The Rubaiyat, after all, rejects intellectual pursuits in favor of wine, good company, and song. Stanza 27 disparages academic pursuits completely:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint and heard great argument
About it and about, but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went.

This criticism, however, ignores the fact that the speaker of the poem is a fictional character, who may or may not be speaking for the author. Even if he is, the philosopher-poet, in any age or culture is not always able to completely balance the two sides equally all the time; what the philosopher explains away, the poet rages against. Far from suggesting that the Rubaiyat cannot be written by the same author as the discourses or mathematical treatises, Khayyam's verse acts as a kind of mirror to his prose, reflecting precisely the opposite response to life. During Sultan Malik Shah's life both shared a great relationship however his luck changed when his successor, Sultan Sanjar entered to power. Sultan Sanjar did not favour the scientist, it seems that Omar offended Sanjar while he was still a child, and he was never forgiven. Upon Malik Shah's death, Khayyam had fallen from favour at court and funding for raising the observatory eventually finished. He went on a pilgrimage to

Mecca and visited Baghdad. In his return he retired to Nishapur, where he appeared to have lived the life of a recluse. Among his other contributions, Khayyam is also best known for his work as a poet. The Rubaiyat was his collection of hundreds of quatrains, and it was first translated from Farsi to English in 1859 by Edward Fitzgerald. The poems celebrated the pleasures of life while illuminating the nuanced political and religious context in which they were created. Some scholars believed that the scientist and author penned around 150 of the quatrains; other writers after him are thought to have contributed to the remainder.

CONCLUSION:

There are six forms of Ahwal expressed in the poem. The spiritual states (Ahwal) are expressed metaphorically or symbolically. The state of Khayyam's intoxication is expressed metaphorically with the words such as Wine, Grape, Perfume. These words have symbolical meaning that is the expression of deep love for God. This shows the poet's allegorical expression. Khayyam undergoes the six spiritual states. They are the ecstasy of Divinity (wajd), the taste of Divine love (Dzawq), the extinction of his emotion (Fana), the consciousness of permanency of Divinity (Baqa'), the expression of deep love to God ('Isqh), and the state of being intoxicated in Divinity (Sukr'). These indicate that the idiosyncrasy of Sufism is revealed in the poem. Thus, it can be concluded that Omar Khayyam is a Sufi poet and The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is a Sufi poem.

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