

ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY

MANIFESTATIONS

Edited by
Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, Art Editor

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14. See, e.g., Quran LXIX, 21.
15. Referring to the infusion into Adam of the Divine Spirit (Quran XV, 29).
16. *Mirsād*, ed. Riyāhī, 299-329.
17. *Mukātibāt-i 'Abd al-Rahmān Isfāraḳīnī* bā 'Alā' al-Dawālah-yi Simnānī (*Correspondence spirituelle échangée entre Nuroddin Esfarāyēni et son disciple 'Alāoddawāleh Semnānī*), ed. H. Landolt (Tehran and Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1972).
18. *Kashf al-asrār*, ed. and French translation by H. Landolt: *Nuruddin Isfāraḳīnī: Le Révélateur des mystères* (Paris: Verdier, 1986).
19. *Rasā'il al-nūr*, in manuscript. See H. Landolt, introduction to *Mukātibāt*, 20-21.
20. See Landolt, introduction to *Mukātibāt*, 21.
21. Ibn Khaldūn, 'Yār (Bulaq: Bulāq Press, 1837) 53-4; J. Richard, "La conversion de Berke et les débuts de l'Islamisation de la Horde d'Or," *Revue des études islamiques* 35 (1967) 173-79.
22. Ibn Battūṭah, *al-Rihlah* (Cairo: Matba'ah Wādī al-Nīl, 1287/1870) 3:5-6.
23. *Awṣiād al-abbāb wa fuṣṣ'at-ādāb jild-i dawrawān: Fuṣṣ'at-ādāb*, ed. Iraj Afshār (Tehran, 1345/1967).
24. H. Landolt, "Simnānī on Wāḥdat al-rūjūd," introduction to *Mukātibāt*, 94.
25. *Ibid*.
26. J. S. Trimmingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) 95; see also K. Nizami, "The Naqshbandiyyah," chapter 8 in this volume.
27. H. Corbin, *Man of Light*, 126-28.
28. For a fuller account, see H. Corbin, *En Islam iranien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972) 3:275-355.
29. Dawlatshāh Samargandī, *Tadhkirat al-shaykhānī*, ed. E. G. Browne (London: Luzac, 1901) 213; Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, *Tarīkh-i ghāzānī*, ed. K. Jahn (Leiden: Brill, 1940) 79.
30. See Naīb Māyil Harawī's introduction to his edition of Hamūyāh's *Mishāb al-tasawwuf* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1362/1983) 36-37.
31. Nasāfi, *Inṣān-i kāmil*, ed. M. Molé (Tehran and Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1341/1962) 106-10; see also Nasāfi, *Le Livre de l'homme parfait*, trans. I. de Gastines (Paris: Fayard, 1984).
32. See Sharafuddin Maneri, *The Hundred Letters*, trans. P. Jackson (New York: Paulist Press, 1980).
33. Nūr al-Dīn Badakhshī, *Kubulāsāt al-manāqib*, trans. J. K. Teufel as *Eine Lebensbeschreibung des Scheichs 'Alī-i Hamadānī* (Leiden: Brill, 1962).
34. Gramlich, *Schittische Derwischorden*, 18-26.
35. For a summary of the available evidence on the later history of the Kubrawiyyah, see H. Algar's article on Kubrā in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed.
36. Muḥammad Tawāḍū', *al-Sīn wa'l-islām* (Cairo, 1364/1945) 112.
37. E.g., G. P. Snesarev, *Relikvy domusul'manskikh cercovani i obradov u Uzbekov Khorezmiā* (Moscow: U.S.S.R. Academy, 1969) 269, 433; S. M. Demidov, *Sufizm v Turkmēni: evolutsiia i perezhiti* (Ashkhabad, 1978) 32-38. See also A. Bennigsen and M. Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State* (London: Croom Helm, 1983) 76.

Rūmī and the Mawlawiyyah

WILLIAM C. CHITTIK

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ALĀ' AL-DĪN RŪMĪ, known in the East as Mawlānā ("our lord," from which is derived the word Mawlawī), was born on 6 Rabi' I 604/30 November 1207 and died on 5 Jumādā II 672/17 December 1273. No doubt the best known of the Sufi poets, he has inspired constant interest among Western scholars and seekers for over a hundred years. In the East his poetry has been popular at all levels of society wherever Persian language has been known, from Turkey to India; his works have provided practical instruction for generations of Muslims at every level of spiritual aptitude; and the Mawlawī Sufi Order that he founded has played a major role in the religious and cultural life of Turkey from Ottoman times to the present. From his own lifetime on, superlatives have been heaped upon his person and poetry; here we can refrain from repeating these while attempting to summarize his historical setting and spiritual message.

The History of the Mawlawiyyah

Rūmī's life story has often been told and need not be discussed here in any detail. His father, Bahā' al-Dīn Walad (d. 628/1231), a well-known and learned divine residing in Balkh in present-day Afghanistan, preached to his faithful about the necessity of spiritual rejuvenation as the context for all moral action; at the same time he was a Sufi master, so he also trained a group of followers in the discipline of the spiritual path. His *Ma'ārif* (*Gnostic Sciences*), a collection of sermons and meditations on Qurānic verses, combines the ethical tone of the preacher with the visionary imagery of the contemplative. In ca. 615/1218, with the Mongols gradually approaching Balkh, Bahā' Walad left for the pilgrimage to Mecca with his family and many followers; Balkh was destroyed in 617/1220. Bahā' Walad stayed for some time in Syria and then moved to Karaman in present-day Turkey,

where Jalāl al-Dīn was married, his wife giving birth to a son, Sulṭān Walad, in 623/1226. Bahā' Walad was soon invited by the Saljuq ruler, 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād, to come to his capital at Konya, some sixty miles northwest of Karaman, and there he settled in about 627/1228. When Bahā' Walad died on 18 Rabī' II 628/23 February 1231, Jalāl al-Dīn was appointed to take over his official duties. At this point Rūmī was already learned in the sciences of his day, especially jurisprudence, theology, and Arabic and Persian literature, and he was thoroughly familiar with the Sufi ethical teachings constantly stressed in his father's writings. He also must have been well advanced on the path of realizing the inward significance of the outward forms of ritual and practice; but the sources suggest that he only began to dedicate himself to methodical Sufi training around the year 629/1232, when Burhān al-Dīn Muhaqqiq Tirmidhī (d. 638/1240-41), a disciple of his father, came to Konya and undertook his spiritual instruction. Rūmī continued to fulfill the functions of a respected man of knowledge, wearing the clerical dress and ministering to the religious and spiritual needs of the populace for several years; but on 26 Jumādā II 642/29 November 1244—note that the exact date has been preserved—an event took place that was to transform him outwardly and inwardly: Shams al-Dīn of Tabriz came to Konya.

Shams-i Tabrizi

Shams is certainly one of the most mysterious and enigmatic figures in Sufism; it is not without reason that Sulṭān Walad likens him to Khidr and Rūmī to Moses (*Walad-nāmah*, 41).¹ The recent publication of Shams's *Maqālāt* (*Discourses*), which were apparently noted down by someone close to both him and Rūmī, should put to rest speculation that Shams was some sort of supernatural apparition rather than a human being. Shams speaks of having seen and recognized Rūmī fifteen or sixteen years earlier in Syria when Rūmī had gone there to study (ca. 630-34/1233-37). He mentions a spiritual awakening he had experienced as a child that set him apart from others; when his father questioned him about his strange behavior, he compared himself to a duckling hatched among chickens. "So, father, I see the ocean: It has become my mount; it is my homeland and spiritual state. If you belong to me or I to you, then come into the ocean; otherwise, stay with the chickens" (*Maqālāt*, 78).² Of his father he could say, "He was a good man and had a certain nobility . . . , but he was not a lover of God. A good man is one thing, a lover something else" (*Maqālāt*, 124).

According to the traditional accounts, and as Shams himself indicates, he was directed to Rūmī through a dream. It is said that Rūmī was aware of

his coming and went out to meet him; they sat opposite each other in front of a shop for some time without speaking. Finally Shams asked Rūmī a question about the comparative stations of the Prophet and Bāyezīd Bastāmī, and Rūmī answered by explaining the incomparable superiority of the former. Then they embraced and "mixed like milk and sugar." For six months they were inseparable, and Rūmī's way of life changed completely; the transformation of the great divine was noted by the whole city, especially when he abandoned his clerical garb, ceased teaching and delivering sermons, and began to attend regular sessions of *samā'*. Sulṭān Walad says that when Shams invited Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn to participate in a special form of *samā'*, "Mawlānā took it as his rite (*mabhab*) and orthodoxy (*ra'y-i durrat*)—his heart blossomed into a hundred gardens" (*Walad-nāmah*, 17). Rūmī himself alludes to the change that he underwent in such verses as the following:

My hand always used to hold a Quran, but now it holds Love's flagon.

My mouth was filled with glorification, but now it recites only poetry and songs. (D 24875-76)

Rūmī's total devotion to Shams incited the jealousy of some of his followers; the unfriendly atmosphere they created made Shams leave Konya after a stay of about sixteen months. In his sorrow, Rūmī cut himself off from practically everyone; soon his disciples realized that they were even more deprived of his presence than before. When a letter came from Shams in Syria, Rūmī sent him a number of ghazals, describing his state in Shams's absence:

Without your presence, *samā'* is forbidden; like Satan, revelry is accursed.

I wrote not a single ghazal without you; when your message arrived,

The pleasure of hearing (*samā'*) it brought five or six into verse. (D 18457-59)

Rūmī sent Sulṭān Walad after Shams, who this time remained in Konya until 645/1247-48, when he disappeared. According to one of the earliest accounts, now accepted by many scholars, he was murdered by jealous disciples. The involvement of Rūmī's son, 'Alā' al-Dīn, in the plot would explain the coldness of his father's relationship with him and the fact that Rūmī refused to attend his funeral when he died in 658/1260. But Rūmī exhibited no signs that he thought Shams was dead, nor did he withdraw into himself as he had at Shams's first disappearance. Instead he devoted himself to *samā'* and to singing songs of heartache and separation. Still hoping to find Shams, on two occasions he went to Damascus looking for him. During his second trip, at least two years after Shams's disappearance, he

came to the conclusion that Shams would only be found within himself. In the words of Sulṭān Walad,

He said, "Though in body I am far from him, without body and spirit we two are one light. . . .
Since I am he and he is I, why do I seek? We are one—now I will sing of myself." (*Walad-nāmah*, 60–61)

Many of Rūmī's own verses make the same identification; his constant praise of Shams must be viewed as praise of his own Self.

Shams of Tabriz is in fact a pretext—it is I who display the beauty of God's Gentleness, I.

To cover up, I say to the people, "He is a noble king, I am but a beggar. . . ." I am obliterated in Shams's beauty—in this obliteration, there is neither he nor I. (D 16532–35)

What manner of person was Shams? This question was already being asked by his contemporaries, and in a sense one could say that Rūmī devotes thousands of verses to answering it, though he usually keeps in view the otherworldly side of Shams's nature. Shams himself was well aware that most people considered his appearance and manner strange or even outrageous.

These people are justified in being unfamiliar with my way of talking. All my words come in the mode of Grandeur (*al-birriyā*)—they all appear as baseless claims. The Quran and Muhammad's words come in the mode of need (*niyāz*), so they all appear as meaning (*ma'na*). Hence people hear words from me that are not in the mode of seeking or need—my words are so high that when you look up, your hat falls off. (*Maqālāt*, 147).

Remarks like the following must have scandalized the more sober members of Rūmī's entourage:

I speak two kinds of words: dissimulation (*nifāq*) and truth (*ḥaqīqah*). In the case of my dissimulation, the souls and spirits of all the saints hope to meet and sit with me; but as for that which is true and without dissimulation—the spirits of the prophets wish that they might have lived during my time to share my companionship (*subḥān*) and listen to my words. (*Maqālāt*, 108)

Shams shows no surprise at the effect his presence had on Rūmī: "The sign that a person has attained to companionship with me is that companionship with others becomes cold and bitter for him—not such that he continues their companionship in spite of its having become cold, but such that he is no longer able to bear it" (*Maqālāt*, 75). Shams was fully aware of Rūmī's spiritual stature and found it natural that Rūmī alone should realize his true worth: "In this world I have nothing to do with the common people

(*awāmm*)—I have not come for their sake. I take the pulse of those who guide the world to God" (*Maqālāt*, 84).

He explains his relationship with Rūmī in a parable:

A merchant had fifty agents who traveled in every direction on land and sea and traded with his property. But he set out in search of a pearl, knowing that there was a certain pearl diver. He passed by the diver, and then the diver came after him. The nature of that pearl was hidden between the merchant and the diver. The merchant had earlier seen a dream concerning the pearl, and he trusted his dream, like Joseph. . . . Today that diver is Mawlānā, the merchant is myself, and the pearl is between us. (*Maqālāt*, 119)

Prefiguring many verses of the *Diwān* named after him, Shams compared himself and Rūmī to the sun and the moon:

Mawlānā is the moonlight; eyes cannot reach the sun of my existence, except by means of the moon. The sun is so bright and radiant that eyes cannot bear to look at its light, nor can the moon reach the sun, unless the sun reaches the moon. "Eyes cannot embrace Him, but He embraces the eyes" (Quran VI, 153). (*Maqālāt*, 120)

It is clear from certain of Shams's remarks quoted above and from other passages in his *Maqālāt* that he made no claim to be Rūmī's spiritual guide in the usual sense of the word—Rūmī was already a great pearl diver when Shams set out to meet him. In fact, Shams states explicitly that there was no master-disciple relationship in either direction: "When I came to Mawlānā, the first condition was that I should not come as a shaykh. God has not yet brought to earth the man that can act as Mawlānā's shaykh. Nor am I someone who can be a disciple—I have passed beyond that stage" (*Maqālāt*, 33). It is also true that Rūmī influenced Shams in ways similar to Shams's influence on him: "I speak well and talk sweetly, inwardly I am bright and radiant. I was water, seething and turning in upon myself and beginning to stink, until Mawlānā's existence struck upon me—then that water began to flow and it keeps on flowing, sweet, fresh, and pleasant" (*Maqālāt*, 245–46).

Whatever the secret of Shams's existence, there can be no doubt that one of the happy consequences of his meeting with Rūmī was the latter's incredible outpouring of poetry. Rūmī's *Diwān-i Shams-i Tabrizi*, containing his collected ghazals and other miscellaneous verses, comprises some forty thousand lines, and his *Mathnawī*—called by Jāmī the Quran in the Persian language—includes about twenty-five thousand verses more. The *Diwān* consists mainly of love poetry, celebrating the joys of union with the Beloved and the agonies of separation from Him. In general, the ghazals average eight to ten lines and represent the spontaneous expression of

particular spiritual states; they were often composed while Rūmī was participating in the *samāʿ* and are usually appropriate for musical accompaniment. In contrast, the *Mathnawī* consists of a single poem in six books written over a period of some sixteen years; it contains over three hundred long and short anecdotes and stories drawn from a wide variety of sources and retold to illustrate various dimensions of the spiritual life. As in the *Drwān*, love remains the central theme, but the *Mathnawī* was written with the conscious intention of elucidating "the roots of the roots of the roots of religion"—the spiritual essence of Islam—in relatively didactic language. Since it is designed to guide disciples and lovers of God on the spiritual path, it differs in style from the ghazals of the *Drwān*, which are largely extemporaneous expressions of spiritual perceptions. The poems in the *Drwān* pertain to all periods of Rūmī's spiritual unfolding after the coming of Shams, whereas the *Mathnawī* appears as the intentional testament of the saint who has reached the highest stages of human perfection and has returned to this world to guide others to God.

Rūmī has also left three relatively short prose works. *Fīhi mā fīhi* (translated into English as *Discourses*) covers many of the same themes as the *Mathnawī*. *Majālis-i sab'ah* (*Seven Sermons*) was apparently written down long before the coming of Shams; the sermons are mystical in tone, but have a strong moralistic and ethical emphasis, like Bahā' Walad's *Ma'ārif*. Finally, about 150 of Rūmī's letters have been preserved; many of these were written to high officials on behalf of disciples or friends looking for jobs, redress of some grievance, or various other favors. In general the letters are interesting for the light they throw on the social role that the head of a great Sufi order had to play.

Rūmī's Followers

Two of Rūmī's companions deserve special mention. Shaykh Ṣalāh al-Dīn Zarkūb (d. 657/1258) was a goldsmith without formal education who had been Muḥaqqiq Tirmidhī's disciple and whose daughter became the wife of Sulṭān Wālad. Two or three years after Shams's disappearance, Shaykh Ṣalāh al-Dīn became Rūmī's closest companion and remained so until his death. He is the object of praise of over fifty of Rūmī's ghazals. Ḥusām al-Dīn Chālabī (d. 683/1284–85) became Rūmī's closest companion after Ṣalāh al-Dīn's death. He had been a favorite disciple for many years, and when Shams was living in Konya he had been given the important duty of looking after his affairs and acting as an intermediary between him and various people who wanted to meet him. A dated ghazal (D 1839) is dedicated to him already in Dhu'l-qa'dah 654/November 1256, and modern scholars

have marshaled strong evidence to show that the *Mathnawī*, which Rūmī dedicated and dictated to Ḥusām al-Dīn, was begun some eighteen months before Ṣalāh al-Dīn's death.

In 672/1273, when Rūmī was nearing the completion of the *Mathnawī* sixth book, which he had already announced would end the work, his health began to decline seriously, though his physicians were unable to diagnose any specific illness. He left the *Mathnawī* unfinished; one of his last ghazals, composed on his deathbed, begins with this line:

How should you know what kind of King is my inward companion? Look not at my yellow face, for I have legs of iron! (D 1426)

At Rūmī's death, Ḥusām al-Dīn was his caliph, that is, his highest ranking disciple, in charge of directing most of the affairs of the order. Nevertheless Ḥusām al-Dīn came to Sulṭān Wālad and asked him to take his father's place as the supreme spiritual guide. According to his own account, Sulṭān Wālad replied as follows:

During my father's time, you were his caliph—no change can now be allowed.

You were the leader and I the follower; the king himself made this known to us.

You are our caliph from first to last, our leader and shaykh in the two worlds. (*Wālad-nāmah*, 123)

Ḥusām al-Dīn remained supreme master of the order until his death ten years later. The disciples then gathered around Sulṭān Wālad and installed him in Ḥusām al-Dīn's place. He undertook a vigorous expansion of the order, sending caliphs throughout Anatolia. He also codified the characteristic Mawlawī rites and rules of dress and behavior. His *Drwān*, three *mathnawīs*, and collected "Discourses" cannot compare to the works of his father on any level, yet they provide important and straightforward clarifications of many of Rūmī's central teachings. Sulṭān Wālad states that one of his purposes in beginning his first *mathnawī* (in 690/1291) was to tell of the spiritual stations and miraculous deeds of those who have lived "in our own times," just as his father's *Mathnawī* was concerned with the deeds of earlier generations. He also points out that Shams al-Dīn, Ṣalāh al-Dīn, and Ḥusām al-Dīn were not well known, but would become famous through his accounts. It is certainly true that Sulṭān Wālad's works are one of the most important sources for the early history of the order, rivaled only by Sīpāh-sālār's *Risālah* and Afākī's *Manāqib al-'arīfīn* (both written in the years 718–19/1318–19).

Concerning Sulṭān Wālad, Rūmī said, "You are the closest of mankind to me in physical constitution and character (*khālqan wa khūlyqan*)" (*Wālad-*

nāmāh, 3), and people often mistook them for brothers. Indeed, perhaps Sultān Walad's most important contribution to the Mawlawiyyah was his transmission of the human qualities of his father: after Sultān Walad's death in 712/1312 three of his four sons ('Arif Chalabī, d. 719/1319; 'Abid Chalabī, d. 729/1329; and Wājid Chalabī, d. 733/1333) followed him successively as masters of the order, and his daughter, Murahharah Khātūn, was the mother of another master. Except for two sons of 'Abid Chalabī and Murahharah's son, all other masters of the order down to recent times have been descendants of 'Arif Chalabī (whose mother, in contrast to his siblings, was the daughter of Ṣalāh al-Dīn Zarkūb).

It would be impossible to provide even a brief outline of the subsequent expansion and influence of the Mawlawī Order here. Suffice it to say that the Mawlawīs played a major role in the history of the Ottoman Empire, spiritually, culturally, and also politically. The development of Turkish music is intimately connected with the Mawlawī "rites" (*ā'īn*), and many of the greatest Turkish calligraphers have been members of the order. Turkish poetry owes a great deal, both stylistically and thematically, to Rūmī's Persian verse; a master like Mehmed Esad Ghālib (d. 1218/1799) can only be understood in the context of the *Mathnawī*. The political role of the order becomes especially apparent during the reign of Sultan Selim III (1789-1808), who was himself a Mawlawī dervish whose musical talents allowed him to compose an *ā'īn*.

Rūmī's radiance was not held back by the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. As A. Schimmel has amply demonstrated, to speak of his influence is to speak of the development of poetry in all major Islamic languages except Arabic and of the popular expansion of the Sufi orders.³ The vast majority of Muslims at all social and educational levels have always appreciated the beauty of poetry and its subsidiary arts, such as music and calligraphy. Wherever these have been valued from Turkey to India, Rūmī has been a central figure.

Rūmī's Sources

Schimmel has shown that a vast range of works are reflected in Rūmī's poetry and ideas, beginning with the Quran and the *Hādith*,⁴ here it will be sufficient to allude to the influence of various earlier Sufis. Besides those figures who were so important in shaping all later formulations of Sufi teachings, such as al-Ghazzālī, it seems that two major strands of influence can be discerned: First, there are the great Sufi poets who preceded Rūmī, in particular Sanā'ī (d. 525/1130-31) and, to a lesser degree, 'Attār (d. ca. 618/1221). The former is often praised by Rūmī; Shams held that he

was "marvellously detached from self: his words are the words of God" (*Maqālāt*, 156).

The other major strand of influence is that of Rūmī's own immediate masters and companions, in particular his father, Bahā' Walad, and Shams-i Tabrizī, both of whose works influenced him in numerous specific instances, as the editors of the *Ma'ārif* and *Maqālāt* have shown. More importantly, these two masters prefigure in their own personalities two complementary dimensions of Rūmī's spirituality. Bahā' Walad's *Ma'ārif* is infused with the emphasis on love and beauty that characterizes Rūmī and the Mawlawiyyah in general; God's Attributes of Gentleness (*lutf*) and Beauty (*jamāl*) set the tone throughout. In contrast, Shams's *Maqālāt* are often marked by displays of Severity (*qahr*) and Majesty (*jalāl*). In one passage, Shams alludes to the fact that Mawlanā reveals God's Gentleness, while he himself displays both Gentleness and Severity (*Maqālāt*, 74). If it is true that Rūmī used to carry his father's *Ma'ārif* with him and study it constantly until Shams forbade him to read it, Shams's act may have symbolized his intention to strengthen within Rūmī the capacity to display the Attributes of Majesty and Severity. Here one should recall the close connection, obvious in Rūmī's teachings, between Severity and the pain and heartache of separation. Indeed, separation from Shams may have been necessary before Rūmī could realize this Attribute fully. Moreover, the many ghazals in which Rūmī displays the divine Majesty and Grandeur while speaking in the first person seem to pertain to the latest period in his life, when he had fully realized Shams al-Dīn—"religion's Sun"—within himself; it can rightly be said that in these ghazals Rūmī speaks from such a high vantage point that, looking up at him, "one's hat falls off." In brief, one might say that Bahā' Walad's influence on Rūmī was "feminine," whereas Shams's was "masculine"; Bahā' Walad was Rūmī's father "in form" (*dar sīrat*) but his mother "in meaning" (*dar ma'nā*), whereas Shams was his spiritual father.

Rūmī and Ibn 'Arabī

It has often been suggested or stated explicitly that Rūmī was influenced by Ibn 'Arabī and/or his followers, but this judgment has been based largely on speculation and can safely be rejected. It is true that Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), Ibn 'Arabī's son-in-law and foremost disciple, was one of Rūmī's close friends, but Rūmī was far too advanced spiritually to come under the influence of "friendship," even that of a great master. (Nor is there any sign that al-Qūnawī was influenced by Rūmī.) Siphāsālār reports that Rūmī became a "companion" of Ibn 'Arabī during the years Rūmī stayed in Damascus (ca. 630-34/1233-37), and it would indeed be strange if

there had been no contact whatsoever. But again, the question of influence must be discussed separately from that of contact or companionship. It is not without significance that certain passages in Rūmī's biographies and Shams's *Maqālāt* suggest that the Mawlawī shaykhs looked upon the systematized theosophy characteristic of Ibn 'Arabī and his followers with disdain; the differences in style are so consistent and deep that it would be inconceivable for these not to reflect a fundamental difference in perspective. The spiritual resources of Islam are certainly broad enough to embrace both of these oceans of spirituality, without excluding other possibilities as well.

Henry Corbin overstates his case when he says that "it would be quite superficial to dwell on the contrast between the two forms of spirituality cultivated by Mawlānā and Ibn 'Arabī."⁵ For those who look at Sufism from the perspective of the spiritual needs of the twentieth century, this judgment may be true, but profound differences remain in the texts; nor should one forget that the two forms of spirituality are, generally speaking, aimed providentially at two different types of mentality. Ibn 'Arabī's complicated theosophy, no doubt grounded in practice to the same extent as Rūmī's "religion of love," appealed primarily to those who had undergone the technical training of the Islamic sciences, especially theology and philosophy. It provided sophisticated answers to sophisticated questions. In contrast, Rūmī's spirituality attracted everyone who could appreciate beauty and music, whatever one's educational level. Rūmī employed the most ordinary phenomena and experiences of everyday life as imagery to explain the profoundest levels of metaphysics and spiritual psychology. He also employed a wide variety of technical terms, but these were drawn primarily from the language spoken by the people, not that of the philosophers and theologians. Hence the Mawlawī dervishes came from every level of society; they ranged from the most educated to the illiterate, the richest to the poorest, the governing elite to the street sweepers. Any Muslim with "taste" (*dhawq*) could follow Rūmī's way (although not necessarily understand the *Mathawwī*), but only a small minority would have the necessary specialized training to understand the doctrines of Islam as expounded by Ibn 'Arabī. An anecdote related to this author by the contemporary Iranian *hakīm* Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshrīyānī conveys the contrast between the two modes of expression succinctly: After listening to Rūmī explain a point of doctrine to his disciples, al-Qūnawī asked him, "How are you able to express such difficult and abstruse metaphysics in such simple language?" Rūmī replied, "How are you able to make such simple ideas sound so complicated?"

It must also be kept in mind that there could be no question of spiritual links between Rūmī and Ibn 'Arabī of the master-disciple kind, since two clear and distinct lines of transmission (*silsilah*) can be discerned. Hence, the

4. The Sufi master and poet Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī.



5. The meeting of Rūmī and Shams-i Tabrizī.



problem comes down to one of doctrinal links, in the sense that Rūmī might have borrowed certain formulations from Ibn 'Arabī. Anyone who reads works by the two masters will see similarities, but these can be traced to sources earlier than Ibn 'Arabī. Nor is it true that because "references to the works of Ibn 'Arabī are frequent in the abundant commentaries on the *Mathnawī* produced in India and in Iran," it is therefore "necessary to study these commentaries if we wish to learn what Mawlānā's spirituality meant to his mystic following."⁶ During Rūmī's own lifetime and through the time of Sulḥān Walad, no reference was made to Ibn 'Arabī's teachings in order to clarify Rūmī's. Thus, for example, Ahmad Rūmī's *Daqā'iq al-haqā'iq* (written in 720/1320) explains in a relatively systematic manner many of Rūmī's important teachings; each of its eighty chapters is preceded by a quotation from the Quran or the *Hadīth*, illustrated by verses from Rūmī's *Mathnawī* or *Diwān* and amplified by the author's own poetry. Works such as this demonstrate that Rūmī's verses do not need to be explained through Ibn 'Arabī's terminology and ideas; Rūmī's works are in fact self-sufficient, especially when accompanied by the practices that went along with them. Moreover, if Rūmī were indeed a follower of Ibn 'Arabī, one would expect other followers of Ibn 'Arabī to quote his poetry in their works, since it is exquisitely suited to express many of their teachings. But, in fact, none of Ibn 'Arabī's immediate followers who wrote in Persian and quoted Persian verse (i.e., al-Qūnawī, 'Irāqī, Farghānī, and Jandī) ever quotes from Rūmī. At the very least this suggests that in their view Rūmī did not share their perspective.

Why, then, do Rūmī's commentators insist on interpreting his ideas in terms of Ibn 'Arabī's teachings? The major reason is that intellectual discourse had come to be dominated by Ibn 'Arabī's modes of expression. Thus, to "explain" Rūmī's views meant to translate a poetical idiom with its own characteristic imagery and technical terminology into a more intellectual mode of expression largely determined by the concepts and terms of Ibn 'Arabī's school. There is no fundamental incompatibility between the two modes of spirituality, but to translate one form of expression into another meant a dilution of the specific virtues and, in particular, the spontaneity of the former.

The mere fact that Rūmī's commentators refer to Ibn 'Arabī's teachings does not mean that all Rūmī's followers understood him in such terms. Most commentaries were written precisely by and for scholars trained in the Islamic sciences, that is, "intellectuals." But the vast majority of disciples in most orders, drawn as they were from every level of Islamic society, would have been satisfied with the poetry itself without feeling any need for "explanation." The beauty of the poetry when recited or sung was sufficient

"commentary" on its intellectual content. Even today when Sufi orders meet in places like Iran and listen to the recitation of the *Mathnawī*, every devotee appreciates the beauty of the poetry, which makes available the intellectual content in a direct manner, but few are interested in technical explanation of the intellectual bases of Rūmī's thought.

Finally, perhaps it still needs to be stressed that there is no evidence Rūmī's works of influence by Ibn 'Arabī or al-Qūnawī. Even Hem Corbin, the outstanding proponent of harmony between the two modes of spirituality among those who have studied the texts, never claims any direct influence, since none of Ibn 'Arabī's original terminology or discussions found in Rūmī's works.

The Religion of Love

When Ibn 'Arabī speaks of the "religion of love" in the famous poem from his *Tarjuman al-ashwāq*, he is alluding to the nonspecificity or "nonentificity" of the heart of the Perfect Man, who experiences continuous theophanies of the Divine Essence, theophanies that "never repeat themselves. Hence, his heart becomes a receptacle for every form, a pasture for gazelles, a cloister for Christian monks." Once one has understood what this means in the context of Ibn 'Arabī's teachings, it would not be totally inaccurate to say that Rūmī is alluding to the same thing when he says, for example, that "the intellect is bewildered by the Religion of Love" (D 2610). But to consider the meaning of the term "religion of love" as identical in the two instances would be to ignore certain fundamental differences in perspective between the two schools. Thus, for Rūmī love, along with the beauty and joy that it implies, is the heart and marrow of religion, the central theme of all spirituality, whereas for Ibn 'Arabī, love is a possible mode of realizing the Nondelimited Truth. When reading Rūmī, one is constantly pulled toward the experience of love as the central reality beyond any possible conceptualization; when reading Ibn 'Arabī, one does not feel that Love is all-important. The emphasis is on the experience and comprehension of Ultimate Reality, but love is not necessarily the primary means to achieving this, while the theoretical description of that Reality and of the means to reaching it remains a central concern.

In no sense did Rūmī attempt to set down, in the manner of his friend al-Qūnawī, a metaphysical or theological system, or a comprehensive philosophy of the nature of existence. His aim is to tell of the wonders of love and to "open a door to the Unseen world for the creatures" (D 14324). Above all, he wants to ignite the fire of love in the heart of man: "The worst of all deaths is to live without love" (D 13297).

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How long this talk, these figures of speech, these metaphors? I want burning, burning—accustom yourself to that burning.

Ignite the fire of love in your spirit and burn away all thoughts and concepts!
(M II 1762-63)

The overwhelming impression that the reader receives from studying Rūmī's works is the necessity and urgency of following the spiritual life and abandoning oneself to the Divine Mercy. But this does not mean that no coherent "philosophy of existence" underlies his works. Quite the contrary: His clear perception of man's place in the universe helps make his message so persuasive.

Rūmī does not set out to discuss metaphysics, theology, cosmology, anthropology, or psychology, but his views on all these become clear while he sings the praises of Love; in retrospect numerous commentators have recognized a coherent world view underlying his poetry and have attempted to clarify it from their own perspectives. But in doing so they invariably throw water on the burning fire of his poetry.

The Quranic doctrine of *tawhīd* shapes everything that Rūmī says. As Schimmel remarks, "one may say without exaggeration that Rūmī's poetry is nothing but an attempt to speak of God's grandeur as it reveals itself in the different aspects of life."⁷ This, precisely, is the essence of *tawhīd*: to show that everything sings the praises of the One, since all multiplicity is ultimately reducible to Unity.

Rūmī's world view has been outlined in detail elsewhere;⁸ here one can only allude to a few of its distinguishing characteristics. Like other Sufis, Rūmī sees the universe as the theophany of God's Names and Attributes, while man or Adam, "the lord of 'He taught the Names'" (M I 1234), carries God's Trust because he is made in His image. The Divine Attributes can be divided into two categories, those of Mercy (*rahmat*) or Gentleness, and those of Wrath (*ghadab*) or Severity, though only the former is intrinsic to God's very Essence, since "My Mercy precedes My Wrath."

As theophanies of all the Names and Attributes, human beings embrace both Gentleness and Severity. In general, the prophets and saints maintain a perfect balance between the two Attributes, but since Gentleness or Mercy is in fact prior, it dominates over them. In contrast, God's Wrath dominates over the unbelievers. In the same way the angels are theophanies of Gentleness and Mercy, whereas the satans are theophanies of Severity and Wrath; microcosmically, the intellect ('*ʿaql*) pertains to Gentleness, whereas the ego (*nafs*) manifests Severity. The ordinary human situation, as perceived by Rūmī, is for man to have faith in God and practice his religion, yet to be caught in the struggle between angel and devil, intellect and ego, since it is

not yet clear whether Mercy or Wrath will determine any particular individual's resting place in the next world, that is, whether he will enter paradise or hell.⁹ "The saints are waiting to bring the believers into their own houses and make them like themselves, while the satans are also waiting to drag them down toward themselves to 'the lowest of the low' (Quran XCIV, 5)."¹⁰

The cosmic drama, at the center of which stands man, results from the manifestation of the Hidden Treasure: "I loved to be known, so I created the creatures." The Love and Mercy that lie at the base of the creative urge bring the universe into existence and determine its final end; Wrath comes into play only in subordination to Mercy and with Mercy in view. Thus Rūmī defends the function of Iblis in the cosmic harmony and shows that evil is a necessary concomitant of the world's creation; but never does he claim that Iblis is equal to Adam, hell to paradise, or the ego to the intellect, since Mercy and Gentleness remain forever the precedent Attributes.

Unique among the creatures, man is able to choose the path he is to follow in the unfolding of the primordial possibilities embraced by the Hidden Treasure. Rūmī's appeals to everyday experience provide some of the most convincing arguments in Islamic literature for man's free will and responsibility. Moreover, the overall thrust of his works—to encourage his fellow humans to enter the spiritual path—would be meaningless without human freedom. "Man is mounted upon the steed of 'We have honored Adam's children' (Quran XVII, 70): the reins of free will are in the hands of his discernment" (M III 3300).

Rūmī's view of man's relationship to God, discussed or alluded to in innumerable passages in his works, provides a comprehensive doctrine of the nature of existence. A second dimension of his teachings has to do with the path man must follow to attain spiritual perfection and actualize the form upon which he was originally created; here Rūmī describes the attributes and the practices—such as prayer, fasting, and the remembrance of God—of the spiritual warrior, who "cuts the throat of sensuality" (D 36120) and "rides his stallion joyfully into a sea of blood" (D 18700). Then a third major dimension of Rūmī's works describes in a vast range of imagery and symbolism the various degrees of spiritual development leading to the station where man may rightfully say with al-Hallāj, "I am the Real."

The One Beloved

While affirming that Love cannot be defined, Rūmī describes its qualities and attributes in a thousand images and anecdotes. In summarizing his words, one might say that Love is a divine power that brings the universe

into existence, motivates the activity of every creature, and wells up in the human heart to establish unity in the midst of multiplicity. Ultimately, Love is God as Creator, Sustainer, and Goal of the universe; it is the One Reality that reveals itself in infinite forms.

Intimately connected with Love is beauty or loveliness, that which is lovable. Probably no Sufi order emphasizes beauty in theory and in practice as much as the Mawlawiyyah. Certainly Sufis in general are the first to recall the Prophet's saying, "God is beautiful, and He loves beauty," but the Mawlawīs have been especially thorough in drawing all the consequences of this teaching for the spiritual life. In the context of Rūmī's teachings, "God is beautiful" means that "There is no more beautiful but God"; true (*ḥaqīqī*) beauty belongs to Him alone, while the beauty of all other things is "derivative" or "metaphorical" (*majāzī*).

Love for God has struck fire in the spirit's bush, burning away all derivative realities. (D 36080)

Everything lovable derives its reality from the divine Beloved, the only reality that truly is; this is perhaps the central theme of Bahā' Walad's *Ma'arīf*. A typical passage speaks of God's Beauty as follows:

"Glory be to God!" means this: O God, how pure and holy Thou art! For every contour of the hours and the black-eyed beauties, the loveliness of all kinds of animals, the freshness and sparkle of all flowers, herbs, sweet waters, and blowing winds, all joys, all hopes, are spots on the face of Thy unique Beauty, dust and debris in Thy lane.¹⁰

Rūmī repeats his father's message in numerous verses, though his insistence that we derive the consequences for our spiritual lives is clearer and more compelling. The Way of Love is to discern the True Beloved from the false, to cut away everything illusory and evanescent with the sword of the *shabādh*—"no god but God"—and to turn totally toward the One Beloved.

Listen! Open a window toward Joseph, then behold a delightful spectacle!
"To love God" is to open that window, for the Friend's Beauty brightens the breast.

Always look toward the face of the Beloved! This is in your own hands—listen to me, my friend!

Open the way into the depths of your own self! Banish any perception that thinks of "others"¹¹ (M VI 3095-98)

The lover discerns that there is only a single Beloved; "others" are veils over the Real.

Love is that flame which, when it blazes up, burns away everything except the Beloved.

It drives home the sword of "no god" to slay "other than God".... (M V 588-589).

The mistake of worldly people is not their love for things of this world but their inability to perceive that all things of this world are but shadows of the true Beloved.

The bird is flying on high, while its shadow runs across the ground, flying like a bird.

The fool hunts that shadow, running until he becomes exhausted,

Not knowing that it is the reflection of the bird in the sky, unaware of the shadow's source. (M I 417-19)

Imperfect loves, loves for "other than God," will eventually disappoint the lover, since only God is real. Felicity lies in discerning this truth in the present life and attaching ourselves to the One Beloved here and now. But we will not find the Beloved in the world around us. This is the message of many anecdotes in the *Mathnawī*, such as the famous story of the Sufi who sat in a beautiful garden meditating, only to have a busybody interrupt and tell him to gaze upon the marks of God's Mercy in the garden.

The Sufi answered, "Mercy's marks are in the heart, O self-seeker! On the outside are only the marks of the marks." (M IV 1362)

Similarly, Rūmī begins a ghazal as follows:

Without thinking I mentioned the name of roses and gardens—that Rose-Faced Beauty came and slapped me on the mouth!

"I am the Sultan, I am the Spirit of all rosegardens. In the face of a Presence like Me, do you think of so-and-so?"

You are My tambourine—do not let yourself be beaten by just anyone! You are My flute—beware, do not play just anyone's tune!" (D 21748-50)

Heartache and Joy

For the spiritual traveler, the goal is to reestablish the human connection with the Gentleness, Love, and Mercy that brought man into existence. Since "this world is the house of God's Severity" (M VI 1890), he must cling to the Gentleness that pertains to the other world. In cosmological terms, the contrast between the lower and the upper worlds, or material and spiritual existence, is expressed in such pairings as body and spirit, form and meaning, outward and inward, dust and air, foam and ocean; in general, all these pairs correspond to Severity and Gentleness ("in general," since Rūmī sometimes takes other relationships into account).

The cosmological relationship between Gentleness and Severity manifests itself spiritually and psychologically in the contrast between "union"

(*wisāl*) and "separation" (*frāq*). Nearness to God and union with Him result from Mercy and Gentleness, whereas distance and separation from Him are the consequence of Wrath. Spiritual perfection involves a harmony between these two Attributes, always with Mercy taking precedence. Initially man is caught in the "House of Severity" and seeks Gentleness:

His Mercy is prior to His Wrath. If you want spiritual priority, go, seek the prior Attribute. (M IV 3205)

But finally, when the traveler reaches the station of sanctity, he combines the two Attributes in a harmonious balance, since he has actualized the theomorphic form upon which he was created. Thus Rūmī speaks of the perfect guide on the path, the shaykh:

At one moment the wave of his Gentleness becomes your wing, at the next his Severity's fire carries you forward. (M IV 545)

In the process of attaining to spiritual perfection, the lover will traverse a path that carries him through alternating experiences of separation and union, or "contraction" (*qabḥ*) and "expansion" (*bast*). Rūmī's ghazals speak of various degrees of these experiences in a great variety of images, the most common being those of "derivative love" (the beautiful face, the tresses, the kiss), wine drinking (the cup, intoxication, sobriety), and the garden (flowers, spring, autumn).¹¹ The imagery is not chosen arbitrarily; rather, it grows up as it were "naturally" because of the possibilities and limitations of human language within the context of Islamic civilization and, more specifically, because the experiences themselves assume a particular imaginal form within the given context. Rūmī discusses the nature of "imagination" (*khayāl*) in great detail; here a single quotation must suffice:

First there were intoxication, loverhood, youth, and the like; then came luxuriant spring, and they all sat together.

They had no forms and then became manifested beautifully within forms— beheld things of the imagination assuming form!

The heart is the antechamber of the eye: For certain everything that reaches the heart will enter into the eye and become a form. (D 21574-76)

Much of Rūmī's poetry must be understood as an attempt to render spiritual and "imaginal" perceptions intelligible to those who have not perceived them. His father before him had devoted a good portion of the *Mā'arīf* to the same task. For example, we read there as follows:

In my every part streams of light flow like molten gold. . . . All my thoughts and tastes come into existence from God and all have turned their faces toward Him. He is like a handsome king sitting in the midst of young brides: one nibbles on his back, another bites his shoulder, and still another presses

herself against him. Or [my thoughts are] like children who surround their young father like pearls and play with him; or they are like pigeons and sparrows circling the person who feeds them and landing upon him wherever they can. Just as all existents, like moles, turn round about God's Beauty, so my ideas and thoughts turn round about God.¹²

Rūmī's message is that all joy and all delight are found in God, and that God is to be found at this moment in the heart. The following ghazal, employing typical imagery, is perhaps more explicit than most:

Have you heard about the Emperor's edict? All the beauties are to come out from their veils.

His words were these: "This year I want sugar *very* cheap."

Wonderful year! Splendid, blessed day! Wonderful Emperor! Splendid, laughing fortune!

It is now forbidden to sit in the house, for the Emperor is strolling toward the square.

Come with us to the square and see a joyful banquet, manifest and hidden.

Tables have been set, abundant blessings spread out: halva and roasted fowl. Serving boys stand like moons before the saki; minstrels play tunes sweeter than life.

But love for the King has delivered the spirits of the drunkards from saki and table.

You say, "Where could this be?" I answer: "Right there, at the very point where the thought of 'Where' arose." (D 1903)

But it is not easy to turn in upon oneself and establish contact with the innermost core of one's being. To do so, one must follow the discipline laid down by the prophets and saints. The Mawlawī path is grounded firmly in the *Shari'ah* and the *sunnah*, centering upon the remembrance (*dhikr*) of the Beloved through various outward and inward supports, ranging from prayer and fasting to music and dance. Discipline is central, for without the practice of religion one will never be able to leave the confines and limitations of one's own individuality and enter into the Divine Presence: "Since you are not a prophet, enter the Way!" (M II 3453).

Our distance from God stems from our own self-existence, our mistaken impression that we are somehow independent of our Source. The ego veils us from perceiving the spirit and what lies beyond; like Iblīs, we see only the outward side of things. We must actualize the inward angelic light known as the Intellect, which by its very nature is a "finder of God" (M III 3195). Then the ego, which is one in origin with Saran (M III 3197, 4053), can be overcome. At the same time, we need to avoid the calculating attitude of the "partial intellect" (*aqḥ-i-juz'ī*), which is still veiled by the ego's clouds, and abandon ourselves to infinite Love. At the final stages of the Path,

"everything other than God"—even the Universal Intellect itself, since it too is a created reality—must be left behind.

Escape from the Ego

In the context of Rūmī's spiritual psychology, the life of the ego is the death of the spirit; union with the lower world is separation from God. Pain and heartache derive from our illusory selfhood and our distance from Self. To pass beyond Wrath and reach the Mercy which is the source of all, we must escape from the ego and dwell in the heart. Pain and suffering, then, are the necessary concomitants of the life of the ego. They cannot be overcome on this level of existence, but must be transformed inwardly into the joy that lies at the center of the heart. In fact, true pain can be known only by the prophets and saints, since they alone are given a vision of things as they are in themselves. As Rūmī often remarks, until a bird has drunk fresh water, it will never realize that it lives on brine; until the traveler tastes union, he will never understand that he dwells in the infinite heartache of separation. "Whoever is more awake has greater pain" (M I 629). Hence also, the greatest misfortune a human being can suffer occurs when he does not feel the pain of separation:

He that is without pain is a brigand, for to be without pain is to say "I am God." (M II 2521)

As long as we have no pain, we will not strive for ease; as long as we have no love, we will not seek the Beloved.

Where there is pain, cures will come; where there is poverty, wealth will follow. . . .
Spend less time seeking water and acquire thirst! Then water will gush forth from above and below. (M III 3210, 12)

To acquire thirst and pain, we must realize our own imperfection and inadequacy—or, rather, our utter nothingness before the One Reality. Rūmī's central teaching, like that of other Sūfis, comes down to this: "Remove self from the midst, so that you may grasp Self in your embrace!" (D 12280). Our selfhood is empty and illusory, yet we remain bound to it. Once it has been nullified and annihilated through the discipline of the Path and the fire of love and desire, nothing remains but God. As Rūmī expresses it, employing the words of the *shahadah*:

After "no god," what else remains?
There remains "but God," the rest has gone. Bravo, great, idol-burning Love!
(M V 589-90)

Selfhood, then, is separation; selflessness is union and human perfection. A typical ghazal calls the seeker to this realization:

Revelers, beg the minstrel for wine! Come to pleasure, ask for the song of the reed!

Become royal riders on the steed of delights, fortunate men! Pass beyond heartache's horse with galloping revelry!

O you who sit with self, annihilate intellect, awareness, and foresight with pure wine from the Vat of Oneness!

Behold a new spring with gardens and meadows of a hundred colors—abandon the cold, dryness, and adversity of December!

When you see decapitated corpses row upon row, you will be apostates, O lovers, if you weep and wail!

You must seek the Chinese Idol in China—what kind of intellect tells you to go to Rayy?

At the Ruins of Subsistence in the *samā'i* of the spirit's ear, abandon this childlike repetition of the alphabet!

Fill your skull's cup with the unmixed eternal wine—for God's sake, roll up the carpet of intellect and circumspection!

O lovers, come out of the attributes of selfhood—obliterate yourselves in the vision of the Living God's Beauty!

Along with Shams al-Dīn, the lord of kings, king of Tabriz, sacrifice your spirit! For his sake, dedicate yourself to God! (D 747)

God's Mercy

Rūmī and those of his followers who have been faithful to his teachings tell us that God's Love, Mercy, and Gentleness pervade the cosmos and determine our destinies. The universe is fundamentally good and beautiful, though our own self-centeredness may prevent us from seeing this. God's Mercy hides behind the veil of every manifestation of Wrath, pulling us toward our ultimate felicity. But it remains for us to open ourselves to the "precedent Attribute," lest we remain forever veiled. Our task as humans is to return to the Mercy from which we arose and thus to integrate all multiplicity into Oneness and to see all phenomena as veils upon the Beloved's Face. Speaking for the saints who are mankind's guides on this path, Rūmī sings:

Accusom yourself to us, not to the unaware! Don't be a donkey—why do you sniff at the tail of every she-ass?

Your beginning and end are eternal Love—don't be a whore, taking a different husband every night.

Set your heart upon that Desire from which it can never be detached. Lion-man, don't make your heart the dog of every lane!

When in pain, you seek a remedy—turn your eyes and heart toward the Remedy, not to this and that.

Run not like a camel toward every thornbush—abandon not the garden, spring, meadow, and stream.

Pay attention! The Emperor has set out a kingly banquet. For God's sake, don't continue to starve in this dustbin!

Our polo-playing Prince has come onto the field—make your heart and spirit a ball before His horses!

Wash your face clean—don't blame the mirror! Refine your gold—don't blame the scales!

Part your lips only toward Him who gave you lips, run only toward Him who gave you feet! Know that the faces and hair of these beauties are false—don't call them "moon-faced, silken locked!"

Cheeks, eyes, and lips were loated to a clod of earth—don't be so eager to look lovingly on the eyeless.

Love's beauty called out, "The *samā'* will last forever²—shout and dance only in pursuit of that beauty!

Breathe no more words, poet, or breathe them silently beneath your lips. Speech is a veil—make it a single veil, not a hundred! (D 1992)

Notes

1. Citations are from *Walaḥ-nāmah*, ed. J. Humānī (Tehran: Iqbāl, 1316/1937).
2. Citations are from *Maqālāt-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*, ed. M. 'A. Muwāḥhid (Tehran: Dānshgāh-i Šan 'arī-yi Arjāmhr, 2036/1977).
3. A. Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun* (London: Fine Books, 1978) 367ff.
4. *Ibid.*, 37ff.
5. H. Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn 'Arabī* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969) 70.
6. *Ibid.*, 71.
7. Schimmel, *Triumphal Sun*, 225.
8. See W. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1983).
9. Rūmī, *Fihri mā fihī*, ed. B. Furūzānfar (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1348/1969) 78; see also Chittick, *Sufi Path*, 86.
10. *Ma'arīf*, ed. B. Furūzānfar (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Majlis, 1333/1954) I, 111-12.
11. See Chittick, *Sufi Path*, Part III; cf. Schimmel, *Triumphal Sun*, Part II; and "Sun Triumphal—Love Triumphant: Maulana Rumi and the Metaphors of Love," in her *As Through a Veil: Mystical Poetry in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982) 83-133.
12. *Ma'arīf*, 134-35.

6

The Chishtiyyah

SAYYID ATHAR ABBAS RIZVI

History

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHISHTIYYAH ORDER goes back to the third/ninth century. It originated in the town of Chisht, from which it received its name, some one hundred kilometers east of Harat in modern Afghanistan. The order, however, achieved fame only in India. Other branches, which spread to Transoxiana and Khurasan did not survive long. The Chishtiyyah trace their lineage back to Hasan al-Basrī (21/642-110/728). They believe that Hasan was 'Alī ibn Abī Tallī's disciple, a doctrine which they defend spiritedly. Of the later Sufis, the Chishtiyyah give a prominent place to Abū Sa'īd ibn Abī-Khayr (357/967-440/1049). He was born and died at Mayhana (the present Me'ana near Sarakhs) but lived for a long time in Nayshapur. The hard ascetic exercises practiced by some Chishtīs, such as hanging head downward into a well continuously for forty nights, are a legacy from this shaykh. His teachings also inspired the Chishtīs to devote themselves unquestioningly to their *pīrs* (spiritual guides), to prostrate themselves before their *pīrs* and to practice self-abasement and service to mankind.

The founder of the Chishtiyyah Order in India was Khwājāh Mu'īn al-Dīn Hasan. No information is available regarding his early life. On the basis of his death, which occurred on 6 Rajab 633/16 March 1236, when he was reputed to be ninety-seven years old, it is presumed that he was born in 536/1141-42 in Sijistan (Sistan). He was fifteen years old when his father died. The Khwājāh inherited a garden and a water mill, but he left his property to adopt a life of study and travel. At Harwan, a suburb of Nayshapur, he became the disciple of the greatest contemporary Chishtiyyah *pīr*, Khwājāh 'Uthmān Harwanī. For about twenty years, he accompanied his *pīr* to various places and later traveled independently. In Baghdad he visited the Qādiriyyah Sufī, Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī and other eminent Sufis. Leaving there, he traveled through Iraq and Iran and arrived