

GABRIEL'S WING

Arise in order that we may make the order of the sun's journey
fresh
That we may make the burnt out spirit of evening and morning
fresh.

*

The heart of a diamond can be cut by the leaf of a flower;
A soft and gentle word has no effect on a stupid man!

—Bartari-Hari

[Translated by D.J. Matthews]

1

My epiphany of passion causes commotion in
the precinct of the Divine Essence,
Strikes terror in the pantheon of His
Attributes.

The houri and the angel are captives of my
imaginings—
My glance ruffles Your Manifestations.

My quest is the architect of the Mosque and
the idol-house,
Though my song causes tumult both in the
Ka'bah and Somnath.

My sharp vision pierced through the core of
existence;
Confounded by my illusions at yet another time.

Oh what a rash deed that You did not leave
me hidden:
I was the only secret in the conscience of the
universe!

[Translated by the Editors]

*

All potent wine is emptied of Thy cask;
Art Thou, indeed, a Cup-bearer, may I ask?
Thou gavest me a drop from an ocean;
Art Thou a miser in a Nourisher's mask?

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

2

If the stars have strayed—
To whom do the heavens belong, You or Me?
Why must I worry about the world—
To whom does this world belong, You or Me?

If the Placeless Realm
Offers no lively scenes of passion and
longing,

Whose fault is that, my Lord?—
Does that realm belong to You or to me?

On the morning of eternity he dared to say
'No',

But how would I know why—
Is he Your confidant, or is he mine?

Muhammad is Yours,
Gabriel is Yours,
The Qur'an is Yours—
But this discourse,
This exposition in melodious tunes,
Is it Yours or is it mine?

Your world is illuminated
By the radiance of the same star
Whose loss was the fall of Adam, that
creature of earth,
Was it Yours or mine?

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

3

Bright are Your tresses: brighten them even
more:
Ravish the senses and the mind, ravish the
heart and the eyes.

Love concealed, and beauty too!
Reveal Yourself to me, or reveal me to myself.

You are the limitless ocean and I am but a tiny
rivulet—
Either make Your peer or turn me limitless at
least.

If I am a mother-of-pearl, the lustre of my
pearl is in Your hands,
But if I am a piece of brick, give me a
diamond's sheen.

If I am not destined to sing at the advent of
Spring,
Make this half-enraptured breath a skylark of
the Spring.

Why did You order me to quit the Garden of
Eden?—

Now there is much to be done here—so just
wait for me!

When the roll of my deeds is brought up on
the Day of Reckoning,
Be ashamed as You will shame me.

[Translated by the Editors]¹

¹ Based on partial translations by Annemarie Schimmel and Sayyad Fayyaz Mahmood in *Iqbal*:

*

Make our hearts the seats of mercy and love,
And make them in Thy thought for ever
move;
Give the invincible power of Ali the brave,
To one whom gavest Thou poor means to live.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

4

Whether or not it moves you,
At least listen to my complaint—
It is not redress this free spirit seeks.

This handful of dust,
This fiercely blowing wind,
And these vast, limitless heavens—
Is the delight You take in creation
A blessing or some wanton joke?

The tent of the rose could not withstand
The wind blowing through the garden:
Is this the spring season,
And this the auspicious wind?

I am at fault, and in a foreign land,
But the angels never could make habitable
That wasteland of yours.

That stark wilderness,
That insubstantial world of Yours
Gratefully remembers my love of hardship.

An adventurous spirit is ill at ease
In a garden where no hunter lies in ambush.

The station of love is beyond the reach of
Your angels,
Only those of dauntless courage are up to it.

*

Give to the youth my sighs of dawn;
Give wings to these eaglets again,
This, dear Lord, is my only wish—
That my insights should be shared by all!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

Poet of Tomorrow edited by Khawaja Abdur Rahim; and Naim Siddiqui in *Baal-i-Jibreel*.

5

What avails love when life is so ephemeral?
What avails a mortal's love for the immortal?

Love that is snuffed out by death's passing
blast
Love without the pain, the passion that
consumes?

A flickering spark I am, aglow for a fleeting
glance
Flow vain for a flickering spark to chase an
eternal flame!

Grant me the bliss of eternal life, O Lord,
And mine will be the ecstasy of eternal love.

Give me the pleasure of an everlasting pain
An agony that lacerates my soul for ever.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

6

My scattered dust charged with Love
The shape of heart may take at last:
O God, the grief that bowed me then
May press me down as in the past!

The Maids of Eden by their charm
May arouse my urge for song:
The flame of Love that burns in me,
May fire the zeal of Celestial Throng!

The pilgrim's mind can dwell at times
On spots and stages left behind:
My heed for spots and places crossed,
From the Quest may turn my mind!

By the mighty force of Love
I am turned to Boundless Deep:
I fear that my self-regard,
Me, for aye, on shore may keep!

My hectic search for aim and end,
In life that smell and hue doth lack,
May get renown like lover's tale,
Who riding went on litter's track!

The rise of clay-born man hath smit
The hosts of heaven with utter fright:
They dread that this fallen star

To moon may wax with fuller light.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

*

Thy world the fish's and the winged thing's
bower;
My world a crying of the sunrise hour;
In Thy world I am helpless and a slave;
In my world is Thy kingdom and Thy power.

7

Contrary runs our planet, the stars whirl fast,
oh Saki!
In every atom's heartbeat a Doomsday blast,
oh Saki!

Torn from God's congregation its dower of
faith and reason,
And godlessness in fatal allurements dressed,
oh Saki!

For our inveterate sickness, our wavering
heart, the cure—
That same joy-dropping nectar as in the past,
oh Saki.

Within Islam's cold temple no fire of longing
stirs,
For still your face is hidden, veiled and un-
guessed, oh Saki.

Unchanged is Persia's garden: soil, stream,
Tabriz, unchanged;
And yet with no new Rumi is her land graced,
oh Saki.

But of his barren acres Iqbal will not despair:
A little rain, and harvests shall wave at last,
oh Saki!

On me, a beggar, secrets of empire are
bestowed;
My songs are worth the treasures Parvez
amassed, oh Saki.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

*

Due to Thy benevolence, I am not without
merit,
However, I am not a slave to a Tughral or a
Sanjar;
It is my nature to see the world as it is;

But, in no case, am I the Cup of any Jamshid!

[Translated by A. Anwar Beg]

8

Set out once more that cup, that wine, oh
Saki—

Let my true place at last be mine, oh Saki!

Three centuries India's wine-shops have been
closed,

And now for your largesse we pine, oh Saki;

My flask of poetry held the last few drops—
Unlawful, says our crabb'd devine, oh Saki.

Truth's forest hides no lion-hearts now: men
grovel
Before the priest, or the saint's shrine, oh Saki.

Who has borne off Love's valiant sword?

About

An empty scabbard Wisdom's hands twine,
oh Saki.

Verse lights up life, while heart burns bright,
but fades

For ever when those rays decline, oh Saki;

Bereave not of its moon my night; I see
A full moon in your goblet shine, oh Saki!

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

*

He is the essence of the Space as well as the
Placeless Realm—

And Space is nothing but a figure of speech:

How could Khizer tell, and what,

If the fish were to ask, "Where is the water?"

[Translated by the Editors]

9

My Saki made me drink the wine
Of *There is no god but He*:

From the illusive world of sense,
This cup divine has set me free.

Now I find no charm or grace
In song and ale, or harp and lute:

To me appeal the tulips wild,
The riverside and mountains mute.

My flagon small is blessing great,

For the age athirst and dry:

In the cells where mystics swell

Big empty gourds are lying by.

In love a novice I am yet,

Much good for you to keep apart,

For my glance is restive more

Than my wild and untam'd heart.

The dark unfathomed caves of sea,

Hold gems of purest ray serene:

The gems retain in midst of brine

Their essence bright and clean.

Through the poet's quickening gaze

The rose and tulip lovelier seem:

No doubt, the minstrel's piercing glance

Is nothing less than magic gleam.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

*

At times, Love is a wanderer who has no
home,

And at times it is Noshervan, the King of
Kings:

At times it comes to the battlefield in full
armor,

And at times naked and weaponless.

[Translated by the Editors]

10

Slow fire of longing—wealth beyond
compare;

I will not change my prayer-mat for Heaven's
chair!

Ill fits this world of Your freemen, ill the next:
Death's hard yoke frets them here, life's hard
yoke there.

Close veils inflame the loiterer in Love's lane;
Your long reluctance fans my passion's flare.

The hawk lives out his days in rocks and
desert,

Tame nest-twig-carrying his proud claws
forswear.

Was it book-lesson, or father's glance, that
taught
The son of Abraham what son should bear?
Bold hearts, firm souls, come pilgrim to my
tomb;
I taught poor dust to tower hill-high in air.
Truth has no need of me for tiring-maid;
To stain the tulip red is Nature's care.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

*

Love, sometimes, is the solitude of Nature;
It is, sometime, merrymaking and company-
seeking:
Sometime the legacy of the mosque and the
pulpit,
Sometime Lord Ali the Vanquisher of the
Khyber!

[Translated by the Editors]

11

Have You forgotten then my heart of old,
That college of Love, that whip that bright
eyes hold?
The school-bred demi-goddesses of this age
Lack the carved grace of the old pagan mold!
This is a strange world, neither cage nor nest,
With no calm nook in all its spacious fold.
The vine awaits Your bounteous rain: no
more
Is the Magian wine in Persia's taverns sold.
My comrades thought my song were of
Spring's kindling—
How should they know what in Love's notes
is told?
Out of my flesh and blood You made this
earth;
Its quenchless fever the martyr's crown of
gold.
My days supported by Your alms, I do not
Complain against my friends, or the times
scold.

[Translated by Victor Kiernan]

*

Grant me the absorption of the souls of the
past,
And let me be of those *who never grieve*;
The riddles of reason I have solved, but now,
O Lord! Give me a life of ecstasy.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

12

By dint of Spring the poppy-cup,
With vintage red is over-flown:
With her advent the hermit too
Temperance to the wind hath thrown.

When great and mighty force of Love
At some place its flag doth raise,
Beggars dressed in rags and sack
Become heirs true to King Parvez.

Antique the stars and old the dome
In which they roam about and move:
I long for new and virgin soil
Where my mettle I may prove.

The stir and roar of Judgement Day
Hath no dread for me at all:
Thine roving glance doth work on me
Like the Last Day's Trumpet Call.

Snatch not from me the blessing great
Of sighs heaved at early morn:
With a casual loving look
Weaken not thine fierce scorn.

My sad and broken heart disdains
The Spring and dower that she brings:
Too joyous the song of nightingale!
I feel more gloomy when it sings.

Unwise are those who tell and preach
Accord with times and the age.
If the world befits you not,
A war against it you must wage.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

*

The subtle point that life would not end with
the death of the body
I learnt from Abul Hasan¹:

¹ Abul Hasan Ash'ari.

The un, if it would hate its beam
Will lose all its brilliance.

[*Translated by Muhammad Munawwar Mirza*]

13

Mine ill luck the same and same,
O Lord, the coldness on Your part:
No useful aim has been served,
By skill in poetic art.

Where am I and where are You,
Is the world a fact or naught?
Does this world to me belong,
Or is a wonder by You wrought?

The precious moments of my life,
One by one have been snatched:
But still the conflict racks my brain,
If heart and head are ever matched.

A hawk forgetful of its breed,
Upbrought and fed in midst of kites,
Knows not the wont and ways of hawks,
And cannot soar to mighty heights.

For song no tongue is set apart,
No claim to tongues is laid by me:
What matters is a dainty song,
No matter what its language be.

Faqr and Kingship are akin,
Though at odds may these appear:
One wins the heart with single glance,
The other rules with sword and spear.

Some have left the caravan train,
And some on Ka'bah turn their back;
For leaders of the Faithful Band,
Winsome mode and manners lack.

[*Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah*]

*

This reason of mine knows not good from
evil;
And tries to exceed the bounds that nature
fixed;
I know not what has happened to me of late,
My reason and my heart are ever at war.

[*Translated by Naim Siddiqui*]

14

Methought my racing field lay under the
skies,
This plaything of water and clay, I regarded
as my world;
Thy unveiling broke the spell of searching
glances,
I mistook this blue vault for Heaven.
The Sun, the Moon, the Stars, methought,
would keep me company,
Fatigued, they dropped out in the twists and
turns of space:
One leap by Love ended all the pother,
I fondly imagined, the earth and sky were
boundless.
What I esteemed as the clarion call of the
caravan,
Was but the plaintive cry of a traveller, weary
and forlorn.

[*Translated by S.A. Rahman¹*]

*

To be God is to have charge of land and sea;
Being God is nothing but a headache!
But being a servant of God? God forbid!
That is no headache—it is a heartache!

[*Translated by Mustansir Mir*]

15

Reason is either luminous, or it seeks proofs;
Proof-seeking reason is but an excess of
wonder.

Thine alone is what I possess in this handful
of dust;
And to keep it safe is beyond my power, O
Lord!

My songs of lament were all inspired by Thee;
If they have reached the stars, it is no fault of
mine.

¹ Quoted in 'Chughtai and Iqbal' by Arif Rahman Chughtai in *Iqbal: Commemorative Volume* edited by Ali Sardar Jafri and K.S. Duggal

Art Thou pleased, O Lord, with man's
imperfection?
Why repeat a flawed attempt, and make his
shame eternal?

The Western ways have tried to make me a
renegade;
But why are our mullahs a disgrace to
Muslims?

Fools think man is a bondman of destiny;
But man has still the power to break the
bonds of fate.

Thou hast Thy pantheon, and I have mine, O
Lord!
Both have idols of dust; both have idols that
die.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

This Adam—is he the sovereign of land and
sea?
What can I say about such an incompetent
being!
He is not able to see anything—himself, God,
or the world!
Is this the masterpiece of Your art?

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

16

Lovely, oh Lord, this fleeting world; but why
Must the frank heart, the quick brain, droop
and sigh?

Though usury mingle somewhat with his
godship,
The white man is the world's arch-deity;

His asses graze in fields of rose and poppy:
One wisp of hay to genius You deny;

His Church abounds with roasts and ruby
wines:
Sermons and saws are all Your mosques
supply.

Your laws are just, but their expositors
Bedevil the Koran, twist it awry;

Your paradise no-one has seen: in Europe
No village but with paradise can view.

Long, long have my thoughts wandered
about heaven;
Now in the moon's blind caverns let them sty!

I, dowered by Nature with empyreal essence,
Am dust—but not through dust does my way
lie;

Nor East, nor west my home, nor Samarkand,
Nor Ispahan nor Delhi; in ecstasy,

God-filled, I roam, speaking what truth I
see—

No fool for priests, nor yet of this age's fry.

My folk berate me, the stranger does not love
me:

Hemlock for sherbet I could never cry;

How could a weigher of truth see Mount
Damawand

And think a common refuse-heap as high?

In Nimrod's fire faith's silent witness, not
Like mustard-seed in the grate, burned
splutteringly—

Blood warm, gaze keen, right-following,
wrong-forswearing,

In fetters free, prosperous in penury,

In fair of foul untamed and light of heart—

Who can steal laughter from a flower's bright
eye?

—Will no one hush this too proud thing Iqbal
Whose tongue God's presence-chamber could
not tie!

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

1¹

*In November, 1933, His Majesty the Leader
of the Faithful the now-martyred Nadir
Shah Ghazi granted the author permission
to visit the shrine of The sage Sana'i of*

¹ The numbering of poems in *Gabriel's Wing* starts again after 16. The only plausible explanation is that it marks a new section—while God was addressed in the previous section, the addressee here will be the humanity.

Ghazna. These verses were written in commemoration of the event, in imitation of a famous panegyric by the poet—'We are coming after Sina'i and Attar.'

All Nature's vastness cannot contain you, oh
My madness: vain, those wanderings to and
fro

In deserts! By selfhood only are the spells
Of sense broken,— that power we did not
know.

Rub your eyes, sluggard! Light is Nature's
law,
And not unknown to Ocean its waves flow.

Where reason and revelation war, faith errs
To think the Mystic on his cross its foe,

For God's pure souls, in thralldom or on
thrones,
Have one safe shield, his scorn of this world's
show.

But do not, Gabriel, envy my rapture: better
For Heaven's dounce folk the prayer and the
beads' neat row!

*

I have seen many a wine-shop East and West;
But here no Saki, there in the grape no glow.

In Iran no more, in Tartary no more,
Those world-renouncers who could
overthrow

Great kings; the Prophet's heir filches and
sells

The blankets of the Prophet's kin. When to

The Lord I was denounced for crying
Doomsday

Too soon, by that Archangel who must blow

Its trumpet, God made answer—*Is Doomsday
far*

*When Makkah sleeps while China worships?—
Though*

The bowl of faith finds none to pour, the
beaker

Of modern thought brims with the wine of
No.

Subdued by the dexterous fiddler's chords
there murmurs

In the lowest string the wail of Europe's
woe—

Her waters that have bred the shark now
breed

The storm-wave that will smash its den
below!

Slavery—exile from the love of beauty:
Beauty—whatever free men reckon so;

Trust no slave's eyes, clear sight and liberty
Go hand in hand. His own resolves bestow

The empire of To-day on him who fishes
To-morrow's pearl up from Time's undertow.

The Frankish glassblowers' arts can make
stone run:

My alchemy makes glass flint-hard. Pharaoh

Plotted and plots against me; but what harm?
Heaven lifts my hand, like Moses', white as
snow;

Earth's rubbish-heaps can never quell this
spark

God struck to light whole deserts, His
flambeau!

Love, self-beholding, self-sustaining, stands
Un-awed at the gates of Caesar or Khosro;

If moon or Pleiades fall my prey, what
wonder—

Myself bound fast to the Prophet's saddle-bow!

He—Guide, Last Envoy, Lord of All—lent
brightness

Of Sinai to our dust; Love's eyes, not slow

To kindle, hail him Alpha and Omega,
Chapter, and Word, and Book. I would not go

Pearl-diving there, for reverence of Sina'i;
But in these tides a million pearls still grow.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

2

Who is this composer of *ghazals*, who is
burningly passionate and cheerful?

He makes the thoughts of the wise full of
madness.

Although poverty also has royal
characteristics,
Kingship is only half complete without a
kingdom.

Now in the cell of the Sufi, the same poverty
has not remained—
The poverty whose charter is written in the
blood of the hearts of lions.

Ah circle of dervishes, see how the man of
God is,
In whose collar is the tumult of Judgement's
Day—

—who is as bright as a flame by the heat of
repetition of God's name;
Who is quicker than the lightning by the
swiftness of his thought.

Kingship gives rise to signs of madness—
They are the scalpels of Allah, be they Taimur
of Genghis.

Thus Iraq and Persia give me praise for my verse:
This Indian infidels sheds blood without
swords or spears.¹

[Translated by D.J. Matthews]

3

The breath of Gabriel
If God on me bestow,
I may in words express
What Love has made me know.

How can the stars foretell
What future holds in store?
They roam perplex'd and mean
In skies that have no shore.

To fix one's mind and gaze
On goal is life, in fact:
To ego's death to lead
The thoughts that mind distract.

How strange! The bliss of self
Having bestowed on me,

¹ We have slightly altered Matthews' translated
line to bring it closer to the original.

God mighty will that I
Beside myself should be.

I neither like nor claim
Plato's thought or Croesus' gold:
Clean conscience, lofty gaze
And zeal is all I hold.

By Holy Prophet's Ascent
This truth to me was taught,
Within the reach of man
High heavens can be brought.

The Life perhaps is still
Raw and incomplete:
Be and it becomes
E'er doth a voice repeat.

The West hath cast a spell
On thine heart and mind:
In Rumi's burning flame
A cure for thyself find.

Through his bounty great
My vision shines and glows,
And mighty Oxus too
In my pitcher flows.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

4

Fabric of earth and wind and wave!
Who is the secret, you or I,
Brought into light? Or who the dark
world of what hides yet, you or I?

Here in this night of grief and pain,
trouble and toil, that men call life,

Who is the dawn, or who dawn's prayer
cried from the minaret, you or I?

Who is the load that Time and Space
bear on their shoulder? Who the prize

Run for with fiery feet by swift
daybreak and sunset, you or I?

You are a pinch of dust and blind,
I am a pinch of dust that feels;

Through the dry land, Existence, who
flows like a streamlet, you or I?

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

5

(Written in London)

Thou art yet region-bound,
Transcend the limits of space;
Transcend the narrow climes
Of the East and the West.

For selfless deeds of men
Rewards are less mundane;
Transcend the houris' glances,
The pure, celestial wine.

Ravishing in its power
Is beauty in the West;
Thou bird of paradise,
Resist this earthly trap.

With a mountain-cleaving assault,
Bridging the East and West,
Despise all defences,
And become a sheathless sword.

Thy imam is unabsorbed,
Thy prayer is uninspired,
Forsake an imam like him,
Forsake a prayer like this.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

6

The free by dint of *faqr*
Life's secrets can disclose:
With Gabriel *faqr* is bound
By ties of kinship close.

The scholar, mystic and
The bard, by thinking wrong,
Many a bark have sunk,
That was sound and strong.

You need a burning glance
That crows down lions bold:
Only the sheep and goats
Heave sighs deep and cold.

Love's physician scanned my face
And thus he did bespeak,
"You have no ailment, but
Your zeal is faint and weak."

The soul that knows no stain
Is something quite discreet:
The glow and tint of blood
Is wrought by bread and meat.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

7

Hill and vale once more under the poppy's
lamps are bright,
In my heart the nightingale has set new songs
alight;

Violet, violet, azure, azure, golden, golden,
mantles—
Flowers, or fairies of the desert, rank on rank
in sight?

On the rosy-spray dawn's soft breeze has left
a pearl of dew,
Now the sunbeam turns this gem a yet more
glittering white.

Town or woodland, which is sweeter, if for
her unveiling
Careless beauty love towns less than where
green woods invite?

Delve into your soul and there seek our life's
buried tracks;
Will you not be mine? then be not mine, be
your own right!

World of soul—the world of fire and ecstasy
and longing:
World of sense—the world of gain that fraud
and cunning blight;

Treasure of the soul once won is never lost
again:
Treasure gold, a shadow—wealth soon comes
and soon takes flight.

In the spirit's world I have not seen a white
man's Raj,
In that world I have not seen Hindu and
Muslim fight.

Shame and shame that hermit's saying pouted
on me—you forfeit
Body and soul alike if once you cringe to
another's might!

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

8

(Written in Kabul)

Muslims are born with a gift to charm, to persuade;
Brave men—they are endowed with a noble courtesy.

Slaves of custom are all the schools of old;
They teach the eaglet to grovel in the dust.
These victims of the past have seen the dawn of hope,
When I revealed to them the eagle's ways.
The man of God knows but two words of faith;
The scholar has tomes of knowledge old and new.

About wine and women I know not how to write;
Ask not a stone-breaker to work on glass.
O Iqbal! From where did you learn to be such a dervish:¹
Even among the kings there is talk about your contentment!

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

9

Through Love the song of Life
Begets its rhythmic flow:
From Love the shapes of clay
Derive an endless glow.
Love makes its way to all
The pores in human flesh,
Like dewy wind of morn
That makes the rose twig fresh.
If man denies his God,
On kings he has to fawn:
By trust in God, the kings
To his door are drawn.

¹ The last two lines, "O Iqbal!... your contentment!" have been provided by the editors, since the translator had left them out.

Free heart lends kingly state,
To belly death is due:
Decide which of the two
Is better in your view.

O Muslim, search your heart,
Of mullah don't ask it,
"The sacred House of God,
The righteous why have quit?"

10

Of passion's glow your heart is blank,
Your glances are not chaste and frank:
To wonder at then there is naught
That bold and dauntless you are not.
A longing strong for God's display,
Is also hid in self-same clay:
O heedless man, let this be known,
Brains alone you do not own.

The eye whose light and luster rest
On collyrium brought from West:
Is full of art, conceit and show,
It gets not wet at others' woe.

How can the priest and monk assess
The height of craze that I possess?
still sound the hems of robes they wear,
Which have no rifts and know no tear.

How long the stars shall hold their sway
On fate of man, sprung from clay?
Either bereft of life I drop,
Or the Wheel of Fate must stop.

Lightning I am and keep my eye
On waste and hill that reach the sky:
Heaps of straw and mounds of dust,
Too low they are, avoid I must.

That godly man gets world's bequest,
Who risks his life in ceaseless quest:
That man no Faith can claim at all
Who lives not up to Prophet's call.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

11

A host of peril though you face,
Yet your tongue with heart ally:
From times antique and hoar

Qalandars on this mode rely.

Men congregate in numbers large
In the mart where wine is sold,
For polite and courteous seems
The Head of Mart, the Magian Old.

Though the points by Razi touched
May be subtle and profound,
Yet against infirm belief
No cure in them is ever found.

The disciple blind shed copious tears,
Of sinful life he felt contrite.
May God aid the shaykh as well
To feel ashamed and do the right!

Man is bound still hand and foot
In chains by this talisman old,
For idols of the age of past
Still men within their armpits hold.

Enough for me that I affirm
With tongue alone my faith and creed:
A thousand thanks for mullah's claim
That he with heart avows, indeed.

As good as Muslim's true belief,
If blessed with Love, unfaith is eke:
Bereft of Love a Muslim true
Is no better than Zindiq.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

12

Rely on the witness of the phenomenal world
To know whether you are on the mark or
have gone astray:

Neither kingship nor poverty for a Muslim
who lacks in faith,
The one who has it is a king even if he be
poor.

He depends on the sword if he lacks in faith:
If he has faith he may need no weapons in the
fight.

A Muslim without faith yields to what his
fate ordains;
With faith, he is destiny incarnate.

I revealed the secrets and rent the veil,
But your blindness has no cure.

[Translated by the Editors]

13

(Written in Cordoba)

These Western nymphs
A challenge to the eye and the heart,
Are bold of glance,
In a paradise of instant bliss.

Thy heart is a wavering ship,
Tossed by beauty's assault
These moons and stars that glisten,
Are whirlpools in thy sea.

The warblings of the harp and lyre,
Have wondrous powers—
Powers that cannot be captured
In the world of sound.

By teaching him the monastic wont and way,
The Sufi has led astray the jurist of the town.¹

The prostration that once
Shook the earth's soul,
Now leaves not a trace
On the mosque's decadent walls.

I have not heard in the Arab world
The thunderous call
The call to prayer that pierced
The hearts of hills in the past.

O Cordoba! Perhaps
Some magic in thy air
Has breathed into my song
The buoyancy of youth.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

14

A heart awake to man imparts
Umar's brains and Hyder's manly parts:
If watchful heart a man may hold,
His dross is changed to sterling gold.

Beget a heart alive and sound,
For, if it be in slumber bound,
You cannot strike a deadly blow,

¹ The two lines, "By teaching him...the jurist of the town," have been provided by the editors since the translator had left them out.

Nor even I can daring show.

If sense of smell be full and stunted,
The musk-deer never can be hunted:
If bereft of sense of smelling true,
Surmise and guess can yield no clue.

My sighs no more I can withhold,
When Muslims' sloth I do behold:
If Muslims do not mend their way,
Magians their luck might steal away.

These simple thralls of Yours, O Lord,
From every house and door are barred:
For kings, no less the acolytes,
Are fraudulent and hypocrites.

The freedom that this age does grant
Does ever freedom's essence want:
Though freedom seems to outward sight,
Yet is no less than prison tight.

O Lord of Yathrib! Cure provide
For doubts that in my breast abide:
My wisdom to the West is due,
Girdled my faith like Brahman true.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

15

in the coquetry and fierceness of the self there
is no pride, there are no airs. Even if there
are airs, then they are not without the
pleasure of submission.

The eye of love is in search of the living heart;
hunting for carrion does not befit up to the
royal hawk.

In my song there is no charming and romantic
grace, for the blast of the trumpet of Israfil is
not meant to please the heart.

I will not ask for wine from the Frank, saki,
for this is not the way of the pure-hearted
profligates.

The rule of love has never been widespread in
the world. The reason is this—that love is no
time-server.

One continual anxiety—whether absent or
present! If I tell it myself, my story is not
long.

If you desire then read the *Persian Psalms*¹ in
seclusion; the midnight lament is not bereft
of secrets.

[Translated by D.J. Matthews]

16

A recreant captain, a battle-line thrown back,
The arrow hanging target-less and slack!

Nowhere near you that shell which holds
life's pearl;
I have dragged the waves and searched the
ocean's track.

Plunge in your self, on idols dote no more,
Pour our no more heart's blood for paint to
deck

Their shrines. I unveil the courts of Love and
Death:
Death—life dishonoured; Love—death for
honour's sake.

¹ We have changed the translator's 'Psalms of
Persia' to the more widely known title of the book.

I gleaned in Rumi's company: one bold heart
Is worth of learned heads the whole tame pack;

Once more that voice from Sinai's tree would cry
Fear not! if some new Moses led the attack.

No glitter of Western science could dazzle my
eyes

The dust of Medina stains, like collyrium,
black.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

17

(Written in Europe)

At London, winter wind, like sword, was
biting though,
My wont to rise at early morn I didn't forego.

At times my heated talk to gathering pleasure
lent;

My holding 'loof at times perplexed them all,
I trow.

No hope for change is there, if workers rule
the land,

For those who hew the rocks, like Parvez
tricks do know.

Statecraft divorced from Faith to reign of
terror leads,

Though it be a monarch's rule or Commoners'
Show.

The streets of Rome remind of Delhi's
glorious past,

The lesson same and charm are writ upon its
brow.

18

The ancient fane in which we live
Has heaps of thorns at every turn;
Too hard to cross it safe and sound
Without the aid of sighs that burn.

The tale of quarry shot by Love
Is simple, brief and not too long;
The victim feels the joy of prick
And then the rest of saddle thong.

The sterling truth to Muslim taught,
In feuds of different sects is lost;

How can you catch this truth again,
With bias if your mind be fraught?

One is the outward form of faith,
The other its spirit deep and true:
He, who quaffs its spirits deep,
Brings secrets hidden to his view.

O pilgrim wise, who tread the [ath,
If passion strong for faith you lack,
The bough of faith shall whither fast,
Obscure and dim become the path.

Courage and valour are the signs
By which the state of Love is known:
Not every zeal is pert and rude,
Nor daring by ev'ry person shown.

On the Day of Judgement too
My frenzy will not let me rest:
With Mighty God I shall contend
Or rend to fragments my own vest.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

19

The way to renounce is
To conquer the earth and heaven;
The way to renounce is not
To starve oneself to death.

O cultists! I like not
Your austere piety;
Your piety is penury,
Suffering and grief.

A nation that has lost
Taimur's great heritage,
Is unfit for piety,
And is unfit to rule.

If the sweet cup-bearer
Listens not to me, it is good;
When I say, "no more,"
That will only bring me more.

The Sufi and his peers
Are all engrossed in a glimpse;
They know not that concealment
Is itself a vision.

Bondage is freedom
With favours from on high,

And when favours are withheld,
Even freedom is bondage.

The West is a treasure-house
For the reason's quest;
But for the heart it is
A source of decay and death.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

20

Though reason to the portal guide,
Yet entry to it is denied.

Beg God to grant a lighted heart,
For light and sight are things apart.

Though knowledge lends to mind a glow,
No houris its Eden can ever show.

How strange that in the present time
No one owns the joy sublime!

Some passions leave the mind intact,
While others make it blind to fact.

The heart from unrest gets its life,
What pity if it knows no strife!

You die because from God you flee,
If living, linked with God shall be.

The pearls have all their covering cleft,
Of urge to show you are bereft.

Show unto me, though I too cry,
It is not tale of Moses and Sinai.

21

The self of man is ocean vast,
And knows no depth or bound:
If you take it for a stream,
How can your mind be sound?

The magic of this whirling dome
We can set at naught:
Not of stone but of glass
Its building has been wrought.

In Holy Trance in self we drown,
And up we rise again;
But how a worthless man can show
So much might and main?

Your rank and state cannot be told
By one who reads the stars:
You are living dust, in sooth,
Not ruled by Moon or Mars.

The maids of Ed'n and Gabriel eke
In this world can be found,
But, alas! You lack as yet
Glances bold and zeal profound.

My craze has judged aright the bent
Of times wherein I am born:
Love be thanked for granting me
The gown entire and untorn.

Spite of Nature's bounty great,
Its guarding practice, mark!
It grants the ruby reddish hue,
But denies the heat of spark.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

22

The morning breeze has whispered to me a
secret,
That those who know their selfhood, are
equal to kings.

Selfhood is the essence of thy life and honour,
Thou shalt rule with it, but without it be in
disgrace.

Thou hast not led my way, O man of wisdom!
But why, complain? Thou knowest not the
way.

Fakirs who know the wont and way of kings
Are as yet being trained in my literary circle.¹

Thy monastic cult is a strait and narrow path,
Which I like not, but thy freedom I respect.

This world of inferior prey is meant to
sharpen thy claws,
Thou art an eagle-hunter, but art a novice yet.

Whether thou art in the East or West, thy faith
Is meaningless, unless thy heart affirms it.

¹ Two lines, "Fakirs who know...my literary circle," have been provided by the editors since the translator had left them out.

23

Thy vision and thy hands are chained, earth-bound,
Is it thy nature's fault, or of the thought too high?

The schoolmen have strangled thy nascent soul,
And stifled the voice of passionate faith in thee.

Absorb thyself in selfhood, seek the path of God,
This is the only way for thee to find freedom.

Ask an unclad dervish what the heart doth say,
May God show thee thy place in the world of men.

If bare-headed, have a towering will,
The crown is not for thee, but for the eagle alone.

When thou lovest selfhood, thou lovest power, too;
Blame not the stars and fate for thy fall.

Monasteries and schools left me sad and dejected,
No life and no love; no vision and no knowledge.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

24

The mind can give you naught,
But what with doubt is fraught:
One look of Saintly Guide
Can needful cure provide.

The goal that you presume
Is far and out of view:
What else can be this life
But zeal for endless strife?

Much worth the pearl begets,
For guard on self it sets:
What else in pearl is found
Except its sheen profound?

Though blood in veins may race,
To Life it lends no grace:
Only the glow of heart
To Life can zeal impart.

Wherefore, O Tulip Bride,
From me your charms you hide?
I am the breath of morn,
Your face I would adorn.

What Frankish dealers take
For counterfeit and fake,
Is true and real art—
Not valued in their Mart.

Though indigent I be,
I am of hand yet free:
What can the Flame bestow
Except its spark and glow?

25

The splendour of a monarch great
Is worthless for the free and bold:
Where lies the grandeur of a king,
Whose riches rest on borrowed gold?

You pin your faith on idols vain
And turn your back on Mighty God:
If this is not unbelief and sin,
What else is unbelief and fraud?

Luck favours the fool and the mean,
And exalts and lifts to the skies
Only those who are base and low
And know not how to patronize.

One look from the eyes of the Fair
Can make a conquest of the heart:
There is no charm in the fair sweet,
If it lacks this alluring art.

I am a target for the hate
Of the mighty rich and the great,
As I know the end of Caesars great
And know the freaks of luck or fate.

To be a person great and strong
Is the end and aim of all;
But that rank is not real and true
That is attained by the ego's fall.

My bold and simple mode of life
Has captured each and every heart;

Though my numbers are lame and dull
And lay no claim to poet's art.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

26

You are neither for the earth nor for the
heaven:
The world is for you, and not you for the
world.

The sparks Reason and Heart are shed of the
flame of Love:

That one to burn the straw, this one for
burning the field of reeds.

This garden is for painful strains:
Neither for enjoying the roses nor for making
a nest.

How long, while your ship remains in Ravi,
Nile and Euphrates?
—When it is meant for the Ocean, which
knows no bounds.

Once who were beacons to the brightest stars,
Have long been awaiting a guide to show
them the way now.

High ambition, winsome speech, a passionate
soul—
This is all the luggage for a leader of the
Caravan.

It was a plain and simple truth but the
imagination of the Persian mind
Has confounded it with the poetic license.

I am saving a song for the Placeless Realm—
A song that could shake even the trusty
Gabriel.

27

O Prisoner of Space! You are not far from the
Placeless Realm—
That Audience Hall is not far away from your
planet.

Grieve not, for a meadow that faces no threat
from the Autumn,
Is not far away from your nest.

The gist of all Gnostic knowledge is merely
this:

That life is an arrow spent and yet from the
bow it is not too far!

Your station lies a little ahead of all the stars
and Pleiades:

Move on, for it is not a long way from the
skies.

Lest he asks the guide to let him be!

—It would be no surprise from a traveller
who thinks too much.

[Translated by the Editors]

28

(Written in Europe)

My mind on me bestowed a thinker's gaze,
From Love I learnt a toper's wont and ways.

No wine, no flask, no goblet goes around,
Sweet looks to banquet lend its hue and
sound.

Take not my rhymes for poet's art,
I know the secrets of wine-seller's mart.

Behold the bud athirst for breath of Morn,
It tells the story of my heart forlorn.

Know not, absence or presence if it be,
I am the alien here, all others free.

My stay in West I may prolong a bit,
My frenzy if this desert will admit.

The stage of mind by Iqbal soon was crost,
But in the Vale of Love this sage was lost.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

29

From the heavens comes an answer to our
long cries at last:

The heavens break their silence, the curtains
rise at last!

Little of change love's fortunes inherit: born in
anguish

And fire, in fire and anguish its end it buys at
last.

The destiny of nations I chart for you: at first
The sword and spear; the zither's, the lute's
soft sighs at last.

Outlandish are the customs that Europe's
tavern knows!

It steeps men first in pleasure, the wine
supplies at last.

Be it the awe of Nadir, be it the glory of a
Tamerlane:

At last all exploits are drowned in a barrel of
wine.¹

The cloistered hour is over, the arena's hour
begins;
The lightning comes to asunder those cloudy
skies at last!

It was too hard to withhold the flood of these
truths,

At last the Qalandar revealed the secrets of
the Book.²

Comment [MSU1]: *Pakist
an Quarterly*, Karachi. April
1947

[Translated by M.D. Taseer]

30

All life is voyaging,
all life in motion,
Moon, stars, and creatures
of air and ocean.

To you the champion,
the lord of battle,
Bright angels offer
their swords' devotion—

But of that blindness,
that caravan spirit!
Of your own greatness
you have no notion.

How long this bondage
to darkness? Choose now:
A prince's scepter,—
a hermit's potion.

¹ Two lines, "Be it the awe of Nadir...a barrel of wine," have been provided by the editors. The translator had left them out.

² Two lines, "It was too hard...the secrets of the Book," have been provided by the editors. The translator had left them out.

I know our priesthood,
how faint in action,
In sermons pouring
a languid lotion.

31

Every atom pants for glory: greed
Of self-fruit earth's whole creed!
Life that thirsts for no flowering—death:
Self-creation—a godlike deed;
Through self the mustard-seed becomes
A hill: without, the hill a seed.
The stars wander and do not meet,
To all things severance is decreed;
Pale is the moon of night's last hour
No whispered things of friendship speed.
Own self is all the light you need;
You are this world's sole truth, all else
Illusion such as sorceries breed.
—These desert thorns prick many a doubt:
Do not complain if bare feet bleed.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

32

This wonder by some glance is wrought,
Or Fortune's wheel has come full round:
At last the Frankish charm has broke,
The East by which in past was bound.

By the building of my nest,
This secret hid was brought to view
That for the bards that sing and chant
The choice of nest is bolt from blue.

If slave to God, you grow divine,
If slave to world a beggar mean:
You are the master of your fate,
So make the choice the two between.

Of selfhood heedless never be,
Your gaze to self always confine:
Who knows, you mat anon become
The threshold of some sacred shrine.

O heir to creed *no god but He*,
In you I see no sign or trace
Of mighty deeds that terror strike,
Your talk devoid of charm and grace.

Your glances bold would strike the heart
 With awe, though sheathed within the
 breast:
 Alas! a qalandar's fervent zeal
 In you is dead and is at rest.
 Of Sanctuary's secret hid
 Iqbal perhaps is well aware:
 His speech and song display alike
 A confidential mode and air.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

33

What should I ask the sages about my origin:
 I am always wanting to know my goal.
 Develop the self so that before every decree
 God will ascertain from you: "What is your
 wish?"
 It is nothing to talk about if I transform base
 selves into gold:
 The passion of my voice is the only alchemy I
 know!
 O Comrade, I beheld the secrets of Destiny in
 them—
 What should I tell you of those lustrous eyes!
 Only if that *majzub*¹ of the West were living in
 these times,
 Iqbal could have explained to him the 'I am.'
 My heart bleeds from the song of the early
 morning:
 O Lord! What is the sin for which this is a
 punishment?

[Translated by the Editors]²

¹ Iqbal's note—Nietzsche, the famous self-absorbed
 German philosopher who could not interpret his
 inner experience correctly and was therefore
 misled by his philosophical thoughts.

² The first four lines are based on a partial
 translation by Annemarie Schimmel in 'The Ideal
 of Prayer in the Thought of Iqbal,' included in *Iqbal:
 the Poet of Tomorrow*, edited by Khawaja Adbur
 Rahim.

34

When through the Love man conscious grows
 Of respect self-awareness needs,
 Though in chains, he learns at once
 The regal mode and kingly deeds.

Like Rumi, Attar, Ghazzali and Razi,
 One may be mystic great or wise,
 But none can reach his goal and aim
 Without the help of morning sighs.

No need for leaders sage and great
 To lose all hope of Muslim true:
 Though amiss this pilgrim be,
 Yet can burn on fire like rue.

O Bird, that yearn to merge with God,³
 You must keep this truth in sight,
 To suffer death is nobler far
 Than bread that clogs your upward flight.

A person poor and destitute,
 Who walks in steps of God's Lion bold,
 Is more exalt'd than monarchs great:
 He spurns the worldly wealth and gold.

Men bold and firm uphold the truth
 And let no fears assail their hearts:
 No doubt, the mighty Lions of God
 Know no tricks and know no arts.

35

Once more I feel the urge to wail
 And weep at dead of night:
 O traveller, stop a bit, perchance
 I face some awful site.

Awhile in dark abyss of Fate
 Dive and see beneath:
 Out of this battlefield I come
 Like sword out of the sheath.

This verse some man with witty mind
 On niche of mosque did write:
 These fools fell prostrate on the earth,
 When it was time to fight."

O man, who at my misery scoff,
 Follow the road you tread:

³ Translator has made a gross error: Iqbal's phrase
 simply means *the bird who flies to the Throne of God*.

When the cup to me was passed,
The gathering all had fled.

Iqbal his glow to Muslims lent,
Who in India dwell:
An easy-going man he was
And served the sluggards well.

To find Iqbal for years on end
I did chafe and fret:
By effort great that kingly hawk
Has come within my net.

36

Devoid of passion's roar
I can exist no more:
What else can be this life
But passion strong and strife?

My essence endlessly
Impels my minstrelsy:
Some may in throng be still,
Who feels for others' ill.

Love's flame can still set fire
To lodge and goods entire:
If thirst be not aflame,
Wherefore the saki blame?

Your judgment of the West
On glamour must not rest:
Its essence seems so bright
By means of electric light.

The thoughts of world conquest
Can never shape in breast,
If blessed not be your gaze
With world-wide wont and ways.

I, even in winter drear,
Fell not in hunter's snare:
My nest's branches bare
Drew the hunter's stare.

Their plans shall end in smoke,
Miscarry the destined stroke:
This fact with truth is fraught,
No fiction of my thought.

37

Nature before your mind present,
Subdue this world of hue and scent.

Of selfhood you appear bereft,
To find the thing lost go on quest.

The stars do shine in boundless space,
Desire to get this lofty place.

Disrobed the houris of your mead,
The rose and tulip darning need.

Of urge, though Nature not deplete,
Yet where it fails you must complete.

38

Alas! The mullah and the priest,
Conduct their sermons so
That despite their efforts great,
The hearts of listeners fail to glow.

O fellow stupid, get firm belief,
For faith upon you can bestow
Dervishhood of such lofty brand
'Fore which the mighty monarchs bow.

Disunion's ache that I do feel
A thousand hues and garbs can don:
To rapture and surprise converts,
Anon to sighs of early morn.

Secrets of love and passion strong
Transcend the ken of earthy breed:
This much alone I learnt that death
Of heart disunion means indeed.

The Fair with His own Beauty drunk
Is impelled to cast the Veil aside:
The reasons of His remaining hid
Within my own dim sight abide.

The rules that govern the Turn of Fate
No one can ever understand,
Else the heirs to Tamerlane
Were brave like those of Turkish Land.

How have the beggars of the Shrine
Brought Iqbal within their fold,
Though monarchs great and princes strong
A falcon white can't get in hold?

39

The magic old to life is brought
By means of present science and thought:
The path of life cannot be trod

Without the aid of Moses' Rod.

The mind is skilful in artful tasks,
And can assume a hundred masks:
Poor helpless Love that knows no guise
Ain't mullah, hermit or too wise.

Forbid the rest of lodge and bed
To those who road of Love do tread:
Like travellers they always roam,
Though they seem to stay at home.

Concern for journey's food and steed,
Like burden great, retards your speed:
Of this dead weight, if one be free,
Like breeze can cross the mount and sea.

No wealth is owned by dervish free,
At call of death he yields with glee:
He has not either gold or land,
Of him no one can tithe demand.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

40

Other worlds exist beyond the stars—
More tests of love are still to come.

This vast space does not lack life—
Hundreds of other caravans are here.

Do not be content with the world of colour
and Smell,
Other gardens there are, other nests, too.

What is the worry if one nest is lost?
There are other places to sigh and cry for!

You are an eagle, flight is your vocation:
You have other skies stretching out before
you.

Do not let mere day and night ensnare you,
Other times and places belong to you.

Gone are the days when I was alone in
company—
Many here are my confidants now.

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

41

(Written in France)

The West seeks to make life a perpetual feast;
A wish in vain, in vain, in vain!

Aware of my state, my spiritual guide assures
me,
Thy ecstasy has reached the plenitude of its
power.

Moses asked for a Divine glimpse, but I do
not:
The demand was right for him; but is
forbidden for me.

The plaint of the men of God betrays a
suppressed secret;
But the ways of the men of God are not meant
for all.

Zikr in the Sufis' circle was devoid of ecstasy,
I remained unsatisfied, and so was everyone.

Love is thy goal, and mine, too, but both
Are so far novices on the path of love.

Alas! Thou hast betrayed the secret of a fakir,
Though a fakir has wealth more than a king of
men.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

42

If self with knowledge strong becomes,
Gabriel it can envious make:
If fortified with passion great,
Like trump of Israfil can shake.

The scourge of present science and thought,
To me, no doubt, is fully known,
Like Abraham, the Friend of God,
In its flame I have been thrown.

The caravan in quest of goal
By charm of lodge is led astray,
Though never can the ease of lodge
Be same as joy to be on way.

If seeing eye you do not own,
Among my listeners do not pause,
For subtle points about the self,

Like sword, deep yawning wounds can
cause.
Still to mind I can recall,
In Europe what I learnt by heart:
But can the veil of Reason match
With joy that Presence can import.
From caravan you are adrift,
And night has donned a mantle black:
For you my song that burns as flame,
Like a torch, can light the track.
The tale of the Holy Shrine, if told,
Is simple, strange and red in hue:
With Ismail the tale begins
Ends with Husain, the martyr true.

43

The schools bestow no grace of fancy fine,
Cloisters impart no glow of Love Divine.
The goal that Travellers seek is far and wide,
Alas! There is no chief to lead and guide.
No less than Khyber, the war of faith and
land,
But warrior like Ali is not at hand.
Beyond the bounds of science for faithful
thrall
Is bliss of love and sight of God withal.
The chief of tavern thinks that West has raised
The house on shaking founds, whose walls
are glazed.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

44

Events as yet folded in the scroll of Time
Reflect in the mirror of my perception.
Neither the planets, nor the spinning skies—
Only my bold song—can tell you your
destiny.
Either my sighs are devoid of fire,
Or else your straw and thorns as yet retain
some sap;
Yet perchance my morning song
May quicken the fire that your dust
contains—

The dust that will break the spell of the
passing time one day,
Though it is entangled in the skein of Fate as
yet.

[Translated by the Editors]

45

To Lover's glowing fire and flame
The mystic order has no claim:
They don't discourse or talk of aught
Save wonders by their elders wrought.

Alas! The throne as well as the mat,
Alike are full of guile and craft:
Both royal hall and Holy Shrine
Have lost their essence fine.

The scrolls of Sufis and mullah may
Put them to shame on Judgment Day
Before the Throne of Judge Supreme
For being empty in extreme.

How can this world or next contain
The man not bound to one domain?
The East or West is not his home,
Not tied to Syrian Land or Rome.

Intoxication due to nightly wine,
No doubt, by now, is one decline,
But saki's glance still pricks the heart,
Like a swift and piercing dart.

My bitter notes with patience hark,
That I utter in this park:
Bear it in mind that passion too
Oft can work like elixir true.

More dear and precious song replete
With lightning's dazzling flash and heat
Than coffers full of yellow gold
That mighty kings and chiefs do hold.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

46

Intuition in the West was clever in its power,
But had not the plenitude for absolute abandon.

The quintessence of life is the force of faith
supreme—
It is a force denied to all our seats of learning.

The galaxies, the planets, the firmament, are all
Waiting for man's rise, like a star in heaven.

Brains are bright and hearts are dark and eyes
are bold,

Is this the sum and substance of what our age
has gained?

The world is a haystack for the fire of the Muslim
soul,

But if thou art eyeless, thou canst not find thy
way.

To a multitude of men, reason is the guide,
They know not that frenzy has a wisdom of
its own.

The world entire is a legacy of the Man of Faith:¹
I say it on the authority of *We would not have
created it.*

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

47

O manly heart, the goal you seek
Is hard to gain like gem unique:
Get firm resolve and freedom true,
If aim of life you wish to woo.

Like Sanjar great and Tughral just
To rule and conquer learn you must:
Or like a qalandar true and bold
The wont and way of monarch hold.

Farabi's thirst for lore beget,
Or Rumi's fever great and fret:
You need a thinker's lofty gaze,
Or Moses' passion to amaze.

Learn the wolfish tricks and guile,
Be like Franks in wit and wile:
Else own the passion of God's Hand,
Or strike the foes like Tartar band.

Act on Muslim law and rites,
Or sit in fane like acolytes:
Be it the Shrine or temple high,
Ever like a drunkard cry.

¹ Two lines, "The world entire...*would not have
created it,*" have been provided by the editors since
the translator had left them out.

In whatsoever state you be,
A fettered thrall or monarch free:
No wonder ever can be wrought,
With Love, if courage be not fraught.

48

A monarch's pomp and mighty arms
Can never give such glee,
As can be felt in presence of
A qalandar bold and free.

The world is like an idol house,
God's Friend, a person free:
No doubt, this subtle point is hid
In words, *No god but He.*

The world that you with effort make
To you belongs alone:
The world of brick and stone you see,
You cannot call your own.

The clay-made man is still among
The vagrants on the road,
Though man beyond the moon and stars
Can find his true abode.

This news I have received from those
Who rule the sea and land,
That Europe lies on course of flood
'Gainst which no one can stand.

A world there is quite fresh and new
In sighs at morn I have:
Your portion seek within its tracts,
Thus goal and aim achieve.

Count my gourd an immense gain,
For pure and sparkling wine
No more the seats of learning store
Nor sells the Sacred Shrine.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

49

On me no subtle brain though Nature spent,
My dust hides strength to dare the high
ascent—

That frantic dust whose eye outranges reason,
Dust by whose madness Gabriel's rose is rent;

That will not creep about its garden gathering
Straw for a nest—un-housed and yet content.

And Allah to this dust a gift of tears
Whose brightness shames the constellations, lent.

50

By men whose eyes see far and wide new
cities shall be founded:
Not by old Kufa or Baghdad is my thought's
vision bounded.

Rash youth, new-fangled learning, giddy
pleasure, gaudy plume,—
With these, while these still swarm, the
Frankish wine-shop is surrounded.

Not with philosopher, nor with priest, my
business; one lays waste
The heart, and one sows discord to keep mind
and soul confounded;

And for the Pharisee—far from this poor
worm be disrespect!
But how to enfranchise Man, is all the problem I
have sounded.

The fleshpots of the wealthy are for sale about
the world;
Who bears love's toils and pangs earns wealth
that God's hand has compounded.

I have laid bare such mysteries as the hermit
learns, that thought,
In cloister or in college, in true freedom may
be grounded.

No fastings of Mahatmas will destroy the
Brahmins' sway;
Vainly, when Moses holds no rod, have all his
words resounded!

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

51

To God the angels did complain
'Gainst Iqbal and did say
That rude and insolent is he,
Nature he paints much gay.

Though born of mud and water, yet
A god assumes to be:
Not bound to any home or land,
Of earthly ties is free.

To throngs of Heaven he has taught,
Like man, to fret and pine.
To clay-made man he fain would teach
The wont and mode divine.

52

Over the tussle of heart and head
Rumi has won and Rizi fled.

Still bowl of Jamshid is alive,
Without guile kingship cannot thrive.

Both you and I aren't Muslims true,
Though we say the prayers due.

I know the end of wrangle well
Where mullahs at each other yell.

Turkish and Arabic both are sweet,
For talk of Love all tongues are meet.

The breed of Azar idols make,
But Friends of God these idols break.

You are alive and live for aye
The rest is all a play with clay.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

53

Arise! The bugle calls! It is time to leave!
Woe be to the traveller who still awaits!

The confines of a monastery suit thee not—
The times have changed, thou seest, and so hast
thou.

Thorny is the path, O seeker of salvation!
Whether thy heart is the slave or the master of
reason.

The selfhood of one who bemoans all change,
Is yet a prisoner of time, shackled by days and
nights.

O songbird! Thy song is well rewarded when
It infuses fire into the rose's bloom.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

54

The Gnostic and the common throng
New life have gained through my song:
I have conferred relish fine

On them for Love's fiery wine.

Some Ajami near the Holy Shrine
Did sadly sing this song and pine,
"Alas! the robes by pilgrims worn
To threads and pieces now are torn."

The place of Husain, the Martyr great
Is fact, not bound to Space or Date,
Though the Syrians and the Kufis may
Often change their wont and way.

The gamblers who with you compete
Are deft of band and they can cheat:
Your fumbling shaky hands, I fear,
May bring about your ruin so drear.

No wonder If the Muslims gain
Their ancient glory once again—
Sanjar's splendour pomp and state,
The piety and *faqir* of mystics great.

The robe of art and lore I wear
Is through Your special bounty there:
You know my coarse and homely frame,
To honour great I have no claim.

55

Through many a stage the crescent goes
And then at last full moon it grows:
Perfection no one can attain,
Save by dint of strife and strain.

The bud that gets no share of light
From the sun that shines so bright,
And opens through its inner urge
Is bereft of life's full surge.

If your gaze of sins be free,
Then chaste and pure your heart shall be,
For God the Mighty has decreed
That heart shall follow and gaze shall lead.

The tulip red with heart afire
In avenue could not thrive and spire,
As this world of corn and wheat
For tulip wild could not be meet.

Great wars by Aibak and Ghauri fought
By the world are all forgot;
But the lays of Khusrau still
Our hearts with joy and pleasure fill.

56

In the maze of eve and morn,
O man awake, do not be lost:
Another world there yet exists
That has no future or the past.

None knows that tumult's worth and price
Which hidden lies in future's womb:
The mosque, the school and tavern too
Since long are silent like a tomb.

In tears shed at early morn
Is found the gem unique and best,
The gem, whose like is never held,
By mother shell within its breast.

The Culture New is nothing else
Save glamour false and show, indeed:
If the face be fair and bright,
Rouge vendors aid it does not need.

Much care and caution must he take,
Who sets the music of a song:
For oft the Voice Unseen inspires
Such airs as jarring are and wrong.

57

The cloisters, once the rearing place
Of daring men and royal breed,
Alas! Now nothing else impart—
To foxy ways they pay much heed.

The chiefs who lead the caravan train,
Of that virtue quite are blank,
Which is found in shepherd's task
And leads to Moses' noble rank.

How can the birds with voices sweet
The thrilling joy of song attain?
Alas! The birds in hostile mead
Cannot their breath for long sustain.

One type of rapture and surprise
Is darkness deep and pitch complete;
The other rapture and surprise
With love and knowledge is replete.

My thoughts sublime that soar aloft,
Like the flash of lightning, show the way;
Lest travellers in the dark of night
Should miss the track and go astray.

58

From Salman¹, singer sweet,
This subtle point I know:
That world is wide enough
For those who courage show.

A man can live without
The light of science and art;
But needs hawk's zeal for quest
And tiger's reckless heart.

Desist from imitation
Of peacock and nightingale:
The one is only hue,
The other chant and wail.

59

The crown, the throne, and mighty arms
By *faqr* are wrought these wonders all:
In short, it is the chief of chiefs
And king of other kings withal.

By means of learning mind and brain,
No doubt, become refined and pure:
Faqr makes the heart and gaze of man
From earthly filth and dross secure.

Scholar and sage knowledge makes,
But Christ and Moses by *faqr* are wrought:
To *faqr* the road is fully known,
Of road the scholar knows not aught.

The state of seeing *faqr* bestows,
But knowledge makes on new rely:
Rapture in *faqr* is virtue great,
Whereas in knowledge sin so high.

One God there is that knowledge owns
To other God *faqr* lays a claim:
No god but He, I do proclaim,
No god but He, I do proclaim.

On the whetting stone of *faqr*,
When sword of Self gets sharp and bright,
A single stroke by warrior bold
Can out an army big to flight.

¹ Iqbal's note— Salman [refers to] Masud Sa'ad Salman, the famous poet of the Ghaznavid era who was probably born in Lahore.

Within your clay, if there exist
A heart alive and wide awake,
The glass of sun and moon as well
One look of yours forthwith can break.

60

In my craze that knows no bound,
Of the Mosque I made the round:
Thank God that outer vest of Shrine
Still was left untorn and fine.

I wish good luck and pleasure great,
To all, of faith who always prate
But all the jurists of the town
With one accord upon me frown.

Men, like Plato, still roam about
Betwixt belief and utter doubt
Men endowed with reason, aye,
Ever on the heights do stay.

Unless the Book's each verse and part
Be revealed unto your heart,
Interpreters, though much profound,
Its subtle points cannot expound

The joy that Frankish wine does give
Lasts not for long nor always live,
Though scum at bottom of its bowl
Is always pure and never foul.

61

Knowledge and reason work in manner
strange,
In case of Love 'gainst heart and sight they
range.

The end of Muslim folk I know full well,
On theoretic points their preachers dwell.

Though bird of mead hovers my lodge around,
Yet has no share of my melodious sound.

The Turks, I hear, between the lines can read,
Who can this verse so odd convey with speed?

"You take the West for neighbour sweet and
dear,
Though Stars to land of yours are close and
near."

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

*

The rituals of the Sanctuary unsanctified!
The Church commercialized.
My torn apparel ought to be valued much,
For madness has become rare these days!

[Translated by the Editors]

*

O wave! Plunge headlong into the dark seas,
And change thyself with many a twist and
turn;
Thou wast not born for the solace of the shore;
Arise, untamed, and find a path for thyself.

*

Am I bound by space, or beyond space?
A world-observer or a world myself?
Let Him remain happy in His Infinitude,
But condescend to tell me where I am.

*

Confused is the nature of my love for Thee,
And more confused is my song in Thy praise;
For I sometimes do relish fulfillment,
At other times, a yearning in my heart.

*

I was in the solitude of selfhood lost,
And was, it seemed, unaware of the Presence;
I lifted not my eyes to see my Friend,
And, on the Day of Judgment, shamed myself.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

Faith, like Abraham, sits down in the fire;
To have faith is to be drawn into God and to
be oneself.
Listen, you captive of modern civilization,
To lack faith is worse than slavery!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

*

Arabian fervour has within it the Persian
melodies,
The hidden purpose of the Sanctuary is to
unify all nations.

Western thought is bereft of the idea of
Oneness,
Because the Western civilization has no
Ka'bah.

[Translated by M. Munawwar Mirza]¹

*

A restless heart throbs in every atom;
It has its abode, alone, in a multitude;
Impaled upon the wheel of days and nights,
It remains unchained by the tyranny of time.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

I wish someone saw how I play the flute—
The breath is Indian, the tune Arabian!
My vision has a taint of the Western style;
I am a Ghaznavi by temper, but my fate is
that of an Ayaz!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

*

Thy vision is not lofty, ethereal,
Thou dost not have the flight of a faith
inspired;
Thou mayest be of an eagle breed, no doubt,
Thou dost not have those bold, piercing eyes.

*

Neither the Muslim nor his power survives;
The Sufi has outlived his radiant soul;
Ask God for the heart and soul of men of the
past,
Become a fakir, first, to regain thy power.

*

Distracted are thy eyes in myriad ways;
Distracted is thy reason in many pursuits;
Forsake not, O heart, thy morning sighs!
Chanting His name, thou mayest save thy
soul.

*

Selfhood in the world of men is prophethood;
Selfhood in solitude is godliness;

¹ A few words have been altered for brevity.

The earth, the heavens, the great empyrean,
Are all within the range of selfhood's power.

*

The beauty of mystic love is shaped in song;
The majesty of mystic love is abandon;
The peak of mystic love is Hyder's power;
The decline of mystic love is Razi's word.

*

Where is the moving spirit of my life?
The thunder-bolt, the harvest of my life?
His place is in the solitude of the heart,
But I know not the place of the heart within.

*

Thy bosom has breath; it does not have a
heart;
Thy breath has not the warmth and fire of life;
Renounce the path of reason; it is a light
That brightens thy way; it is not thy Final
goal.

*

I am not a pursuer, nor a traveller,
I am not a goal, but a narrow track,
I am not a harvest, but a thunder-bolt,
Born to set fire to straw, buried in the dust.

*

Pure in nature thou art, thy nature is light;
Thou art the star in the firmament;
Thou not an eagle of the King of Men,
Thy preys are the nymphs and the angels
bright.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

They no longer have that passionate love—
Muslims are drained of blood.
The rows are uneven, the hearts adrift, the
prostration joyless—
All this because the inner feeling is dead!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

*

Dew-drops glisten on flowers that bloom in
the spring;
The breeze, the jasmine, and the rose have
failed
To raise the tumult of joy and liveliness,
For flowers here lack the spark and fire of life.

*

Conquer the world with the power of
selfhood,
And solve the riddle of the universe;
Be intimate with thy shores, like the sea,
But avoid the surf around the boundless deep.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

Reason makes the traveller sharp-sighted.
What is reason? It is a lamp that lights up our
path.
The commotion raging inside the house—
What does the traveller's lamp know of it!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

A PRAYER

(Written in the Mosque of Cordoba)

My invocations are sincere and true,
They form my ablutions and prayers due.
One glance of guide such joy and warmth can
grant,
On marge of stream can bloom the tulip plant.
One has no comrade on Love's journey long
Save fervent zeal, and passion great and
strong.
O God, at gates of rich I do not bow,
You are my dwelling place and nesting
bough.
Your Love in my breast burns like Doomsday
morn,
The cry, *He is God*, on my lips is born.

Your Love, makes me God, fret with pain and
pine,
You are the only quest and aim of mine.

Without You town appears devoid of life,
When present, same town appears astir with
strife.

For wine of gnosis I request and ask,
To get some dregs I break the cup and glass.

The mystics' gourds and commons' pitchers
wait
For liquor of your Grace and Bounty great.

Against Your godhead I have a genuine
plaint,
For You the Spaceless, while for me restraint.

Both verse and wisdom indicate the way
Which longing face to face can not convey.

[Translated by Syed Akbar Ali Shah]

*

The mystic's soul is like the morning breeze:
It freshens and renews life's inner meaning;
An illumined soul can be a shepherd's, who
Could hear the Voice of God at God's
command.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

THE MOSQUE OF CORDOBA

(Written in Spain, especially Cordoba)

The succession of day and night
Is the architect of events.
The succession of day and night
Is the fountain-head of life and death.
 The succession of day and night
 Is a two-tone silken twine,
 With which the Divine Essence
 Prepares Its apparel of Attributes.
The succession of day and night
Is the reverberation of the symphony of
Creation.
Through its modulations, the Infinite
demonstrates
The parameters of possibilities.
 The succession of day and night
Is the touchstone of the universe;

Now sitting in judgement on you,
Now setting a value on me.
But what if you are found wanting.
What if I am found wanting.
Death is your ultimate destiny.
Death is my ultimate destiny.

 What else is the reality of your days
 and nights,
 Besides a surge in the river of time,
 Sans day, sans night.
Frail and evanescent, all miracles of
ingenuity,

Transient, all temporal attainments;
Ephemeral, all worldly accomplishments.

 Annihilation is the end of all
 beginnings.
 Annihilation is the end of all ends.
Extinction, the fate of everything;
Hidden or manifest, old or new.

Yet in this very scenario

Indelible is the stamp of permanence
On the deeds of the good and godly.
 Deeds of the godly radiate with Love,
 The essence of life,
 Which death is forbidden to touch.

Fast and free flows the tide of time,
But Love itself is a tide that stems all tides.
 In the chronicle of Love there are times
 Other than the past, the present and the
 future;
 Times for which no names have yet
 been coined.

Love is the breath of Gabriel.

Love is the heart of Mustafa.

Love is the messenger of God.

Love is the Word of God.

 Love is ecstasy lends luster to earthly
 forms.

 Love is the heady wine,

 Love is the grand goblet.

Love is the commander of marching troops.

Love is a wayfarer with many a way-side
abode.

 Love is the plectrum that brings

 Music to the string of life.

 Love is the light of life.

 Love is the fire of life.

To Love, you owe your being,
 O, Harem of Cordoba,
 To Love, that is eternal;
 Never waning, never fading.
 Just the media these pigments, bricks
 and stones;
 This harp, these words and sounds, just
 the media.
 The miracle of art springs from the
 lifeblood of the artist!
 A droplet of the lifeblood
 Transforms a piece of dead rock into a living
 heart;
 An impressive sound, into a song of
 solicitude,
 A refrain of rapture or a melody of mirth.
 The aura you exude, illumines the
 heart.
 My plaint kindles the soul.
 You draw the hearts to the Presence
 Divine,
 I inspire them to bloom and blossom.
 No less exalted than the Exalted Throne,
 Is the throne of the heart, the human breast!
 Despite the limit of azure skies,
 Ordained for this handful of dust.
 Celestial beings, born of light,
 Do have the privilege of supplication,
 But unknown to them
 Are the verve and warmth of
 prostration.
 An Indian infidel, perchance, am I;
 But look at my fervour, my ardour.
 'Blessings and peace upon the Prophet,' sings
 my heart.
 'Blessings and peace upon the Prophet,' echo
 my lips.
 My song is the song of aspiration.
 My lute is the serenade of longing.
 Every fibre of my being
 Resonates with the refrains of *Allah hoo!*
 Your beauty, your majesty,
 Personify the graces of the man of faith.
 You are beautiful and majestic.
 He too is beautiful and majestic.
 Your foundations are lasting,
 Your columns countless,

Like the profusion of palms
 In the plains of Syria.
 Your arches, your terraces, shimmer with the
 light
 That once flashed in the valley of Aiman
 Your soaring minaret, all aglow
 In the resplendence of Gabriel's glory.
 The Muslim is destined to last
 As his *Azan* holds the key to the
 mysteries
 Of the perennial message of Abraham
 and Moses.
 His world knows no boundaries,
 His horizon, no frontiers.
 Tigris, Danube and Nile:
 Billows of his oceanic expanse.
 Fabulous, have been his times!
 Fascinating, the accounts of his
 achievements!
 He it was, who bade the final adieu
 To the outworn order.
 A cup-bearer is he,
 With the purest wine for the connoisseur;
 A cavalier in the path of Love
 With a sword of the finest steel.
 A combatant, with *la ilah*
 As his coat of mail.
 Under the shadow of flashing
 scimitars,
 La ilah is his protection.
 Your edifice unravels
 The mystery of the faithful;
 The fire of his fervent days,
 The bliss of his tender nights.
 Your grandeur calls to mind
 The loftiness of his station,
 The sweep of his vision,
 His rapture, his ardour, his pride, his
 humility.
 The might of the man of faith
 Is the might of the Almighty:
 Dominant, creative, resourceful, consummate.
 He is terrestrial with celestial aspect;
 A being with the qualities of the
 Creator.
 His contented self has no demands
 On this world or the other.

His desires are modest; his aims exalted;
His manner charming; his ways winsome.
 Soft in social exposure,
 Tough in the line of pursuit.
But whether in fray or in social
 gathering,
 Ever chaste at heart, ever clean in
 conduct.
In the celestial order of the macrocosm,
His immutable faith is the centre of the Divine
 Compass.
All else: illusion, sorcery, fallacy.
 He is the journey's end for reason,
 He is the *raison d'être* of Love.
 An inspiration in the cosmic
 communion.
O, Mecca of art lovers,
You are the majesty of the true tenet.
You have elevated Andalusia
To the eminence of the holy Harem.
 Your equal in beauty,
 If any under the skies,
 Is the heart of the Muslim
 And no one else.
Ah, those men of truth,
Those proud cavaliers of Arabia;
Endowed with a sublime character,
Imbued with candour and conviction.
 Their reign gave the world an
 unfamiliar concept;
 That the authority of the brave and
 spirited
 Lay in modesty and simplicity,
 Rather than pomp and regality.
Their sagacity guided the East and the West.
In the dark ages of Europe,
It was the light of their vision
That lit up the tracks.
 A tribute to their blood it is,
 That the Andalusians, even today,
 Are effable and warm-hearted,
 Ingenuous and bright of countenance.
Even today in this land,
Eyes like those of gazelles are a common
 sight.
And darts shooting out of those eyes,
Even today, are on target.

Its breeze, even today,
Is laden with the fragrance of Yemen.
Its music, even today,
Carries strains of melodies from Hijaz.
Stars look upon your precincts as a piece of
 heaven.
But for centuries, alas!
Your porticoes have not resonated
With the call of the *muezzin*.
 What distant valley, what way-side abode
 Is holding back
 That valiant caravan of rampant Love.
Germany witnessed the upheaval of religious
 reforms
That left no trace of the old perspective.
 Infallibility of the church sage began to
 ring false.
 Reason, once more, unfurled its sails.
France too went through its revolution
That changed the entire orientation of
 Western life.
 Followers of Rome,
 Feeling antiquated worshipping the
 ancientry,
 Also rejuvenated themselves
 With the relish of novelty.
The same storm is raging today
In the soul of the Muslim.
A Divine secret it is,
Not for the lips to utter.
 Let us see what surfaces
 From the depths of the deep.
 Let us see what colour
 The blue sky changes into.
Clouds in the yonder valley
Are drenched in roseate twilight.
The parting sun has left behind
Mounds and mounds of rubies, the best from
 Badakhshan.
 Simple and doleful is the song
 Of the peasant's daughter:
 Tender feelings adrift in the tide of
 youth.

O, the ever-flowing waters of Guadalquivir¹,
Someone on your banks
Is seeing a vision of some other period of
time.

Tomorrow is still in the womb of
intention,
But its dawn is flashing before my
mind's eye.

Were I to lift the veil
From the profile of my reflections,
The West would be dazzled by its brilliance.

Life without change is death.
The tumult and turmoil of revolution
Keep the soul of a nation alive.

Keen, as a sword in the hands of Destiny
Is the nation

That evaluates its actions at each step.

Incomplete are all creations
Without the lifeblood of the creator.
Soulless is the melody
Without the lifeblood of the maestro.

[Translated by Saleem A. Gilani]

MU'TAMID'S LAMENT IN PRISON

Mu'tamid was the king of Seville and an Arabic poet. He was defeated and imprisoned by a ruler of Spain. Mu'tamid's poems have been translated into English and published in the Wisdom of the East series.

In my breast,
A wail of grief,
Without any spark or flash,
Alone survives,
Passionless, ineffectual.
A free man is in prison today,
Without a spear or a sword;
Regret overwhelms me
And also my strategy.
My heart
Is drawn by instinct to chains.
Perhaps my sword was of the same steel.
Once I had a two-edged sword—
It turned into the chains that shackle me now.

¹ Note from Iqbal—"The well-known river of Cordoba, near which the Mosque is located."

How whimsical and indifferent
Is the Author of fates.

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

FIRST DATE TREE SEEDED BY ABDUL RAHMAN THE FIRST

These verses from Abdul Rahman the First are quoted in Tarikh al Muqqari. The following Urdu poem is a liberal translation (the tree mentioned here was planted in Madinatut Zahra)

You are the apple of my eye,
My heart's delight:
I am remote from my valley,
To me you are the Burning Bush of Sinai!
You are a houri of the Arabian Desert,
Nursed by the Western breeze.
I feel homesick in exile,
You feel homesick in exile:
Prosper in this strange land!
May the morning dew quench your thirst!

The world presents a strange sight:
The vision's mantle is torn apart—
May valour struggle with the waves if it must,
The other side of the river is not to be seen!
Life owes itself to the heat of one's soul:
Flame does not rise from dust.
The Syrian evening's fallen star
Shined brighter in the exile's dawn.
There are no frontiers for the Man of Faith,
He is at home everywhere.

[Translated by the Editors]

*

That blood of pristine vigour is no more;
That yearning heart's power is no more;
Prayer, fasting, *hajj*, sacrifice survive,
But in thee nature's old dower is no more.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

SPAIN

(Written in Spain—on the way back)

Spain! You are the trustee of the Muslim
blood:
In my eyes you are sanctified like the Harem.

Prints of prostration lie hidden in your dust,
Silent calls to prayers in your morning air.
In your hills and vales were the tents of those,
The tips of whose lances were bright like the
stars.

Is more henna needed by your pretties?
My lifeblood can give them some colour!
How can a Muslim be put down by the straw
and grass,
Even if his flame has lost its heat and fire!
My eyes watched Granada as well,
But the traveller's content neither in journey
nor in rest:
I saw as well as showed, I spoke as well as
listened,
Neither seeing nor learning brings calm to the
heart!

*

The veiled secrets are becoming manifest—
Bygone the days of *you cannot see Me*;
Whosoever finds his self first,
Is Mahdi himself, the Guide of the Last Age.

[Translated by the Editors]

TARIQ'S PRAYER

(In the Battlefield of Andalusia)

These warriors, victorious,
These worshippers of Thine,
Whom Thou hast granted the will
To win power in Thy name;
Who cleave rivers and woods in twain,
Whose terror turns mountains into dust;
They care not for the world;
They care not for its pleasures;
In their passion, in their zeal,
In their love for Thee, O Lord,
They aim at martyrdom,
Not the rule of the earth.
Thou hast united warring tribes,
In thought, in deed, in prayer.
The burning fire that life had sought
For centuries, was found in them at last.

They think of death, not as life's end,
But as the ennobling of the heart.

Awaken in them an iron will,
And make their eye a sharpened sword.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

*

This revolution of time is eternal;
Only you are real, the rest is nothing but tales
and legends.

No one has ever seen yesterday or tomorrow:
Today is the only time that is yours!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

LENIN

(Before God)

All space and all that breathes bear witness;
truth

It is indeed; Thou art, and dost remain.
How could I know that God was or was not,
Where Reason's reckonings shifted hour by
hour?

The peerer at planets, the counter-up of
plants,
Heard nothing there of Nature's infinite
music;

To-day I witnessing acknowledge realms
That I once thought the mummery of the
Church.

We, manacled in the chains of day and night!
Thou, moulder of all time's atoms, builder of
aeons!

Let me have leave to ask this question, one
Not answered by the subtleties of the schools,
That while I lived under the sky-tent's roof
Like a thorn rankled in my heart, and made
Such chaos in my soul of all its thoughts
I could not keep my tumbling words in
bounds.

Oh, of what mortal race art Thou the God?
Those creatures formed of dust beneath these
heavens?

Europe's pale cheeks are Asia's pantheon,
And Europe's pantheon her glittering metals.
A blaze of art and science lights the West

With darkness that no Fountain of Life
 dispels;
 In high-reared grace, in glory and in
 grandeur,
 The towering Bank out-tops the cathedral
 roof;
 What they call commerce is a game of dice
 For one, profit, for millions swooping death.
 There science, philosophy, scholarship,
 government,
 Preach man's equality and drink men's blood;
 Naked debauch, and want, and
 unemployment—
 Are these mean triumphs of the Frankish arts!
 Denied celestial grace a nation goes
 No further than electricity or steam;
 Death to the heart, machines stand sovereign,
 Engines that crush all sense of human
 kindness.
 --Yet signs are counted here and there that
 Fate,
 The chess-player, has check-mated all their
 cunning.
 The Tavern shakes, its warped foundations
 crack,
 The Old Men of Europe sit there numb with
 fear;
 What twilight flush is left those faces now
 Is paint and powder, or lent by flask and cup.
 Omnipotent, righteous, Thou; but bitter the
 hours,
 Bitter the labourer's chained hours in Thy
 world!
 When shall this galley of gold's dominion
 flounder?
 Thy world Thy day of wrath, Lord, stands
 and waits.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

SONG OF THE ANGLES

As yet the Reason is unbridled, and Love is on
 the road:
 O Architect of Eternity! Your design is
 incomplete.

Drunkards, jurists, princes and priests all sit
 in ambush upon Your common folk:
 The days in Your world haven't changed as
 yet.
 Your rich are too unmindful, Your poor too
 content—
 The slave as yet frets in the street, the master's
 walls are still too high.
 Learning, religion, science and art are all
 means to fulfill lust:
 The grace of Love—the redeemer—is not as
 yet bestowed upon all.
 The essence of Life is Love, the essence of
 Love is the self;
 Alas! This cutting sword as yet rests in the
 sheath!

[Translated by the Editors]

GOD'S COMMAND

(To His Angels)

Rise, and from their slumber wake the poor
 ones of My world!
 Shake the walls and windows of the mansions
 of the great!
 Kindle with the fire of faith the slow blood of
 the slaves!
 Make the fearful sparrow bold to meet the
 falcon's hate!
 Close the hour approaches of the kingdom of
 the poor—
 Every imprint of the past find and annihilate!
 Find the field whose harvest is no peasant's
 daily bread—
 Garner in the furnace every ripening ear of
 wheat!
 Banish from the house of God the mumbling
 priest whose prayers
 Like a veil creation from Created separate!
God by man's prostrations, by man's vows idols
 cheated—
 Quench at once My shrine and their fane the
 sacred light!
 Rear for me another temple, build its walls
 with mud—

Wearied of their columned marbles, sickened
 is My sight!
 All their fine new world a workshop filled
 with brittle glass—
 Go! My poet of the East to madness dedicate.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

*

Theorizing is the infidelity of the self:
 To be a Moses is the secret of the self;
 Let me tell you the mystery of *faqr* as well as
 power:
 Guard your self while in poverty.

[Translated by the Editors]

ECSTASY

(Most of these verses were written in Palestine)

I could not go to my friends empty-
 handed
 From an orchard!

—Saadi

Life to passion and ecstasy—sunrise in the
 desert:
 Luminous brooks are flowing from the
 fountain of the rising sun.
 The veil of being is torn, Eternal Beauty
 reveals itself:
 The eye is dazzled but the soul is richly
 endowed.
 The heavy night-cloud has left behind it red
 and blue cloudlets:
 It has given a head-dress of various hues to
 the Mount Idam to wear.
 Air is clean of dust particles; leaves of date-
 palms have been washed;
 The sand around Kazimah is soft like velvet.
 The remains of burnt-out fire are observable
 here and a piece of tent-rope there:
 Who knows how many caravans have passed
 through this tract.
 I heard the angel Gabriel saying to me: This
 indeed is your station—
 For those acquainted with the pleasure of
 separation, this is the everlasting comfort.

To whom should I say that the wine of life is
 poison to me:
 I have new experiences while the universe is
 decadent entire.
 Is there not another Ghaznavi in the factory of
 Life?—
 The Somnaths of the People of the Harem
 have been awaiting a blow for long.
 The Arabian fervour and the Persian comfort
 Have both lost the Arabian acuteness and the
 Persian imagination.
 The Caravan of Hijaz has not another Husain
 amongst it—
 Although the tresses of the Tigris and the
 Euphrates are still as bright as ever.
 Intellect, heart and vision, all must take their
 first lessons from Love—
 Religion and the religious law breed idols of
 illusion if there is no Love.
 The truthfulness of Abraham is but a form of
 Love, and so is the patience of Husain—
 And so are Badr and Hunayn in the battle of
 existence.

The universe is a verse of God and you are the
 meaning to be grasped at last;
 Colour and scent are the caravans that set
 forth to seek you.
 The disciples in the schools are insipid and
 purblind;
 The esoteric of the monastery have low aims
 with empty bowls;
 I—whose *ghazal* reflects the flame that has
 been lost,
 All my life I pined after the type of men that
 exists no more.
 The zephyr nurtures thorn and straw,
 While my breath nurtures passion in hearts;
 My song thrives upon my lifeblood:
 The strings of the instrument become alive
 with the blood of the musician.
 Give not occasion for conturbation to this
 restless heart;
 Bright are your tresses, brighten them even
 more.

You are the Sacred Tablet, You are the Pen
and the Book;
This blue-colored dome is a bubble in the sea
that you are.
You are the lifeblood of the universe:
You bestowed the illumination of a sun upon
the particles of desert dust.
The splendour of Sanjar and Selim: a mere
hint of your majesty;
The *faqr* of Junaid and Bayazid: your beauty
unveiled.
If my prayers are not led by my passion for
you,
My ovation as well as my prostrations would
be nothing but veils upon my soul.
A meaningful glance from you redeemed both
of them:
Reason—the seeker in separation; and Love—
the restless one in Presence.
The world has become dark since the sun has
set down;
Unveil your beauty to dawn upon this age.
You are a witness on my life so far:
I did not know that Knowledge is a tree that
bears no fruit.
The old battle was then revived in my
conscience:
Love, all Mustafa; Reason, all Abu Lahab.
It persuaded me with art, it pulled me by
force:
Strange is Love at the beginning, strange in its
perfection!
Separation is greater than union in the state of
ecstasy;
For union is death to desire while separation
brings the pleasure of longing.
In the midst of the union I dared not cast a
glance;
Though my audacious eye was looking for a
pretence.
Separation is the warmth of hot-pursuit; it is
at the heart of fond lamentation—
It is why the wave is in search; it is why the
pearl is precious.

[Translated by the Editors]

THE MOTH AND THE FIREFLY

THE MOTH

The firefly is so far removed
From the status of the moth!
Why is it so proud
Of a fire that cannot burn?

THE FIREFLY

God be thanked a hundred times, That I am
not a moth—
That I am no beggar
Of alien fire!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

TO JAVID

A nation's life is illumined by selfhood,
Selfhood is the pathway to everlasting life.

This one thing that Adam is not without the
Purpose—
A manifold life, a manifold leisure!¹

Earth-bound crows cannot aspire to the
eagle's flights,
But they corrupt the eagle's lofty, noble
habits.

May God make thee a virtuous, blameless
youth;
Thou livest in an age deprived of decency.

Iqbal was not at ease in a monastery,
For he is bright, and sprightly, and full of wit,

MENDICANCY

A witty man in a tavern spoke with a tongue
untamed:
"The ruler of our state is a beggar unashamed;
How many go bare-headed to deck him with
a crown?
How many go naked to supply his golden
gown?
The blood of the poor turns into his red wine;
And they starve so that he may in luxury
dine.

¹ Two lines, "This one thing...a manifold leisure!" have been provided by the editors. The translator left them out.

The epicure's table is loaded with delights,
Stolen from the needy, stripped of all their
rights.
He is a beggar who begs money, be it large or
small,
Kings with royal pomp and pride, in fact, are
beggars all."

—Adapted from Anvari

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

HEAVEN AND THE PRIEST

Being present there, my impetuous tongue
To silence I could not resign
When an order from God of admission on
high
Came the way of that reverend divine;
I humbly addressed the Almighty: O Lord,
Excuse this presumption of mine,
But he'll never relish the virgins of heaven,
The garden's green borders, the wine!
For paradise isn't place for a preacher
To meddle and meddle and mangle,
And he, pious man—second nature to him
Is the need to dispute and to jangle;
His business has been to set folk by the ears
And get nations and sects in a tangle:
Up there in the sky is no Mosque and no
Church
And no Temple—with whom will he
wrangle?

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

CHURCH AND STATE

Monasticism was the church's base
Its austere living had no room for wealth.
The anchorite and the king have ever been
hostile;
One has humility; the other an exalted power.
Church and state were separated at last;
The revered priest was rendered powerless.
When church and state parted the ways for
ever,
It set in the rule of avarice and greed.
This split is a disaster both for country and
faith,
And shows the culture's blind lack of vision.

It is the miracle of a desert-dweller
To make the grace a mirror to power.¹
Mankind's deliverance lies in the unity
Of those who rule the body and those who
rule the soul.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

THE EARTH IS GOD'S

Who rears the seed in the darkness of the
earth?
Who lifts the cloud up from the ocean's
waves?
Who summoned from the West the fruitful
wind?
Whose soil is this? Or whose that light of the
sun?
Who filled the grain like pearls, the ripe corn's
ear?
Who taught the months by instruction to
revolve?
Landlord! This broad plough-land is not
thine, it is not thine;
Nor thy father's land; it is not thine, it is not
mine.

[Translated by Sir Abdul Qadir]

TO A YOUNG MAN

Thy sofas are from Europe, thy carpets from
Iran;
This slothful opulence evokes my sigh of pity.
In vain if thou possessest Khusroe's imperial
pomp,
If thou dost not possess prowess or
contentment.
Seek not thy joy or greatness in the glitter of
Western life,
For in contentment lies a Muslim's joy and
greatness.
When an eagle's spirit awakens in youthful
hearts,
It sees its luminous goal beyond the starry
heavens.

¹ Two lines, "It is the miracle...to the power," have been provided by the editors since the translator had left them out.

Despair not, for despair is the decline of
 knowledge and gnosis:
 The Hope of a Believer is among the
 confidants of God.¹
 Thy abode is not on the dome of a royal palace;
 Thou art an eagle and shouldst live on the
 rocks of mountains.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

COUNSEL

An eagle full of years to a young hawk said—
 Easy your royal wings through high heaven
 spread:
 To burn in the fire of our own veins is youth!
 Strive, and in strife make honey of life's gall;
 Maybe the blood of the pigeon you destroy,
 My son, is not what makes your swooping
 joy!

POPPY OF THE WILDERNESS

Oh blue sky-dome, oh world companionless!
 Fear comes on me in this wide desolation.
 Lost travellers, you and I; what destination
 Is yours, bright poppy of the wilderness?
 No prophet walks these hills, or we might
 be
 Twin Sinai-flames; you bloom on Heaven's
 spray
 For the same cause I tore myself away:
 To unfold; to be our selves, our wills agree.
 On the diver of Love's pearl-bank be God's
 hand—
 In every ocean-drop all ocean's deeps!
 The whirlpool mourning for its lost wave
 weeps,
 Born of the sea and never to reach the land.
 Man's hot blood makes earth's fevered
 pulses race,
 With stars and sun for audience. Oh cool
 air
 Of the desert! Let it be mine too to share
 In silence and heart-glow, rapture and grace.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

¹ Two lines, "Despair not...confidants of God,"
 have been provided by the editors since the
 translator had left them out.

*

Iqbal recited once in a garden in Spring
 A couplet cheerful and bright in tone and
 spirit:
 Unlike the rose, I need no breeze to blossom.,
 My soul doth blossom with my ecstasy.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

SAKINAMA

Spring's caravan has pitched its tent
 At the foot of the mountain, making it
 Look like the fabled garden of Iram
 With a riot of flowers—iris, rose,
 Narcissus, lily, eglantine,
 And tulip in its martyr's gory shroud.
 The landscape is all covered with
 A multicoloured sheet, and colour flows
 Even in the veins of stones like blood.
 The breezes blow intoxicatingly
 In a blue sky, so that the birds
 Do not feel like remaining in their nests
 And fly about. Look at that hill-stream. How
 It halts and bends and glides and swings
 around,
 And then, collecting itself, surges up
 And rushes on. Should it be stemmed, it
 would
 Cut open the hills' hearts and burst the rocks.
 This hill-stream, my fair saki, has
 A message to give us concerning life.
 Attune me to this message and,
 Come, let us celebrate the spring,
 Which comes but once a year.
 Give me that wine whose heat
 Burns up the veils of hidden things,
 Whose light illuminates life's mind,
 Whose strength intoxicates the universe,
 Whose effervescence was Creation's source.
 Come lift the veil off mysteries,
 And make a mere wagtail take eagles on.
 The times have changed; so have their signs.
 New is the music, and so are the instruments.
 The magic of the West has been exposed,
 And the magician stands aghast.
 The politics of the ancient regime
 Are in disgrace: world is tired of kings.

The age of capitalism has passed,
 The juggler, having shown his tricks, has
 gone.
 The Chinese are awaking from their heavy
 sleep.
 Fresh springs are bubbling forth from
 Himalayan heights.
 Cut open is the heart of Sinai and Faran,
 And Moses waits for a renewed theophany.
 The Muslim, zealous though about God's
 unity,
 Still wears the Hindu's sacred thread around
 his heart.
 In culture, mysticism, canon law
 And dialectical theology—
 He worships idols of non-Arab make.
 The truth has been lost in absurdities,
 And in traditions is this *ummah* rooted still.
 The preacher's sermon may beguile your
 heart,
 But there is no sincerity, no warmth in it.
 It is a tangled skein of lexical complexities,
 Sought to be solved by logical dexterity.
 The Sufi, once foremost in serving God,
 Unmatched in love and ardency of soul,
 Has got lost in the maze of Ajam's ideas:
 At half-way stations is this traveller stuck.
 Gone out is the fire of love. O how sad!
 The Muslim is a heap of ashes, nothing more.

O Saki, serve me that old wine again,
 Let that old cup go round once more.
 Lend me the wings of Love and make me fly.
 Turn my dust to fireflies that flit about.
 Free young men's minds from slavery,
 And make them mentors of the old.
 The *millat's* tree is green thanks to your sap:
 You are its body's breath.
 Give it the strength to vibrate and to throb;
 Lend it the heart of Murtaza, the fervour of
 Siddiq.
 Drive that old arrow through its heart
 Which will revive desire in it.
 Blest be the stars of Your heavens; blest be
 Those who spend their nights praying to You.
 Endow the young with fervent souls;
 Grant them my vision and my love.
 I am a boat in a whirlpool, stuck in one place.

Rescue me and grant me mobility.
 Tell me about the mysteries of life and death,
 For Your eye spans the universe.
 The sleeplessness of my tear-shedding eyes;
 The restless yearnings hidden in my heart;
 The prayerfulness of my cries at midnight;
 My melting into tears in solitude and
 company;
 My aspirations, longings and desires;
 My hopes and quests; my mind that mirrors
 the times
 (A field for thought's gazelles to roam);
 My heart, which is a battlefield of life,
 Where legions of doubt war with faith—
 O Saki, these are all my wealth;
 Possessing them, I am rich in my poverty.
 Distribute all these riches in my caravan,
 And let them come to some good use.

In constant motion is the sea of life.
 All things display life's volatility.
 It is life that puts bodies forth,
 Just as a whiff of smoke becomes a flame.
 Unpleasant to it is the company
 Of matter, but it likes to see
 Its striving to improve itself.
 It is fixed, yet in motion, straining at
 The leash to get free of the elements.
 A unity imprisoned in diversity,
 It is unique in every form and shape.
 This world, this sex-dimensioned idol-house,
 This Somnat is all of its fashioning.
 It is not its way to repeat itself:
 You are not I, I am not you.
 With you and me and others it has formed
 Assemblies, but is solitary in their midst.
 It shines in lightning, in the stars,
 In silver, gold and mercury.
 Its is the wilderness, its are the trees,
 Its are the roses, its are the thorns.
 It pulverises mountains with its might,
 And captures Gabriel and houris in its noose.
 There is a silver-grey, brave falcon here,
 Its talons covered with the blood of
 partridges,
 And over there, far from its nest,
 A pigeon helplessly aflutter in a snare.

Stability is an illusion of eyes,
 For every atom in the world pulsates with
 change.
 The caravan of life does not halt anywhere,
 For every moment life renews itself.
 Do you think life is great mystery?
 No, it is only a desire to soar aloft.
 It has seen many ups and downs,
 But likes to travel rather than to reach the
 goal;
 For travelling is life's outfit: it
 Is real, while rest is appearance, nothing
 more.
 Life loves to tie up knots and then unravel
 them.
 Its pleasure lies in throbbing and in fluttering.
 When it found itself face to face with death,
 It learned that it was hard to ward it off.
 So it descended to this world,
 Where retribution is the law,
 And lay in wait for death.
 Because of its love of duality,
 It sorted all things out in pairs,
 And then arose, host after host,
 From mountains and from wilderness.
 It was a branch from which flowers kept
 Shedding and bursting forth afresh.
 The ignorant think that life's impress is
 Ephemeral, but it fades only to emerge anew.
 Extremely fleet-footed,
 It reaches its goal instantly.
 From time's beginning to its end
 Is but one moment's way for it.
 Time, chain of days and nights, is nothing but
 A name for breathing in and breathing out.
 What is this whiff of air called breath?
 A sword, and selfhood is that sword's sharp
 edge.
 What is the self? Life's inner mystery,
 The universe's waking up.
 The self, drunk with display, is also fond
 Of solitude;—an ocean in a drop.
 It shines in light and darkness both;
 Displayed in individuals, yet free from them.
 Behind it is eternity without
 Beginning, and before it is
 Eternity without an end;

It is unlimited both ways.
 Swept on by the waves of time's stream,
 And at the mercy of their buffeting,
 It yet changes the course of its quest
 constantly,
 Renewing its way of looking at things.
 For it huge rocks are light as air:
 It smashes mountains into shifting sand.
 Both its beginning and its end are journeying,
 For constant motion is its being's law.
 It is a ray of light in the moon and
 A spark in stone. It dwells
 In colours, but is colourless itself.
 It has nothing to do with more or less,
 With light and low, with fore and aft.
 Since time's beginning it was struggling to
 emerge,
 And finally emerged in the dust that is man.
 It is in your heart that the Self has its abode,
 As the sky is reflected in the pupil of the eye.
 To one who treasures his self, bread
 Won at the cost of self-respect is gall.
 He values only bread he gains with head held
 high.
 Abjure the pomp and might of a Mahmud;
 Preserve your self, do not be an Ayaz.
 Worth offering is only that prostration which
 Makes all others forbidden acts.
 This world, this riot of colours and of sounds,
 Which is under the sway of death,
 This idol-house of eye and ear,
 In which to live is but to eat and drink,
 Is nothing but the Self's initial stage.
 O traveller, it is not your final goal.
 The fire that is you has not come
 Out of this heap of dust.
 You have not come out of this world;
 It has come out of you.
 Smash up this mountainous blockade,
 Go further on and break out of
 This magic ring of time and space.
 God's lion is the self;
 Its quarry are both earth and sky.
 There are a hundred worlds still to appear,
 For Being's mind has not drained
 Of its creative capabilities.

All latent worlds are waiting for releasing
blows
From your dynamic action and exuberant
thought.

It is the purpose of the revolution of the
spheres
That your selfhood should be revealed to you.
You are the conqueror of this world
Of good and evil. How can I tell you
The whole of your long history?
Words are but a strait-jacket for reality:
Reality is a mirror, and speech
The coating that makes it opaque.
Breath's candle is alight within my breast,
But my power of utterance cries halt.
*Should I fly even a hairbreadth too high,
The blaze of glory would burn up my wings.*

[Translated by M. Hadi Husain]

TIME

What was, has faded: what is, is fading: but of
these words few can tell the worth;
Time still is gaping with expectation of what
is nearest its hour of birth.
New tidings slowly come drop by drop from
my pitcher gurgling of time's new sights,
As I count over the beads strung out on my
threaded rosary of days and nights.
With each man friendly, with each I vary, and
have a new part at my command:
To one the rider, to one the courser, to one the
whiplash of reprimand.
If in the circle you were not numbered, was it
your own fault or mine?
To humour no-one am I accustomed to keep
untasted the midnight wine!
No planet-gazer can ever see through my
winding mazes; for when the eye
That aims it sees by no lights from Heaven,
the arrow wavers and glances by.
That is no dawn at the Western skyline—it is
a bloodbath, that ruddy glow!
Await to-morrow; our yesterday and to-day
are legends of long ago.
From Nature's forces their reckless science
has stripped the garments away, until

At last its own nesting-place is scorched by
the restless lightning it cannot still:
To them the trade-wind belongs, the sky-way,
to them the ocean, to them the ship—
It shall not serve them to calm the whirlpool
by which their fate holds them in its grip!
But now a new world is being born, while this
old one sinks out of sight of men,
This world the gamblers of Europe turned
into nothing else than a gambling-den.
That man will still keep his lantern burning,
however tempests blow strong and cold,
Whose soul is centred on high, whose temper
the Lord has cast in the royal mould.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

THE ANGELS BID FAREWELL TO ADAM

You have been given the restlessness of Day
and Night,
We know not whether you are made of clay
or mercury;
We hear you are created from clay,
But in your nature is the glitter of Stars and
Moon.
Your sleep would be preferable over much
wakefulness
If you could behold your own beauty even in
a dream!
Your morning sighs are invaluable
For they are the water to your ancient tree.
Your melody unravels the secret of life
For it is Nature that has attuned your organ.

[Translated by the Editors]¹

ADAM IS RECEIVED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

Open thy eyes and look above,
Look at the streak of dawn;
Look at the veiling of the vision;
Look at the banishment unfair;
Look at the battle of hope and fear.

¹ Based on a translation provided by S.A. Vahid in 'Iqbal and Western Poets' in *Iqbal Poet-Philosopher of the East* (1971), edited by Hafeez Malik.

Thine are the clouds, the rains, the skies,
 Thine are the winds, the storms,
 The woods, the mountains, the rivers are
 thine;
 The world of the angels was a void;
 Look at the peopled earth, which is thine.

Thou wilt rule it like a king;
 The stars will gaze in wonder;
 Thy vision will encompass the earth;
 Thy sighs will reach the heavens;
 Look at the power of thy pain and passion.

The spark in thee is a radiant sun;
 A new world lives in thee;
 Thou carest not for a borrowed heaven;
 Thy life-blood has it concealed;
 Look at the reward of anguish and toil.

Thy lyre has an eternal plaintive string,
 Panting with the passion of love;
 Thou guardest eternal secrets divine,
 And livest a life of obedient power;
 Look at the world as shaped by thy will.

*

My nature is like the fresh breeze of morn:
 Gentle sometimes, at other times strong;
 I give a velvet mantle to flower petals,
 And to prickly thorns, the sharpness of the
 needle.

THE MENTOR AND THE DISCIPLE

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Discerning eyes bleed in pain,
 For faith is ruined by knowledge in this age.

RUMI

Fling it on the body, and knowledge
 becomes a serpent;
 Fling it on the heart, and it becomes a friend.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE:

Master of love; of God!
 I do remember thy noble words:
 'Wherefrom comes this Friendly voice—
 Thin, feeble, and dry as a reed?'
 The world today has an eternal sadness,
 With neither joy, nor love, nor certitude,

What doth it know about this mystery—
 Who is the friend, and what is the friend's
 voice?
 The sound of music is a dirge
 In the West's crumbling pageant.

RUMI

Every ear is not attuned to the word of
 truth,
 As a fig suits not the palate of every bird.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

I have mastered knowledge of both the East
 and the West,
 My soul suffers still in agony.

RUMI

Quacks sicken you more;
 Come to us for a cure.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Thy glance of wisdom brightens my heart;
 Explain to me the order for *jihad*.

RUMI

Break the image of God by the command of
 God,
 Break the friend's glass, with the friend's stone.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Oriental eyes are dazzled by the West;
 Western nymphs are fairer than those in
 Paradise.

RUMI

Silver glisters white and new,
 But blackens the hands and clothes.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

The warm-blooded youths in schools,
 Alas, are victims of Western magic!

RUMI

When an unfledged bird begins its flight,
 It becomes a ready feline morsel.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

How long this clash between church and
 state?
 Is the body superior to the soul?

RUMI

Coins may jingle at night,
But gold waits for the morrow.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Tell me about the secret of man,
Tell how dust is a peer of the stars.

RUMI

His outside dies of an insect's bite,
His inside roams the seven heavens.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Dust with thy help has a luminous eye,
Is man's purpose knowledge or vision?

RUMI

Man is perception; the rest is skin;
Perception is the perception of God.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

The East lives on through your words!
Of what disease nations die?

RUMI

Every nation that perished in the past,
Perished for mistaking stone for incense.¹

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Muslims have now lost their vigour and force;
Wherefore are they so timid and tame?

RUMI

No nation meets its doom,
Until it angers a man of God.²

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Though life is a mart without any lustre,
What kind of bargain doth offer some gain?

RUMI

Sell cleverness and purchase wonder;
Cleverness is doubt; wonder is perception.

¹ Four lines, "The East lives...for incense" are provided by the editors since the translator had left them out.

² Two lines, "No nation...a man of God" are from the editorial material in *What Should Then Be Done O People of the East* (1977) by B.A. Dar:

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

My peers consort with kings in court,
While I am a beggar, uncovered,
bare-headed.

RUMI

To be the slave of a man with an illumined
heart,
Is better than to rule the ruler's of' the land.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

I am at a loss to know the puzzle
Of free will and determination.

RUMI

Wings bring a hawk to Kings;
Wings bring a crow to the grave.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

What is the aim of the Prophet's path—
The rule of the earth, or a monastery?

RUMI

Prudence in our faith decrees war and
power,
In the faith of Jesus—a cave and mount.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

How to discipline the body?
And how to awaken the heart?

RUMI

Be obedient, ride on the earth like a horse,
Not like a corpse borne on shoulders.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

The secret of faith I do not know;
How to believe in the Day of Judgement?

RUMI

Be the Judgement Day, and see the
Judgement Day;
This is the condition for seeing everything.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

*The selfhood soars up to the skies—
It preys upon the sun and the moon—
Deprived of the Presence, relying on existence,
wearied:
Impoverished by its own preys.*

RUMI

*Love alone is fit to be hunted,
But who can ever ensnare it!*¹

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Thou knowest the heart of the universe;
Tell how a nation can be strong?

RUMI

If thou art a grain, it will be picked by birds,
And if a blossom, it will be picked by
urchins.
Hide thy grain, and be the trap;
Hide thy blossom, and be the grass.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

Thou callest me to seek the heart;
To be a seeker of the heart, and to be in a
conflict;
My heart is in my breast,
Like a mirror, it shows my powers.

RUMI

Thou sayest thou hast a heart
The heart is not below, but in the empyrean,
Thou thinkest thy heart is a heart,
Forsaking the search for illumined hearts.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

My mind soars in ethereal flights,
But I grovel in the dust;
I have failed in the affairs of the world;
Kicks and buffets are my lot;
Why is material world beyond my reach?
Why are the wise in faith, fools in the
world?

RUMI

One who can scale the heights of heaven,
Can tread the path of earth with ease.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

What is the secret of knowledge and
wisdom?
And how to be blessed with passion and
pain?

¹ The italicised lines are provided by the editors;
the translator had left them out.

RUMI

Knowledge and wisdom are born of honest
living;
Love and ecstasy are born of honest living.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

The world demands me to meet and mingle,
But the song is born in solitude.

RUMI

Keep away from strangers, not from Him,
Wrap thyself for winter, not for spring.

THE INDIAN DISCIPLE

India now has no light of vision or yearning;
Men of illumined hearts have fallen on evil
days.

RUMI

Imparting heat and light is the task of the
brave;
Cunning and shamelessness are the refuge
of the mean.

*

Thy body knows not the secrets of thy heart,
And so thy sighs reach not the heights of
heaven;
God is disgusted with bodies without souls;
The living God is the God of living souls.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

GABRIEL AND IBLIS

GABRIEL

Old friend, how goes the world of colour
and smell?

IBLIS

Burning and suffering, scars and pain,
seeking and longing!

GABRIEL

They are all talking about you in the
celestial spheres.
Could your ripped garment still be
mended?

IBLIS

Ah, Gabriel, you do not know this secret:
When my wine-jug broke it turned my head.
I can never walk this place again!
How quiet this region is! There are no
houses, no streets!
One whose despair warms the heart of the
universe
What suits him best, 'Give up hope' or *Don't
give up hope!*

GABRIEL

You gave up exalted positions when you
said "No."
The angels lost face with God—what a
disgrace that was!

IBLIS

With my boldness I make this handful of
dust rise up.
My mischief weaves the garment that reason
wears."
From the shore you watch the clash of good
and evil.
Which of us suffers the buffets of the
storms—you or I?
Both Khizr and Ilyas feel helpless:
The storms I have stirred up rage in oceans,
rivers, and streams.
If you are ever alone with God, ask Him:
Whose blood coloured the story of Adam?
I rankle in God's heart like a thorn. But what
about you?
All you do is chant 'He is God' over and
over!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

*

The mentor exhorted his disciples once:
Listen to my words, in value greater than
gold:
The Western wine is poison for the people,
When the offspring knows neither pride nor
skill.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

THE PRAYER-CALL

One night among the planets
The Star of Morning said—
"Has ever star seen slumber
Desert Man's drowsy head?"
"Fate, being nimble-witted,"
Bright Mercury returned,
"Served well that pretty rebel—
Tame sleep was what he earned!"
"Have we," asked Venus, "nothing
To talk about besides?
Or what is it to us, where
That night-blind firefly hides?"
"A star," the Full Moon answered,
"Is man, of terrene ray:
You walk the night in splendour,
But so does he the day;
"Let him once learn the joy of
Outwatching night's brief span—
Higher than all the Pleiades
The unfathomed dust of Man!
Closed in that dust a radiance
Lies hidden, in whose clear light
Shall all the sky's fixed tenures
And orbits fade from sight."
—Suddenly rose the prayer-call,
And overwhelmed heaven's lake;
That summons at which even
Cold hearts of mountains quake.

SESTET

Though I have little of rhetorician's art,
Maybe these words will sink into your heart:
A quenchless crying on God through the
boundless sky—
A dusty rosary, earth-bound litany—
So worship men self-knowing, drunk with
God;
So worship priest, dead stone, and mindless
clod.

LOVE

The martyrs of Love are not Muslim nor
Paynim,
The manners of Love are not Arab nor Turk!
Some passion far other than Love was the
power

That taught Ghazni's high ruler to dote on his
 slave.
 When the spirit of Love has no place on the
 throne,
 All wisdom and learning vain tricks and
 pretence!
 Paying court to no king, by no king held in
 awe,
 Love is freedom and honor, whose scorn of
 the world
 Holds more than the magic that made
 Alexander
 His fabulous mirror—its magic makes man.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

THE STAR'S MESSAGE

I fear not the darkness of the night;
 My nature is bred in purity and light;
 Wayfarer of the night! Be a lamp to thyself;
 With thy passion's flame, make thy darkness
 bright.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

TO JAVID

(On receiving his first letter in London)

Build in love's empire your hearth and your
 home;
 Build Time anew, a new dawn, a new eve!
 Your speech, if God give you the friendship of
 Nature,
 From the rose and tulip's long silence weave.
 No gifts of the Franks' clever glass-bowers
 ask!
 From India's own clay mould your cup and
 your flask.
 My songs are the grapes on the spray of my
 vine;
 Distil from their clusters the poppy-red wine!
 The way of the hermit, not fortune, is mine;
 Sell not your soul! In a beggar's rags shine.

[Translated by Javid Iqbal]

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Wherefore this succession of day and night?
 And what are the sun and the starry heavens?

Am I in my land or in banishment?
 The vastness of this desert fills me with fright.
 I know not the enigma of this life of mine;
 I know not where to find one who knows.
 Avicenna wonders where he came from;
 And Rumi wonders where he should go.
*With every wayfarer I pace a little;
 I know not yet who my leader is¹.*

A LETTER FROM EUROPE

We venture not beyond the shores—
 Being to the senses confined.
 But Rumi is an ocean,
 Stormy, mysterious.

Iqbal! Thou, too, art moving
 In that band of men—
 That band of men of passion,
 Of which Rumi is the guide.

Rumi, they say,
 Is the guiding light for freedom;
 Has he, indeed, a message,
 For the age we live in?

REPLY²

"Eat not hay and corn like donkeys;
 Eat of thy choice like the musk-deer;
 He dies who eats hay and corn,
 He who eats God's light, becomes the Quran."

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

AT NAPOLEON'S TOMB

Strange, strange the fates that govern
 This world of stress and strain,
 But in the fires of action
 Fate's mysteries are made plain.
 The sword of Alexander
 Rose sun-like form that blaze
 To make the peaks of Alwand
 Run molten in its rays.
 Action's loud storm called Timur's
 All-conquering torrent down—
 And what to such wild billows
 Are fortune's smile or frown?

¹ The italicized lines are from Ghalib in Urdu.

² These lines are from Rumi in Persian.

The prayers of God's folk treading
The battlefield's red sod,
Forged in that flame of action
Become the voice of God!
But only a brief moment
Is granted to the brave—
One breath or two, whose wage is
The long nights of the grave.
Then silence at last the valley
Of silence is our goal,
Beneath this vault of heaven
*Let our deeds' echoes roll!*¹

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

MUSSOLINI

What is the originality of thought and
action?—a taste for revolution.
What is the originality of thought and
action?—the age of youth for a nation.
Originality of thought and action creates
miracles of life:
It turns pebbles into ruby stones.
O Great Rome! Your conscience has changed
altogether:
Is this a dream I see or is this for real!
Your old have the gleam of life in their eyes;
The flame of desire warms up the hearts of
your young.
This warmth of love, this longing and this
self-expression:
Flowers cannot hide themselves in the season
of Spring.
Songs of passion fill your air now—
The instrument of your nature was awaiting
someone to play on it!
Whose benevolent eye has graced this miracle
upon you?
He whose vision is like the light of the Sun!

A QUESTION

A self-respecting tramp was saying to the
Almighty:
I dare not complain for my woes of poverty;

¹ The italicised lines are from Hafiz of Shiraz in Persian.

But pray tell me if it is by Your permission
That the angels bestow riches upon the
worthless ones?

[Translated by the Editors]

TO THE PUNJAB PEASANT

What is this life of yours, tell me its mystery—
Trampled in dust is your ages-old history!
Deep in that dust has been smothered your
flame—
Wake, and hear dawn its high summons
proclaim!
Creatures of dust from the soil may draw
bread:
Not in that darkness is Life's river fed!
Base will his metal be held, who on earth
Puts not to trial his innermost worth!
Break all the idols of tribe and of caste,
Break the old customs that fetter men fast!
Here is true victory, here is faith's crown—
One creed and one world, division thrown
down!
Cast on the soil of your clay the heart's seed:
Promise of harvest to come, is that seed!

NADIR SHAH OF AFGHANISTAN

Laden with pearls departed from the
presence-hall of God
That cloud that makes the pulse of life stir in
the rose-bud's vein
And on its way saw Paradise, and trembled
with desire
That on such exquisite abode it might descend
in rain.
A voice sounded from Paradise: "They wait
for you afar,
Kabul and Ghazni and Herat, and their new-
springing grass;
Scatter the tear from Nadir's eye on the
poppy's burning scar,
That never more may be put out the poppy's
glowing fire!"

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

THE LAST TESTAMENT OF KHUSH-HAL
KHAN KHATTAK¹

Let the tribes be lost in the unity of the nation,
So that the Afghans gain prestige!
The youth to whom the stars are not out of
 bounds
Are the ones I love indeed—
In no way is this child of the mountains
Inferior to the Mughal.
May I tell you my secret, O Comrade:
Khush-hal Khan would much like that his
 burial place
Be far from the reaches of the dust blown by
 the Mughal cavalry,
Carried by the mountain wind.

[Translated by the Editors]

THE TARTAR'S DREAM

Prayer-mat and priestly turban have turned
 footpad,
With wanton boys' bold glances men are
 flattered;
The Church's mantle and the creed in shreds,
The robe of State and nation torn and tattered.
I cling to faith but may its spark not soon
Lie quenched under these rubbish-heaps
 thick-scattered!
Bokhara's humble dust and Samarkand's
The turbulent billows of many winds have
 battered.

*A gem set in a ring of misery
That circles me on every side, am I.²*

Suddenly quivered the dust of Samarkand,
And from an ancient tomb a light shone, pure
As the first gleam of daybreak, and a voice
Was heard:—"I am the spirit of Timur!

¹ Iqbal's note—Khush-hal Khan Khattak was a well-known patriotic poet of Pushto who forged a union of Afghan tribes of the Frontier to liberate Afghanistan from the Mughals. Only the Afridis among the tribes remained on his side till the last. About a hundred of his poems were published in translation from London in 1862.

² Iqbal's note—This couplet is anonymous. Nasiruddin Tusi quoted it, probably in *Sharah Isharat*.

Chains may hold fast the men of Tartary,
But God's firm purposes no bonds endure
Is this what life holds—that Turania's peoples
All hope in one another must abjure?
*Call in the soul of man a new fire to birth!
Cry a new revolution over the earth!"*

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

WORLDS APART

When the heart is enlightened,
It is blessed with an inward eye.
The initiate has a different level
Of space and time in each position.
The mullah's and the crusader's azan,
The same in words, are apart in spirit.
The vulture and the eagle soar
In the same air, but in worlds apart.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

ABU AL 'ALA AL-MA'ARRI³

It is said that Ma'arri never ate meat;
He lived on fruit and vegetables.
A friend sent him a roasted partridge,
To allure that clever gentleman into eating
 meat.
When Ma'arri saw that elegant tray
He, the author of *Ghufran*⁴ and *Lazumat*⁵ said,
"O You helpless little bird, would you tell me
 your sin
For which this punishment has been awarded
 to you?
Alas, you did not become a falcon;
Your eye did not perceive the directives of
 Nature.
It is the eternal decree of the Judge sitting in
 Judgement on destinies—
That weakness is a crime punishable by death.

[Translated by M. Munawwar Mirza]

³ Iqbal's note-- Abu al 'Ala al-Ma'arri, a famous Arabic poet.

⁴ Iqbal's note—*Risala tul Ghufran* is the title of a famous book by him.

⁵ Iqbal's note—*Lazumat* is the collection of his panegyrics.

CINEMA

Cinema—or new fetish-fashioning,
 Idol-making and mongering still?
 Art, men called that olden voodoo—
 Art, they call this mumbo-jumbo;
 That—antiquity's poor religion:
 This—modernity's pigeon-plucking;
 That—earth's soil: this—soil of Hades;
 Dust, their temple; ashes, ours.

TO THE PUNJAB PIRS

I stood by the Reformer's tomb: that dust
 Whence here below an orient splendour
 breaks,
 Dust before whose least speck stars hang their
 heads,
 Dust shrouding that high knower of things
 unknown
 Who to Jehangir would not bend his neck,
 Whose ardent breath fans every free heart's
 ardour,
 Whom Allah sent in season to keep watch
 In India on the treasure-house of Islam.
 I craved the saints' gift, other-worldliness
 For my eyes saw, yet dimly. Answer came:
 "Closed is the long roll of the saints; this Land
 Of the Five Rivers stinks in good men's
 nostrils.
 God's people have no portion in that country
 Where lordly tassel sprouts from monkish
 cap;
 That cap bred passionate faith, this tassel
 breeds
 Passion for playing pander to Government."

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

POLITICS

Ranks must be determined for this game;
 Let you be the *firzine* and I the pawn by the
 grace of the chess-player.
 The pawn, indeed, is an insignificant token,
 Even the *farzine* is not privy to the chess-
 player's strategy.

[Translated by the Editors]

FAQR

There is a *faqr* that teaches the hunter to be a
 prey;
 There is another that opens the secrets of
 mastery over the world.
 There is a *faqr* that is the root of needfulness
 and misery among nations;
 There is another that turns mere dust into
 elixir.
 There is the *Faqr* of Shabbir (Hussain) which
 leads to sovereignty
 The real legacy of a Muslim is the Shabbirian
 treasure
 Love no more has the fervour, nor beauty
 retains its charms
 Ghaznavi has lost its zeal and the tresses of
 Ayyaz are bereft of their sheen

[Translated by the Editors]

THE SELF

Barter not thy selfhood for silver and gold;
 Sell not a burning flame for a spark half-cold;
 So says Firdowsi, the poet of vision and grace,
 Who brought to the East the dawn of brighter
 days:
 Be not a churl for filthy lucre's sake,
 Count not thy coppers, whatever they may make.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

SEPARATION

The sun is weaving with golden thread
 A mantle of light about earth's head;
 Creation hushed in ecstasy,
 As in the presence of the Most High.
 What can these know—stream, hill, moon,
 star—
 Of separation's torturing scar?
 Mine is this golden grief alone,
 To this dust only is this grief known.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

MONASTERY

Talking in signs and symbol is not for this age,
 And I know not the art of artful sniggers;
 No more are those who said: *Rise, in God's name!*

The ones alive are sweepers and grave-diggers.

[Translated by Naim Siddiqui]

SATAN'S PETITION

To the Lord of the universe the Devil said:—
A firebrand Adam grows, that pinch of dust
Meager-souled, plump of flesh, in fine clothes
trussed,

Brain ripe and subtle, heart not far from dead.
What the East's sacred law made men abjure,
The casuist of the West pronounces pure;
Knowest Thou not, the girls of Paradise see
And mourn their gardens turning wilderness?
For fiends its rulers serve the populace:
Beneath the heavens is no more need of me!

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

BLOOD

If blood is warm in the body, there is no fear
nor anxiety,
And the heart is free of tribulations.
The one who has received this bounty
Is neither greedy for wealth nor miserable in
poverty.

FLIGHT

The tree said to a bird of the desert one day:
"Creation is founded on the principle of injustice;
For the Creation could have been so much
more pleasant
If I had also been granted the gift of flight."
The bird gave him a good reply:
"Woe! You regard justice to be injustice;
He is not entitled to fly in this world,
Whoever is not free from earth-rootedness."

TO THE HEADMASTER

The headmaster is an architect
Whose material is the human soul.
A good advice has been left for you
By the sage Qa'ani:
*Do not raise a wall against the Sun
If you wish the courtyard illuminated."*

THE PHILOSOPHER

He could fly high but he wasn't daring and
passionate,
The sage remained a stranger to the secret of
Love.
The vulture roamed around the air like an eagle,
But could not get acquainted with the taste of
a fresh prey.

[Translated by the Editors]

THE EAGLE

I have turned away from that place on earth
Where sustenance takes the form of grain and
water.
The solitude of the wilderness pleases me—
By nature I was always a hermit—
No spring breeze, no one plucking roses, no
nightingale,
And no sickness of the songs of love!
One must shun the garden-dwellers—
They have such seductive charms!
The wind of the desert is what gives
The stroke of the brave youth fighting in
battle its effect.
I am not hungry for pigeon or dove—
For renunciation is the mark of an eagle's life.
To swoop, withdraw and swoop again
Is only a pretext to keep up the heat of the
blood.
East and West -these belong to the world of
the pheasant,
The blue sky—vast, boundless—is mine!
I am the *dervish* of the kingdom of birds—
The eagle does not make nests.

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]

DISCIPLES IN REVOLT

Not a rushlight for us,—in our Master's
Fine windows electric lights blaze!
Town or village, the Muslim's a duffer—
To his *Brahmins* like idols he prays.
Not mere gifts—compound interest these
saints want,
In each hair-shirt a usurer's dressed,
Who inherits his seat of authority
Like a crow in the eagle's old nest.

[Translated by V.G. Kiernan]

THE LAST WILL OF HARUN RASHID

Harun said to his son when his hour came,
"You'll will also pass this way some day.
The Angel of Death is an unseen to the infidel,
But it is not hidden from a Muslim's eyes."

TO THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Transcend the intellect if you have courage to
do so:
There are islands hidden in the ocean of the
self as yet.
The secrets of this silent sea, however, do not
yield
Until you cut it with the blow of the Moses' rod.

[Translated by the Editors]

EUROPE

The Jewish money-lenders, whose cunning
beats the lion's prowess,
Have been waiting hopefully for long.
Europe is ready to drop like a ripe fruit,
Let's see in whose bag it goes.

—Adapted from Nietzsche

[Translated by the Editors]

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Falling down is the destiny of that bird
Whose duality of nature renders him unable
to fly.
Not every heart is an abode to the trusty
Gabriel,

Nor can every thought ensnare the Paradise
like a bird.

The ecstasy of thought is dangerous in a nation
Where the individuals observe no rule.
Though God-gifted intellect is the lamp of an
age,
The freedom of thought is a Satanic concept.

[Translated by the Editors]

THE LION AND THE MULE

THE LION

You are so different and unlike
All the other dwellers of the wild and the
desert!
Who are your parents and ancestors?
And what is your tribe?

THE MULE

Perhaps your highness does not know
My uncle—my mother's brother:
He gallops like the wind, and is
The pride of the royal stable!

—Adapted from German

THE ANT AND THE EAGLE

THE ANT

I am so miserable and forlorn—
Why is your station loftier than the skies?

THE EAGLE

You forage about in dusty paths;
The nine heavens are as nothing to me!

[Translated by Mustansir Mir]