

JAVIDNAMA

PRAYER

Man, in this world of seven hues,
lute-like is ever afire with lamentation;
yearning for a kindred spirit burns him
inwardly
teaching him threnodies to soothe the heart,
and yet this world, that is wrought of water
and clay—
how can it be said to possess a heart?
Sea, plain, mountain, grass —all are deaf and
dumb,
deaf and dumb heaven and sun and moon;
though the stars swarm in the selfsame sky
each star is more solitary than the other,
each one is desperate just as we are,
a vagrant lost in an azure wilderness—
the caravan unprovisioned against the
journey,
the heavens boundless, the nights
interminable.
Is this world then some prey, and we the
huntsmen,
or are we prisoners utterly forgotten?
Bitterly I wept, but echo answered never:
where may Adam's son find a kindred spirit?

I have seen that the day of this dimensioned
world
whose light illuminates both palace and street
came into being from the flight of a planet,
is nothing more, you might say, than a
moment gone.
How fair is the Day that is not of our days,
the Day whose dawn has neither noon nor
eve!

Let its light illuminate the spirit
and sounds become visible even as colours;
hidden things become manifest in its
splendour,
its watch is unending and intransient.
Grant me that Day, Lord, even for a single
day,
deliver me from this day that has no glow!

Concerning whom was the Verse of
Subjection revealed?
For whose sake spins the azure sphere so
wildly?
Who was it knew the secret of *He taught the
names?*
Who was intoxicated with that saki and that
wine?
Whom didst Thou choose out of all the
world?
To whom didst Thou confide the innermost
secret?
O Thou whose arrow transpierced our breast,
who uttered the words *Call upon me*, and to
whom?
Thy countenance is my faith, and my Quran:
dost Thou begrudge my soul one
manifestation?
By the loss of a hundred of its rays
the sun's capital is in no wise diminished.

Reason is a chain fettering this present age:
where is a restless soul such as I possess?
For many ages Being must twist on itself
that one restless soul may come into being.
Except you fret away at this brackish soil
it is not congenial to the seed of desire;
count it for gain enough if a single heart

grows from the bosom of this unproductive
 clay!
 Thou art a moon: pass within my dormitory,
 glance but once on my unenlightened soul.
 Why does the flame shrink away from the
 stubble?
 Why is the lightning-flash afraid to strike?
 So long as I have lived, I have lived in
 separation:
 reveal what lies beyond yon azure canopy;
 open the doors that have been closed in my
 face,
 let earth share the secrets of heaven's holy
 ones.
 Kindle now a fire within my breast—
 leave be the aloe, and consume the
 brushwood,
 then set my aloe again upon the fire
 and scatter my smoke through all the world.
 Stir up the fire within my goblet,
 mingle one glance with this inadvertency.
 We seek Thee, and Thou art far from our
 sight;
 no, I have erred—we are blind, and Thou art
 present.
 Either draw aside this veil of mysteries
 or seize to Thyself this sightless soul!
 The date-tree of my thought despairs of leaf
 and fruit;
 either despatch the axe, or the breeze of
 dawn.
 Thou gavest me reason, give me madness too,
 show me the way to inward ecstasy.
 Knowledge takes up residence in the thought,
 love's lodge is the unsleeping heart;
 so long as knowledge has no portion of love
 it is a mere picture-gallery of thoughts.
 This peep-show is the Samiri's conjuring-
 trick;
 knowledge without the Holy Ghost is mere
 spellbinding.
 Without revelation no wise man ever found
 the way,
 he died buffeted by his own imaginings;
 without revelation life is a mortal sickness,
 reason is banishment, religion constraint.

This world of mountain and plain, ocean and
 land—
 we yearn for vision, and it speaks of report.
 Grant to this vagrant heart a resting-place,
 restore to the moon this fragment of the
 moon.
 Though from my soil nothing grows but
 words,
 the language of banishment never comes to an
 end.
 Under the heavens I feel myself a stranger:
 from beyond the skies utter the words I am
 near,
 that these dimensions, this north and this
 south,
 like to the sun and moon in the end may set,
 I shall transcend the talisman of yesterday
 and tomorrow, transcend the moon, sun,
 Pleiades.
 Thou art eternal splendour; we are like
 sparks—
 a breath or two we possess, and that too
 borrowed.
 You who know naught of the battle of death
 and life,
 who is this slave who would emulate even
 God?
 This slave, impatient, conquering all horizons,
 finds pleasure neither in absence nor in
 presence.
 I am a momentary thing: make me eternal,
 out of my earthiness make me celestial.
 Grant me precision both in speech and action:
 the ways are clear—give me the strength to
 walk.
 What I have said comes from another world;
 this book descends from another heaven.
 I am a sea; untumult in me is a fault;
 where is he who can plunge into my depths?
 A whole world slumbered upon my shore
 and saw from the strand naught but the surge
 of a wave.
 I, who despair of the great sages of old,
 have a word to say touching the day to come!
 Render my speech easy unto the young,
 make my abyss for them attainable.

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

PRELUDE IN HEAVEN

ON THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION HEAVEN REBUKES EARTH

Life out of the delight of absence and presence
fashioned forth this world of near and far;
so snapped asunder the thread of the moment
and mixed the hues of Time's house of
amazement.

On all sides, out of the joyous yearning for
hábitude
arose the cry: 'I am one thing, you are
another.'

The moon and the stars learned the way to
walk,
a hundred lamps were kindled in the
firmament.

In the azure heavens the sun pitched
its gold-cloth tent with its silver ropes,
raised its head over the rim of the first dawn
and drew to its breast the new-born world.
Man's realm was a heap of earth, no more,
an empty wilderness, without a caravan;
not a river wrestled in any mountain,
not a cloud sprinkled on any desert,
no chanting of birds among the branches,
no leaping of deer amidst the meadow.

Sea and land lacked the spirit's
manifestations,
a curling vapour was the mantle of earth's
body;

the grasses, never having known the breeze of
March,
still slumbered within the depths of earth.

The azure sky then chided the earth, saying:
'I never saw anyone pass so miserable a life!
In all my breadth what creature is so blind as
you?

What light is yours, save that drawn from my
lamp?

Be earth high as Alvand, yet it is only earth,
it is not bright and eternal as the skies.

Either live with the apparatus of a
heart-charmer,
or die of the shame and misery of
worthlessness!

Earth felt put to shame by heaven's reproach,
desperate, heavy of heart, utterly annihilated,
fluttered before God in the agony of unlight.
Suddenly a voice echoed from beyond the
skies:

'O trusty one, as yet unaware of the trust,
be not sorrowful; look within thy own heart.
The days are bright of the tumult of life,
not through the light thou seest spread in all
quarters.

Dawn's light comes from the spotted sun,
the soul's light is unsullied by the dust of
time;

the soul's light is upon a pathless journey,
roves farther than the rays of sun, and moon.
Thou hast washed from the soul's tablet the
image of hope,

yet the soul's light manifests out of thy dust!
Man's reason is making assault on the world,
but his love makes assault on the Infinite;
his thought knows the way without any
guide,

his sight is more wakeful than Gabriel.
Earthy, yet in flight he is like an angel;
heaven is but an ancient inn upon his way;
he pricks into the very depths of the heavens
like the point of a needle into silk;
he washes the stains from the skirt of Being,
and without his glance, the world is blank
and blind.

Though few his magnificats, and much blood
he sheds,

yet he is as a spur in the flanks of doom.

His sight becomes keen through observing
phenomena

so that he sees the Essence within the
attributes.

Whoever falls in love with the beauty of
Essence,

he is the master of all existing things.'

SONG OF THE ANGELS

The lustre of a handful of earth one day
shall outshine the creatures of light;
earth through the star of his destiny one day
shall be transformed into heaven.

His imagination, which is nourished by the
 torrent of vicissitudes,
 one day shall soar out of the whirlpool of
 the azure sky.
 Consider one moment the meaning of Man;
 what thing do you ask of us?
 Now he is pricking into nature, one day he
 will be modulated perfectly,
 so perfectly modulated will this precious
 subject be
 that even the heart of God will bleed one
 day at the impact of it!

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

PRELUDE ON EARTH

THE SPIRIT OF RUMI APPEARS AND EXPLAINS THE MYSTERY OF THE ASCENSION

Tumultuous love, indifferent to the city—
 for in the city's clangour its flame dies—
 seeks solitude in desert and mountain-range
 or on the shore of an unbounded sea.
 I, who saw among my friends none to confide
 in,
 rested a moment on the shore of the sea:
 the sea, and the hour of the setting sun—
 the blue water was a liquid ruby in the
 gloaming.
 Sunset gives to the blind man the joy of sight,
 sunset gives to evening the hue of dawn.
 I held conversation with my heart;
 I had many desires, many requests—
 a thing of the moment, unsharing
 immortality,
 a thing living, unsharing life itself,
 thirsty, and yet far from the rim or the
 fountain,
 involuntarily I chanted this song.

GHAZAL¹

Open your lips, for abundant sugar-candy is
 my desire;
 show your cheek, for the garden and
 rosebed are my desire.
 In one hand a flask of wine, in the other the
 beloved's tress—
 such a dance in the midst of the maidan is
 my desire.
 You said, 'Torment me no more with your
 coquetry: begone!'
 That saying of yours, 'Torment me no more,
 ' is my desire.
 O reason, become out of yearning a babbler
 of words confused;
 O love, distracted subtleties are my desire.
 This bread and water of heaven are fickle as
 a torrent;
 I am a fish, , a leviathan-Oman is my desire.
 My soul has grown weary of Pharaoh and
 his tyranny;
 that light in the breast of Moses, Imran's
 son, is my desire.
 Last night the Elder wandered about the city
 with a lantern
 saying, 'I am weary of demon and monster:
 man is my desire.'
 My heart is sick of these feeble-spirited
 fellow-travellers;
 the Lion of God and Rustam-i Dastan, are
 my desire.
 I said, 'The thing we quested after is never
 attained.'
 He said, 'The unattainable—that thing is my
 desire!'
 The restless wave slept on the grey water,
 the sun vanished, dark grew the horizon—
 evening stole a portion of its capital
 and a star stood like a witness above the roof.
 The spirit of Rumi rent the veils asunder;
 from behind a mountain mass he became
 visible,
 his face shining like the sun in splendour,
 his white hairs radiant as the season of
 youth—

¹ This *ghazal* is from the *Divan* of Rumi.

a figure bright in a light immortal,
 robed from head to foot in everlasting joy.
 Upon his lips the hidden secret of Being
 loosed from itself the chains of speech and
 sound:
 his speech was as a suspended mirror,
 knowledge commingled with an inward fire.
 I asked him, 'What is the existent, the
 non-existent?
 What is the meaning of praiseworthy and
 unpraiseworthy?'
 He said, 'The existent is that which wills to
 appear:
 manifestation is all the impulse of Being.
 Life means to adorn oneself in one's self,
 to desire to bear witness to one's own being;
 the concourse on the day primordial arrayed
 desired to bear witness to their own being.
 Whether you be alive, or dead, or dying—
 for this seek witness from three witnesses.
 The first witness is self-consciousness,
 to behold oneself in one's own light;
 the second witness is the consciousness of
 another,
 to behold oneself in another's light;
 the third witness is the consciousness of God's
 essence,
 to behold oneself in the light of God's essence.
 If you remain fast before this light,
 count yourself living and abiding as God!
 Life is to attain one's own station,
 life is to see the Essence without a veil;
 the true believer will not make do with
 Attributes—
 the Prophet was not content save with the
 Essence.
 What is Ascension? The desire for a witness,
 an examination face-to-face of a witness—
 a competent witness without whose
 confirmation
 life to us is like colour and scent to a rose.
 In that Presence no man remains firm,
 or if he remains, he is of perfect assay.
 Give not away one particle of the glow you
 have,
 knot tightly together the glow within you;
 fairer it is to increase one's glow,
 fairer it is to test oneself before the sun;

then chisel anew the crumbled form;
 make proof of yourself; be a true being!
 Only such an existent is praiseworthy,
 otherwise the fire of life is mere smoke.'

I asked again, 'How shall one go before God?
 How may one split the mountain of clay and
 water?
 The Orderer and Creator is outside Order and
 Creation;
 we—our throats are strangled by the noose of
 Fate.'

He said, 'If you obtain the Authority
 you can break through the heavens easily.
 Wait till the day creation all is naked
 and has washed from its skirt the dust of
 dimension;
 then you will see neither waxing nor waning
 in its being,
 you will see yourself as of it, and it of you.
 Recall the subtlety Except with an authority
 or die in the mire like an ant or a locust!
 It was by way of birth, excellent man,
 that you came into this dimensioned world;
 by birth it is possible also to escape,
 it is possible to loosen all fetters from oneself;
 but such a birth is not of clay and water—
 that is known to the man who has a living
 heart.
 The first birth is by constraint, the second by
 choice;
 the first is hidden in veils, the second is
 manifest;
 the first happens with weeping, the second
 with laughter,
 for the first is a seeking, the second a finding;
 the first is to dwell and journey amidst
 creation,
 the second is utterly outside all dimensions;
 the first is in need of day and night,
 the second—day and night are but its vehicle.
 A child is born through the rending of the
 womb,
 a man is born through the rending of the
 world;
 the call to prayer signalizes both kinds of
 birth,

the first is uttered by the lips, the second of
the very soul.
Whenever a watchful soul is born in a body
this ancient inn, the world, trembles to its
foundations!’
I said, ‘I know not what manner of birth this
is.’
He said, ‘It is one of the high estates of life.
Life plays at vanishing and then
reappearing—
one role is constant, the other transitory;
now life dissolves itself in manifestation,
anon it concentrates itself in solitude.
Its manifestation shines with the light of the
Attributes,
its solitude is lit up by the light of the Essence.
Reason draws life towards manifestation,
love draws life towards solitude.
Reason likewise hurls itself against the world
to shatter the talisman of water and clay;
every stone on the road becomes its preceptor,
lightning and cloud preach sermons to it.
Its eye is no stranger to the joy of seeing,
but it possesses not the drunkard’s boldness;
therefore, fearing the road, it gropes like a
blind man,
softly, gently it creeps along, just like an ant.
So long as reason is involved with colour and
scent
slowly it proceeds upon the path to the
Beloved;
its affairs achieve some order gradually—
I do not know when they will ever be
completed!
Love knows nothing of months and years,
late and soon, near and far upon the road.
Reason drives a fissure through a mountain,
or else makes a circuit around it;
before love the mountain is like a straw,
the heart darts as swiftly as a fish.
Love means, to make assault upon the
Infinite,
without seeing the grave to flee the world.
Love’s strength is not of air and earth and
water,
its might derives not from toughness of
sinew;

love conquered Khaibar on a loaf of barley,
love clove asunder the body of the moon,
broke Nimrod’s cranium without a blow,
without a battle shattered Pharaoh’s hosts.
Love in the soul is like sight it in the eye,
be it within the house or without the door;
love is at once both ashes and spark,
its work is loftier than religion and science.
Love is authority and manifest proof,
both worlds are subject to the seal-ring of
love;
timeless it is, and yesterday and tomorrow
spring from it,
placeless it is, and under and over spring
from it;
when it supplicates God for selfhood
all the world becomes a mount, itself the
rider.
Through love, the heart’s status becomes
clearer;
through love, the draw of this ancient inn
becomes void.
Lovers yield themselves up to God,
give interpretative reason as an offering.
Are you a lover? Proceed from direction to
directionlessness;
make death a thing prohibited to yourself.
You who are like a dead man in the grave’s
coffer,
resurrection is possible without the sound of
the Trumpet!
You have in your throat melodies sweet and
delicate;
how long will you croak like a frog in the
mud?
Boldly ride upon space and time,
break free of the convolutions of this girdle;
sharpen your two eyes and your two ears—
whatever you see, digest by way of the
understanding.
“The man who hears the voice of the ants
also hears from Time the secret of Fate.”
Take from me the glance that burns the veil,
the glance that becomes not the eye’s
prisoner.
“Man is but sight, the rest is mere skin;
true sight signifies seeing the Beloved.
Dissolve the whole body into sight—

go to gazing, go to gazing, go to gaze!"
 Are you afraid of these nine heavens? Fear
 not;
 are you afraid of the world's immensity? Fear
 not.
 Open wide your eyes upon Time and Space,
 for these two are but a state of the soul.
 Since first the gaze advanced on manifestation
 the alternation of yesterday and tomorrow
 was born.
 The seed lying in the soil's house of darkness
 a stranger to the vast expanse of the sky—
 does it not know that in an ample space
 it can display itself, branch by branch.
 What is its substance? A delight in growing;
 this substance is both its station and itself.
 You who say that the body is the soul's
 vehicle,
 consider the soul's secret; tangle not with the
 body.
 It is not a vehicle, it is a state of the soul;
 to call it its vehicle is a confusion of terms.
 What is the soul? Rapture, joy, burning and
 anguish,
 delight in mastering the revolving sphere.
 What is the body? Habit of colour and scent,
 habit of dwelling in the world's dimensions.
 Your near and far spring out of the senses;
 what is Ascension? A revolution in sense,
 a revolution in sense born of rapture and
 yearning;
 rapture and yearning liberate from under and
 over.
 This body is not the associate of the soul;
 a handful of earth is no impediment to flight.'

ZARVAN, THE SPIRIT OF TIME AND
 SPACE, CONDUCTS THE TRAVELLER ON
 HIS JOURNEY TO THE SUPERNAL WORLD

My soul was convulsed by the words that he
 spoke,
 every atom of my body trembled like
 quicksilver.
 Suddenly I saw, between the West and the
 East,
 heaven immersed in a single cloud of light;

out of that cloud an angel descended
 having two faces, one like fire, one like
 smoke—
 one dark as night, the other bright as a
 meteor,
 the eyes of one watchful, the other's eyes
 asleep.
 The hues of his wings were of crimson and
 gold,
 emerald and silver, azure and lapis-lazuli;
 his temper had the fleetness even of a
 phantom,
 he sped from earth to the Milky Way in an
 instant;
 every moment he was seized by another
 desire,
 to spread his wings in yet another sky.
 He said, 'I am Zarvan, I am the
 world-subduer,
 alike hidden from sight and manifest am I.
 Every plan is bound up with my determining;
 voiced and voiceless—all alike are my prey.
 Through me the bud swells upon the branch,
 through me the birdie bewails in the nest;
 through my flight the seed becomes a stalk,
 through my effluence every parting turns to
 union.
 I pronounce both reproach and exhortation;
 I render athirst, that I may offer wine.
 I am life, I am death, I am resurrection,
 I am the Judgment, Hell, Heaven and Hour.
 Man and angel are both in bondage to me,
 this transitory world is my own child;
 I am every rose that you pluck from the
 branch,
 I am the matrix of every thing that you see.
 This world is a prisoner in my talisman,
 every moment it ages through my breath.
 But he who has in his heart *I have a time with
 God,*
 that doughty hero has broken my talisman;
 if you wish that I should not be in the midst,
 recite from the depths of your soul *I have a
 time with God.*'
 I know not what it was that was in his glance,
 it snatched away from my sight this ancient
 world;

either my sight opened on another world
 or this same world took on another form.
 I died in the universe of colour and scent,
 I was born in a world without tumult and
 clamour;
 my thread snapped from that ancient world,
 a whole new world came into my hands.
 My soul trembled at the loss of a world
 until another world blossomed out of my
 dust;
 my body became nimbler, my soul more
 adventurous,
 the eye of my heart was keener and more
 wakeful;
 veiled things became manifest uncurtained,
 the melody of the stars reached my ears.

CHANT OF THE STARS

Your reason is the fruit of life, your love is
 creation's mystery;
 O form of dust, welcome to this side of the
 world of dimensions!
 Venus and Moon and Jupiter are rivals on
 your account,
 for one glance from you there's a great jostle
 of manifestations.
 On the road to the Beloved there are
 revelations ever fresh and new;
 the man of true yearning and desire yields
 not his heart to the All.
 Life is truth and purity, life is quickening
 and surging;
 gallop from eternity to eternity; life is the
 Kingdom of God.
 Unto the passion of minstrelsy give leave to
 clamour and riot,
 give wine again to profligate and censor,
 wine pitcher on pitcher.
 Syria and Iraq, India and Persia are
 accustomed to the sugar-cane;
 give to the sugar-cane's habituate the
 bitterness of desire!
 That it may enter upon battle with the
 high-billowed ocean
 give to the heart of the rivulet the joy of the
 swift torrent.
 The poor man is a fire, rulership and power
 imperial are straw;

a naked sword is ample enough for the
 august pomp of kings.
 The drumming of the dervish, Alexander's
 clamorous vanity—
 the one is the rapture of Moses, the other the
 Samiri's conjuring.
 The one slays with a glance, the other slays
 with an army;
 the one is all peace and amity, the other is
 all war and wrangling.
 Both were conquerors of the world, both
 sought immortality,
 the one by the guidance of violence, the other
 guided by love.
 Bring the hammer-blow of the dervish,
 break the rampart of Alexander;
 renew the ancient wont of Moses, break the
 glamour of wizardry!

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF THE MOON

This earth and heaven are the Kingdom of
 God,
 this moon and Pleiades are our patrimony;
 whatever thing meets your gaze upon this
 road,
 regard it with the eye of intimacy.
 Go not about your own dwelling like a
 stranger—
 you who are lost to yourself, be a little
 fearless!
 This and that impose your command on their
 hearts;
 if you say 'Don't do this, do that,' they obey.
 The world is nothing but idols of eye and ear;
 its every morrow will die like yesterday.
 Plunge like a madman into the desert of the
 Quest,
 that is to say, be the Abraham of this
 idol-house!

When you have travelled all through earth
and heaven,
when you have traversed this world and the
other,
seek from God another seven heavens,
seek a hundred other times and spaces.
Self-lost to sink on the bank of the river of
Paradise,
quit of the battle and buffetting of good and
evil—
if our salvation be the cessation of searching,
better the grave than a heaven of colours and
scents.
Traveller! the soul dies of dwelling at rest,
it becomes more alive by perpetual soaring.
Delightful it is to travel along with the stars,
delightful not to rest one moment on the
journey.
When I had tramped through the vastness of
space
that which was once above now appeared
below me,
a dark earth loftier than the lamp of night,
my shadow (O marvel!) flung above my
head;
all the while nearer and nearer still
until the mountains of the Moon became
visible.
Rumi said, 'Cleanse yourself of all doubts,
grow used to the manners and ways of the
spheres.
The moon is far from us, yet it is our familiar;
this is the first stage upon our road;
seen must be the late and soon of its time,
seen must be the caverns of its mountains.'

That silence, that fearful mountain-range,
inwardly full of fire, outwardly riven and
ravined!
A hundred peaks, such as Khaftin and
Yildirim,
smoke in their mouths and fire in their bellies;
out of its bosom not a blade of grass sprang,
no bird fluttered in its empty spaces;
clouds without moisture, winds swift and
sword-sharp
ever doing battle with a dead earth.
A worn-out world without colour and sound,

no sign of life therein, neither of death,
no root of the palm tree of life in its navel,
no events hidden in the thighs of its time;
though it is a member of the family of the sun
its dawn and evening beget no revolution.
Rumi said, 'Rise, and take a step forward,
do not let slip this wakeful fortune.
Its interior is fairer than its exterior,
another world lurks hidden in its hollows.
Whatever presents itself to you, man of sense,
seize it in the rings of the eye and the ear.
If the eye has vision, everything is worth
seeing,
worthy to be weighed in the glance's balance.
Wheresoever Rumi leads, there go;
be estranged a moment or two from all but
he.'

Gently he drew my hand towards him,
then swiftly he sped to the mouth of a crater.

AN INDIAN ASCETIC, KNOWN TO THE
PEOPLE OF INDIA AS JAHAN-DOST, WHO
LIVES AS A HERMIT IN ONE OF THE
CAVERNS OF THE MOON

Like a blind man, my hand on my
companion's shoulder,
I placed my foot within a deep cavern;
the moon's heart was sore ravaged by its
darkness,
within it even the sun would have needed a
lamp.
Fancies and doubts made assault upon me,
hung my reason and sense upon the gallows.
I went along a road where highwaymen
lurked in ambush,
my heart void of the joy of truth and
certainty;
presently manifestations met my gaze
unveiled,
a bright dawn without any rising of the sun—
a valley, whereof each stone was an idolater,
a demon's haunt thick with lofty palm-trees.
Was this place truly compounded of earth
and water,
or was my sleeping fantasy painting pictures?
The air was filled with the joy and gaiety of
wine,

the shadows, kissing its dust, were light's
 own essence.
 No cerulean sky spanned its earth,
 no twilight painted its margin crimson and
 gold;
 there light was not in the chains of darkness,
 there no mists enveloped dawn and eventide.
 Under a palm-tree an Indian sage,
 the pupils of his eyes bright with collyrium,
 his hair knotted on his head, his body naked,
 coiled about him a white snake writhing,
 a man superior to water and clay,
 the world a mere image in the cloister of his
 fantasy,
 his time subject to no revolution of days,
 he had no traffick with the azure-tinted skies.
 He said to Rumi, 'Who is your fellow-
 traveller?
 In his glance there is a desire for life!'

RUMI

A man who is a wanderer on the quest,
 a fixed star with the constitution of a planet.
 His enterprise is more mature than his
 immaturities;
 I am a martyr to his imperfections.
 He has made of his glass the arch of heaven,
 his thought seeks to be boon-companion of
 Gabriel!
 He swoops like an eagle on the moon and
 sun, his prey,
 hot-foot he circumambulates the nine
 spheres.
 A drunkard's words he has spoken to the
 people of earth
 calling the houris idols, Paradise an
 idol-house.
 I have seen flames in the billow of his
 smoke,
 I have seen majestic pride in his prostration.
 Ever he laments yearningly like a flute,
 separation and union alike slay him.
 I do not know what is in his water and clay;
 I do not know what his rank and station
 may be.

JAHAN-DOST

The world is a thing of colour, and God is
 without colour.
 What is the world? What is man? What is
 God?

RUMI

Man is a sword, and God is the swordsman;
 the world is the whetstone for this sword.
 The East saw God and did not see the
 world,
 the West crept along the world and fled
 away from God.
 True servanthood is to open the eyes to
 God;
 true life is to see oneself without a veil.
 When a servant takes quittance of life
 God Himself calls down blessings on that
 servant.
 Whatever man is unconscious of his destiny,
 his dust travels not with the fire of the soul.

JAHAN-DOST

Tied up in the knot of being and not-being
 the East has seen little into these secrets.
 The task of us celestials is only to see,
 and my soul does not despair of the East's
 tomorrow.
 Yesterday I saw on the summit of
 Qashmarud
 an angel that had descended out of heaven;
 out of his glance the joy of sight distilled
 as he gazed solely towards our mound of
 dust.
 I said to him, 'Hide not a secret from your
 confidants;
 what is it that you see in this silent dust?
 Do you melt for the beauty of some Venus?
 Have you flung your heart into the well of
 Babylon?'
 He said, 'It is the hour of the East's arising;
 the East has a new sun shining in its breast.
 Rubies come forth from the stones of the
 road,
 its Josephs are issuing out of the well.
 I have seen a resurrection happening in its
 bloom,

I have seen its mountains trembling and
quaking;
it is packing up to quit the station of Azar
at last to forswear forever idolatry.
Happy is the people whose soul has
fluttered,
that has created itself anew out of its own
clay.
For the Throne-angels that hour is the dawn
of festival
when the eyes of a nation at last awake!

The Indian sage was silent for a little while;
then he looked at me again, somewhat
impatiently.
He asked, 'Death of the reason?' I said, 'Giving
tip thought.'
He asked, 'Death of the heart?' I said, 'Giving
up
remembrance.'
He asked, 'The body?' I said, 'Born of the dust
of the road.'
He asked, 'The Soul?' I said 'The symbol of
One God.'
He asked, 'And Man?' I said, 'One of God's
secrets.'
He asked, 'The world?' I said, 'Itself stands
face to face.'
He asked, 'This science and art?' I said, 'Mere
husk.'
'He asked, 'What is the proof?' I said, 'The
face of the Beloved.'
He asked, 'The commons' religion?' I said,
'Just hearsay.'
He asked, 'The gnostics' religion?' I said,
'True seeing.'
My words brought much pleasure to his soul,
and he disclosed to me delightful subtleties.

NINE SAYINGS OF THE INDIAN SAGE

1

This world is not a veil over the Essence of
God;
the image in the water is no barrier to
plunging in.

2

It is delightful to be born into another world,

so that another youth may thereby be
attained.

3

God is beyond death, He is the very essence
of life;
when His servant dies, He knows not what is
happening.
Though we are birds without wings or
feathers,
we know more of the science of death than
God.

4

Time? It is a sweet mingled with poison,
a general compassion mingled with
vengeance;
you see neither city nor plain free of its
vengeance—
its compassion is that you may say, 'It has
passed.'

5

Unbelief is death, my enlightened friend;
how beseems it a hero to wage holy war on
the dead?
The believer is living, and at war with
himself,
he falls upon himself like a panther on a deer.

6

The infidel with a wakeful heart praying to an
idol
is better than a religious man asleep in the
sanctuary.

7

Blind is the eye that sees sin and error;
never does the sun behold the night.

8

Association with the mire makes the seed a
tree;
man by association with the mire is brought
to shame.
The seed receives from the mire twisting and
turning
that it may make its prey the rays of the sun.

I said to the rose, 'Tell me, you with your torn
breast,
how do you take colour and scent from the
wind and the dust?'
The rose said, 'Intelligent man bereft of
intelligence,
how do you take a message from the silent
electric ray?
The soul is in our body through the attraction
of this and that;
your attraction is manifest, whereas ours is
hidden.'

EPIPHANY OF SAROSH

Thereupon the wise man ceased his discourse;
self-intoxicated, he broke away from the
world—
ecstasy and yearning snatched him out of his
own hands.
Then came into being, by the magic of divine
vision—
when it is present the notes become like
Mount Sinai,
without its presence there is nor light nor
manifestation—
a delicate creature in the talisman of that
night,
a star shining upon that starless night.
The hyacinth-curls of his two tresses reached
his waist,
mountains and foothills drew brilliance from
his face.
Wholly drowned in a drunken epiphany,
drunken without wine, he chanted
melodiously.
Before him the lantern of the imagination
span around,
full of wiles as the ancient sphere of heaven;
in that lantern appeared a form of many hues,
hawk pouncing on sparrow, panther seizing
deer.
I said to Rumi, 'You who know the secret,
reveal the secret to your companion of little
vision.'
He said, 'This form like unto flashing silver
was born in the thought of the holy God;

impatiently, out of the joy of
self- manifestation,
he came down into the dormitory of existence,
like ourselves a wanderer, exile his portion—
you are an exile, I am an exile, he is an exile.
His rank is that of Gabriel, his name is Sarosh,
he transports from sense, and restores to
sense.
It was his dew that opened our bud,
the fire of his breath kindled the dead ember.
The poet's plectrum striking the chords of the
heart is of him,
and it is he who rends the veil shrouding the
Ka'bah.
Within his melody I have glimpsed an entire
universe.
now take fire for a moment from his song.'

THE SONG OF SAROSH

I fear that you are steering the barque into a
mirage;
born within a veil, you will die within a veil.
When I washed the collyrium of Razi from
my eyes
I saw the destinies of nations hidden in the
Book.
Twist over field and avenue, twist over
mountain and desert—
the lightning that twists upon itself dies
within the cloud.
I dwelt a while with the Westerners, sought
much and saw scarcely
the man whose musical modes turn not
upon number.
Without the anguish of battle that
propinquity is not attainable;
you who speak of 'scent in rose-water,' go,
ravish the rose-bush!
Superficial ascetic, I concede that selfhood is
transient,
but you do not see the whirlpool within the
bubble.
This delightful music comes not from the
minstrel's plucking,
a houri exiled from Paradise is weeping
within the lute.

DEPARTURE FOR THE VALLEY OF
YARGHAMID, CALLED BY THE ANGELS
THE VALLEY OF TAWASIN

Rumi, that guide to passion and love
whose words are as Salsabil to throats athirst,
said, 'The poetry in which there is fire
originates from the heat of "He is God!"
That chant transforms rubbish into a
rose-garden,
that chant throws into confusion the spheres,
that chant bears testimony to the Truth,
bestows on beggars the rank of kings.
Through it the blood courses swifter in the
body,
the heart grows more aware of the Trusty
Spirit.
Many a poet through the magic of his art
is a highwayman of hearts, a devil of the
glance.
The poet of India—God help him,
and may his soul lack the joy of speech!—
has taught love to become a minstrel,
taught the friends of God the art of Azar.
His words are a sparrow's chirp, no ardour or
anguish;
the people of passion call him a corpse, not a
man.
Sweeter than that sweet chant which knows
no mode
are the words which you utter in a dream.
The poet's nature is all searching,
creator and nourisher of desire;
the poet is like the heart in a people's breast,
a people without a poet is a mere heap of clay.
Ardour and drunkenness embroider a world;
poetry without ardour and drunkenness is a
dirge.
If the purpose of poetry is the fashioning of
men,
poetry is likewise the heir of prophecy.'
I said, 'Speak again also of prophecy,
speak again its secret to your confidant.'
He said, 'Peoples and nations are his signs,
our centuries are things of his creation.
His breath makes stones and bricks to speak;
we all are as the harvest, he the sown field.

He purifies the bones and fibres,
gives to the thoughts the wings of Gabriel;
the mutterings within the hearts of creatures
upon his lip become Star, Light, and Pluckers.
To his sun there is no setting, none;
to his denier never shall come perfection.
God's compassion is the company of his
freemen,
the wrath of God is his impetuous blow.
Be you Universal Reason itself, flee not from
him,
for he beholds both body and soul together.
Stride then more nimbly on the road to
Yarghamid
that you may see that which must be seen—
engraved upon a wall of moonstone
behold the four Tasins of prophecy.'

Yearning knows its own way without a guide,
the yearning to fly with the wings of Gabriel;
for yearning the long road becomes two steps,
such a traveller wearies of standing still.
As if drunk I strode out towards Yarghamid
until at last its heights became visible.
What shall I say of the splendour of that
station?
Seven stars circle about it unceasingly;
the Carpet-angels are inly lit by its light,
its dust's collyrium brightens the eyes of the
Throne-angels.
God gave to me sight, heart and speech,
gave me the urge to search for the world of
secrets;
now I will unveil the mysteries of the
universe,
I will tell you of the Tawasin of the Apostles.

TASIN OF GAUTAMA

*The Repentance of the coquettish
Dancing-Girl*

GAUTAMA
Ancient wine and youthful beloved are—
nothing;
for men of true vision the houris of Paradise
are— nothing.
Whatever you know as firm and enduring
passes away,

mountain and desert, land, sea and shore
 are—nothing.
 The science of the Westerners, the
 philosophy of the Easterners
 are all idol-houses, and the visiting of idols
 yields— nothing.
 Think upon self, and pass not fearfully
 through this desert,
 for you are, while the substance of both
 worlds is— nothing.
 On the road which I hewed out with the
 point of my eyelash
 station and caravan and shifting sands are—
 nothing.

Transcend the unseen, for this doubt and
 surmise are nothing;
 to be in the world and to escape from the
 world—that is Something!
 The Paradise that some God grants unto you
 is nothing;
 when Paradise is the reward of your
 labours—that is something.
 Do you seek repose for your soul? The
 soul's repose is nothing;
 the tear shed in sorrow for your
 companions—that is something.
 The wine-drenched eye, the temptress
 glance and the song
 are all fair, but sweeter than these—there is
 something.
 The cheek's beauty lives for a moment, in a
 moment is no more;
 the beauty of action and fine ideals—that is
 something.

THE DANCING-GIRL

Give not occasion for conturbation to this
 restless heart;
 add one or two curls more to my twisted
 tress.
 In my breast is such a lightning-flash of
 revelation from you,
 I have yielded the bitterness of expectation
 to the moon and the sun.
 The joy of God's presence founded in this
 world idolatry's wont;
 love ever eludes the soul that is full of hope.

So that with carefree heart I may play a new
 melody
 give back again to the meadow the true bird
 of the meadow.
 You have granted me a lofty nature; release
 the shackle from my foot
 that I may bestow a prince's robe upon your
 sackcloth.
 If the axe struck against the stone, what
 cause of talk is that?
 Love can carry upon its back a whole
 mountain-range!

TASIN OF ZOROASTER

Ahriman Tempts Zoroaster

AHRIMAN

Because of you my creatures complain like a
 reed-pipe,
 because of you our April has become like
 December;
 you have made me humbled and
 dishonoured in the world,
 you have stained your image with my
 blood.
 Truth lives through the epiphany of your
 Sinai,
 death for me dwells within your White
 Hand.
 It is folly to rely on a covenant with God,
 to travel the road to His desire is to lose the
 way;
 poisons lurk within His rose-tinted wine.
 saw, worm and cross—these are His gifts.
 Noah had no other resource but prayer,
 but the words of that hapless man were of
 no avail.
 So abandon the city and hide yourself in a
 cave,
 choose the company of the cavalcade of the
 creatures of light;
 with one glance make the dust a
 philosopher's stone,
 set fire to the heavens with a single prayer;
 become a wanderer in the mountains like
 Moses,
 be half-consumed in the fire of vision;
 but you must certainly give up prophecy,

you must give up all such mullah-mongery.
By associating with nobodies, a somebody
becomes a nobody,
though his nature be a flame, he becomes a
chip of wood.
So long as prophethood is inferior to
sainthood
prophecy is a veritable vexation to love.
Now rise, and nestle in the nest of Unity,
abandon manifestation and sit in retirement!

ZOROASTER

Light is the ocean, darkness is but its shore;
no torrent like me was ever born in its heart.
My breast is swarming with restless waves;
what should the torrent do but devastate the
shore?
The colourless picture, which no man has
ever seen,
cannot be painted save with the blood of
Ahriman.
Self-display — that is the very secret of life,
life is to test out one's own striking-power.

The self becomes more mature through
suffering
until the self rends the veils that cover God.
The God-seeing man sees himself only
through God;
crying 'One God', he quivers in his own
blood.
To quiver in blood is a great honour for
love,
saw, stave and halter — these are love's
festival.
Upon the road of love, whatever betides is
good;
then welcome to the unloving kindnesses of
the Beloved!

Not my eye only desired the manifestation
of God;
it is a sin to behold beauty without a
company.
What is solitude? Pain, burning and
yearning;
company is vision, solitude is a search.
Love in solitude is colloquy with God;

when love marches forth in display, that is
to be a king!
Solitude and manifestation are the
perfection of ardour,
both alike are states and stations of
indigence.
What is the former? To desert cloister and
church;
what is the latter? Not to walk alone in
Paradise!
Though God dwells in solitude and
manifestation,
solitude is the beginning, manifestation the
end.
You have said that prophecy is a vexation:
when love becomes perfect, it fashions men.
It is delightful to go on God's road by
caravan,
it is delightful to go in the world free as the
soul.

TASIN OF CHRIST

Vision of the sage Tolstoy

In the midst of the mountain-range of Seven
Deaths
is a valley where no bird stirs, no branches, no
leaf;
the smoke encircling it turns the moon's light
to pitch,
the sun in its broad heavens seems dying of
thirst.
A river of quicksilver flows through that
valley
meandering like the stream of the Milky Way.
Before it the hollows and heights of the road
are nothing,
so swift its current, wave on wave, twist on
twist.
A man stood, drowned up to his waist, in that
quicksilver
uttering a thousand ineffectual laments,
Rain, wind and water were not his portion —
athirst he, and no water save the quicksilver.
On the bank I espied a slim-bodied woman
whose eyes would have waylaid a hundred
caravans,

one that taught infidelity to the
 Church-elders,
 her glance turned ugly to beautiful, beautiful
 to ugly.
 I said to her, 'Who are you? What is your
 name?
 What is this utter lamentation and weeping?'
 She said, 'In my eye is the spell of the Samiri;
 my name is Ifrangin, my profession is
 wizardry.'
 All of a sudden that silvery stream froze,
 the bones of that youth broke in his body.
 He cried aloud, 'Alas, alas for my destiny!
 Alas for my ineffectual lamentation!'
 Ifrangin said, 'If you have eyes to see,
 look a little also at your own deeds.
 The Son of Mary, that Lamp of all creation
 whose light lit up the world dimensioned and
 undimensioned—
 that Pilate, and that cross, that pallid face—
 what wrought you, what wrought he beneath
 the skies!
 You, to whose soul the joy of faith is
 forbidden,
 worshipper of idols fashioned of raw silver,
 you did not know the worth of the Holy
 Spirit,
 you bought the body, gambled away the
 soul!'
 The reproach of that fair woman, drunken
 with blandishment,
 was a lancet that pierced the youth's heart.
 He said, 'You who display wheat and sell
 barley,
 because of you Shaykh and Brahmin sell their
 own country.
 Your infidelities have debased reason and
 religion,
 your profit-mongerings have cheapened love.
 Your love is torment, and secret torment at
 that;
 your hatred is death, and sudden death at
 that!
 You have associated with water and clay,
 you have stolen away God's servant from
 Him.
 Wisdom, which loosened the knots of things,

to you has given only thoughts of devastation.
 That man whose substance is true knows well
 your crime is heavier than my crime.
 His breath restored the departed soul to the
 body;
 you make the body a mausoleum for the soul.
 What we have done unto His humanity
 His community has done unto His divinity.
 Your death is life for the people of the world:
 wait now, and see what your end shall be!

TASIN OF MOHAMMED

*The Spirit of Abu Jahl Laments in the
 Sanctuary of the Ka'bah*

My breast is riven and anguished by this
 Mohammed;
 his breath has put out the burning lamp of the
 Ka'bah.
 He has sung of the destruction of Caesar and
 Chosroes,
 he has stolen away from us our young men.
 He is a wizard, and wizardry is in his speech:
 these two words 'One God' are very unbelief.
 So he has rolled up the carpet of our fathers'
 faith
 and has done with our Lord Gods what he
 has done.
 The blow of his fist has scattered Lat and
 Manat:
 take vengeance upon him, you created beings!
 He bound his heart to the invisible, broke
 with the visible,
 his incantation shattered the living, present
 image.
 It is wrong to attach the eye to the invisible;
 that which comes not into sight—wherever is
 it?
 It is blindness to make prostration to the
 invisible;
 the new religion is blindness, and blindness is
 remoteness.
 To bend double before an undimensioned
 God
 such prayers bring no joy to the worshipper.
 His creed cuts through the rulership and
 lineage

of Koraish, denies the supremacy of the
 Arabs;
 in his eyes lofty and lowly are the same thing
 he has sat down at the same table with his
 slave.
 He has not recognized the worth of the noble
 Arabs
 but associated with uncouth Abyssinians;
 redskins have been confounded with
 blackskins,
 the honour of tribe and family has been
 destroyed.
 This equality and fraternity are foreign
 things—
 I know very well that Salman is a Mazdakite;
 The son of Abdullah has been duped by him
 and he has brought disaster upon the Arab
 people.
 Hashim's progeny have become estranged
 one from another,
 a couple of prayers have utterly blinded them.
 What is alien stock, compared with the
 Adnani,
 what betokens Sahbani speech to the
 barbarian?
 The eyes of the elect of the Arabs have been
 darkened;
 will you not rise up, Zuhair, from the dust of
 the tomb?
 You who are for us a guide through this
 desert,
 shatter the spell of the chant of Gabriel!
 Tell again, you Black Stone, now tell again,
 tell again what we have suffered through
 Mohammed!
 Hubal, thou who acceptest the excuses of thy
 servants,
 seize back thy temple from the irreligious
 ones;
 expose their flock unto the ravening wolves,
 make their dates bitter upon the palm-tree!
 Let loose a burning wind on the air of the
 desert
 as if they were stumps of fallen-down
 palm-trees
 O Manat, O Lat, go not forth from this abode,
 or if you leave this abode, go not from our
 hearts!

You who have forever a lodging in our eyes,
 tarry a little, if you intend to depart from me.

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF MERCURY

VISITATION TO THE SPIRITS OF JAMAL
 AL-DIN AFGHANI AND SA' ID HALIM
 PASHA

A handful of dust so carried forward its task
 to the contemplation of its own
 manifestations:
 either I fell into the net of being and existence
 or existence became a prisoner in my net!
 Have I made a chink in yon azure curtains?
 Am I of the skies, or are the skies of me?
 Either heaven has taken my heart into its
 breast
 or it is my heart that has seized heaven.
 Is this external then internal? What is it?
 What manner of thing is it the eye sees? What
 is it?
 I beat my wings towards another heaven,
 I see another world rising before me,
 a world of mountains and plains, seas and dry
 land,
 a world far more ancient than our earth,
 a world grown out of a little cloud
 that has never known the conquest of man—
 images as yet unlined on the tablet of
 existence
 where no critic of nature has yet been born.
 I said to Rumi, 'This wasteland is very fair,
 very fair the tumult of the waters in the
 mountains.
 I find no sign here of any living thing,
 so whence comes the sound of the call to
 prayer?'
 Rumi said, 'This is the station of the saints,
 this heap of earth is familiar with our dust.
 When the father of mankind departed out of
 Eden

he dwelt in this world for one or two days;
 these expanses have felt the burning of his
 sighs,
 heard his lamentations in the hour of dawn.
 The visitors to this honourable station
 are themselves pious men of lofty stations,
 pious men such as Fudail and Bu Sa'id,
 true gnostics like Junaid and Ba Yazid.
 Rise up now, and let us pray together,
 devote a moment or two to burning and
 melting.'

I went on, and saw two men engaged in
 prayer,
 the acolyte a Turk, the leader an Afghan.
 The Sage of Rum, in rapture continually,
 his face radiant with an ecstasy of joy,
 said, 'The East never gave birth to two better
 sons—
 the plucking of their nails unravelled our
 knots:
 Maulana Jamal, Sayyid of all Sayyids,
 whose eloquence gave life to stone and sherd,
 and passionate Halim, commander of the
 Turks
 whose thoughts matched the loftiness of his
 station.
 To offer prayer with such men is true
 devotion,
 a labour else whose hoped-for wage is
 Paradise.

The recitation of that vigorous elder,
 the Chapter of the Star in that silent plain—
 a recital that to move Abraham to ecstasy,
 to enrapture the pure spirit of Gabriel;
 the heedful heart becomes restless in the
 breast,
 the cry 'No god but God' rises from the
 tombs;
 it imparts to smoke the quivering of the flame,
 bestows on David ardour and intoxication;
 at his recital every mystery was revealed,
 the Heavenly Archetype appeared unveiled.

After prayer I rose up from my place
 and kissed his hand in all humility.
 Rumi said, 'A mote that travels the skies,
 in its heart a whole world of fire and passion!

Only upon himself he has opened his eyes,
 yielded his heart to no man, is utterly free;
 swiftly he paces through the expanse of
 Being—
 jestingly, I call him Zinda-Rud.'

AFGHANI

Zinda-Rud, tell us of our terrestrial world,
 speak to us of our earth and sky.
 A thing of dust, you are clear-eyed as the
 Holy Ones—
 give us some tidings of the Muslims!

ZINDA-RUD

In the heart of a people that once shattered
 the world
 I have seen a conflict between religion and
 country.
 The spirit is dead in the body through
 weakness of faith,
 despairs of the strength of the manifest
 religion;
 Turk, Persian, Arab intoxicated with Europe
 and in the throat of each the fish-hook of
 Europe;
 and East wasted by the West's imperialism,
 Communism taken the lustre from religion
 and community.

AFGHANI

Religion and Country

The Lord of the West, cunning from head to
 toe,
 taught the people of religion the concept of
 Country.
 He thinks of the centre, while you are at
 discord—
 give up this talk of Syria, Palestine, Iraq!
 If you can discriminate between good and
 evil
 you will not bind your hearts to clods,
 stones, bricks.
 What is religion? To rise up from the face of
 the dust
 so that the pure soul may become aware of
 itself!

He who has said 'God is He' is not
 contained
 within the confines of this dimensioned
 order.
 A grass-blade is of the earth, and yet rises
 from the earth;
 alas, if the pure soul should die in the dust!
 Although man sprang out of water and clay,
 from water and clay rose-like drew colour
 and sap,
 alas, if he wanders forever in water and
 clay,
 alas, if he soars not higher than this station!
 The body says, 'Go into the dust of the
 roadway';
 the soul says, 'Look upon the expanse of the
 world!'
 Man of reason, the soul is not contained in
 dimensions;
 the free man is a stranger to every fetter and
 chain,
 the free man rails against the dark earth
 for it beseems not the falcon to act like a
 mouse.

This handful of earth to which you give the
 name 'country',
 this so-called Egypt, and Iran, and Yemen—
 there is a relationship between a country
 and its people
 in that it is out of its soil that a nation rises;
 but if you look carefully at this relationship
 you will descry a subtlety finer than a hair.
 Though it is out of the East that the sun rises
 showing itself bold and bright, without a
 veil,
 only then it burns and blazes with inward
 fire
 when it escapes from the shackles of East
 and West;
 drunk with splendour it springs up out of
 its East
 that it may subject all horizons to its
 mastery;
 its nature is innocent of both East and West,
 though relationship-wise, true, it is an
 Easterner.

Communism and Capitalism

The author of *Das Kapital* came of the stock
 of Abraham,
 that is to say, that prophet who knew not
 Gabriel;
 since truth was implicit even within his
 error
 his heart believed, though his brain was an
 infidel.
 The Westerners have lost the vision of
 heaven,
 they go hunting for the pure spirit in the
 belly.
 The pure soul takes not colour and scent
 from the body,
 and Communism has nothing to do save
 with the body.
 The religion of that prophet who knew not
 truth
 is founded upon equality of the belly;
 the abode of fraternity being in the heart,
 its roots are in the heart, not in water and
 clay.

Capitalism too is a fattening of the body,
 its unenlightened bosom houses no heart;
 like the bee that pastures upon the flower
 it overpasses the petal, and carries off the
 honey,
 yet stalk and leaf, colour and scent all make
 up the rose
 for whose selfsame beauty the nightingale
 laments.
 Surpass the talisman, the scent and colour,
 bid farewell to the form, gaze only upon the
 meaning.
 Though it is difficult to descry the inward
 death,
 call not that a rose which in truth is clay.

The soul of both is impatient and intolerant,
 both of them know not God, and deceive
 mankind.
 One lives by production, the other by
 taxation
 and man is a glass caught between these
 two stones.
 The one puts to rout science, religion, art,

the other robs body of soul, the hand of
bread.
I have perceived both drowned in water and
clay,
both bodily burnished, but utterly dark of
heart.
Life means a passionate burning, an urge to
make,
to cast in the dead clay of the seed of a heart!

SA'ID HALIM PASHA

East and West

For Westerners intelligence is the stuff of
life,
for Easterners love is the mystery of all
being.
Only through love intelligence gets to know
God,
love's labours find firm grounding in
intelligence;
when love is companioned by intelligence
it has the power to design another world.
Then rise and draw the design of a new
world,
mingle together love with intelligence.
The flame of the Europeans is damped
down,
their eyes are perceptive, but their hearts are
dead;
they have been sore smitten by their own
swords,
hunted down and slaughtered, themselves
the hunters.
Look not for fire and intoxication in their
vine;
not into their heavens shall rise a new age.
It is from your fire that the glow of life
comes,
and it is your task to create the new world.
Mustafa Kemal, who sang of a great
renewal,
said the old image must be cleansed and
polished;
yet the vitality of the Ka'bah cannot be made
new
if a new Lat and Manat from Europe enter
its shrine.

No, the Turks have no new melody in their
lute,
what they call new is only the old tune of
Europe;
no fresh breath has entered into their breast,
no design of a new world is in their mind.
Turkey perforce goes along with the existing
world,
melted like wax in the flame of the world we
know.

Originality is at the roots of all creation,
never by imitation shall life be reformed;
The living heart, creator of ages and epochs,
that soul is little enamoured of imitation:
if you possess the spirit of a true
Mussulman
examine your own conscience, and the
Quran—
a hundred new worlds he within its verses,
whole centuries are involved in its
moments;
one world of it suffices for the present age—
seize it, if the heart in your breast grasps
truth..
A believing servant himself is a sign of God,
every world to his breast is as a garment;
and when one world grows old upon his
bosom,
The Quran gives him another world!

ZINDA-RUD

The barque of us terrestrials has no
helmsman,
no one knows where the Quran's world lies.

AFGHANI

It is a world lost now in our breast,
a world awaiting yet the command 'Arise!'
A world without distinction of race and
colour,
its evening is brighter than Europe's dawn;
a world cleansed of monarchs and of slaves,
a world unbounded, like the believer's
heart,
a world so fair, that the effluence of one
glance
planted the seed of it in Omar's soul.
Eternal it is, the impact of it ever new,

ever new the leaf and fruit of its sure
foundations;
inwardly it is anxious not of change,
outwardly, every moment is revolution.
Behold, that world lies within your own
heart;
now I will tell you of its firm foundations.

The Foundations of the Quranic World

1. Man, God's Vicegerent

In both worlds, everywhere are the marks of
love;
man himself is a mystery of love.
Love's secret belongs not to the world of
wombs,
not to Shem or Ham, Greece or Syria:
a star without East and West, a star
unsetting
in whose orbit is neither North nor South.
The words *I am setting* tell his destiny,
their exegesis reaches from earth to heaven.
Death, grave, uprising, judgment are his
estates,
the light and fire of the other world are his
works;
himself is Imam, prayer and sanctuary,
himself the Ink, himself the Book and the
Pen.
Little by little what is hidden in him
becomes visible;
it has no boundaries, its kingdom no
frontiers.
His being gives value to contingent things,
his equilibrium is the touchstone of
contingent things.
What shall I declare of his sea without a
shore?
All ages and all times are drowned in his
heart.
That which is contained within man is the
world,
that which is not contained within the world
is man.
Sun and moon are manifest through his
self-display;
even Gabriel cannot penetrate his privacy.

Loftier than the heavens is the station of
man,
and the beginning of education is respect for
man.

Man alive in heart, do you know what thing
life is?

One-seeing love that is contemplating
duality:
man and woman are bound one to the other,
they are the fashioners of the creatures of
desire.

Woman is the guardian of the fire of life,
her nature is the tablet of life's mysteries;
she strikes our fire against her own soul
and it is her substance that makes of the
dust a man.

In her heart lurk life's potentialities,
from her glow and flame life derives
stability;
she is a fire from which the sparks break
forth,
body and soul, lacking her glow, cannot
take shape.

What worth we possess derives from her
values
for we are all images of her fashioning;
if God has bestowed on you a glance aflame
cleanse yourself, and behold her sanctity.

You from whose faith the present age has
taken all fire,
now I will tell you openly the secrets of the
veil.

The joy of creation is a fire in the body
and society is lightened by that light,
and whosoever takes any portion of that fire
watches jealously over his private passion;
all the time he fixes his gaze on his own
image

lest his tablet should receive any other
image.

Mohammed chose solitude upon Mount
Hira

and for a space saw no other beside himself;
our image was then poured into his heart
and out of his solitude a nation arose.

Though you may be an unbeliever in God,
yet you cannot gainsay the Prophet's glory.

Though you possess a soul illumined as
 Moses,
 yet without solitude your thoughts remain
 barren;
 by isolation the imagination becomes more
 vivid,
 more vivid, more questing, more finding.

Science and passion are both stations of life
 both take a share of the impact of events.
 Science derives pleasure from verification,
 love derives pleasure from creativeness.
 Display is very precious to the verifier,
 to the creator solitude is very precious.
 The eye of Moses desired to behold Being—
 that was all part of the pleasure of
 verification;
thou shalt not see Me contains many
 subtleties—
 lose yourself a little while in this sea
 profound.

On all sides life's traces appear unveiled,
 its fountain wells up in the heart of creation.
 Consider the tumult that rages through all
 horizons;
 inflict not on the Creator the trouble of
 display—
 solitude is the protection of every artist,
 solitude is the bezel in the artist's ring.

2. *Divine Government*

The servant of God has no need of any
 station,
 no man is his slave, and he is the slave of
 none;
 the servant of God is a free man, that is all,
 his kingdom and laws are given by God
 alone,
 his customs, his way, his faith, his laws are
 of God,
 of God his foul and fair, his bitter and sweet.
 The self-seeking mind heeds not another's
 welfare,
 sees only its own benefit, not another's;
 God's revelation sees the benefit of all,
 its regard is for the welfare and profit of all.
 Just alike in peace and in the ranks of war,

His joining and parting are without fear and
 favour;
 when other than God determines the aye
 and nay
 then the strong man tyrannises over the
 weak;
 in this world command is rooted in naked
 power;
 mastery drawn from other than God is pure
 unbelief.

The tyrannical ruler who is well-versed in
 power
 builds about himself a fortress made up of
 edicts;
 white falcon, sharp of claw and swift to
 seize,
 he takes for his counsellor the silly sparrow
 giving to tyranny its constitution and laws,
 a sightless man giving collyrium to the
 blind.

What results from the laws and
 constitutions of kings?
 Fat lords of the manor, peasants lean as
 spindles!

Woe to the constitution of the democracy of
 Europe!
 The sound of that trumpet renders the dead
 still deader;
 those tricksters, treacherous as the revolving
 spheres,
 have played the nations by their own rules,
 and swept the board!
 Robbers they, this one wealthy, that one a
 toiler,
 all the time lurking in ambush one for
 another;
 now is the hour to disclose the secret of
 those charmers—
 we are the merchandise, and they take all
 the profits.
 Their eyes are hard out of the love of silver
 and gold,
 their sons are a burden upon their mothers'
 backs.
 Woe to a people who, out of fear for the
 fruit,
 carries off the very sap from the tree's trunk

and, that the plectrum wins no melody from
its strings,
slays the infant yet unborn in its mother's
womb.

For all its repertory of varied charms
I will take nothing from Europe except—a
warning!
You enchained to the imitation of Europe,
be free,
clutch the skirt of the Quran, and be free!

3. *The Earth is the Lord's*

The history of man throughout East and
West
is a tale of wars, battles, revolts, for 'land';
one bride there is, and we are all her
husbands,
that enchantress is without all and with all
withal.
Her blandishments are nothing but guile
and trickery,
she belongs neither to you nor to me either.
These stones and rocks have nothing in
common with you;
they are the stuff of stillness, you are on a
journey.
How can the sleeper and the wakeful mix
together?
What has the planet to do with the fixed
star?
God has called the earth simply our
'enjoyment',
this valueless 'enjoyment' is gratis, gratis.
You landowner, take a wise hint from me:
take from the land your food and grave, but
take it not.
How long will its company last? You are, it
is not;
you are a living being, it is a lifeless show.
You are an eagle, therefore get you about
the skies,
open your wings and pinions, rise clear of
the earth.
'The Earth is the Lord's': the inward
meaning is plain,
and he who sees not this plain is an infidel.

I do not say, desert utterly dwelling and
lane;
this world of colour and scent is your
empire—
grain by grain gather the jewels from its soil,
falcon-like seize your prey out of its skies,
smite your axe against its mountain-ranges,
take light from your self and set it all afire.
Have nothing to do with the ancient ways of
Azar
but hew out a new world to your own
desire!
Yield not your heart to colour and scent,
dwelling and lane;
the heart is His sanctuary, yield it only to
Him.
Death without substance, without tomb and
winding-sheet
is to lose oneself in riches, children, wife;
but he who has the words 'One God' by
heart
can lose within himself a world entire.
What is the poverty of hunger, dancing,
nakedness?
Poverty is true kingship; what is monkery?

4. *Wisdom is a Great Good*

God has declared, *Wisdom is a great good*;
wherever you may see this good, seize it.
Science gives pinions to words and sounds,
bestows purest substance on things without
substance;
science finds a way even to heaven's zenith
to pluck the sight out of the sun's own eye.
Its transcript is the commentary of the
cosmos,
the fate of the cosmos hangs upon its
determining;
it says to the desert, 'Bubble up!' and it
bubbles,
to the sea, 'Produce a mirage!' and it
produces it.
Its eye beholds all the events in creation
that it may see the sure foundations of
creation;
if it attaches its heart to God, it is prophecy,
but if it is a stranger to God, it is unbelief.
Science without the heart's glow is pure evil,

for then its light is darkness over sea and
 land,
 its rouge renders the whole world black and
 blind,
 its springtide scatters the leaves of all being,
 sea, plain and mountain, quiet garden and
 villa
 are ravaged by the bombs of its aeroplanes.
 It is its fire that burns the heart of Europe,
 from it springs the joy of raiding and
 robbing;
 it turns topsy-turvy the course of the days,
 despoils the peoples of their capital.
 Its power becomes the faithful ally of Satan;
 light becomes fire by association with fire.
 To slay Satan is indeed a difficult task,
 since he is hidden within the depths of the
 heart;
 better is it to make him a true Mussulman,
 better to smite him dead with the sword of
 the Quran.
 God save us from majesty that is without
 beauty,
 God save us from separation without union!
 Science without love is a demonic thing,
 science together with love is a thing divine;
 science and wisdom without love are a
 corpse,
 reason is an arrow that never pierced the
 target.
 With the vision of God make the blind to
 see,
 convert Abu Lahab into an impetuous
 Hyder!

ZINDA-RUD

You have displayed the foundations of the
 Book of God,
 yet is yonder world still veiled in a shroud.
 Why does it not strip off the veil from its
 face,
 why does it not issue yet out of our hearts?
 Before us lies a whole world wasting away,
 a nation quietly reposing in its own dust;
 the heart's ardour of Tartar and Kurd is
 vanished—
 either the Mussulman are dead, or the
 Quran is dead.

SA'ID HALIM PASHA

The religion of God is more shameful than
 unbelief,
 because the mullah is a believer trading in
 unfaith;
 in our eyes this dew-drop of ours is an
 ocean,
 to his eyes our ocean is a dew-drop.
 At the elegant graces of that Quran-vendor
 I have seen the Trusty Spirit himself cry out!
 His heart is a stranger to what lies beyond
 the sky,
 for him the Archetype of the Book is but a
 fable;
 having no share of the wisdom of the
 Prophet's religion,
 his heaven is dark, being without any star.
 Short of vision, blind of taste, an idle gossip,
 his hairsplitting arguments have fragmented
 the Community.
 Seminary and mullah, before the secrets of
 the Book,
 are as one blind from birth before the light
 of the sun.
 The infidel's religion is the plotting and
 planning of Holy War;
 the mullah's religion is corruption in the
 Way of God.
 The man of God is the soul of this
 dimensionate world;
 say from me to him, who has gone into
 solitude,
 'You whose thoughts are life itself to the
 believer,
 whose breaths are confirmation to the
 Community,
 having the sublime Quran by heart is your
 rite,
 your religion the publishing of the Word of
 God.
 You with whom God speaks, how long will
 you hang your head?
 Come, bring forth your hand out of your
 sleeve!
 Speak of the history of the 'white' people,
 speak to the gazelle of the vastness of the
 desert.

Your nature is illumined by the Chosen One,
so declare now, where is our station?

The man of God takes not Colour and scent
from anyone,
the man of God receives colour and scent
from God;
every moment there is in his body a fresh
soul,
every moment he has, like God, a new
labour.

Declare the secrets to the believer,
declare the exposition of the mystery of
Every day.

The caravan has no halting-place but the
Sanctuary,
the caravan has naught but God in its heart;
I do not say that its road is different—
it is the caravan that is different, different its
regard.

AFGHANI

Have you any acquaintance with the
Traditions of the Chosen One?
'God's religion came a stranger into the
world.'

I will tell you the meaning of this virgin
saying.

The 'strangerhood' of religion is not the
poverty of God's remembrancers;
for the man who is truly a researcher
'strangerhood' of religion refers to the
scarceness of its
verses.

The 'strangerhood' of religion every time is
of a different kind;
ponder well this subtly, if you have eyes
to see.

Fasten your heart again to the perspicuous
Verses
that you may seize a new age in your lasso.
No man knows the inner secrets of the Book;
Easterners and Westerners alike twist and
turn this way and that.
The Russians have laid down a new design;
they have taken bread and water, and
jettisoned religion.
Behold truth, speak truth, seek only truth;

speak one or two words from me to the
people.

Afghani's Message to the Russian People

One thing is the goal and aim of the Quran,
other the rite and ritual of the Muslim;
in his heart there is no burning fire,
the Chosen One is not living in his breast.
The believer has not eaten the fruit of the
Quran,
in his cup I have seen neither wine nor beer.
He broke the magic spell of Caesar and
Chosroes
and himself sat on the throne of empire;
when the young shoot of power gathered
strength,
his religion took on the shape of empire,
But empire changes the gaze entirely,
reason, understanding, usage and way alike.

You who have laid down a new plan,
and disengaged your heart from the ancient
system,
like us Muslims you have broken
the bone of imperial rule in this world.
So that you may light a lamp in your heart
take a warning from our past history;
set your foot firm in the battle,
circle no more about this Lat and Hubal.
This aged world requires a nation
that shall be both bearer of good tidings and
warner.

Return again to the peoples of the East;
your 'days' are bound up with the 'days' of
the East.

You have kindled a new flame in the soul,
your heart houses a new night and day.
The rite and religion of the Franks have
grown old;
look no more towards that ancient cloister.
You have finished now with lords;
pass on from 'no', march onwards to 'but'—
pass on from 'no', if you are a true seeker,
that you may take the road of living
affirmation.

You who desire a new world-order,
have you sought for it a firm foundation?

You have expunged the ancient tale chapter
by chapter;
illumine your thoughts from the Archetype
of the Book.
Who gave the black man the White Hand?
Who gave the good news of no Caesar, no
Chosroes?
Transcend the many-coloured splendours,
find yourself by abandoning Europe!
If you are apprised by the Westerners'
cunning
give up the wolf, take on the lion's trade.
What is wolfishness? The search for food
and means;
the Lion of the Lord seeks freedom and
death.
Without the Quran, the lion is a wolf;
the poverty of the Quran is the root of
empire.
The poverty of the Quran is the mingling of
meditation and reason—
I have never seen reason perfect without
meditation.
Meditation? To school pleasure and passion;
this is the affair of the soul, not the affair of
lip and palate.
From it arise the flames that burn the breast,
it does not accord with your temperament
yet.
Martyr of the delicate beauty of reason,
I will tell you of the revelations of reason!
What is the Quran? Sentence of death for the
master-man,
succour for the slave without food and
destitute.
Look not for good from the money-grubbing
manikin—
You will not attain piety, until you expend.
What pray is born of usury? Tumults!
No one knows the pleasure of 'a good loan'.
Usury darkens the soul, hardens the heart
like a stone,
makes man a ravening beast, without fangs
and claws.
It is lawful to draw one's sustenance from
the soil—

this is man's 'enjoyment', the property of
God.
The believer is the trustee, God is the
possessor;
whatever you see other than God is
perishing.
God's banner has been beaten down by
kings,
their entry has reduced townships to misery.
Our bread and water are of one table;
the progeny of Adam are *as a single soul*.
When the Quran's design descended into
this world
it shattered the images of priest and pope;
I speak openly what is hidden in my heart—
this is not a book, it is something other!
When it has entered the soul, the soul is
transformed;
when the soul has been transformed, the
world is changed.
Like God, it is at once hidden and manifest,
living and enduring, yes, and speaking.
In it are the destinies of East and West—
realise then the lightning-like swiftness of
thought!
It told the Muslim, 'Put Your life in your
hands;
give whatever you possess beyond your
needs.'
You have created a new law and order;
consider it a little in the light of the Quran
and you will understand life's heights and
depths,
you will comprehend the destiny of life.
Our assembly is without wine and
cupbearer,
yet the melodies of the Quran's instrument
are immortal;
if our plectrum now strikes without effect,
Heaven houses thousands of excellent
strummers.
God's remembrance requires not nations,
it transcends the bounds of time and space.
God's remembrance is apart from the
remembrance of every remembrancer—
what need has it of Greek or Syrian?
If God should remove it from us

He can if He will transfer it to another
 people.
 I have seen the blind conformity and
 opinionatedness of Muslims
 and every moment my soul trembles in my
 body;
 I fear for the day when it shall be denied to
 them.
 and its fire shall be kindled in quite other
 hearts.

THE SAGE OF RUM BIDS ZINDA-RUD
 INTONE A SONG

The Sage of Rum, that man filled wholly with
 ecstasy and passion,
 I know what effect these words had on his
 soul;
 he drew from his breast a heart-rending sigh,
 his tears ran redder than the blood of martyrs.
 He, whose arrows pierced only the hearts of
 heroes,
 turned his gaze upon Afghani, and spoke:
 'The heart must throb with blood like the
 twilight,
 the hand must be thrust into the saddle-straps
 of God;
 hope moves the soul to flow like a running
 river,
 the abandonment of hope is eternal death.'
 He looked at me again, and said: 'O
 Zinda-Rud,
 with a couplet set all being afire.
 Our camel is weary and the load is heavy;
 more bitter must be the song of the
 caravaner.
 The proving of holy men is through adversity,
 it is right to make the thirsty yet more athirst.
 Like Moses depart from the the River Nile,
 stride out like Abraham towards the fire.
 A melody of one who catches the scent of the
 Beloved
 bears a people onwards even to the Beloved's
 street.

THE SONG OF ZINDA-RUD

You say that these roses and tulips are
 permanent here;

no, they are travellers all, like the waves of
 the breeze.

Where is the new truth which we seek, and
 do not find?

Mosque, school and tavern, all alike are
 barren.

Learn a word from your own self, and in
 that word burn,

for in this convent all lack Moses' fire.

Speak not of the striving for purity of these
 monastery- dwellers,
 they are all dishevelled of hair, blankets
 unwashed.

What temples they have fashioned within
 the Sanctuary,

these unitarians of one thought, but all split
 in two!

The problem is not that the hour of feasting
 has passed,

the problem is that they are all without
 sweetmeats and boon-companion!

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF VENUS

Between us and the light of the sun there
 hang

how many veils of space fold upon fold!

A hundred curtains have been suspended
 before us,

intertwisted firework displays,

that the unardent heart may increase in
 ardour

and become agreeable to branch, leaf and
 fruit.

Through its glow blood leaps in the tulip's
 veins,

its dance transmutes the stream to quicksilver.

Even so the pure spirit rises from the dust,

the pure spirit flees towards whither towards
 is not;

on that road are but death and resurrection,
 resurrection and death,

no other provision save fever and glowing.
 Into that expanse of a hundred azure heavens
 plunging continually, it surges out anew;
 itself its own sanctuary, its own Abraham,
 self-offering, like him who was sacrificed to
 God.

Before it the nine heavens are nine Khaibars,
 its smiling is of the stature of Hyder.
 It is this incessant conflict that purifies the
 spirit,
 makes it firm, speedy, nimble,
 it spreads its wings in the broadness of light,
 its talons seize Gabriel and the houris,
 that it may take its share in the *eye swerved not*
 and stand guardian in the ranks of God's
 servants.

I do not know where my own station is,
 I only know that it is apart from all friends.
 Deep within me rages a war without
 horsemen and armies;
 he well describes it who has vision like me.
 Men are ignorant of the conflict between
 unbelief and faith,
 my soul is lonely, like Zain al-Abidin;
 none is apprised of the station and the way,
 but for my song there is no lamp to light the
 path.

Infant, youth, old man—all are drowned in
 the sea,
 only one poor soul has won his way to the
 shore.

I have drawn aside the curtains of this tent;
 I am fearful of union, and lament for
 separation.

If union be the end of yearning, beware;
 how blessed the sighs and vain lamentations!
 The wayfarer searches little for the high-road
 if to be carefree is congenial to his soul.

My soul is such that, for the joy of gazing,
 it every moment desires a new world.

Rumi, well aware of the states of my soul,
 said 'Do you desire another world? Take it!
 Love is cunning, and we are counters in his
 hand;

look ahead—we are in the land of Venus.
 This world too subsists on water and clay,
 a sanctuary enveloped in purest musk,

with a glance that burns and rends all veils
 pass within its clouds and mists
 and you will see therein the ancient gods;
 I know them all, one by one—
 Baal, Marduk, Ya' uq, Nasr, Fasn,
 Ramkhan, Lat, Manat, Asr, Ghasr;
 every one of them offers proof of its
 immortality
 in the temper of this age that knows no
 Abraham.'

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE GODS OF THE ANCIENT PEOPLES

That tempestuous wind, those night black
 clouds—
 in their darkness the lightning itself had lost
 its lustre;
 an ocean suspended in their air,
 its skirt rent, few pearls pouring,
 its shore invisible, its waves high-surg-ing,
 high-surg-ing, powerless to battle with the
 winds.

Rumi and I in that sea of pitch
 were as phantoms in the bedchamber of the
 mind—
 he much-travelled, I new to travel,
 my eyes impatient to gaze abroad.
 Continually I cried: 'My sight is inadequate,
 I do not see where the other world may be!
 Presently a mountain-range appeared,
 a river, a broad meadow appeared,
 mountain and plain embracing a hundred
 springtides—
 fragrant with musk came the breeze from the
 hills.

Songs of birds conspiring together,
 fountains, and verdant herbs half-grown.
 The body was fortified by the emanation of
 that air,
 the pure spirit in the flesh keener of vision.
 I fixed my gaze on the top of a mountain;
 joyful the mountain, the slope, the stretching
 plain;
 a lovely valley, even, not sinking nor rising—
 the water of Khizr would have need of such a
 land.

In this valley were the ancient gods,

there the God of Egypt, here the Lord of
 Yemen,
 there a Lord of the Arabs, here of Iraq,
 this one the god of union, that the god of
 separation,
 here an offspring of the sun, and the moon's
 son-in-law,
 another looking to the consort of Jupiter,
 one holding a two-edged sword in his hand,
 another with a serpent wreathed about his
 throat.
 Each one was trembling at the Beautiful
 Name,
 each wounded by the smiting of Abraham.
 Mardukh said: 'Man has fled from God,
 fled from church and sanctuary, lamenting,
 and to augment his vision and perception
 turns his gaze backwards to the past age.
 He takes delight in ancient relics,
 makes speeches about our theophanies.
 Time has revealed a new legend;
 a favourable wind is wafting from yonder
 earth.'
 Baal in excess of joy chanted sweetly
 unveiling our secrets to the gods.

SONG OF BAAL

Man has rent yonder azure veil
 and, beyond the sky, has seen no God.
 What is there in man's heart but thoughts,
 like waves this upsurging and that fleeing?
 His soul takes repose in the sensible;
 would that the past age might return!
 Long live the European orientalist
 who has drawn us forth from the tomb!
 Ancient gods, our time has come!

Behold, the ring of unity is broken,
 Abraham's people have lost the joy of *Alast*;
 its company is scattered, its cup in
 fragments,
 the cup which was drunken with the wine
 of Gabriel.
 Free man has fallen into the bonds of
 directions,
 joined up with fatherland and parted from
 God;
 his blood is cold of the glory of the ancients,

the Elder of the Sanctuary has tied the
 Magian girdle.
 Ancient gods, our time has come!

The days of joy have returned to the world,
 religion has been routed by sovereignty and
 lineage.
 What thought is there now of the lamp of
 the Chosen One,
 seeing that a hundred Bu Lahabs blow it
 out?
 Though the cry 'There is no god' rises up
 still
 how should that remain on the lips which
 has gone from the heart?
 The West's enchantment has revived
 Ahriman;
 the day of God is pale-cheeked, fearful of
 the night.
 Ancient gods, our time has come!

Religion's chain must be loosed from his
 neck,
 our slave was ever a free slave;
 since the ritual prayers are heavy for him,
 we seek only one prayer, and that without
 prostration.
 Passions are elevated by songs,
 so what pleasure is there in prayers without
 hymns?
 Better the demon that makes itself visible
 than a God to whom the Unseen is meet.
 Ancient gods, our time has come!

WE PLUNGE INTO THE SEA OF VENUS
 AND BEHOLD THE SPIRITS OF PHARAOH
 AND KITCHENER

The Sage of Rum, that master of fair Report
 whose blow has the power of Abraham's fist,
 chanted this song in the world of intoxication
 and all the ancient gods prostrate fell.

GHAZAL²

Again one must gaze on the past and the future;
 ho, rise up, for one must think anew.
 Love carries its load on the she-camel of Time;
 are you a lover? You must make your mount of evening and morn.
 Our elder said, 'The world follows not a constant way,
 one must close one's eyes to its joys and griefs.
 If, having abandoned the world, you intend Him,
 first you must pass away from your self.'
 I said to him, 'In my heart are many Lats and Manats.'
 He said, 'You must destroy this idol-house utterly.'

Again he said to me: 'Rise up, boy,
 cling only to my skirt, boy.
 Yonder mountains, yonder heights without a Moses,
 so covered with snow as to seem a heap of silver,
 beyond them stretches a diamond-shining ocean,
 its depths even more translucent than its surface;
 undisturbed by wave or torrent,
 in its nature an eternal quiet.
 This is the place of power-drunk arrogants
 denying the Unseen, worshipping the seen;
 that one from the East, the other from the West,
 both at war and blows with the men of God.
 One has had on his neck the staff of Moses,
 the other struck asunder by a dervish's sword,
 both Pharaohs, one little, the other great,
 both dying of thirst in the embrace of the sea;
 each is familiar with the bitterness of death—
 the death of tyrants is one of God's signs.

² This appeared as *Ghazal* 21 in Part 2 of *Persian Psalms*. Arberry's translation of the same piece as part of that book (also included in the present volume) differs from this version.

Follow me closely and fear no one;
 place your hand in mine and fear no one.
 I will rend apart the sea like Moses;
 I will guide you into its very breast.'

The sea opened to us its breast—
 or was it air, that appeared as a water?
 Its depths were a valley without colour and scent,
 a valley whose darkness was fold on fold.
 The Sage of Rum chanted the Sura of Taha;
 under the sea streamed down moonshine.
 Mountains washed, naked and cold,
 and amid them two bewildered men
 who first cast a glance on Rumi,
 then gazed one upon the other.
 Pharaoh cried, 'What wizardry! What a river of light!
 whence comes this dawn, this light, this apparition?'

RUMI

All that is hidden through Him is manifest;
 the origin of this Light is from the White Hand.

PHARAOH

Ah, I have gambled away the coin of reason
 and religion;
 I saw, but did not recognize this light.
 World-rulers, gaze all upon me;
 world-destroyers, gaze all upon me!
 Woe to a people blinded by avarice
 who have robbed the tomb of rubies and pearls!
 A human shape dwells in a museum
 with a legend upon its silent lips
 telling the history of imperialism
 and giving visions to the blind.
 What is the grand design of imperialism?
 To seek security by contriving division.
 From such evil doctrine the fate of rulership
 declines,
 the contrivances of rulership become void
 and confused.
 If I could only see God's interlocutor again
 I would beg from him a heart aware.

RUMI

Government without spiritual light is raw,
 raw,
 imperial power without the White Hand is a
 sin.
 Rulership is strong through the weakness of
 the subjects,
 its roots are firm through the deprivation of
 the deprived.
 The crown derives from tribute and the
 yielding of tribute;
 if a man be a rock, he soon becomes glass.
 Armies, prisons, chains are banditry;
 he is the true ruler who needs not such
 apparatus.

KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM

The goal of the people of Europe is lofty,
 they excavate not any grave for rubies and
 pearls—
 the history of Egypt, Pharaoh and Moses
 can be seen from ancient monuments.
 Science and wisdom is simply the unveiling
 of secrets;
 wisdom without research is utterly
 worthless.

PHARAOH

Science and wisdom uncovered my tomb;
 but what was there to find in the Mahdi's
 grave?

THE SUDANESE DERVISH APPEARS

A restless lightning flashed in the water,
 waves surged and rolled in the water;
 a sweet scent wafted from the rose-garden of
 Paradise,
 the spirit of that dervish of Egypt appeared.
 His fire melted the pearl in the oyster-shell,
 melted the stone in the breast of Kitchener.
 He cried, 'Kitchener, if you have eyes to see,
 behold the avenging of a dervish's dust!
 Heaven granted no grave for your dust,
 gave no resting-place but the salty ocean.'
 Then the words broke in his throat;
 from his lips a heart-rending sigh was loosed.
 'Spirit of the Arabs', he cried, 'arise;

like your forebears, be the creator of new
 ages!
 Fouad, Feisal, Ibn Saoud,
 how long will you twist like smoke on
 yourselves?
 Revive in the breast that fire which has
 departed,
 bring back to the world the day that has gone.
 Soil of Batha, give birth to another Khalid,
 chant once more the song of God's Unity.
 In your plains taller grow the palm-trees;
 shall not a new Farouk arise from you?
 World of musky-hued believers,
 from you the scent of eternal life is coming to
 me.
 How long will you live without the joy of
 journeying,
 how long with your destiny in alien hands?
 How long will you desert your true station?
 My bones lament in the deep like a reed-pipe;
 are you afraid to suffer? The Chosen One
 declared,
 "For man the day of suffering is the day of
 purification."
 'Cameleer, our friends are in Yathrib, we in
 Nejd;
 sing that song which will stir the camel to
 ecstasy.
 The cloud has rained, grasses have sprouted
 from the earth,
 it may be that the camel's pace grows languid.
 My soul wails of the pain of separation;
 take the road where fewer grasses grow.
 My camel is drunk with the grass, I for the
 Beloved;
 the camel is in your hands, I in the hands of
 the Beloved.
 They have made a way for waters into the
 desert,
 upon the mountains the palm fronds are
 washed.
 Yonder two gazelles one after the other—
 see how they are descending from the hill,
 for a moment drink from the desert spring
 and then glance upon the traveller.
 The dew has softened the sands of the plain
 like silk,

the highway is not hard for the camel:
 the clouds ring on ring like the wings of the
 partridge—
 I fear the rain, for we are far from the goal.
 Cameleer, our friends are in Yathrib, we in
 Najd;
 sing that song which will stir the camel to
 ecstasy.'

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF MARS

THE MARTIANS

For an instant I closed my eyes in the waters,
 for a little in the depths I broke away from
 myself,
 bore my baggage towards another world,
 with another time, another space.
 Our sun reached its horizons,
 creating a different kind of night and day.
 The body is a stranger to the spirit's wont and
 way
 which dwells in time, yet is a stranger to time.
 Our soul accords with every fire there is,
 its time rejoices in every day there is;
 it grows not old with the flight of time,
 the days illumine the world through its light.
 The ceaseless revolution of day and night
 from it derives;
 make it your journey, for the very world
 springs from it.

A broad meadow with a tall observatory
 whose telescope lassoed the Pleiades—
 is this the nine-domed retreat of Khizr,
 or is it the dark territory of our earth?
 Now I searched for the bounds of its
 immensity,
 anon I gazed upon the expanse of heaven.
 The Sage of Rum, that guide of the
 visionaries,
 spoke: 'Behold, this world is Mars;

like our world, it is a talisman of colours and
 scents,
 having cities and habitations, palaces and
 streets.
 Its dwellers are skilled in many arts, like the
 Franks,
 excelling us in physical and psychical
 sciences.
 They have greater dominion over time and
 place
 because they are cleverer at the science of
 space;
 they have so penetrated into its essence
 that they have seen its every twist and turn.
 Earth's dwellers—their hearts are bound to
 water and clay;
 in this world, body is in bondage to heart.
 When a heart makes its lodging in water and
 clay,
 with water and clay it makes what it wills;
 intoxication, joy, happiness are at the disposal
 of the soul,
 the soul determines the body's absence and
 presence.
 In our world, existence is a duality,
 soul and body, the one invisible, the other
 visible;
 for terrestrials, soul and body are bird and
 cage,
 whereas the thought of Martians is unitive.
 When the day of separation arrives for any,
 he becomes livelier from the flame of
 separation;
 a day or two before the day of death
 he proclaims his decease to his fellows.
 Their soul is not nourished by the body,
 therefore it has not become habituated to the
 body.
 Death is to draw in the body,
 death is to flee from the world into one's self.
 This discourse is too high for your thought
 because your soul is dominated by your body.
 You must wander here for a moment or two;
 God gives not such an opportunity to
 everyone.'

THE MARTIAN ASTRONOMER COMES OUT
OF THE OBSERVATORY

An aged man, his beard white as snow,
having expended many years upon science
and wisdom,
keen of eye like the Western sages,
his raiment like the robes of a Christian monk,
far on in years, yet tall of stature as a cypress,
his features glowing like a Turk of Merv,
well-versed in the wont and way of every
road,
the deep thoughts evident in his eyes,
seeing a man approaching, he opened like a
flower
and spoke in the tongue of Tusi and
Khayyam.
'A form of clay, prisoner to Quantity and
Quality,
has come forth from the abode of Under and
Over,
given flight to earth without aid of aircraft,
lent to the fixed stars the essence of the
planet!'
His speech and comprehension flowed like a
river;
I was lost in stupefaction at his words:
is this all a dream, or a trick of magic?
Pure Persian proceeding from a Martian's
lips!
He continued: 'In the time of the Chosen One
there was a Martian, a man pure of soul,
who opened his world-beholding eyes on
your world
and set his heart on travelling the confines of
man.
He spread his wings in the vast expanses of
being
until he alighted in the desert of Hejaz.
He wrote down all that he saw in East and
West,
his picture more colourful than the Garden of
Paradise.
I too have been in Iran and Europe,
I have travelled in the realms of Nile and
Ganges,
I have seen America and Japan and China,
investigating the metals of the earth.

I have knowledge of earth's nights and days,
I have journeyed through its lands and seas.
The tumults of Adam's sons are open before
me,
though man is not intimate with our labours.'

RUMI

I am of the skies, my companion is of the
earth,
intoxicated, yet he has not tasted the veins
of the vine;
a man intrepid, his name is Zinda-Rud,
his drunkenness derived from
contemplating existence.
We who have chanced thus upon your city
are in the world, yet free from the world.
In our quest for ever new apparitions
be our companion on the road for a little
time.

THE MARTIAN SAGE

These are the environs of Marghadin of
Barkhiya—
Barkhiya is the name of our ancestor.
Farzmarz, the tempter to all evil,
came up to Barkhiya once in Paradise;
'How can you remain here content?' he
cried.
'For many ages you have been dominated
by God.
There is a world far better than your abode,
compared with which Paradise itself is but a
moment's springtide;
that world is loftier than all other worlds,
that world is more sublime than
spacelessness.
God Himself knows nothing of that world;
I have never seen a world more free.
God does not interfere in its ordering,
it has no Book, no Prophet, no Gabriel,
no circumambulations, no prostrations
there,
no prayers, no thanksgivings.'
Barkhiya replied, 'Depart, you sorcerer,
pour your own image upon that world!'
Since our ancestor did not succumb to his
guile
God entrusted to us another world.

So enter this God-given kingdom;
 behold Marghadin and its laws and
 customs.

TOUR OF THE CITY OF MARGHADIN

Marghadin and those lofty edifices—
 what can I say of that noble city?
 Its inhabitants sweet of speech as honey,
 comely their faces, gentle their manners,
 simple their apparel,
 their thoughts innocent of the burning fever
 of gain,
 they were intimate with the secrets of the
 sun's alchemy;
 who so of them desires silver or gold gathers
 it from light,
 even as we gather salt from the briny sea.
 The aim of science and art there is service,
 no one weighs work done against gold;
 no one is even acquainted with dinars and
 dirhams,
 these idols may not enter the sanctuary.
 The demon of the machine has no power over
 nature,
 the skies are not blackened by smoke;
 the lamp of the hard-toiling farmer is always
 bright,
 he is secure from the plundering of the
 landlords,
 his tillage is not a struggle for water,
 his harvest is his own, no other shares in it.
 In that world there are no armies, no
 squadrons,
 none gains his livelihood by killing and
 murder;
 In Marghadin no pen wins lustre
 from inscribing and disseminating lies;
 in the market-places there is no clamour of the
 workless,
 no whining of beggars afflicts the ear.

THE MARTIAN SAGE

No one here is a mendicant or destitute,
 slave and master, ruler and ruled, here are
 none.

ZINDA-RUD

Mendicant and destitute are so by God's
 decree,
 by God's decree ruler and ruled;
 none but God is the creator of destiny
 and against destiny human design is
 powerless.

THE MARTIAN SAGE

If your heart bleeds on account of one
 destiny,
 petition God to decree another destiny;
 if you pray for a new destiny, that is lawful,
 seeing that God's destinies are infinite.
 Earthlings have gambled away the coin of
 selfhood,
 not comprehending the subtle meaning of
 destiny;
 its subtlety is contained in a single phrase—
 'If you transform yourself, it too will be
 transformed.'
 Be dust, and fate will give you the winds;
 be a stone, and it will hurl you against glass.
 Are you a dew-drop? Your destiny is to
 perish;
 are you an ocean? Your destiny is to endure.
 Every moment you are fashioning new Lats
 and Manats;
 inconstant one, do you look for constancy
 from idols?
 So long as your faith is to accord not with
 your self
 the world of your thoughts is your prison;
 toil without treasure—such is destiny;
 treasure without toil—such is destiny!
 If this is the foundation of faith, ignorant
 fellow,
 then the needy will become still more in
 need.
 Woe to that religion which lulls you to sleep
 and still holds you in sleep profound!
 Is this religion, or magic and enchantment?
 Is this religion, or a grain of opium?
 Do you know whence comes the penetrating
 nature,
 whence came this houri into your tenement
 of clay?

Do you know whence comes the sages'
 power of thought,
 whence the potency of prayer in God's
 interlocutors?
 Do you know whence came this heart, and
 its visitations,
 whence these arts, these miracles?
 Do you have fire of speech? That comes not
 from you;
 do you have flame of action? That comes not
 from you.
 All this is an overflow of the springtime of
 nature,
 nature which derives from nature's Creator.
 What is life? A mine of gems;
 you are the trustee, its owner is Another.
 A radiant nature glorifies the man of God,
 to serve all God's creatures, that is his aim—
 Service belongs to the wont and way of
 prophethood;
 to seek a reward for service is mere
 commerce.

Even so this wind, earth, cloud, field,
 orchard, meadow, palace, street, stones,
 bricks—
 you who say, 'Our property is of ourselves',
 ignorant one, all this belongs to God.
 If you regard God's earth as your own,
 then what means the verse, *Work not
 corruption?*

Adam's sons have given their hearts to Iblis,
 and from Iblis I have seen only corruption.
 None should convert a trust to his own use;
 blessed is he who renders God's property
 up to God.

You have carried off what does not belong
 to you;
 my soul sorrows for so unworthy a deed.
 If you own a thing, that is meet and right,
 but if you do not, say yourself, how is that
 proper?

Return to God the property of God
 so that you may loose the knot of your
 involvement;
 for why is there poverty and want under
 heaven's arch?

Because you say what is the Lord's belongs
 to you.

The man who has not leaped forth from
 water and clay
 has shattered his own glass with his own
 stone.

You who cannot tell goal from path,
 the value of every thing is measured by the
 regard.

So long as the pearl is your property, it is a
 pearl,
 otherwise it is a pebble, worth less than a
 farthing.

View the world otherwise, and it will
 become other,
 this earth and heaven will be transformed.

THE MARTIAN DAMSEL WHO CLAIMED TO BE A PROPHETESS

We passed by thousands of streets and
 mansions;
 on the edge of the city was a broad square
 and in that square a swarm of men and
 women,
 amidst them a woman with the stature of a
 tall pomegranate-tree.

Her face was radiant, but without the light of
 the soul,
 as if its meaning were too hard to express;
 her speech lacked fire, her eyes lacked tears,
 not intimate with the joy of desire:
 her breast was void of the ardour of youth,
 blind and unreceptive to images her mirror;
 she knew nothing of love and the laws of
 love,
 she was a sparrow spurned by the hawk of
 love.

That sage who knew all subtleties spoke to us:
 'This damsel is not of the Martians;
 simple and free of guile, without artifice,
 Farzmarz kidnapped her from the Franks
 and made her expert in the craft of
 prophethood,
 then let her loose upon this world,
 She declared, "I have come down from
 heaven;
 my message is the final message of time."

She speaks of the status of man and woman,
she speaks more openly of the secrets of the
body.

The destiny of life in this end of time
I will now recount in the language of
earthlings.'

ADMONITION OF THE MARTIAN PROPHETESS

Women! Mothers! Sisters!

How long shall we live like fond darlings?
To be a darling here is to be a victim,
to be a darling is to be dominated and
deprived.

We idly comb out our tresses
and think of men as our prey;
but man is a hunter in the guise of a quarry
and circles about you to lasso you.
His swooning ardours are but cunning and
deceit,
cunning and deceit his anguish and agony
and yearning.

Though that infidel makes a shrine of you,
he causes you to suffer much anguish and
grief.

To be his consort is a torment of life,
union with him is poison, separation from
him sugar.

A twisting serpent he—flee from his coils,
do not pour his poisons into your blood.
Maternity pales the cheeks of mothers;
O happy, to be free and without husband!

The divine revelation comes to me
continuously
augmenting the delight I have in faith.
The time has come when by a miracle of
science
it is possible to see the foetus within the
body;

from life's field you may gather a harvest
of sons and daughters exactly as you choose,
and if the foetus accords not with our desire
it is the essence of religion ruthlessly to slay
it.

After this age other ages will come
wherein new secrets shall be revealed;
the foetus will take nourishment of another
kind,

without the night of the womb it will find
the day.

Finally that being utterly demonic will die
even as died the creatures of the ancient
days.

Tulips without scar, with skirt unstained,
not in need of dew, will rise from the earth.
Of their own accord the secrets of life will
emerge,
life's string will yield melodies without a
plectrum.

Oyster dying of thirst under the sea,
do not accept the scatterings of April;
rise up and wage war with nature,
that by your battling the maiden may be
freed.

Woman's unitarianism is to escape from the
union of two bodies;
be guardian of yourself, and tangle not with
men!

RUMI

Regard the creed of this new-fangled age,
regard the harvest of irreligious education.
Love is the law and ritual of life,
religion the root of education; religion is
love.

Love externally is ardent, fiery,
inwardly it is the Light of the Lord of the
Worlds.

From its inward fever and glow, science and
art derive,
science and art spring from its ingenious
madness;
religion does not mature without Love's
schooling;
learn religion from the company of the
Lords of Love.

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF JUPITER

THE NOBLE SPIRITS OF HALLAJ, GHALIB,
AND QURRAT AL-AIN TAHIRA WHO
DISDAINED TO DWELL IN PARADISE,
PREFERRING TO WANDER FOR EVER

Let me be a ransom for this demented heart
which every instant bestows on me another
desert;

whenever I take up a lodging, it says,
'Rise -up!'

The self-strong man reckons the sea as but a
pool.

Seeing that the signs of God are infinite
where, traveller, can the high-road end?
The task of science is to see and consume,
the work of gnosis is to see and augment;
science weighs in the balance of technology,
gnosis weighs in the balance of intuition;
science holds in its hand water and earth,
gnosis holds in its hand the pure spirit;
science casts its gaze upon phenomena,
gnosis absorbs phenomena into itself.

In quest of continuous manifestations
I travel through the skies, lamenting like a
reed;

all this is by the grace of a pure-born saint
whose ardour fell upon my soul.

The caravan of these two scanners of existence
presently halted by the shores of Jupiter,
that world, that earth not yet complete,
circling about it moons swift of pace;
the glass of its vine was still empty of wine,
desire as yet had not sprouted from its soil.
Midnight, a world half day in the moon's
gleam,

the air thereof neither chill nor torrid.

As I lifted my gaze towards heaven
I saw a star closer to me;
the awful prospect robbed me of my senses—
near and far, late and soon became
transformed.

I saw before me three pure spirits
the fire in whose breasts might melt the
world.

They were clad in robes of tulip hue,
their faces gleamed with an inner glow;
in fever and fervour since the moment of

Alast,
intoxicated with the wine of their own
melodies.

Rumi said, 'Do not go out of yourself so,
be quickened by the breath of these songs of
fire.

You have never seen intrepid passion; behold!
You have never seen the power of this wine;
behold!

Ghalib and Hallaj and the Lady of Persia
have flung tumult into the soul of the
sanctuary.

These songs bestow stability on the spirit,
their warmth springs from the inmost heart of
creation.'

THE SONG OF HALLAJ

Seek from your own earth a fire as yet
unseen,
another's apparition is unworthy of your
demand.

I have so fastened on myself my gaze, that
though the beauty of the Beloved
fills all the world, I am left no time to
contemplate.

I would not give for Jamshid's realm that
verse of Naziri:

'He who is yet unslain belongs not to our
tribe.'

Though reason whose trade is wizardry
mustered an army,
your heart will not be dismayed, for Love is
not alone.

You know not the way and are uninformed
of the stage;
what melody is there that is not in Sulaima's
lute?

Tell a tale of the hunting and fettering of
sharks:
do not say, 'Our skiff knows not the face of
the sea.'

I am disciple of the zeal of that wayfarer
who never set foot
on any high-road that ran over mountains,
deserts and seas.

Be partner with the ring of wine-bibbing
dissolutes;
beware of allegiance to a Master who is not
a man of tumult.

THE SONG OF GHALIB

Come, let us change the rule of heaven,
let us change fate by revolving a heavy
measure of wine;
though the police-captain makes trouble, we
will not worry,
and if the king himself sends a present, we
will reject it.
Though Moses converse with us, we will not
say a word;
though Abraham be our host, we will
decline him.
Battling, the tribute-snatchers of the grove
we will turn away from our garden's gate
with empty basket;
peacefully, the birds that flutter their wings
at dawn
we will send back from the grove to their
nests.
You and I are of Hyder, so no wonder
would it be
if we turn back the sun towards the East.

THE SONG OF TAHIRA

If ever confronting face to face my glance
should alight on you
I will describe to you my sorrow for you in
minutest detail.
That I may behold your cheek, like the
zephyr I have visited
house by house, door by door, lane by lane,
street by street.
Through separation from you my heart's
blood is flowing from my eyes
river by river, sea by sea, fountain by
fountain, stream by stream.
My sorrowful heart wove your love into the
fabric of my soul
thread by thread, thrum by thrum, warp by
warp, woof by woof.
Tahira repaired to her own heart, and saw
none but you

page by page, fold by fold, veil by veil,
curtain by curtain.

The ardour and passion of these anguished
lovers
cast fresh commotions into my soul;
ancient problems reared their heads
and made assault upon my mind.
The ocean of my thought was wholly agitated;
its shore was devastated by the might of the
tempest.
Rumi said, 'Do not lose any time,
you who desire the resolution of every knot;
for long you have been a prisoner in your
own thoughts,
now pour this tumult out of your breast!'

ZINDA-RUD PROPOUNDS HIS PROBLEMS
TO THE GREAT SPIRITS

Why do you keep far from the station of
believers?
That is, why are you exiled from Paradise?

HALLAJ

The free man who knows good and evil,
his spirit cannot be contained in Paradise.
The mullah's Paradise is wine and houris
and page boys,
the Paradise of free men is eternal voyaging;
the mullah's Paradise is eating and sleeping
and singing,
the lover's Paradise is the contemplation of
Being.
The mullah's Resurrection is the splitting of
the tomb and the trumpet's blast,
tumult-arousing Love is itself the Dawn of
Resurrection.
Science is founded upon fear and hope,
lovers are troubled by neither hope nor fear;
science is fearful of the grandeur of creation,
Love is immersed in the beauty of creation;
science gazes upon the past and the present,
love cries, 'Look upon what is coming!'
Science has made compact with the canon of
constraint
and has no other resource but constraint and
resignation;
Love is free and proud and intolerant

and boldly investigates the whole of Being.
Our love is a stranger to complaining
even though it weeps the tears of
drunkenness.
Our constrained heart is not truly
constrained,
our arrow is not shot by any houri's glance;
our fire augments out of separation,
separation is congenial to our soul.
Life without prickings is no true life;
one must live with a fire under one's feet.
Such living is the destiny of the self
and through this destiny the self is built up.
A mote through infinite yearning becomes
the envy of the sun,
in its breast the nine spheres cannot be
contained;
when yearning makes assault upon a world
it transforms momentary beings into
immortals.

ZINDA-RUD

The wheeling of destiny is death and life;
no man knows what the wheeling of destiny
is.

HALLAJ

Whoever possesses the apparatus of destiny,
Iblis and death tremble before his might.
Predestination is the religion of men of zeal,
predestination for heroes is the perfection of
power.
Ripe souls become yet riper through
constraint
which for raw men is the embrace of the
tomb.
Khalid constrained turns a world upside
down;
for us, constraint tears us up by the roots.
The business of true men is resignation and
submission;
this garment does not suit the weaklings.
You who know the station of the Sage of
Rum,
do you not know the words of the Sage of
Rum?

'A fire-worshipper there was in the
time of Ba Yazid;
a blessed Muslim said to him,
"Better were it if you accepted the
Faith
so that salvation and the excellence
would be yours."
The other said, "Disciple, if this be
faith
that the Shaykh of the World Ba
Yazid possesses,
I cannot endure its glowing heat
which is too great for the strivings of
my soul."'³

Our concern is only with hope and fear;
not every man has the zeal to surrender.
You who say, 'This was to be, and so
happened,
all things were tethered to a divine decree,
and so happened,'
you have little understood the meaning of
destiny,
you have seen neither selfhood nor God.
The believer true thus petitions God:
'We accord with you, so accord with us.'
His resolution is the creator of God's
determination
and on the day of battle his arrow is God's
arrow.

ZINDA-RUD

Men of short vision have stirred up
commotions
and hung God's true servant on the gibbet.
The hidden things of Being are manifest to
you;
declare then, what was your crime?

HALLAJ

The sound of the Last Trump was in my
breast;
I saw a people hastening to the tomb,
believers with the character and colour of
infidels
who cried 'No god but God' and denied the
self.

³ The story is taken from the *Mathnawi* of Rumi.

'God's bidding' they called a vain image
because it was bound to water and clay.
I kindled in my self the fire of life
and spoke to the dead of the mysteries of
life.
The whole world has been founded on
selfhood,
love therein has been compounded with
violence;
selfhood is everywhere visible, yet invisible,
our gaze cannot endure to look on selfhood;
within its light many fires lurk hidden,
from its Sinai creation's epiphanies shine.
Every moment every heart in this ancient
convent
discourses, albeit secretly, of the self;
whoever has not taken his share of its fire
has died in the world, a stranger to himself.
India and Iran alike are privy to its light,
but few there are who also know its fire.
I have spoken of its light and its fire;
confidant of my secret, see now my crime.
What I have done you too have done;
beware!
You have sought to resurrect the dead:
beware!

TAHIRA

From the sin of a frenzied servant of God
new creatures come into being;
unbounded passion rends veils apart,
removes from the vision the old and stale,
and in the end meets its portion in rope and
gallows
neither turns back living from the Beloved's
street.
Behold Love's glory in city and fields,
lest you suppose it has passed away from
the world;
it lies concealed in the breast of its own
time—
how could it be contained in such a closet as
this?

ZINDA-RUD

You who have been given the agony of the
eternal quest,

explain to me the meaning of a verse of
yours:
The dove is a handful of ashes, the
nightingale a network of colour—
O lamentation, what is the true sign of a
broken heart?

GHALIB

The lament that rises out of a broken heart—
I have seen its effect different in every place;
the dove is consumed through its influence,
the nightingale daubed with colours as its
result.
In it, death is in the embrace of life,
one moment here is life, there is death;
such a colour as glowed in Mani's abode,
such a colour as begets colourlessness.
You know not, this is the station of colour
and scent;
the portion of every heart is according to its
ululation.
Either enter colour, or pass into
colourlessness,
that you may grasp a token of the broken
heart.

ZINDA-RUD

A hundred worlds are manifest in this azure
expanse;
are there saints and prophets in every
world?

GHALIB

Consider well this being and not-being;
continuously worlds are coming into
existence.
Wherever the tumultuous clamour of a
world arises,
there too is a *Mercy unto all beings*.

ZINDA-RUD

Speak more plainly; my understanding
flags.

GHALIB

It were a sin to speak of these things more
plainly.

ZINDA-RUD

Then is the conversation of adepts
unprofitable?

GHALIB

It is difficult to give tongue to this subtlety.

ZINDA-RUD

You are wholly afire with the glow of the
quest,
yet how strange, you cannot master mere
words!

GHALIB

'Creation', 'Predestination', 'Guidance' are
the beginning;
a *Mercy unto all beings* is the end.

ZINDA-RUD

I have not yet glimpsed the face of the
meaning;
if you possess a fire, then burn me!

GHALIB

You who like me decry the secrets of
poetry,
these words overstretch the string of poetry;
the poets have adorned the banquet of
words,
but these Moses lack the White Hand.
What you demand of me is unbelief,
an unbelief transcending poetry.

HALLAJ

Wherever you see a world of colour and
scent
out of whose soil springs the plant of desire
is either already illumined by the light of the
Chosen One
or is still seeking for the Chosen One.

ZINDA-RUD

I ask of you — though to ask is a sin —
the secret of that essence whose name is the
Chosen One;
is it a man, or an essence in being
such as but rarely comes into existence?

HALLAJ

Before him the whole world bows prostrate,
before him who called himself His servant.
'His servant' surpasses your understanding
because he is man, and at the same time
essence.

His essence is neither Arab nor non-Arab;
he is a man, yet more ancient than man.

'His servant' is the shaper of destinies,
in him are deserts and flourishing
cultivations;

'His servant' both increases life and destroys
it,

'His servant' is both glass and heavy stone.

'Servant' is one thing, 'His servant' is
another;

we are all expectancy, he is the expectation.

'His servant' is time, and time is of 'His
servant';

we all are colour, he is without colour and
scent.

'His servant' had beginning, but has no end;
what have our morn and eve to do with 'His
servant'?

No man knows the secret of 'His servant',

'His servant' is naught but the secret of 'save
God'.

'Save God' is the sword whose edge is 'His
servant';

do you want it plainer? Say, He is 'His
servant'.

'His servant' is the how and why of creation,

'His servant' is the inward mystery of
creation.

The true meaning of these two verses
becomes not clear

until you behold from the station of *Thou
threwest not*.

Zinda-Rud, have done now with speaking
and listening,

become drowned in the ocean of being,
Zinda-Rud.

ZINDA-RUD

I know so little — what is this business of
Love?

Is it the joy of beholding? Then what is
beholding?

HALLAJ

The meaning of beholding that Last of Time
is to make his rule binding on oneself.
Live in the world like the Apostle of men
and jinn
that like him you may be accepted by men
and jinn
Then behold yourself—that is the same as
beholding him;
his Sunna is a secret of his secrets.

ZINDA-RUD

What is the beholding of the God of the nine
spheres,
of Him without whose command moon and
sun do not revolve?

HALLAJ

First, to implant on one's soul the image of
God,
then next to implant it on the world;
when the soul's image is perfected in the
world,
to behold the commons is to behold God.
Blessed is the man whose single sigh
causes the nine heavens to circle about his
dwelling;
woe to the dervish who, having uttered a
sigh,
then closes his lips and draws back his
breath!
Such a one never made God's rule to run in
the world;
he ate barley-bread, but never fought like
Ali;
he sought a convent and fled from Khyber,
he practised monkhood and never saw royal
power.
Do you possess God's image? The world is
your prey;
destiny shares the same reins as your
design.
The present age seeks to war with you;
imprint God's image on this infidel's tablet!

ZINDA-RUD

God's image has been implanted on the
world;

I do not know how it has been implanted.

HALLAJ

It has been implanted by force of love
or it has been implanted by force of
violence;
because God is more manifest in love,
love is a better way than violence.

ZINDA-RUD

Declare, master of the secrets of the East,
what difference is there between the ascetic
and the lover?

HALLAJ

The ascetic is a stranger in this present
world,
the lover is a stranger in the world to come.

ZINDA-RUD

The end of gnosis is not-being
what is life to repose in annihilation?

HALLAJ

The intoxication of lovers comes from
emptied cups;
not-being is to be ignorant of gnosis.
You who seek your goal in annihilation,
non-existence can never discover existence.

ZINDA-RUD

He who counted himself better than Adam
in his jar and cup remains neither wine nor
lees;
our handful of dust is acquainted with the
skies
where is the fire of that destitute one?

HALLAJ

Speak little of that Leader of those in
separation,
throat athirst, and eternally a blood-filled
cup.
We are ignorant, he knows being and
not-being;
his infidelity revealed to us this mystery,
how that from falling comes the delight of
rising,

from the pain of waning springs the joy of waxing.

Love is to burn in his fire;
without his fire, burning is no burning.
Because he is more ancient in love and service,
Adam is not privy to his secrets.
Tear off the skirt of blind conformity
that you may learn God's Unity from him.

ZINDA-RUD

You who hold the clime of the soul under
your royal signet,
keep company with me a moment more.

HALLAJ

We do not tolerate confinement to one station,
we are wholly and singly a yearning to soar;
every instant our occupation is to see and to quiver,
our labour is to fly without feathers and wings.

IBLIS, LEADER OF THE PEOPLE OF
SEPARATION, APPEARS

The company of the radiant of heart is for a breath or two,
that breath or two is the substance of being and not-being;
it made love more tumultuous, and then passed,
endowed reason with vision, and then passed.
I closed my eyes to hold it still within me,
to transport it from my eyes to my heart.
Suddenly I saw the world had become dark,
become dark from space even to spacelessness.
In that night a flame appeared
from the midst of which an old man leaped forth
wrapped in a cloak of antimony grey,
his body immersed in wreathing smoke.
Rumi said, 'The Leader of the People of Separation!
How all a-fire, and what a cup of blood!
Ancient, seldom smiling, of few words,

his eyes scanning the soul within the body,
drunkard and mullah, philosopher and Sufi,
in practice like a toiling ascetic,
his nature alien to the joy of union,
his asceticism the abandonment of eternal beauty;
since it was not easy to break away from beauty,
he made a beginning with spurning adoration.

Gaze a little at his visitations,
gaze at his difficulties, his tenacity
still absorbed in the battle of good and evil,
he has seen a hundred prophets, and is an infidel yet.'

My soul in my body quivered for his agony;
a sigh of anguish broke from his lips.
With eyes half-closed he turned to me and said;

'Who besides me has so gloried in action?
I have become so involved in labour
that even on the sabbath I am rarely at rest,
I have no angels, no servants attending me;
my revelation is without benefit of prophets.
I have brought neither Traditions nor Book;
I have robbed theologians of their sweet soul.
None ever spun finer than they the thread of religion.

yet in the end they left the Ka'bah a heap of bricks.

My religion has no such foundation;
in the faith of Iblis there are no schisms and sects.

Ignorant one, I have given up prostration,
I have turned the organ of good and evil.

Do not take me for one who denies God's existence;

open your eyes on my inner self, overlook my exterior.

If I say, "He is not", that would be foolishness,

for when one has seen, one cannot say, "He is not".

Under the veil of "No" I murmured "Yes";
what I have spoken is better than what I never said.

To share in the pain and suffering of Adam

I did not forgo the fury of the Beloved.
 Flames sprang forth from my sown field;
 man out of predestination achieved free-will.
 I displayed my own hideousness
 and have given you the joy of leaving or
 choosing.
 Deliver me now from my fire;
 resolve, O man, the knot of my toil.
 You who have fallen into my noose
 and given to Satan the leave to disobey,
 live in the world with true manly zeal;
 as you pity me, live a stranger to me
 proudly disregarding my sting and my
 honey,
 so that my scroll may not become blacker still.
 In the world the huntsman lives on his prey;
 whilst you are my prey, I draw out my
 arrows.
 He who soars aloft is secure from falling;
 if the quarry is cunning, the huntsman will
 fail.’
 ‘Give up this cult of separation’, I said to him.
 ‘The most hateful of things to God is divorce.’
 He said, ‘The fire of separation is the stuff of
 life;
 how sweet the intoxication of the day of
 separation!
 The very name of union comes not to my lips;
 if I seek union, neither He remains nor I.’
 The word ‘union’ made him out of himself;
 the burning agony was renewed in his heart.
 He wallowed awhile in his own fumes,
 he became lost again in his own fumes;
 out of those fumes whirling a lament rose
 high;
 how blessed the soul that can feel anguish!

SATAN’S LAMENT

God of the righteous and the unrighteous,
 man’s company has devastated me.
 Not once has he rebelled against my rule;
 he has closed his eyes to himself, and has not
 found himself.
 His dust is a stranger to the joy of
 disobedience,
 a stranger to the spark of pride.
 The prey says to the huntsman, ‘Seize me’:

save me from the all too obedient servant!
 Set me free from such a quarry;
 remember my obedience of yesterday.
 My lofty aspiration through him has been
 abased;
 alas for me, alas for me, alas for me!
 His nature is raw, his resolution weak,
 this opponent cannot withstand one blow
 from me.
 I need a servant of God possessed of vision,
 I need a riper adversary!
 Take back this plaything of water and clay:
 a child’s toy suits not a man of a certain age.
 What is man? A handful of straw;
 one spark from me is enough for a handful of
 straw.
 If nothing but straw existed in this world,
 what profited it to endow me with so much
 fire?
 It were a shame to melt a piece of glass;
 to melt a rock—that is a proper task!
 I have become so saddened by all my
 triumphs
 that now I come to You for recompense;
 I seek from You one who dares to deny me—
 guide me, to such a man of God.
 I need a man who will twist my neck,
 whose glance will set my body quivering,
 one who will say, ‘Depart from my presence’,
 one in whose eyes I am not worth two
 barleycorns.
 Grant me, O God, one living man of faith;
 haply I shall know delight at last in defeat.

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

THE SPHERE OF SATURN

THE VILE SPIRITS WHICH HAVE BETRAYED
 THE NATION AND HAVE BEEN REJECTED
 BY HELL

The Sage of Rum, leader of the righteous,
 familiar with all the stages of the righteous,

spoke: 'Hard-toiling traveller of the heavens,
do you see yonder world that wears a girdle?
That which it has twisted around its waist
it stole from the tail of a star.
So heavy of pace it is, its motion seems
stationary;
under its rule, every good is turned to evil
and base.
Though its form is fashioned of water and
clay
it is difficult to set foot on its soil.
A myriad angels, thunder in hand,
dispensing God's wrath since the Day of
Alast,
continually castigate the planet
and dislodge it from its pivot.
A world rejected and repelled by heaven,
its morn is as evening, the sun is so grudging.
It is the lodging-place of spirits that shall
know no resurrection,
which Hell itself shrank from burning:
therein live two ancient demons
who slew a people's soul to save their skins,
Jaafar of Bengal and Sadiq of Deccan,
shame to mankind, religion and fatherland,
unaccepted, despairing, undesired,
a nation ruined by their handiwork.
A nation, which had loosed the bonds of
every nation,
thus lost its high sovereignty and its faith.
Do you not know that the land of India,
dear to the heart of every sensitive soul,
a land whose every manifestation lit up the
world,
now grovels amid dust and blood?
Who sowed in its soil the seed of slavery?
All this is the handiwork of those evil spirits.
Pause a moment in the azure expanse
that you may see the retribution for their
deeds.

THE SEA OF BLOOD

What I beheld was indescribable;
body by terror was dissundered from soul.
What met my eyes? A sea of blood I viewed
tempest-torn outwardly and inwardly;

the air swarmed with snakes, as with sharks
the sea,
their hoods black as night, their pinions
quicksilver;
billows roaring and rending like panthers
so that the sharks in terror of them lay dead
on the shore.
The sea gave the shore not one moment's
respite;
every instant mountain-blocks fell crashing in
blood.
Bloody wave fought with wave of blood,
whilst in their midst a skiff tossed up and
down;
in that skiff were two men pale of cheek,
pale of cheek, naked, with hair dishevelled.

THE SPIRIT OF INDIA APPEARS

Heaven split in twain. A pure-born houri
lifted the veil from her countenance;
on her brow shone eternal fire and light,
her eyes were radiant with immortal joy.
The robe covering her was lighter than a
cloud,
its warp and woof of the veins of rose-petals.
With all such loveliness, she was doomed to
chains and fetters,
and from her lips sighs of agony broke.
Rumi said, 'See, this is the Spirit of India;
the heart is broken by her lamentation.'

THE SPIRIT OF INDIA LAMENTS

The soul's candle is quenched in the lamp of
India:
Indians are strangers to India's fair repute,
its manikins not intimate with their self's
secrets,
their plectrum plucks but rarely at their
strings.
They fasten their eyes upon the past,
their hearts would glow from an extinguished
fire.
Because of them I am bound hand and foot,
they are the reason for my unavailing
laments;
they have estranged themselves from their
selfhood,
they have made a prison of ancient customs.

Humanity is pained by their existence:
the new age is outraged by their 'clean' and
'unclean'.

Have done with the poverty that bestows
nakedness;
blessed is the poverty which bestows true
power.
Beware of constraint and of the habit of
patience;
constraint is poison to both constringer and
constrained—
the latter becomes habituated to patience,
the former becomes habituated to constraint;
for both the pleasure of oppression increases
and I can only repeat, Ah, would that my
people knew!
When shall India's night give place to day?
Jaafar is dead, but his spirit is living still;
as soon as it escapes from the chains of one
body
at once it makes its nest in another flesh.
Now it makes concord with the church,
anon it turns entreating to the templars;
its creed, its cult are nothing but commerce,
an Antar got up in the robes of Hyder.
As the world changes in scent and colour,
even so its customs and usages change;
In former times it bowed before other gods,
in our days its idol is the fatherland.
Outwardly it is anguished for the Faith,
inwardly it wears the thread like the templars.
Jaafar, in whatever body, murders the nation;
this 'good old Muslim' murders the nation.
He is always smiling, and is friends with
none;
let a snake smile, it is still a snake.
His treachery divided the people's unity;
his nation is demeaned by the fact of his
being.
Whenever a nation is devastated
the root of its ruin is a Sadiq or a Jaafar.
God save me from the spirit of Jaafar,
save me from the Jaafars of the present time!

THE LAMENT OF ONE OF THE
SKIFF-RIDERS OF THE SEA OF BLOOD

"Neither not-being nor being will accept us:

alas, for the unkindness of being and
not-being!
We passed through the world of East and
West
and with pain and affliction reached the gates
of Hell,
but Hell shot not a single spark at Sadiq and
Jaafar
nor even a handful of ashes hurled at our
heads,
saying, 'Sticks and straws are better for Hell;
my flame is better unsullied by these two
infidels.'

We journeyed beyond the nine heavens
seeking to come to sudden death
which spoke: 'The soul is a secret among my
secrets;
it is my task to preserve the soul and destroy
the body.
Though the wicked soul is not worth two
barleycorns,
be gone, you who would have me destroy the
soul!
Such a task cannot be performed by Death;
the traitor's soul will not find rest in Death.'

Swift winds! O sea of blood,
O earth, O azure heaven,
O stars, O shining moon, O sun!
O Pen, O Preserved Tablet, O Book!
White idols! Lords of the West,
who hold a world in your grip without war
and violence!
This world without beginning is without end;
where is the Lord Protector of traitors?

Suddenly there came a terrible sound
which split the breast of desert and ocean.
The whole realm of body disjointed fell apart;
moment by moment the mountain-masses
crumbled—
mountains like clouds in motion—
a world's destruction without the Blast of the
Trumpet.
Lightning and thunder, fired by an inward
fever,
sought a nest of refuge in the Sea of Blood.

The billows boiled and broke out of
themselves;
mountains and valleys were drowned in
blood.

All that befell the visible and the invisible
the stars cavalcade beheld, and passed on
indifferently.

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

BEYOND THE SPHERES

THE STATION OF THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER NIETZSCHE

The conflict of being and not-being is
universal;
no man knows the secret of yon azure sky.
Everywhere death brings the message of
life—
happy is the man who knows what death is.
Everywhere life is as cheap as the wind,
unstable, and aspiring to stability.
My eyes had beheld a hundred six-day
worlds
and at last the borders of this universe
appeared;
each world had a different moon, a different
Pleiades,
a different manner and mode of existence.
Time in each world flowed like the sea,
here slowly, and there swiftly;
our year was here a month, there a moment,
this world's more was that world's less.
Our reason in one world was all-cunning,
in another world it was mean and abased.
On the frontiers of this world of quality and
quantity
dwelt a man with a voice full of agony,
his vision keener than an eagle's,
his mien witness to a heart afire;
every moment his inward glow increased.
On his lips was a verse he chanted a hundred
times:

'No Gabriel, no Paradise, no houri, no God,
only a handful of dust consumed by a
yearning soul.'

I said to Rumi, 'Who is this madman?'
He answered: 'This is the German genius
whose place is between these two worlds;
his reed-pipe contains an ancient melody.
This Hallaj without gallows and rope
has spoken anew those ancient words;
his words are fearless, his thoughts sublime,
the Westerners are struck asunder by the
sword of his speech.
His colleagues have not comprehended his
ecstasy
and have reckoned the ecstatic mad.
Intellectuals have no share of love and
intoxication;
they placed his pulse in the hand of the
physician,
yet what have doctors but deceit and fraud?
Alas for the ecstatic born in Europe!
Avicenna puts his faith in textbooks
and slits a vein, or prescribes a sleeping-pill.
He was a Hallaj who was a stranger in his
own city;
he saved his life from the mullahs, and the
physicians slew him.
'There was none in Europe who knew the
Way,
so his melody outstretched the strings of his
lute;
none showed the wayfarer the road,
and a hundred flaws vitiated his visitations.
He was true coin, but there was none to assay
him,
expert in theory, but none to prove him;
a lover lost in the labyrinth of his sighs,
a traveller gone astray in his own path.
His intoxication shattered every glass;
he broke from God, and was snapped too
from himself.
He desired to see, with his external eyes,
the intermingling of power with love;
he yearned for these to come forth from water
and clay
a cluster sprouting from the seed-bud of the
heart.

What he was seeking was the station of Omnipotence, which station transcends reason and philosophy. Life is a commentary on the hints of the self, "no" and "but" are of the stations of the self; he remained fast in "no" and did not reach "but" being a stranger to the station of "His servant". Revelation embraced him, yet he knew it not, being like fruit all the farther from the roots of the tree. His eyes desired no other vision but man; fearlessly he shouted, "Where is man?" and else he had despaired of earth's creatures and like Moses he was seeking the vision. Would that he had lived in Ahmad's time, so that he might have attained eternal joy. His reason is in dialogue with itself; take your own way, for one's own way is good. Stride onwards, for now that station has come wherein speech sprouts without spoken words.'

DEPARTURE FOR THE GARDEN OF PARADISE

I passed beyond the bounds of this universe and set foot in the undimensioned world, a world without both right and left, a world devoid of night and day. Before it the lantern of my perception dimmed, my words died in awe of the meaning. To speak of the spirit with the tongue of water and clay— it is very hard to soar in a cage! Regard a little while the world of the heart that you may win clear vision by the light of the self. What is the heart? A world without colour and scent, a world without colour and scent and without dimensions. The heart is at rest, yet every moment in motion;

the heart is a world of spiritual states and thoughts. Reason makes its way from fact to fact, it travels without highroad and tramping and transport; a hundred images, each different from the other, this one acquaint with heaven, that one unattaining. No one says that this which is acquaint with heaven is on the right hand of that unattaining image, or that the joy which comes from beholding the beloved is but half a pace from the air of His street. Your eyes may be wakeful or asleep; the heart sees without the rays of the sun. Know that world by the world of the heart— yet what shall I say of what defies analogy? In that universe was another world whose origin was from another Divine fiat, undecaying, and every moment transformed, unimaginable, yet there clearly visible; every moment clothed in a new perfection, every moment clad in a new beauty. Its time had no need of moon and sun; in its expanse the nine spheres are contained. Whatever is in the Unseen comes face to face even before the desire for it issues from the heart. How can I tell in my own tongue what it is, this world? It is light, and presence, and life. Tulips repose amidst the mountains, rivers meander in the rose-gardens; buds crimson, white and blue blossom with the breath of the holy ones; its waters silver, the air ambergris, palaces with domes of emerald, tents of ruby with golden ropes, beauties with countenances radiant as a mirror. Rumi said, 'Prisoner of analogy, pass beyond the credibility of the senses, acts fair and foul derive out of manifestation, the latter turning to Hell, the former to Heaven; these many-coloured palaces you behold

are built of deeds, not of bricks and stones;
what you call Kauthar and page and houri
are the reflection of this world of ecstasy and
joy.

Here life is the Beatific Vision, naught else,
the bliss of seeing and speaking with the
Beloved.'

THE PALACE OF SHARAF AL-NISA

I said, 'Yonder mansion of pure ruby
which gathers tribute from the sun,
yon station, yon abode, yon lofty palace
whose portico the houris throng
pilgrim-robed—
tell me, you who inspired the travellers to
search,
who is the owner of this habitation?'
Rumi replied: 'This is the mansion of Sharaf
al-Nisa;
the birds on its roof sing in the angels' choir.
Our ocean gave not birth to such a pearl;
no mother gave birth to such a daughter.
By her grave the earth of Lahore vies with
heaven;
none in this world comprehends her secret.
She was all ecstasy and yearning, anguish and
burning,
eyes and lamp to the governor of Panjab;
radiance of the family of Abd al-Samad,
her poverty is an image remaining eternally.
To cleanse her being wholly with the Quran,
not for one moment did she cease recitation;
at her side a double-edged sword, the Quran
in her hand,
flesh, body, mind and soul drunken with
God;
solitude with sword, Quran and prayer—
O happy life, passed in supplication!
When the last breath issued from her lips,
looking upon her mother most yearningly
she spoke: "If you would have knowledge of
my secret,
regard this sword and this Quran.
These two forces preserve each the other
and are the axis of all life's creation.
In this world, which dies every moment,

only these two were your daughter's
intimates.

Now that I take my leave I have this to say to
you:

do not remove the sword and the Quran from
me.

Take to your heart these words I speak;
better my tomb without dome and lamp;
for believers, sword and Quran suffice—
let this be the furniture of my grave."

For long ages, beneath this golden dome,
the sword and the scriptures lay upon her
shrine.

Her resting-place, in this inconstant world,
spoke a message to the people of the Truth
until the Muslims did with themselves what
they did

and time's revolution rolled up their carpet.
The man of God was mindful of other than
God,

the lion of the Lord took to the trade of the
fox;

the quicksilver fire and fever departed from
his heart—

you know well what befell Panjab—
the Khalsa snatched away sword and Quran
and in that land Islam expired.'

VISITATION TO HIS HIGHNESS SAYYID ALI HAMADANI AND MULLA TAHIR GHANI OF KASHMIR

Rumi's words kindled a fire in my heart.
Alas for Panjab, that precious land!
Even in Paradise I burned with the fever
of my friends, and knew again my ancient
griefs
until in that bower a sorrowful voice
rose up from the banks of the stream Kauthar:
'I gathered a handful of straw to set myself on
fire;
the rose supposes that I would build a nest in
the garden.'

Rumi said, 'Observe what is now coming;
give not your heart to what has passed, my
son.

That poet of colourful song, Tahir Ghani,

whose poverty abounds in riches inward and outward,
drunk with eternal wine, is chanting a melody
in the presence of the Sayyid sublime,
noble of nobles, commander of Persia,
whose hand is the architect of the destiny of
nations.

Ghazali himself learned the lesson of God is
He

and drew meditation and thought from his
stock.

Guide he of that emerald land,
counsellor of prince and dervish and sultan;
a king ocean-munificent, to that vale
he gave science, crafts, education, religion.
That man created a miniature Iran
with rare and heart-ravishing arts;
with one glance he unravels a hundred
knots—
rise, and let his arrow transfix your heart.'

IN THE PRESENCE OF SHAH-I HAMADAN

ZINDA-RUD

I seek from you the key to the secret of God:
He sought from us obedience, and created
Satan.

So to adorn the hideous and unlovely
and to demand of us comeliness of works—
I ask you, what is this magic-mongering,
what this dicing with an evil adversary?
A handful of dust, against yon revolving
sphere—
tell me now, did it beseem Him so to do?
Our labour, our thoughts, our anguish
is but to bite our hands in despair.

SHAH-I HAMADAN

The man who is fully aware of himself
creates advantage out of loss.
To sup with the Devil brings disaster to a
man,
to wrestle with the Devil brings him glory.
One must strike oneself against Ahriman;
you are a sword, he is the whetstone;
become sharper, that your stroke may be
hard,
else you will be unfortunate in both worlds.

ZINDA-RUD

Under the heavens man devours man,
nation grazes upon another nation.
My soul burns like rue for the people of the
Vale;

cries of anguish mount from my heart.

They are a nation clever, perceptive,
handsome,

their dexterity is proverbial,

yet their cup rolls in their own blood;

the lament in my flute is on their behalf.

Since they have lost their share of selfhood
they have become strangers in their own
land;

their wages are in the hands of others,

the fish of their river in other men's nets.

The caravans move step by step to the goal;

but still their work is ill-done, unformed,
immature.

Through servitude their aspirations have
died,

the fire in the veins of their vine is
quenched.

But do not think that they were always so,
their brows ever lowered thus to the dust;
once upon a time they too were warlike folk,
valiant, heroic, ardent in battle.

Behold her mountains turbaned in white,

behold the fiery hands of her chenars;

in springtime rubies leap down from the
rocks,

a flood of colour rises from her soil,

stippled clouds cover mountain and valley

like cotton-flocks strewn from a carder's
bow.

Mountain and river, and the setting of the
sun:

there I behold God without a veil.

I wandered with the zephyr in Nishat

chanting as I roved, 'Listen to the reed'.

A bird perched in the branches was singing:

'This springtide is not worth a penny.

The tulip has blossomed, the dark-eyed
narcissus is in bloom,

the breeze of Nauruz has torn their skirts;

for many ages from this mountain and

valley have sprung

daisies purer than the light of the moon,

for many ages the rose has packed and
unpacked her baggage,
yet our earth has not begotten a second
Shihab al-Din.'

The passionate lament of that bird of dawn
filled my heart with new fire and fever.
Presently I beheld a madman, whose
threnody
robbed me of all endurance and reason.
'Pass us by, and seek not an impassioned
lament,
pass from the rose-twig, that talisman of
colour and scent.

You said that dew was dripping from the
tulip's petals;
nay, it is a feckless heart weeping beside the
river.

What have these few feathers to do with
such a chant?

It is the spirit of Ghani mourning the death
of desire.

Zephyr, if you should pass over Geneva
speak a word from me to the League of
Nations:
they have sold farmer and cornfield, river
and garden,
they have sold a people, and at a price how
cheap.'

SHAH-I HAMADAN

I will tell you a subtle mystery, my son:
the body is all clay, the soul a precious pearl.
The body must be melted for the sake of the
soul,
the pure must be distinguished from the
clay.
If you cut off a part of the body from the
body,
that slice of the body will be lost to you;
but the soul which is drunk with vision—
if you give it away, it will return to you.
The soul's substance resembles nothing else;
it is in bonds, and yet not in bonds;
if you watch over it, it dies in the body,
and if you scatter it, it illuminates the
gathering.
What, noble sir, is the soul 'drunk with
vision'?

What does it mean to 'give the soul away'?
To give away the soul is to surrender it to
God,

it means melting the mountain with the
soul's flame.

'Drunk with vision' means discovering
one's self,
shining like a star in the night-season:
not to discover one's self is not to exist,
to discover is to bestow the self on the self.
Whosoever has seen himself and has seen
naught else
has drawn forth the load from the self's
prison;
the 'drunk with vision' who beholds himself
deems the sting sweeter than the honey—
in his eyes the soul is cheap as the air,
before him the walls of his prison tremble;
his axe shivers the granite rock
so that he takes his share of the universe.
When he gives up the soul, his soul is truly
his,
otherwise his soul is his guest but for a
moment or two.

ZINDA-RUD

You have spoken of the wisdom of foul and
fair;
learned sage, expound a further subtlety.
You were the guide of those who behold the
inner meanings
you were the confidant of the secrets of
kings.
We are poor men, and the ruler demands
tribute;
what is the origin of the sanction of throne
and crown?

SHAH-I HAMADAN

What is the origin of Kingship in East and
West?
Either the consent of the peoples, or war and
violence.
Exalted sir, I will speak with you plainly;
it is forbidden to pay tribute save to two
persons:
either those in authority as being among
you,

whose proof and demonstration is the verse
of God,
or else a hero swift-rising like a hurricane
who seizes cities, and stakes himself in the
battle,
on the day of war conquering the land by
force of arms,
on the day of peace by the winning ways of
love.
You might indeed purchase Iran and India,
but kingship cannot be bought from any
man;
virtuous friend, the Cup of Jamshid
none shall procure from the glassmaker's
shop,
or if he procures aught, all he owns is glass,
and glass has no other property but to
break.

GHANI

Who gave to India this yearning for
freedom?
Who gave the quarry this passion to be the
hunter?
Those scions of Brahmins, with vibrant
hearts,
whose glowing cheeks put the red tulip to
shame—
keen of eye, mature and strenuous in action
whose very glance puts Europe into
commotion.
Their origin is from this protesting soil of
ours,
the rising-place of these stars is our
Kashmir.
If you suppose our earth is without a spark,
cast a glance for a moment within your
heart;
whence comes all this ardour you possess,
whence comes this breath of the breeze of
spring?
It is from the selfsame wind's influence
that our mountains derive their colour and
scent.
Do you not know what one day a wave
said to another wave in Lake Wular?
'How long shall we strike at each other in
this sea?

Rise up, let us break together against the
shore.
Our child, that is to say, yon ancient river
fills with its roar valley and mountains and
meadow;
continually it smites the rocks on its path
until it uproots the fabric of the mountains.
That youth who seized cities, deserts and
plains
took his nurture from the milk of a hundred
mothers;
its majesty strikes terror into mortal hearts;
all this is from us, not from any other.
To live in the bounds of the shore is a sin;
our shore is but a stone in our path.
To accommodate oneself to the shore is
eternal death,
even though you roll in the sea morning and
evening;
life is to leap amidst mountain and desert—
happy is the wave that has transgressed the
shore!
You who have read the lines on the brow of
Life,
you who have given to the East the tumult
of Life,
you who have a sigh that consumes the
heart,
stirring you to restlessness, and us still
more,
from you the birds in the meadow learned
their threnody,
in your tears the grasses make ablution;
out of your genius the field of roses
blossomed,
out of your hope many souls are filled with
hope.
Your cry is a bell urging the caravans;
why then do you despair of the dwellers in
the Vale?
Their hearts are not dead in their breasts,
their embers are not extinguished under the
ice;
wait till you see, without the sound of the
Trumpet,
a nation rising out of the dust of the tomb.
Do not grieve then, visionary;

breathe out that sigh consuming all, dry and moist alike;
 many cities beneath the turquoise heaven
 have been consumed by the flame of a dervish heart.
 Dominion is frailer than a bubble
 and can be destroyed by a single breath.
 The destinies of nations have been shaped
 by a song,
 by a song nations are destroyed and rebuilt.
 Though your lancet has pierced men's hearts,
 none has perceived you as you truly are;
 your melody springs from a poet's song,
 but what you utter transcends poesy.
 Stir up a new tumult in Paradise,
 strike up an intoxicating air in Paradise!

ZINDA-RUD

Habituate yourself to the dervish wine and quaff it continuously;
 when you become riper, hurl yourself at the dominion of Jamshid.
 They said, 'This world of ours—does it agree with you?'
 I said, 'It does not agree'. They said, 'Then break it to pieces'.
 In the taverns I have seen there is not one worthy adversary;
 grapple with Rustam-i Dastan, have done with Magian boys!
 Tulip of the wilderness, you cannot burn alone;
 strike this heart—enflaming brand upon the breast of man;
 You are the ardour of his bosom, the heat of his blood—
 do you not believe me? Then tear apart the flesh of the world.
 Is reason your lamp? Set it on the path to shine;
 or is love your cup? Quaff it with the intimate.
 I pour forth from my eyes the bloody gout of my heart;
 my ruby of Badakhshan—pick it up, and set it in your ring.

MEETING WITH THE INDIAN POET
 BARTARI-HARI

The houris in their palaces and pavilions
 my lament provoked to supreme ardour;
 one here put forth her head from her tent,
 another there peeped out from her chamber
 and gazed;
 to every heart in eternal Paradise
 I gave of the pain and sorrow of yon
 terrestrial globe.
 A smile played on the lips of my holy guide
 and he said: 'O magician of Indian stock,
 behold now that Indian minstrel
 the grace of whose gaze converts the dew to pearls.
 a broiderer of subtleties, his name is Bartari,
 his nature generous as the clouds of Azar;
 from the meadow he plucks only the
 new-sprung buds.
 Your melody has drawn him towards us,
 a king who, with a song sublime,
 even in poverty dwells in lofty exaltation;
 with his delicate thought he designs images of
 beauty,
 a whole world of meaning hidden in two
 words.
 He is intimate with the workshop of life,
 he is Jamshid, his poetry Jamshid's Cup.'
 We rose in reverence for his art
 and prepared suitably to engage with him.

ZINDA-RUD

You who have uttered heart-delighting
 subtleties,
 through whose discourse the East knows all
 mysteries,
 say, whence comes the fire into poetry?
 Does it come from the self, or from God?

BARTARI-HARI

None knows where the poet is in this world;
 his melody springs from the high notes and
 the low.
 That burning heart which he has in his
 breast
 finds not repose even before God.
 Our soul's delight is in questing;

poetry's fire is of the station of desire.
 You who are drunk with wine pressed from
 the vine of words,
 if you should ever attain to this rank.
 with two verses in this world of stone and
 brick
 one can ravish the hearts of the houris of
 Paradise.

ZINDA-RUD

I have seen the Indians twisting this way
 and that;
 it is time you told the secret of God
 unveiled.

BARTARI-HARI

These frail gods are but of stone and brick;
 there is One more lofty, far from temple and
 church.
 Prostration without the joy of action is dry
 and useless;
 life is all action, whether fair or foul.
 I will tell you plainly a word not known to
 every one—
 happy is the man who has written it on his
 heart's tablet.
 This world you behold is not the handiwork
 of God,
 the wheel is yours, and the thread spun on
 your spindle.
 Prostrate yourself before the Law of action's
 reward,
 for from action are born Hell, Purgatory and
 Paradise.

DEPARTURE TO THE PALACE OF THE
 KINGS OF THE EAST, NADIR, ABDALI, THE
 MARTYR - KING

The voice of Bartari penetrated into my soul;
 I was intoxicated with Bartari's song.
 Rumi said: 'It is better to open your eyes,
 better to step outside the circle of your
 thoughts.
 You have passed by the banquet of dervishes;
 give one glance also at the palace of kings.
 The sovereigns of the East are here assembled,
 the might of Iran, Afghanistan and Deccan—

Nadir, who knew the secret of unity
 and conveyed to the Muslims the message of
 love;
 heroic Abdali, his whole being a sign,
 who gave the Afghans the foundation of
 nationhood;
 that leader of all the martyrs of love,
 "glory of India, China, Turkey and Syria",
 whose name is more resplendent than the sun
 and the moon,
 the dust of whose grave is more living than I
 and you.
 Love is a mystery, which he revealed in the
 open plain—
 do you not know how yearningly he gave his
 life?
 By grace of the gaze of the victor of Badr and
 Hunain
 the poverty of the king became heir to
 Husain's ecstasy;
 the King departed from this tavern of seven
 days,
 yet still to this day his trumpet sounds in
 Deccan.'

My words and voice are immature, my
 thought imperfect:
 how can I hope to describe that place?
 The beings of light from its reflected glory
 derive vision,
 vitality, knowledge, speech, awareness;
 a palace whose walls and gates are of
 turquoise
 holding in its bosom the whole azure sky;
 soaring beyond the bounds of quantity and
 quality,
 it reduces thought to mean impotence.
 The roses, the cypresses, the jasmines, the
 flowering boughs
 delicate as a picture painted by the hand of
 spring;
 the petals of the flowers, the leaves of the
 trees every moment
 put on new colours out of the joy of growth—
 such a spellbinder the zephyr is
 that as you wink, gold is turned to scarlet;
 on every side pearl-scattering fountains,
 birds born of Paradise in clamant song.

Within that lofty palace was a chamber
 whose motes held the sun in a lasso;
 the roof, walls and columns were of red agate,
 the floor of jasper, enclosed in carnation.
 To the right and left of that lodge
 houris with golden girdles stood in ranks,
 and in the midst, seated on thrones of gold,
 sovereigns stately as Jamshid, splendid as
 Bahram.

Rumi, that mirror of perfect refinement,
 with utmost affection opened his lips
 saying, 'Here is a poet from the East—
 either a poet, or an eastern magician;
 his thoughts are acute, his soul impassioned;
 his verses have kindled a fire in all the East'.

NADIR

Welcome to you, eastern weaver of
 subtleties
 whose lips the Persian speech so well
 beseems!
 We are your intimate friends; tell us your
 secret,
 reveal what you know of Iran.

ZINDA-RUD

After long ages she opened her eyes on
 herself,
 but then she fell into the snare of a trap,
 slain by the charm of bold and elegant idols,
 creator of culture—and slavish imitation of
 Europe.
 Lost in the cult of 'rulership' and 'race', she
 acclaim
 the glory of Shapur, and despises the Arabs;
 her day today being empty of new
 achievements
 she seeks for life in ancient sepulchres.
 Wedded to the 'fatherland', having
 abandoned her self
 she has given her heart to Rustam, and
 turned from Hyder.
 She is accepting a false image from Europe,
 she takes the version of her history from
 Europe.
 Iran was aged already in the time of
 Yazdajird,

her cheeks were lack-lustre, her blood was
 cold,
 ancient her religion, her laws, her system,
 ancient the light and dark of her dawn and
 eve;
 in her vine's flask no wine foamed,
 no spark glowed in her heap of dust,
 till from the desert a resurrection came to
 her

which endowed her with new life.
 Such a resurrection is a grace of God:
 Persia lives on—where is Rome the mighty?
 He from whose body the pure spirit has
 departed
 cannot rise from the dust without a
 resurrection.

The desert-dwellers breathed life into Iran
 and then sped back to their sandy wastes;
 they erased from our tablet all that was old,
 and departed,
 they brought the apparatus of a new age,
 and departed.

Alas, Iran has not recognized the
 benefaction of the Arabs;
 she has melted away in Europe's fire.

THE SPIRIT OF NASIR-I KHUSRAU ALAVI
 APPEARS, SINGS AN IMPASSIONED
 GHAZAL, AND VANISHES

Once you have taken the sword in your hand
 and grasped the pen
 do not grieve if your body's steed be lame or
 halt:
 virtue is born of the edge of the sword, and
 the point of the pen,
 my brother, as light from fire, and fire from
 narvan-tree.
 Know, that to the faithless, both sword and
 pen are without virtue;
 when faith is not, reed and steel have no
 worth.
 Faith is precious to the wise, and to the
 ignorant it is contemptible;
 before the ignorant, faith is like jasmine before
 a cow.
 Faith is like fine linen, of which one half
 makes a shirt

for Elias, and the other half a shroud for a Jew.

ABDALI

That youth who created dominions,
then fled back to his mountains and deserts,
kindled a fire on his mountain-peaks—
did he emerge of fine assay, or was he
utterly consumed?

ZINDA-RUD

Whilst other nations are eager in
brotherhood,
with him brother is at war against brother.
From his life the life of the whole East
derives;
his ten-year-old child is a leader of armies.
Yet ignorantly he has broken himself from
himself,
not recognizing his own potentialities.
He possesses a heart, and is unaware of that
heart;
body is parted from body, heart from heart;
a traveller, he has lost the road to the good,
his soul is unconscious of its true purposes.
Finely sang that poet familiar with Afghan,
who proclaimed fearlessly what he saw,
that sage of the Afghan nation,
that physician of the sickness of the
Afghans;
he saw the people's secret, and boldly
uttered
the word of truth with a drunkard's
recklessness:
'If a free Afghan should find a camel
richly caparisoned and loaded with pearls,
his mean spirit, with all that load of pearls,
is only delighted with the camel-bell.'

ABDALI

In our nature, fever and ardour spring from
the heart;
waking and slumber possess the body from
the heart.
When the heart dies, the body is
transformed:
when the heart vies for glory, the sweat
turns to blood.

The body is nothing, nothing, when the
heart is corrupt;

so fix your eyes on the heart, and be
attached to naught else.

Asia is a form cast of water and clay;
in that form the Afghan nation is the heart;
if it is corrupt, all Asia is corrupt,
if it is dilated, all Asia is dilated.

So long as the heart is free, the body is free,
else, the body is a straw in the path of the
wind.

Like the body, the heart too is bound by
laws—

the heart dies of hatred, lives of faith.

The power of faith derives from unity;
when unity becomes visible, it is a nation.

Imitation of the West seduces the East from
itself;

these peoples have need to criticize the
West.

The power of the West comes not from lute
and rebeck,

not from the dancing of unveiled girls,
not from the magic of tulip-cheeked
enchantresses,

not from naked legs and bobbed hair;

its solidity springs not from irreligion,
its glory derives not from the Latin script.

The power of the West comes from science
and technology,

and with that selfsame flame its lamp is
bright.

Wisdom derives not from the cut and trim
of clothes;

the turban is no impediment to science and
technology.

For science and technology, elegant young
sprig,

brains are necessary, not European clothes;

on this road only keen sight is required,
what is needed is not this or that kind of hat.

If you have a nimble intellect, that is
sufficient;

if you have a perceptive mind, that is
sufficient.

If anyone burns the midnight oil
he will find the track of science and
technology.

None has fixed the bounds of the realm of
 meaning
 which is not attained without incessant
 effort.
 The Turks have departed from their own
 selves, drunk with Europe,
 having quaffed honeyed poison from the
 hand of Europe;
 of those who have abandoned the antidote
 of Iraq
 what shall I say, except 'God help them'?
 The slave of Europe, eager to show off,
 borrows from the Westerners their music
 and dances;
 he gambles away his precious soul for
 frivolity—
 science is a hard quest, so he makes do with
 fun.
 Being slothful, he takes the easy way;
 his nature readily accepts the easy
 alternative.
 To seek for ease in this ancient convent
 proves that the soul has gone out of the
 body.

ZINDA-RUD

Do you know what European culture is?
 In its world are two hundred paradises of
 colour;
 its dazzling shows have burned down
 abodes,
 consumed with fire branch, leaf and nest.
 Its exterior is shining and captivating
 but its heart is weak, a slave to the gaze;
 the eye beholds, the heart staggers within
 and falls headlong before this idol-temple.
 No man knows what the East's destiny may
 be;
 what is to be done with the heart bound to
 the exterior?

ABDALI

What is able to control the East's destiny
 is the unbending resolve of Pahlavi and
 Nadir:
 Pahlavi, that heir to the throne of Qubad
 whose nail has resolved the knot of Iran,
 and Nadir, that sum-capital of the Durranis

who has given order to the Afghan nation.
 Distressed on account of the Faith and
 Fatherland
 his armies came forth from the mountains:
 at once soldier, officer and Emir
 steel with his enemies, silk with his
 friends—
 let me be ransom for him who has seen his
 self
 and has weighed well the present age!
 The Westerners can have their magic tricks;
 to rely on other than oneself is infidelity.

THE MARTYR-KING

Speak again of the Indians and of India—
 one blade of her grass no garden can
 outmatch;
 speak of her in whose mosques the tumult
 has died,
 of her in whose temples the fire is quenched,
 of her for whose sake I gave my blood,
 whose memory I have nursed in my soul.
 From my grief you may guess at her grief;
 alas, for the beloved who knows no more
 the lover!

ZINDA-RUD

The Indians reject the statutes of Europe,
 they are immune to Europe's magic charms;
 alien laws are a heavy burden on the soul
 even though they descend from heaven
 itself.

THE MARTYR-KING

How man grows from a handful of dust
 with a heart, and with desire in that heart!
 His concern is to taste the delight of
 rebellion,
 not to behold anything but himself;
 for without rebellion the self is unattainable,
 and while the self is not attained, defeat is
 inevitable.
 You have visited my city and my land,
 you have rubbed your eyes upon my tomb;
 you who know the limits of all creation,
 in Deccan have you seen any trace of life?

ZINDA-RUD

I scattered the seeds of my tears in Deccan;
tulips are growing from the soil of that
garden;
the river Cauvery unceasing on its
journey—
in its soul I have beheld a new commotion.

THE MARTYR-KING

You who have been endowed with
heart-illumining words,
I burn still with the fever of your tears.
The incessant digging of the nails of the
initiates
has opened a river of blood from the veins
of the lute.
That melody which issues out of your soul
imparts to every breast an inward fire.
I was in the presence of the Lord of All,
without whom no path can be traversed;
though there none may dare to speak,
and the spirit's only occupation is to behold,
I was afire with the ardour of your verses
and some of your thoughts came on my
tongue.
He said, 'Whose is this verse which you
recited?
In it pulses the true vibration of life'.
With the same ardour, congenial to the soul,
convey from me one or two words to the
Cauvery.
You, Zinda-Rud, 'living stream', he too a
living stream—
sweeter sounds melody interwoven with
melody.

MESSAGE OF THE MARTYR-KING TO THE
RIVER CAUVERY

(THE REALITY OF LIFE, DEATH AND
MARTYRDOM)

River Cauvery, flow gently for a while;
perchance you are wearied by continual
wandering.
For many years you have wept in the
mountains,
carving out your path with your eyelashes.
Sweeter to me than Oxus and Euphrates,

to Deccan your water is the Water of Life.
Alas, for the city which lay in your embrace,
whose sweet beauty was a reflection of your
sweetness!
You have grown old, yet you are ever young,
ever the same your surge, your ardour, your
lustre;
your waves have begotten only the purest
pearls—
may your tresses flow freely till all eternity!
You whose music is the very fire of life,
do you know from whom this message
comes?
From him whose mighty power you once
encircled,
whose empire you reflected in your mirror,
by whose contriving deserts were turned to
Paradise,
who wrought his image with his own blood,
whose dust is the goal of a hundred
yearnings,
and with whose blood your waves surge still;
the man whose words were all action,
the one man awake, whilst the East slept.
You and I are waves of life's river;
every moment this universe changes,
for life is a perpetual revolution
since it is ever searching for a new world.
This flux is the warp and woof of life,
this flux the source of the joy of manifestation;
the highways like travellers are on a journey;
apparently at rest, secretly everywhere in
motion—
the caravan, the camels, the desert, the
palm-trees,
whatever you see, weeps for the pain of
parting.
In the garden the rose is a guest of but a
moment,
its hue and lustre a moment's experiment.
The season of the rose? Funeral and festival
together,
buds in the breast, the rose's bier on the back.
I said to the tulip, 'Burn once again';
the tulip answered, 'You know not yet my
secret,
Existence is constructed of sticks and straws;

what is the guerdon of manifestation, but
regret?

Do you enter the inn of existence? Do not;
do you come from not-being to being? Do not,
or if you do, go not out of your self like a
spark,
but become a wanderer searching for a stack
to fire.

If you have fever and flame like the sun,
step forth into the vastness of the sky;
burn up mountain and bird, garden and
desert,

burn even the fishes in the depths of the sea.
If you have a breast worthy of an arrow,
live like a falcon, and like a falcon die;
immortality is in the breadth of life—
I do not ask of God for length of days,
What is the law, the religion, the rite of life?
Better one instant a lion, than a century a
sheep.

Life is fortified by cheerful resignation;
death is a magic talisman, a fantasy.
The man of God is a lion, and death a fawn;
death is but one station for him of a hundred.
The perfect man swoops upon death
even as a falcon swooping upon a dove,
The slave dies every moment in fear of death;
the fear of death makes life for him a thing
forbidden;
the free servant has another dignity,
death bestows upon him a new life.
He is anxious for the self, but not for death,
since to the free death is no more than an
instant.

Transcend the death that is content with the
grave,
for that death is the death of brute beasts;
the true believer prays to the Holy God
for that other death which raises up from the
dust.

That other death—the goal of the road of love,
the final Allahu Akbar in love's battlefield.
Though to the believer every death is sweet,
the death of Murtada's son is something
other.

The warfare of worldly kings is for rapine,

the believer's warfare is the Sunna of the
Prophet.

What is the believer's warfare? Flight to the
Beloved;
quitting the world, choosing the Beloved's
street,

He who proclaimed to the peoples the word
of love
said of warfare that it was 'the monasticism of
Islam'.

None but the martyr knows this subtlety,
for he has purchased this subtlety with his
blood.

ZINDA-RUD DEPARTS FROM PARADISE: THE HOURIS' REQUEST

The glass of my patience and quietude was
shattered;
The Sage of Rum spoke in my ear, 'Rise up'.
Ah, those words of love, that ecstatic
certainty!
Ah that court, that sublime palace;
heart bleeding, I reached its gate
and beheld there a throng of houris,
on their lips, 'Zinda-Rud, Zinda-Rud,
Zinda-Rud, master of fire and melody!'
Clamour and tumult rose from left and right:
'One or two moments sit with us. sit with us!'

ZINDA-RUD

The traveller who knows the secrets of the
journey
fears the lodging-place more than the
highwayman.

Love reposes not in separation, nor in union,
reposes not, without Eternal Beauty;
first beginning, falling down before idols,
final end, freedom from all heart-ravishers.
Love recks for nothing, and is ever on the
move,
a wayfarer in space and spacelessness.
Our creed, like the swift-paced wave:
abandon the halting-place, choose the
highway.

THE HOURIS OF PARADISE

Your blandishments are like those of Time;
grudge us not now one sweet song.

GHAZAL OF ZINDA-RUD

You have not reached Man, so why do you
 seek God?
 You have fled from your self; why do you
 seek a friend?
 Hang again on the rose-twig and suck in the
 sap and the dew;
 faded blossom, what are you seeking from
 the zephyr?
 What they call musk is two drops of the
 heart's blood;
 gazelle of the Sanctuary, what are you
 seeking in Cathay?
 Poverty's assay is by sovereignty and
 world-dominion;
 seek Jamshid's throne—why do you seek a
 reed-mat?
 Men track it out from the garden of tulips;
 why do you seek from me the song
 drenched with blood?
 The vision augments through the company
 of the
 enlightened of heart;
 why do you seek collyrium from the sorrow
 of the short—sighted?
 We are calenders, and our miracle is
 world-vision;
 seek vision from us—why seek the
 philosopher's stone?

THE DIVINE PRESENCE

Though Paradise is a manifestation of Him
 the soul reposes not, save in the vision of
 Him.
 We are veiled from our Origin;
 we are as birds who have lost our nest.
 If knowledge is perverse and evil of substance
 it is the greatest curtain before our eyes;
 but if the object of knowledge is
 contemplation
 it becomes at once the highway and the guide,
 laying bare before you the shell of being
 that you may ask, 'What is the secret of this
 display?'
 Thus it is that knowledge smoothes the road,
 thus it is that it awakens desire;
 it gives you pain and anguish, fire and fever,
 it gives you mid-night lamentations.

From the science of the interpretation of the
 world of colour and scent
 your eyes and your heart derive nourishment;
 it brings you to the stage of ecstasy and
 yearning
 and then suffers you like Gabriel to stand.
 How shall love bring any soul to the Solitude,
 seeing love is jealous of its own eyes?
 Its beginning is the road and the companion,
 its end, travelling the road without
 companion.

I passed on from all the houris and places
 and hazarded the soul's skiff on the sea of
 light.

I was drowned in the contemplation of
 Beauty,
 which is constantly in eternal revolution;
 I became lost in the heart of creation
 till life appeared to me like a rebeck
 whose every string was another lute,
 each melody more blood-drenched than the
 other.

We are all one family of fire and light,
 man, sun and moon, Gabriel and houri.
 Before the soul a mirror has been hung,
 bewilderment mingled with certainty;
 today's dawn, whose light is manifest,
 in His Presence is yesterday and tomorrow
 ever present.

God revealed in all His mysteries,
 with my eyes makes vision of Himself.
 To see Him is to wax ever without waning,
 to see Him is to rise from the body's tomb;
 servant and Master lying in wait on one
 another,
 each impatiently yearning to behold the other.
 Life, wherever it may be, is a restless search;
 unresolved is this riddle—am I the quarry, or
 is He?

Love gave my soul the delight of beholding,
 gave my tongue the boldness to speak:
 'Thou who givest light and vision to both
 worlds,
 look a little while on yonder ball of clay.
 Uncongenial to the free servitor,
 from its hyacinths springs the sting of thorns.

The victors are drowned in pleasure and
 enjoyment,
 the vanquished have only to count the days
 and nights.
 Thy world has been wasted by imperialism,
 dark night ravelled in the sleeve of the sun.
 The science of Westerners is spoliation;
 the temples have turned to Khaibar, without a
 Hyder.
 He who proclaims 'No god but God' is
 helpless;
 his thought, having no centre, wanders astray,
 slowly dying, pursued by four deaths—
 the usurer, the governor, the mullah, the
 shaykh.
 How is such a world worthy of Thee?
 Water and clay are a stain upon Thy skirt.'

THE VOICE OF BEAUTY

The Pen of God such images fair and foul
 wrote exactly as became each one of Us.
 Noble sir, do you know what it is, to be?
 It is to take one's share of the beauty of
 God's Essence.
 Creating? It is to search for a beloved,
 to display one's self to another being.
 All these tumultuous riots of being
 without our beauty could not come to exist.
 Life is both transient and everlasting;
 all this is creativity and vehement desire.
 Are you alive? Be vehement, be creative;
 like Us, embrace all horizons;
 break whatsoever is uncongenial,
 out of your heart's heart produce a new
 world—
 it is irksome to the free servitor
 to live in a world belonging to others.
 Whoever possesses not the power to create
 in Our sight is naught but an infidel, a
 heathen;
 such a one has not taken his share of Our
 Beauty,
 has not tasted the fruit of the Tree of Life.
 Man of God, be trenchant as a sword,
 be yourself your own world's destiny!

ZINDA-RUD

What law governs the world of colour and
 scent,
 but that water once flowed returns not to
 the stream?
 Life has no desire for repetition,
 its nature is not habituated to repetition;
 beneath the sky, reversion is unlawful to life
 once a people has fallen, it rises not again.
 When a nation dies, it rarely rises from the
 grave;
 what recourse has it, but the tomb and
 resignation?.

THE VOICE OF BEAUTY

Life is not a mere repetition of the breath,
 its origin is from the Living, Eternal God.
 The soul near to Him who said 'Lo, I am
 nigh'—
 that is to take one's share of everlasting life.
 The individual through the Unity becomes
 Divine,
 the nation through the Unity becomes
 Omnipotent;
 Unity produced Ba Yazid, Shibli, Bu Dharr,
 Unity produced, for the nations, Tughril and
 Sanjar.
 Without the Divine Epiphany man has no
 permanence;
 Our Manifestation is life to individual and
 nation;
 both attain their perfection through the
 Unity,
 life being for the latter Majesty, for the
 former Beauty.
 The one is of Solomon, the other of Salman,
 the one perfect poverty, the other all power:
 the one sees there is One, the other becomes
 one—
 while in the world, sit with the former, live
 with the latter!
 What is the nation, you who declare 'No
 god but God'?
 With thousands of eyes, to be one in vision
 The proof and claim of God's people are
 always One:
 'Our tents are apart, our hearts are one.'

Oneness of vision converts the motes to the sun;
 be one of vision, that God may be seen unveiled.
 Do not look slightly on oneness of vision;
 this is a true epiphany of the Unity.
 When a nation becomes drunk with the Unity
 power, yea, omnipotence lies in its grasp.
 A nation's spirit exists through association;
 a nation's spirit has no need of a body.
 Since its being manifests out of companionship,
 it dies when the bands of companionship are broken.
 Are you dead? Become living through oneness of vision;
 cease to be centreless, become stable.
 Create unity of thought and action,
 that you may possess authority in the world.

ZINDA-RUD

Who am I? Who art Thou? Where is the world?
 Why is there a distance between me and Thee?
 Say, why am I in the bonds of destiny?
 Why dost Thou die not, whilst I die?

THE VOICE OF BEAUTY

You have been in the world dimensionate,
 and any contained therein, therein dies.
 If you seek life, advance your selfhood,
 drown the world's dimensions in your self.
 You shall then behold who I am and who you are
 how you died in the world, and how you lived.

ZINDA-RUD

Accept the excuses of this ignorant man;
 remove the veil from the face of destiny.
 I have seen the revolution of Russia and Germany,
 I have seen the tumult raging in Muslimdom,
 I have seen the contrivings of West and East—

present the destinies of West and East.

EPIPHANY OF THE DIVINE MAJESTY

Suddenly I beheld my world,
 that earth and heaven of mine,
 I saw it drowned in a light of dawn;
 I saw it crimson as a jujube-tree:
 out of the epiphanies which broke in my soul
 I fell drunk with ecstasy, like Moses.
 That light revealed every secret veiled
 and snatched the power of speech from my tongue.
 Out of the deep heart of the inscrutable world
 an ardent, flaming melody broke forth.

'Abandon the East, be not spellbound by the West,⁴
 for all this ancient and new is not worth one barleycorn.
 That signet-ring which you gambled away to Ahriman
 should not be pledged even to trusty Gabriel.
 Life, that ornament of society, is guardian of itself;
 you who are of the caravan, travel alone, yet go with all!
 You have come forth brighter than the all-illuminating sun;
 so live, that you may irradiate every mote.
 Alexander, Darius, Qubad and Khusrau have departed
 like a blade of grass fallen in the path of the wind.
 So slender is your cup that the tavern has been put to shame;
 seize a tumbler, and drink wisely, and so be gone!'

[Translated by A.J. Arberry]

⁴ This appeared as *Ghazal* 62 in Part 2 of *Persian Psalms*. Arberry's translation of the same piece as part of that book (also included in the present volume) differs from this version.

ADDRESS TO JAVID

This charming array of words is useless,
 What is in the recesses of the heart hardly
 comes to the lips.
 Although I have expressed several points
 without any difficulty,
 I have something which cannot be expressed
 in words.
 If I say it, it becomes all the more knotty,
 Words and sounds make it more mysterious.
 Catch its warmth from my look,
 Or from my morning lamentation.

You got your first instruction from your
 mother;
 It was her breeze which helped open your
 bud.
 It was her breath that made you what you are;
 O dear one, your worth is all due to her.
 You gained immortal riches (of the spirit)
 through her,
 And learnt *la ilah* through her lips.
 O son, have from me the joy of vision
 And burning in [the fire of] *la ilah*.
 If you say *la ilah*, speak it from the depth of
 your heart
 So that your body may smell of soul.
 The sun and the moon revolve through
 burning in *la ilah*;
 I have seen this "burning" in mountains and
 grass;
 These two words *la ilah* are not mere words;
La ilah is nothing but a sword from which
 there is no escape.
 To live with its burning is to attain power;
La ilah is a stroke very telling and effective
 A believer and to pay obeisance to others!
 A believer and to be disloyal, beggarly and
 hypocrite!
 He sold away his religion and community for
 a trifle
 And burnt away the household goods as well
 as the house.
 His prayers were once inspired by *la ilah*
 though not now;

His submission [to God] had once a grace of
 its own.
 His prayer and fasting have lost all [spiritual]
 light;
 No longer is there any [divine] manifestation
 in his universe.
 He whose source of strength was only God,
 Has fallen prey to love of money and fear of
 death.
 He has lost that ecstasy, ardour and zest that
 once characterised him;
 His religion is in the Book and he is in the
 grave.
 The modern age has adversely affected him;
 He learnt his religion from two prophets:
 The one was from Iran, the other from India;
 The former disapproved of *hajj* (pilgrimage),
 the latter, of *jihad* (holy war)
 When *hajj* and *jihad* are no longer religious
 duties,
 Prayers and fasting lose their inner essence.
 When prayers and fasting are deprived of
 their soul,
 Individual loses his balance and society
 becomes disorganised.
 When the hearts lack warmth of the Quran,
 There can be no hope of good from such
 people.
 The Muslim lost his *khudi*;
 O Khidr! help us, for the situation has gone
 beyond our control.

Prostration which causes tremors to the earth,
 And to whose bidding the sun and the moon
 revolve,
 If it casts its imprint on the stone
 That stone would melt into thin air like
 smoke;
 That prostration these days is nothing but
 bending down of the head,
 And is nothing but old age's weakness.
 It no longer has the grandeur of 'God is High',
 Is it [due to] our fault or any defect in it?
 Everybody is moving fast on his own path,
 Like a bridleless dromedary and without any
 goal.
 The upholder of the Qur'an, with no zest for
 search,

How strange it is!
 If God grants you insight,
 Look at the times in which you live.
 Reasons are impudent and hearts impervious
 to compassion,
 Eyes lack modesty and are immersed only in
 appearances.
 Art and science, religion and politics, reason
 and heart—
 Each concerned only with water and clay.
 Asia, that land of the rising sun,
 Looks towards others and is hidden from
 herself.
 Her heart has ceased to have new experiences,
 Her [intellectual] products are not worth a
 farthing;
 Her life in this ancient world
 Is stationary, frozen and without any urge for
 movement.
 She has fallen prey to *Mullas* and Kings;
 Her thought, being lame and cripple, can't
 soar high.
 Her reason, faith, wisdom and honour
 Are all tied to the apron-strings of the lords of
 the West.
 I made an assault on her world of thought
 And tore the veils from over her secrets.
 My heart has bled within my breast
 Thus have I been able to revolutionise her
 world.
 I have said a few words for the people of the
 age;
 Two oceans have been condensed in two
 cups.
 I have expressed my ideas in a technical
 language,
 That I may win applause from the people;
 It is in the difficult language, using the
 terminology of the West.
 Ecstatic songs from the strings of a harp.
 The origin of one is contemplation, the origin
 of other is thought,
 May you be the inheritor of them both!
 I am a rivulet, my water comes from both
 these sources;
 My separation is both separation and union.

As the demands of the present age are
 different
 I laid the foundation of a different
 phenomenon.
 The young of today are thirsty and yet have
 an empty cup,
 Charming to look at, with a clever mind but
 with dark soul;
 Lacking in insight and conviction and
 hopeless of future,
 Their eye didn't see any thing in the world.
 Poor in spirit, lacking faith in themselves,
 dependent on others,
 The architect of the temple uses bricks made
 of their earth.
 The school is unaware of its objective,
 Hence it does not appeal to their innermost
 heart.
 It robbed their souls of the light of nature;
 Not a single graceful rose grew on its branch.
 Our architect lays the foundation stone awry:
 He cultivates the habits of a duck in the
 young one of a falcon.
 Unless knowledge gets warmth of burning
 from life
 Heart remains devoid of new experiences.
 Knowledge is nothing but exposition of your
 stations
 And commentary of your manifestations.
 One must burn oneself in the fire of sense-
 impressions
 So that one can distinguish between one's
 silver and copper.
 Knowledge of truth starts with sense-
 impressions and ends in vision,
 Its end can't be comprehended by reason.
 A hundred books have you learnt through
 efficient teachers,
 Far better is the lesson that you receive
 through sight.
 From that wine that flows from sight,
 everybody
 Gets intoxicated in his own way;
 The morning breeze puts out the lamp
 But it fills the tulip's cup with wine.
 Eat little, sleep little, talk little:
 Move round yourself like a pair of compasses.

He who denies God is an unbeliever in the eyes of a theologian,
 To me, he who denies himself is a greater unbeliever.
 The one is called "hasty" because of denial of Being;
 The other is "hasty" as well as "unjust" and "ignorant".
 Be steadfast in the way of sincerity
 And free yourself from fear of kings and landlords.
 Don't swerve from the path of justice whether in anger or in peace,
 Stick to the golden mean in affluence or in poverty.
 The Law may be difficult; don't seek escape from it;
 Let none but your own heart be your guide.
 Soul's welfare: limitless remembrance [of God] and rational reflection;
 Body's welfare: self control in youth.
 Position of authority in the world below and above
 Cannot be attained except through body's and soul's welfare.
 The object of journey is to enjoy moving about,
 If your object is to return to the nest, then don't start flying.
 The moon revolves that it may become stationary;
 For man's journey, staying at any place is disallowed.
 Life is nothing but enjoyment of flight;
 Nest is incompatible with its nature.
 The food of vultures and crows is in the earth of the grave,
 The food of hawks is in the neighbourhood of the moon and the sun.
 The essence of religion is: truthful speech and lawful food;
 To look at Beauty in solitude and in company.
 Live as hard as diamond in the path of religion,
 Be in constant touch with God and live without anxiety.
 I tell you of the essence of religion

And relate to you an episode from the life of Sultan Muzaffar.
 He was unique in his acts of sincerity,
 A king enjoying the states of Bayazid.
 He had a horse whom he loved as a dear son;
 Like his master, the horse was hard hitting in war;
 A black steed of pure Arab breed,
 Faithful, faultless and of pure stock.
 O man of intelligence! for a believer, there is nothing more dear
 Than the Qur'an, a sword and a horse.
 What can I say about that horse of noble stock?
 He was like a mountain and moved over rivers like a wind.
 On the day of battle, he was swifter than eyesight:
 A stormy wind encircling mountains and rocks.
 Several tumults of Resurrection were in his swift running;
 Stones would break into pieces under his hoofs.
 One day, the horse, as noble as man,
 Suffered from acute pain in his stomach.
 A veterinary doctor treated him with wine
 And thus the horse was relieved of pain.
 The righteous king no longer used that horse;
 The ways of *taqwa* are different from our ways.
 May God grant you true heart,
 See the submission of a true Muslim!
 Religion is to burn from head to foot in search,
 Its end is love and its beginning is correct behaviour.
 The beauty of the rose lies in its colour and smell;
 One who is disrespectful is without honour.
 When I see a young man, lacking in correct behaviour,
 My days become dark as night.
 It increases pain in my heart
 And the testament of Mustafa comes to my mind.
 I feel ashamed of my own deeds

And hide myself in days gone by. .
 A woman's protection is her husband or the
 grave,
 A man's protection is security from bad
 company.
 It is wrong to speak ill of others;
 Believer and unbeliever—all are God's
 creatures.
 Manliness is to respect man;
 Be aware of the true position of man.
 Man prospers by maintaining proper
 relationship with others,
 Set your foot on the path of friendship.
 Man of love tries to follow in the Ways of
 God,
 Is kind to all, believer and unbeliever alike.
 Let belief and unbelief find room in the
 expanse of your heart;
 If your heart feels ill at ease, then God protect
 you!
 Although heart is confined within water and
 clay,
 This whole world is the world of heart.

 Even if you are a lord of the land,
 Don't give up the attitude of *faqr*.
 The ardour [of this *faqr*] lies hidden in your
 soul
 This old wine is an inheritance from your
 ancestors.
 In this world seek nothing but pangs of the
 heart,
 Ask blessings from God and not from kings.
 It so often happens that a man of insight and
 God-oriented
 Becomes blind through affluence.
 Abundance of wealth deprives man of
 compassion,
 Produces pride and uproots submissiveness.
 I have moved round the world for years,
 I have never seen tears in the eyes of the rich.
 I love him who lives like a dervish;
 Woe to the man who lives forgetful of God!

 Don't expect to find in Muslims that rapture
 and ecstasy
 That faith, conviction and power [which were
 once their characteristics].

Scholars have set aside the teaching of the
 Qur'an,
 Sufis are predatory wolves with long hair.
 Although there is much activity in the
 monasteries,
 There is hardly a person who has wine in his
 cup.
 On the other hand, the West-oriented
 Muslims
 Are seeking sweet water from mirage.
 All are ignorant of the essence of religion,
 They are men of deceit and malice.
 Good and virtue are hardly to be found in the
 elite;
 Sincerity and truth are found only among the
 masses.
 Distinguish people of religion from the people
 of malice;
 See the man of God and sit in his company.
 The vultures have their own laws and
 customs;
 The grandeur of the flight of the hawk is a
 different thing.

 Man of truth comes down from the heaven
 like lightning;
 His fuel is cities and towns of east and west.
 We are still [wrapped] in the darkness of the
 universe;
 He partakes in its management.
 He is like Kalim, Messiah, Khalil;
 He is Muhammad, the Book and Gabriel
 He is like the sun for the universe of the
 people of the heart,
 His rays impart life to the people of the heart.
 First he burns you in his own fire
 Then teaches you kingship.
 We are all people of the heart through his
 ardour,
 Without him, we would be unreal image of
 water and clay.
 I fear, the time in which you were born
 Is immersed in body and is hardly aware of
 the soul.
 When through dearth of soul, body is every
 where,
 The man of truth hides himself within
 himself.

Search does not bring such a man to your
view
Although you see him face to face.
Still you don't give up your search,
Although you have to face a hundred
difficulties.
If, however, you don't find company of a wise
man,
Get from me what I have from my forefathers.
Make Rumi your guide on the path,
That God may grant you ardour and
compassion.
For Rumi knows kernel from shell,
He is steadfast in the way of the Beloved.
People have written commentaries on his
works but none saw him,
His real intent missed our grasp like a deer.
People learnt from him bodily dance;
Dance of the soul was neglected absolutely.
Bodily dance leads to the revolving of the
earth,
Soul's dance upsets the skies.

From soul's dance comes knowledge and
judgment,
Earth as well as heaven is caught in our net.
The individual through it achieves Moses'
ecstasy,
Society becomes inheritor of a great kingdom.
To learn soul's dance is a difficult task;
To burn *other than God* is not a child's play.
So long as the heart does not burn in the fire
of avarice and sorrow,
O son, the soul does not dance till then.
Sorrow is the sign of weak faith and affliction,
O young man! sorrow is half old age.
Do you know that avarice is modern *faqir*,
I am slave of him who controls himself.
You will be a source of comfort to my
impatient soul,
If you chance to learn soul's dance.
I tell you the essence of Mustafa's religion,
And shall pray for you in the grave too!

[Translated by Bashir Ahmad Dar]