

THE SHAIKH WRITES:

(Following is the translation of extract from prologue of the book “*Shaairee mein Sufiana Istilahaat*” by our Shaikh Dr. Shah Meerza Ikhtiyar Hussain Kaif Niazi)

Language is an important source of conveying thoughts. A thought reflects a state of mind that may potentially be intensely powerful but will be hidden from others until sculptured in words. Hence words are the means to express one's thoughts. When a thought comes to mind, it neither has a shape nor a language to convey its expressions across. This becomes possible only when it gets transformed into the body of words. Therefore, the words are merely a depiction of one's thoughts. Consequently, meanings do not exist without words and words do not exist without meanings. But the point to consider here is that the meanings take precedence over the words as they come into existence first. Words were formulated later so that the meanings that have occurred in one's mind can be transmitted to others.

In addition to words, signs are yet another significant mode of communicating the thoughts. Sometimes words and signs are equally important to convey what is in one's mind so that a true consensus *ad idem* (transmitting the thoughts such that the recipient gets the same meaning which the conveyer intends to convey) can be established. Our facial expressions, hand gestures, the body motion, movement of eyes and eyebrows all convey our thoughts. The way we experience anger and sorrow cannot be described through words found in dictionary. Examples, analogies and metaphors come into play to simplify the job. Every form of knowledge is dependent upon terminologies and metaphors for its elaboration. Terms and Metaphors are essential in a language to comprehend any subject in its entirety and also for its teaching to others.. Actually, every form of knowledge has its own terminologies and analogies. This is essential as a single phrase or a word can have multiple meanings in different subjects. For example the word “angle” when used in mathematics is the degree of turn between the two lines whereas in literature it can also be used as a substitute for a point of view.

Whether it's a worldly subject or a spiritual topic, terminologies and metaphors are needed for both. In religious studies *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *hadith* and *tafseer* (exegesis) have their own vocabularies. Similarly, spirituality (Tasawwuf) which encompasses the study of complete religion from the periphery to the core also has its own terminologies which are essential to be learned by all students of the Sufi path else the concepts may be misunderstood.

Sufi terminologies are of two types:

- 1: Academic.
- 2: Poetic.

It is difficult to comprehend concepts of Tasawwuf without understanding the academic terminologies but poetic aspect along with metaphors is important too. As a matter of fact, both are significant in understanding the spiritual knowledge conveyed by the Sufis

These terminologies and metaphors gained significance primarily due to the poetic inclination of most of the Sufi masters. Many Sufi masters were and are famous poets. They use their poetry to propagate the concepts of Sufism.

Music and voice are intimately related to songs and poetry. Accordingly such art forms are used to convey the Sufi teachings in an aesthetically profound manner. *Sama'a* (qawwali rendition) is common amongst most of the Sufi orders. The poetry rendered in *sama'a* comes from both the Sufi poets and non-Sufi poets. Such poetry is adorned with concepts of love and beauty. Often the poetic renditions include articulation on beloved's tresses, cheeks, eyes and lips while stating the topics of union and separation.. Such poetry metaphorically represent various Sufi teachings and cannot be taken in the literal sense.

Similarly, metaphors of wine, ecstasy, tavern and the cup bearer are common in Sufi poetic deliberations. On the contrary, the Sufi masters are all strict followers of the Islamic Shariah and keep away from all such things in their lives. In fact, it is the basic principal that *tareeqah* (spirituality) cannot be followed without following shariah.

The reality is that when one is on the Sufi path, his experiences are beyond the domain of words. Furthermore, some Sufi concepts are such that Sufi masters prefer to convey them under the veil of metaphors. These concepts are understood clearly by those who have the proper knowledgebase and thorough understanding of the underlying concepts while a common man can be misguided by the face value of these metaphors and may result in an undesired criticism.

In fact it is difficult to define words through other words too. For example water can be defined in various ways but one can understand the reality of water only when he sees it ... whether in a glass or in a river.

ED's NOTE:

What if the poets of the world were unable to deliver the intricacies of life in a subtle format? What if the writers could not convey the hard facts of life in a delicate manner? What if we were unable to read and write? And... what if we are able to read and write but unable to decipher the message actually being communicated to us by these poets and authors? No; this does not portray a grim scenario where it's a matter of life and death but you can dwell further upon these thoughts and think about the chain of actions and events that may result as a consequence of being unable to understand the meaning (and not the translation) of the words thrown at us by the poets and writers.

The ability to understand the metaphors is of significance to an ordinary man in general but is of prime importance for the dwellers of the Sufi path. Sufi masters have used multiple means of imparting the esoteric knowledge to the disciples. Poetry and prose being major ones after direct communications. The concepts and wisdom conveyed are so abstract that only creative writing can somehow describe what a Sufi disciple needs to experience rather than read and comprehend. Experiencing the reality gives a first hand experience to the experiencer where not only can he comprehend the events but also be involved in it directly to experience the feelings and emotions. These can only be conveyed to the others in a poetic way rather than in a “matter-of-fact” way. Imagine seeing a wonderful sunset. One is awed by the colours, the grandeur and the mesmerizing effect of the nature and tries to absorb the whole scene .. in fact to be a part of that beautiful scene. He momentarily transcends from the state of “am-ness” to the realm of “am-not”. When he comes out of this experience his awe and his transcendental state cannot be put in straight forward words. Yes he can describe how the sun went down and what the colours on the sky were but he cannot convey the happiness he felt and the state he was in. To impart this effect he would take refuge in the poetic form of expression. The teachings and the guidance provided to a Sufi *salik* are indeed a key to unlock the hidden treasures conveyed by the Sufi masters through poetry and prose.

We are taking part in spreading the word and enticing others to read between the lines. Each one of us can communicate the way he wants to while the works of the masters guide us in improving our skills.

Talib

MOREY ANGNA MOENUDDIN

AAYAE REE

(Moenuddin arrives in my courtyard)

by: Hasan Nizami Meerza

The caption is an extract from the opening couplet of a poetry praising Hazrat Khwaja Moenuddin Chishti (RA) and is often recited in the form of *Qawwali*. When I heard this *Qawwali* for the very first time, its melodious tune and Hindi wordings embraced me with a feeling of devotion and love. It left such a lasting impression that without any doubt, I could say that such *Qawwalis* somehow carry magical seeds of devotion and inner festivity for the disciple which, in a proper spiritual environment, grows mysteriously into a sapling of love. In turn, presence of Hazrat Peer-O-Murshed nurtures it, so that one day, it realizes its utmost potential by blossoming into a flower of consciousness.

Angna i.e. courtyard brings to mind an open space adjacent to the home, where rays of rising sun softly filter through sleepy leaves of the trees and touch the ground laden with scattered rose petals and fallen leaves. Peacefulness prevails and fragrance of night queen flowers and roses hang in the air. Birds can be heard calling for early morning prayers while leaf clad branches of trees perform ablution with beads of dew drops and sway to bow before rising light to make the greenery of leaves more prominent than ever. Gradually, the whole courtyard lights up with bustle of life. Day passes by with the shadows of trees dancing all around in the courtyard on the rhythm of chirping birds and strolling squirrels. Evening arrives with its soothing cool winds heralding a new era of calmness and peace. With the setting of sun, an all-embracing sublime darkness gradually takes over and creates an atmosphere for the glittering festivity of moon and stars. The moon rises as a glowing face in love, in a star studded sky to share its presence in the courtyard.

One finds all seasons of life fleeting like a caravan through the courtyard and yet in the same courtyard, one finds door to his home.

Hazrat Khwaja Moenuddin Chishti (RA) is called as the *Sultan-ul-Hind* (King of India) – a title bestowed upon him by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in a spiritual realm. Almost all Sufi orders of sub-continent culminate in the courtyard of Khwaja saheb (RA) before entering the kingdom of *Sultan-ul-Hind*.

How fortunate is a disciple, who rather finds Khwaja saheb (RA) in his courtyard! It is an honour bestowed upon him through the Grace of God where Khwaja Saheb (RA) makes his presence known to the sincere seeker.

Angna symbolically represents periphery of our spiritual existence that is reflective of

duality. It is a stage that exists before the union of lover (seeker) and beloved (Allah). In a spiritual courtyard, a seeker is close to home, yet not inside of it. It is like standing at the highest rung of spiritual ladder. Lets put it another way by looking at *Angna* through the perspective of *Barzakh*. Concisely put, *Barzakh* is a merging point between the two realms while also distinguishing the two. An analogy of *Barzakh* can be found at the meeting point of light and shade which is not only the point of unification, but also the point of distinction. (for a detailed discussion on *Barzakh*, kindly refer to Newsletter 2). *Angna* likewise, exists as a merging place for exterior with the interior which denotes spiritual state of the disciple where despite living in the world, he is beyond it. In other words, his worldly responsibilities do not deter him coming closer to the *Qalb*, which is home to Allah as per the following Quranic Ayah:

The Beneficent One (Allah), Who is established on the Throne – Quran 20:05

‘Throne’ denotes ‘*Qalb*’ in this Ayah. If we consider ‘Throne’ in a literal sense, it will turn out to be bigger than Allah because if someone sits somewhere, seating place needs to be bigger than him. Also, Allah being *MUHEET* is all encompassing and cannot be isolated in a throne. It is a symbolic way of saying *Qalb* in the light of following Hadith:

Allah says: “The heavens and the earth cannot contain Me, but the heart (*Qalb*) of a true believer can” (*Hadith e Qudsi*).

With *Qalb* as home to Allah, Murshed appears as the *Barzakh* at the threshold of heart (*Qalb*) as an entrance from *angna* into the home (*Qalb*).

Now appearance of Hazrat Khwaja saheb (RA) in a disciple’s courtyard is a blessing in disguise. It only shows a disciple’s deeper bond (nisbet) to his Murshed. Khwaja saheb (RA) appears in the mirror of Murshed who is carrying the same spiritual essence in the physical realm. Again it is not an ordinary mirror rather it carries reflection of Nur-e-Mujassam (Prophet Muhammad pbuh) from Murshed to Murshed. It is like movement of a flame from candle to candle. Flame remains the same wherever or whenever it appears.

Whether you call it Moenuddin or Ikhtiyar Hussain, spirit and/or message remains one and the same. If love of Murshed cannot bring seeker to the unity of enlightened Masters and he is unable to transcend barrier of personalities, then he is yet to find *angna* of Moenuddin what to say of Moenuddin finding his *angna*.

Aayae ree aayae moray bhaag jagaye
Moray angna Moenuddin aayae ree
(His arrival transforms my destiny
Moenuddin arrives in my courtyard)

RUMI’s CORNER

Taqdeer (destiny) vs *tadbeer* (free will) is an ancient controversy and hitherto an unresolved issue. Proponents of each theory have their own, for and against arguments. Like life itself, these points of view are contradictory in nature and there is no simple answer in black and white. Just as the day and night are contradictory in appearance, but complement each other, likewise such issues relate to our perception of reality.

When I turned towards Hazrat Peer O Murshed regarding this issue, I’ve found the following gems in his poetry that may very well be seen from the viewpoint of destiny and free will. I am sure, there are other couplets too, but a window is more than enough to see the grandeur of sun. Lets’ begin with the first couplet:

Jadoo nigaahi teri kae husn e nazar mera
Tasveer meri bhi teri tasveer ban gayee
(Is this your magical gaze or beauty of my vision?)

My portrait has transformed into your picture)

Jadoo nigaahi teri: ‘Your magical gaze’
reflects destiny where one gets spellbound due to extraordinary beauty of *Zaat* (being) and loses control of events with no choice of his own.

Husn e Nazar mera: ‘Beauty of my vision’ is another way of saying free will, where my appreciation of His beauty brings Him to a pedestal of Godliness.

Tasveer meri: ‘My portrait’ brings forward my manifestation as a doer, which is another way of saying free will.

Teri Tasveer: ‘Your picture’ reflects destiny.

Ban gayee: ‘transformation’ i.e. free will seems like my action, but turns out to be my destiny due to His extraordinary beautiful presence. I, in no way remain capable of thinking and acting on my own.

Another couplet of Hazrat can also be seen in the same light:

Tasveer Kaif mein nae tu apni banaae thhee
Kis dhun mein thha kae aap ki tasveer ban gayee

(I was drawing my own portrait, Kaif
Somehow, it turned out to be your portrait)

First line reflects free will because ‘*Kaif*’ is visible as a painter of self-portrait, while the second line reveals destiny after self-portrait transforms into the portrait of beloved.

Mevlana Rumi (RA) says in the same vein:

khud kooza o khud koza-gar o khud gil e kooza
(I am the pitcher, maker of the pitcher and
clay of the pitcher)

Contd. on page 3

MEMOIRS – Part I

by: Asim Meerza

Though we have been to India several times before, but it is always fascinating and exciting to visit the land of diverse cultures and religions. Journey to India becomes more auspicious for us, as we go on a pilgrimage to attend the URS ceremony and pay homage to the great Sufi saint Hazrat Shah Meerza Agha Muhammad (R.A.). His beautiful Shrine is located in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh (formerly known as Central Province -C.P. during the British rule).

I started writing my observations after visiting India in 2004, but they remained unfinished as I put them on a back burner. However, this Newsletter has provided me with the impetus to share my memoirs with the readers. Our visit to India in 2004 commenced with the flight we boarded from Karachi (Pakistan) to Mumbai (India) for onward journey to Jabalpur. We were really fortunate to accompany Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza (the present Shaikh) in this pilgrimage. After reaching Mumbai, we took the train to Jabalpur. Several brothers of our order joined us enroute to Jabalpur. I have always found train journey exciting and full of fun. We were in high spirits in anticipation of attending the URS. Many of us were visiting Jabalpur for the very first time. While approaching Jabalpur, the atmosphere in our compartment became charged with spiritual enthusiasm due to the company of disciples and particularly due to immaculate presence of Hazrat Peer-o-Murshed. Besides, we continuously indulged in useful discussions on various aspects of spirituality along with lives of various Sufi saints, which enlightened our minds and souls. Perhaps it was a sort of preparation for the spiritual event which was soon to take place and attended by us.

Train journey from Mumbai to Jabalpur takes around 17-18 hours. You pass through most of the Maharashtra State and almost half of the Madhya Pradesh, as Jabalpur is located in the center of India. This whole route is adorned with patches of natural settings like beautiful hilly areas of Western Ghats near Mumbai and other locations with picturesque rivers and valleys. You also see eye catching dense forests and streams of water finding the way into the land covered with rice and wheat fields. Such scenic beauty reminds you of the Creator and one feels being part of the scene himself.

We reached Jabalpur at about 2 'o clock in the morning. A large number of devotees had gathered to welcome Hazrat regardless of cold weather and late hours. The warm reception was outburst of love and longing the devotees in India had for months. Hazrat was garlanded and taken in a procession.

URS:

The URS experience cannot be described in words justifiably, as words fall short to convey the true feelings that one experiences. Initiation ceremony of URS was Milad-un-Nabi that was led by a local scholar after the Isha prayers. It was followed by Qawwali sessions by several Qawwals, who recited various beautiful *kalam* (poetry).

The second day of URS, which is of prime significance, started with *Quran Khwani* in the morning. Couple of hours after the *Quran Khwani*, *Juloos* (Sandal and Chadar Procession) preparations went underway with *Roshan Chowki* (consists of Shahnai, Dhol and bongo drums played with sticks) playing soothing tunes. With the culmination of afternoon (*Zuhar*) prayers, Fateha session took place followed by Qawwali in which Qawwals recited poetry eulogizing the Sandal (written by Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza). Words and tune of Sandal poetry created such an ambiance that it moved everyone of us to the core. No doubt, it was an experience out of this world.

The *Juloos* (procession) then left for Mazar Agha sahib (RA). We traveled for about three hours with the procession amidst Qawwals, Bands and *Roshan Chowki*. I would particularly like to mention the Shyam band that is of international repute. They were simply outstanding and played some melodious and remarkable tunes. On our way to Mazar, *langar* (food items) and drinks were served at different places arranged by local shops and mosques. On the way, a beautiful model of Mazar Agha sahib (R.A.) made by one of the disciples, was also presented to Hazrat Peer O Murshed. Police controlled the traffic throughout the way. The local television station took a brief interview of Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza during the procession which was later telecasted in the evening. Before the Mazar of Hazrat Agha sahib (RA), we stopped by at the Mazar of Hazrat Nizami sahib (RA) son of Hazrat Agha Saheb (R.A.). After *Chadar Posh*, sandal application and Fateha at his Mazar, Qawwals recited Nizami saheb's poetry, which created a spiritually elated atmosphere that could only be felt let alone put into words. We reached Mazar Agha Saheb (RA) just before *Maghrib* prayers. After offering the prayers, *Chadar Posh*, sandal application and Fateha were offered at the Mazar Agha Saheb (RA) and other Mazars. Sandal and *Chadar Posh* ceremonies were accompanied by Qawwali with related themes specially the poetry '*Piya audhay chunaria sowat hay*' (my beloved is asleep adorned in a colorful piece of cloth) written by Hazrat Amir Khusro (RA) and *Khol kiwarriya teharr* (open your door) written by our Hazrat Peer-O-Murshed. The atmosphere was ecstatic

with such Qawwalis in those moments. Same ceremonies were performed in all Mazars. Subsequently, *langar* (food) was served to all the devotees who were there to attend the URS ceremonies. The whole Mazar complex can be viewed from the roof of *Sama Khana*. It appears beautiful, particularly, when viewed at night when all the lights are lit up making one feel like floating in the ocean of colors.

Two big screens were installed inside the courtyard of the Mazars' complex with a live telecast of the activities and ceremonies like Sandal, Chadar Posh and Qawwali taking place at the Mazar Agha Saheb and Sama Khana. Several famous Qawwals from India and Pakistan performed during the URS.

The third and the final day of URS's program included Qawwali followed by Rang performed collectively by all Qawwals after Asar Prayers, which ended at Maghreb. The URS ceremonies culminated upon recital of Fateha. All the local newspapers and television stations of Jabalpur covered the events right from the arrival of Hazrat Peer O Murshed till his departure from Jabalpur.

URS of Hazrat Agha Saheb (RA) is one of the most important and prominent cultural and religious event of not only Jabalpur but also for the State of Madhya Pradesh, attended by people from all walks of life regardless of their religious and cultural identities. URS is equally attended by Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christian, Jains etc. This emanates from the teachings of Hazrat Agha Saheb (RA) and his son Dr. Meerza Murtaza Hussain (RA) whose mausoleum is also included in the complex. Their teachings were of love and unity, and that pluralistic tradition continues till to date by Hazrat Agha sahib's (RA) grand son Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza (present Shaikh).

RUMI'S CORNER

Contd. from Page 2..

As per all the spiritual traditions, love leads towards the ultimate flowering of human consciousness. In love, one loses himself to find beloved. In other words, love the highest human value, uses free will to surrender free will at the altar of destiny. A moth as a lover of flame's bright face relinquishes her free will to find destiny in the ever-rising flame of love.

- Rumi

"You consider free will as something you have as a result of a certain thought. But that thought occurring, leading to what you think is your free will is part of the totality of functioning". *Non-duality Indian master: Ramesh Balsekar* (<http://www.lifepositive.com/spirit/new-age-catalysts/balsekar/ramesh-balsekar.asp>)

THE FLIP SIDE

by: *Muhammad Tauseef Ansari*

Revived interest has developed among the general public about Sufism and has taken a new form recently. With the advent of hardliners and intolerant religious factions, the attraction towards the peace loving culture of Sufism and the aura of mystery that shrouds it has pulled quite a large number of previously indifferent people. Taking advantage of this social psyche, a lot of groups decided to ride the wave and use it for their own benefit. These groups included musicians, singers, foreign cultural attaches and the domestic socialites. All of these segments vehemently support Sufism but in the form acceptable to each of them. The singers and musicians would dole out seemingly profound statements in support of Sufism even quoting revered Sufis to the extent of Hazrat Shaikh Mohiuddin Ibn e Arabi (RA) to give weight to their point of view. They would use the Sufi poetry and give a Sufi touch to their music in the race to be among those who claim to be highly influenced by Sufis. But the reality bites when one tries to go beneath their remarks and enquires about the influence and the real teachings of Sufism. In the efforts to elucidate their inclinations they are unable to provide even the basic background and teachings of Sufism let alone a sound understanding of the concepts and teachings

Additionally, foreign cultural attaches, NGOs, large corporate players and the social elites are often into organizing the so called Sufi events. They usually come up with a 'Sufi Music festival' or an 'evening of Sufi music' to lure the people. And, mind you, the people who attend these functions are the select crowd of individuals who are so and so of the social circle and who can pronounce as "being there and done that" to the world. Sometimes these events also have one of those few 'pseudo-intellectuals cum self proclaimed authority on Sufism' delivering lectures on the related topics. Not to mention, their lectures are devoid of the depth and the core concepts of Sufism. The try to cover the topics on a rudimentary level which in the opinion of the experts are devised in such a way so as not to invoke unwanted burden on the minds of the listeners. All of these activities and programs try to focus on the cultural aspects of Sufism and are only the extrovert rituals which are not only just the means to the goal but also have a deeper meaning than that evident to the observers and participants. These are labeled as cultural and Sufi activities and attract a lot of people mostly including those who want to be seen at these events and can be counted amongst the select socialites that can be anywhere and everywhere.

On one hand these activities are considered beneficial by the hardliners as they are able to

enjoy them in the real context and the actual way in which they are supposed to be deciphered. They understand what the rituals relate to. They are well versed with the introvert meanings of the Sufi poetry and have adequate knowledge base and guidance to evidence the Reality within the folds of relativity. But the flip side of the coin portrays the other extreme.

The younger generation has been driven to believe that Sufism comprises of only these rituals and if they are continuously going to qawwali functions, lectures and performing self guided ziker, they have entered into the fold of Sufism. Some go as far as to call themselves Sufis. These people are witnessed in various so called Sufi gatherings as reaching the state of ecstasy through the beat of the drums, a Sufi song or even as much as using drugs. These pseudo Sufis are able to come up with the reason for their disregard of the Shariah and its requirements. Their life is a complex mixture of socializing and merry-making and the tendencies to get involved in the rituals of Sufism. The take refuge in the notion that the introvert aspect of the religion is more important than the extrovert and hence they do not follow the shariah. This is totally against the Sufi doctrines and the teachings of the Sufi masters who had attached equal importance to following the Shariah along with the Sufi Tareeqah. In fact the great Sufi masters have stressed so much on the requirements of Shariah that even when they were in the state of Istighraaq, they had ordered the people to make them offer prayers in that condition too. Such is the way of the great Sufis.

The followers of the Sufi orders, however, also hold an optimistic view towards these activities. One day or the other these people who show interest in the Sufism just for the sake of being related to it and to be considered "moderately enlightened" will come to realize the true essence of the message and teachings of Sufis. And a day will come when most of the people on earth will be striving for self actualization on the Sufi path.

Being the era of advancement and rapid development, converging towards spirituality does not in any way keep a person from enjoying the fruits of the modernization but in fact encourages the dwellers of the Sufi path to be a part of the constant change. It also does not keep one from enjoying the aesthetically stimulating experiences instead it just shifts the focus of the person towards the Ultimate Reality hidden behind everything. Hazrat Niaz be Niaz (RA) says:

*Kahin mutrib bana kahin raqqas
Kahin wo saaz baajta daekha
Singer at some place, dancer at another
Yet a musician at some other place*

HAFIZ SHERAZI

contributed by: *Zeeshan Mirza*

Khwaja Shamsuddin Muhammad Hafiz Shirazi, known by his pen name Hafiz (born 1315 - died 1390) was the most celebrated Persian lyric poet and is often described as a poet's poet. Despite his world-wide fame, the details of Hafiz's life are not altogether clear. What is known is that he was a scholar, an 'arif, a hafiz of the Quran and an exegete of the Book. His life and poems have been the subject of much analysis, commentary, and interpretation and had influenced the course of post-fourteenth century Persian lyrics. Hafiz's poetry attains to lofty mystical heights, and there are few people who are able to perceive his mystic subtleties. All the mystics who came after him admit that he had indeed practically covered the lofty stages of irfan.

خوربگرفت یماه که رخش روشن
گردخط او چشمه کوثر بگرفت
دلها همه در چاه زخندان انداخت
وانگه سر چاه را به عنبر بگرفت

*My beloved is brighter than the sun,
Put in the heavens, my only one.
Placed the hearts upon the earth
To watch the sun's daily run*

ستد تو را بنده شده یخورش ی تو بر
ستست تابنده شده تابنده تو شده
که از شعاع نور رخ تو یزان رو
ستر و ماه تابنده شده ی من یخورش

*You are the moon and the sun is your slave;
As your slave, it like you must behave.
It is only your luminosity and light
That light of sun and moon can save*

امدمارای چیز نقش تو در نظر ن
امدمارای گذرن توره ی جز کو
خواب ارچه خوش آمد همه رادر عهدت
امد ما رایحقا که به چشم در ن

*The only vision I have is your sight
The only thing I follow is your light.
Everyone finds his repose in sleep,
Sleep from my eyes has taken flight*

For those who claim Hafiz Shirazi to be poet sans a Sufi, his following verses about himself indicate that he was not only a hafiz e Quran but his poetry contained all the ingredients of Sufism behind the metaphors and allegories of wine and beauty vehemently used by Hafiz.

*I haven't seen more beautiful lines than yours, Hafiz,
By the Quran that you have in your breast.
Your pure love shall cry out if you, like Hafiz,
Recite the Quran memorized with all the fourteen readings
Of the memorizers of the world none like me has gathered,
Subtleties of wisdom with Quranic delicacies*

A MEMORABLE EVENT

by: **Muhammad Tauseef Ansari**

Come, come again, whoever you are, come!
Heathen, fire worshipper or idolaters, come!
Come even if you broke your penitence a
hundred times,
Ours is the portal of hope, come as you are
- *Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi*

The country-wide terrorist attacks, that put all the major cities including Karachi on a “high alert”, had quite a few attendees of the *mehfil e qawwali* quite skeptical about the venue: Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi. However the lovers of qawwali thronged the banquet hall and kept pouring in till late night. A *fershi* seating arrangement with a few chairs lined up against the walls created a perfect ambiance for an enjoyable evening on October 24, 2009.

It was the death anniversary of the great qawwal Munshi Raziuddin Ahmed; recipient of the pride of performance award and a true maestro of the art of qawwali having complete command over all the styles and ragas. The anniversary event is held regularly by the worthy sons of the legendary performer - Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad - who render soulful melodies and songs of love as a tribute to their father.

Munshi Raziuddin Ahmed Qawwal; a renowned and famous name in qawwali, belonged to the *Qawwal Bachchay Gherana* which comprised of twelve young pupils of Hazrat Ameer Khusrou (RA) to whom he imparted the art of sama'a under the patronage of Hazrat Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia (R.A.). One of its family members, Mir Qutub Buksh was the royal tutor and court musician of the last mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, who conferred upon him the title of “Taanrus Khan”. Munshi Razi was the grandson of Mian Taanrus Khan.

Munshi Razi was well known for his comprehension of the Sufi poetry and was gifted with the art of delivering the allegorical Sufi poetry without losing its original charm. His immaculate technique of integrating couplets of similar meaning to elaborate the crux of Sufi poetry served to keep the audience involved in experiencing the *kalaam* the way it is meant to be comprehended and enjoyed.

His sons Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad are carrying forward the legacy of their father. Under the tutelage of a loving father but a strict teacher, Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad followed his footsteps and now dominate the genre of classical music and the traditional classical ragas.

Farid's command over the rendition, performance, dialect and the background of the Sufi music were evident throughout the performance. The ease with which he could

change the subject from one qawwali to another, the exceptionally beautiful integration of various poetries from different Sufi poets and, most of all, keeping the audience involved were a few traits that came through very well. Although considered inappropriate by those who attend sama'a at *khanqahs* and *dergahs*, the brief explanations and background information narrated by Farid Ayaz during the qawwali were welcomed. His rendition of Persian poetry was par excellence for the traditional qawwali lovers especially when he rendered “*her lehza ba shaklan but e ayyar beramud*” by Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (RA) and “*aye dilbageer daman e sultan e aulia*” a eulogy of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) by Hazrat Niaz be Niaz Shah Niaz Ahmed (RA). Farid Ayaz performed a wide variety of Sufi poetry in different ragas to give a taste of diversity to the audience.

Farid Ayaz commenced with a tribute to his father and eulogizing him not only as a father but also as a tutor and his mentor. The audience was treated with a hamd by Hazrat Ameer Khusro (RA) which was written in response to a bhajan by Hindu clergy. Qaul, the famous tarana by Hazrat Ameer Khusro (RA) followed the hamd. From then onwards, it was a one kalaam after another. The recitals included the following evergreen masterpieces: *Jahan roushen ast az Jamaal e Muhammad, Meray bannay ke baat na poochho, Nami daanum che manzil boud shab jaye kay mun bodum, gher naari ganwaari, me raqsam, kaeserya baalum - padhaaro maaro daes, sirsoun sakal bun phool rahi, kabhi ae haqeeqat e muntazar, chhaap tilak sub chheeni, her lehza ba shaklaan but e ayyar beramud, ay dil bageer daaman e sultan e auliya, kanhayya - yaad hay kuch bhe hamari, mohay apnay he rung maen rung lay and finally rung.* This selection provided Farid and his troupe to display their mastery on all genres of qawwali rendition.

The overall experience was delightfully soul enriching. Those who came for food for soul were satiated while those who turned up for the love of music were adequately rewarded. Those who came to enjoy the intricacies of poetry had a great time and those who attended to see Farid Ayaz deliver ragas were also not disappointed.

One must also laud the wonderful effort put in by the members of troupe under the leadership of their masters Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad. *Alaaps* and *taans* in harmony, synchronized clapping and perfect beat of the *dhooul* and *tabla* that struck one's heart completed the delivery of the qawwali as a whole. Let's hope the legacy is carried forward as it is being done by Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad and their prayers for the return of unity and peace in the homeland are fulfilled.

EVENTS UPDATE

by: **Sheeza Asim**

94th Urs of Hazrat Shah Meerza Agha Muhammad (RA) was held in Karachi on Saturday 17th October 2009 at Khanqah e Aghaia, Muhammad Shah Graveyard, Sector 7-D, North Karachi. The Urs was attended by a large number of devotees and turned out to be another event that was planned and carried out successfully. Farid Ayaz and Abu Muhammad troupe rendered sama' while the chaader sharif was also recited.

94th Urs of Hazrat Shah Meerza Agha Muhammad (RA) was held from 31st October to 2nd November 2009 at Dargah Hazrat Agha Saheb (R.A.), Agha Chowk, Ranital, Jabalpur, India

Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza left for Jabalpur, India on 19th October, 2009 to attend 94th Urs of Hazrat Shah Meerza Agha Muhammad (RA). He arrived in Delhi, India on 19th October 2009 where he visited the Mazar of Mehboob-e-Ilahi Hazrat Khwaja Nizam Uddin Aulia (R.A.). He then proceeded to Jabalpur where he arrived on 20th October, 2009.

He returned to Karachi, Pakistan from Jabalpur, India on 9th November 2009.

Following his return, the movie of Urs from Jabalpur was screened at the residence of our Shaikh and was enjoyed by a large number of devotees. The screening was held after the fateha of 13th Ziqu'ad and was followed by lunger.

The following two New books by Hazrat Dr. Ikhtiyar Hussain Meerza (Present Shaikh) have been published and are available from “Jamaat-e-Salikeen Aghayah Murtaqvia Trust”, Karachi

1. Shaairee mein Sufiana Istilahaat: it provides a glossary and explanation of Sufi terms that have been used by poets to convey not only the divine messages but also their own spiritual experiences

2. A new edition of “Muarif-ul-Tasmeehawal-Fateha”: A detailed explanation of Tasmeeha i.e. ‘*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim*’ and ‘*Surah e Fateha*’ in the context of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud*

A sabeel of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) was set up by the Salikeen from the 7th Muharram till the 10th Muharram. The encouragement and support received prior year played a vital role in this regard.

December 2009 marked the commencement of the new Islamic year. As always, fateha of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and shuhuda-e-Karbala was held on 8th Muharram. Manqabat khwani was followed by speech from Khateeb e Ehl e Sunnat Mr. Abrar Rehmani. Lunger was served after fateha.

میری ڈائری کے کچھ اوراق

از: عمران احمد مرزا

میں نے سلسلہ "نظامی آغائی مرتضوی اختیاری" میں شمولیت اختیار کرنے کے بعد ایک دن ماہانہ فاتحہ کے بعد اپنی دانست میں بہت ہی مشکل اور پیچیدہ مسئلہ حضرت کے سامنے رکھا۔ میں نے ان سے مسئلہ "قضا و قدر" پر سوال کیا۔ مجھے یاد ہے اس وقت حضرت کی کتاب "اسرارِ اسرار" زیر طباعت تھی۔ اس وقت اور بھی مریدین وہاں پر موجود تھے۔ حضرت نے بہت خندہ پیشانی سے مجھے جواب دیا اور خود اٹھ کر پہلے اپنے کمرے میں گئے اور اپنی مذکورہ زیر طباعت کتاب کا مسودہ لائے اور اس میں موجود کئی حوالوں سے مجھے سمجھایا لیکن آپ کا ابتدائی جملہ میرے ذہن میں نقش ہو گیا اور اب بھی کسی الجھن یا دشواری میں وہ جملہ میرے لئے نشانِ منزل ثابت ہوتا ہے۔ آپ نے فرمایا تھا "اس کے لئے صرف توحید کی صحیح سمجھ چاہئے۔"

اس جملہ کی گہرائی اور معنویت آج تک مجھے حیران کئے دیتی ہے کیونکہ اس کی ضیاء میں جب بھی کسی مشکل کا جواب دیکھتا ہوں عقل دنگ رہ جاتی ہے اور بے اختیار حضرت کے تصرف، علم و عرفان اور آگہی کا ذہن متعرف ہو جاتا ہے۔

☆☆☆☆☆☆

جب رومی میاں سلمہ پاکستان میں تھے تو ایک دفعہ ماہانہ فاتحہ کے بعد ہم لوگ حضرت کے پاس حاضر تھے۔ اس وقت

شاید حضرت کسی کو داخل سلسلہ کرنے کے لئے اندر تشریف لے گئے اور ہمارے درمیان داخل سلسلہ ہونے پر گفتگو ہونے لگی۔ ہم سب نے اپنے اپنے خیالات کا اظہار کیا، لیکن جو بات رومی میاں نے کہی اس نے کم از کم میرے ابتدائی غلط تصورات اور خیالات کی نفی کر دی۔ رومی میاں نے فرمایا کہ ہم سمجھتے ہیں کہ ہم مرید ہو گئے لیکن حقیقت یہ ہے کہ "وہ" مرید کرتے ہیں یعنی وہی سہاگن جو پیامن بھائے۔ یہ بالکل ایسا ہی ہے کہ چاہے پیاسا پانی کے پاس جائے یا پانی پیاسے کے پاس آئے۔ دونوں صورتوں میں نشنگی کی آگ پانی ہی بجھاتا ہے ورنہ محض پانی کی موجودگی پیاس کے سدّ باب کے لئے ناکافی ہے۔

☆☆☆☆☆☆

ان ماہانہ فاتحوں میں شرکت سے جو روحانی فوائد حاصل ہوتے ہیں وہ انگنت ہیں اور یقیناً ہر فرد اپنی اپنی استطاعت بلکہ حضرت کی نظرِ کرم کی وجہ سے اس سے بڑھ کر مستفید ہوتا ہے۔ ہم میں سے کئی کو یہ تجربہ ہوا ہے کہ ہم آپ کی محفل میں کوئی خاص مسئلہ سوچتے ہوئے حاضر ہوئے اور آپ نے اس ہی موضوع پر گفتگو کی جس سے وہ حل ہو گیا اور بات سمجھ میں آ گئی۔ آپ کی محفل میں خاموشی کی بھی زبان ہوتی ہے کیونکہ اس وقت خاص آپ کا تصرف ہوتا ہے۔ رومی میاں نے اسی طرف اشارہ کرتے ہوئے ایک دفعہ فرمایا تھا کہ حضرت کی محفل میں اگر خاموش بیٹھے ہوں تب بھی

ایک نورانی گفتگو کی کیفیت ہوتی ہے اور حاضرین محفل اس سے مستفید ہوتے ہیں اور اس سلسلے میں ایک واقعہ بیان کیا جو انہی کی زبانی سنئے۔

☆☆☆☆☆☆

ایک ماہانہ فاتحہ کے دوران حضرت امیر خسرو کا ذکر خیر چھڑ گیا۔ حضرت نے فرمایا کہ آپ عاشق صادق تھے اور اپنے مرشد کی تعریف میں ہمہ وقت رطب اللسان رہتے تھے۔ آپ کا کلام کسی نہ کسی روحانی واردات کا ہی مظہر ہوتا تھا بلکہ جہاں بظاہر کلام میں روحانیت کا پہلو نمایاں نہیں بھی ہے، وہ بھی کسی نہ کسی طرح روحانی واردات کا ہی بیان ہے۔ اچانک میرے دل میں خیال آیا کہ "کاہے کو بیاہی بدیس۔۔۔۔۔" تو محض ایک شادی بیاہ کا گیت ہی نظر آتا ہے جس میں روحانیت کا پہلو مفقود سا دکھائی پڑتا ہے۔ اسی شش و پنج میں ڈیڑھ دو دن بتلا رہا اور آخر کار اس گتھی کو سلجھانے کی غرض سے حضرت کو زحمت دینے کی ٹھانی۔ اس سے پہلے کہ آپ کے کمرے کے دروازے تک پہنچتا، آپ اپنے کمرے سے نگاہ نیچے کئے باہر تشریف لاتے ہوئے نظر آئے۔ میری جانب دیکھا اور آپ کا خاموشی سے چھلکتا و نورانیت سے لبریز جواب میرے دماغ کے نہاں خانے کو منور کر گیا اور جواب خود بخود جاری ہو گیا کہ اس کلام میں ذاتِ اقدس کا مقام احدیت سے مقامِ واحدیت کی جانب نزول کا اشارہ ہے۔