

**A BEGINNER'S TAKE ON SUFI POETRY: DOES THE SUFI  
LOVE TRANSCEND RELIGIOUS BORDERS TO  
ENCAPSULATE HUMANITY?**

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**Abstract**

Love is a dominant feature in Sufi literature. Sufi poetry portrays the diverse faces and nature of love. The major Sufi poets such as Rumi, Hafiz, Shams and Attar have talked about love in their writings. This love is considered one of the most beautiful symbolisms for the love between man and God. The Sufi literature is considered a vibrant part of Islamic literature and civilization, and hence the God found in Sufi works is considered the God as found in Islam. Yet the increasing interest of the non-Islamic world in Sufi works can show that this Islamic literature goes beyond perusing the relations between man and God and encompass the whole humanity, crossing the borders of religion to become truly universal.

**Introduction**

It may not be a wrong statement to say that the increased attention and discussion on the Sufi texts and ideas are largely due to the notion that Sufi poetries, as translated in western languages, often overcome their Islamic scent, that they derive a secular<sup>1</sup> appeal and thus men and women from any creed and faith can connect themselves to the Sufi literature.

This statement, however, can be argued to be correct if and when the Sufi literary texts are taken in their face value. Once the reader permeates through the surface to delve deeper within, s/he finds allegories and metaphors crafted in perfect nuance, creating a web of ambiguous claims and statements, often though not always insinuating confusion in the minds of readers.

The greater share of the Sufi literature deals with the notion of love. Love constantly appears in the Sufi poetry and literature in a myriad of ways.

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1 Secularism here is being used in the non-western sense, meaning preference to no specific religion, a binary to communalism, as opposed to non-religious or anti-religious. See, Ali Riaz, *God Willing*, (Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), pp. 21-22

Jalaluddin Rumi, the most common name on the international plane, closely followed by Fariduddin Attar, Shamsuddin Muhammad Hafiz and Omar Khayyam, all have written expansively on love, so that a genre of Sufi poetry has come to be known as love poems. A close speculation of these poems depicts the pure love between two actors: the lover and the beloved. The allegories and metaphors are poised in perfect nuance so as to be applicable equally to both man and man, and man and God. However, this notion of duality (both as in dual/ambiguous sense and as in dual/two actors) seems pervasive.

This puts a question in the curious reader's mind: Is Sufi poetry only meant to peruse upon the relations between (a) man and God? Or are there instances where the Sufi poems can be taken to encompass the whole humanity, going above the borders of religion and only concern with nature and humanity?

In the following pages, I elucidate what impression can the Sufi poems give to a reader who is just a reader, one who reads for the joy of reading but does not go on to conduct detailed research on what he reads. As opposed to scholarly endeavors, this type of readers is the most common. The whole endeavor focuses on the question that whether the Sufi poems can be taken to encompass the essence of humanity, transcending the narrow borders of religion (religion here referred to in the institutional and disciplinary sense).

The goal of the essay is to discern whether Sufi poems were actually meant to be limited to Muslim readers, and whether the humanity referred to by Rumi in his works is only the body possessing the true faith of Islam. In that case, the poems must be considered as in fact not meant for the uninitiated audience, a group which the average reader belongs to.

I argue that although intended for Muslim audiences, non-Muslim readers can overlook the subtle references to Islamic themes and find meaning in the more universal themes. I build my arguments on the premises that the Sufi texts were written with the Muslim audience in mind, and as such, even the texts that otherwise seem universal are actually intended to be read from an Islamic perspective. However, due to the universal characters of religion and literature, the Sufi texts can appeal to broader range of uninitiated readers, including those reading for the joy of reading but not going into detailed speculation. As opposed to scholarly endeavors, such readers are of greater number.

The paper has two parts: in the first part I analyze the nature of love as found in Sufi literature, and the latter part I analyze how this Sufi love when put in a non-Islamic context can identify and resonate with universal human appeal. In favor of my hypothesis, I refer to various texts from leading Sufi writers such as Rumi, Attar, and Hafiz, to mention a few. I will also explore some other sources to draw comparisons and make further analysis.

### **The Sufi Work and the Sufi Love**

Before delving into my arguments further, it is pertinent to provide a brief synopsis of the texts and poems:

*Jalaluddin Rumi*: In *The King and the handmaiden, Mathnawi, book I*<sup>2</sup>, Rumi describes how a powerful and mighty fell in love with a beautiful handmaiden and by force made her his own. But the handmaiden was lovesick for another goldsmith. Upon the failure of proud doctors, the king begged for divine providence, when god granted his wish and sent a mystical healer. The healer healed the girl and then killed the goldsmith so as to show the girl that her love was superficial.

*Shamsuddin Hafiz*: I take Poem LXXIV<sup>3</sup> from the book *Hafiz of Shiraj: Thirty Poems*. The poem goes as follows:

With locks dishevelled, flushed in a sweat of drunkenness,  
His shirt torn open, a song on his lips and wine-cup in hand —  
With eyes looking for trouble, lips softly complaining —  
So at midnight last night he came and sat at my pillow.  
He bent his head down to my ear, and in a voice full of sadness  
He said: "Oh my old lover, are you asleep?"  
What lover, being given such wine at midnight,  
Would prove love's heretic, not worshipping wine?  
Don't scold us, you puritan, for drinking down to the dregs:  
This fate was dealt us in God's prime Covenant.  
  
Whatever He poured into our tankard we'll swallow:  
If it's liquor of Paradise, or the wine that poisons.  
A laughing wine cup, a tangle of knotted hair —  
And let good resolutions, like those of Hafiz, be shattered.

2 R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalaluddin Rumi*, (E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series, V. IV, London, 1926), pp. 5-11

3 Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs, *Hafiz of Shiraj: Thirty Poems*, (John Murray Pub Ltd., 1952), p. 30

This poem talks about the forgetful slumbering human spirit, who is often unmindful to God's calling. It is only when that God's voice shakes man to the core that he wakes up from his sleep only sink into a stupor of love: the love for God. This stupor is shunned by the normal world, but for a Sufi, this portrays how a lover is ready to be ashamed and punished for breaking conventional behavior to reach God's closeness through love.

*Fariduddin Attar:*<sup>4</sup> In *The Story of Sheikh Saman*, Attar offers a narrative of how a famous Sufi sheikh dreams of Rome, and to decipher his dream travels there. Upon arriving, he sees a Christian girl and falls madly in love with love. This madness is symbolizing man's love for god. But the poem is full of ambiguity, and at the end, the Christian girl is approached by divine ordain to embrace the sheikh's faith who selflessly loved her, thus showing triumph of Islam as the true faith.

In *Gabriel and the unbeliever*, Gabriel the archangel saw god blessing a non-believer (non-muslim). Upon his astonishment, God says that the non believer was ignorant of the proper ways of Islam, but his yearning for God was pure, this transcending the precincts of a particular established religion and seeping into human race in general.

*The faithless Moslem and the faithful infidel* offers a story of how in the middle of a war, a Muslim asks time to pray which the non-Muslim honors. But when the non-muslim takes his turn to pray, the Muslim wants to kill him. Then God speaks to the Muslim that even as a believer he lacked faith, whereas the non-believer kept his promise (keeping promises is a vital aspect of Islam). Upon hearing the accounts, the non-believer says his eyes are open and embraces Islam over his pagan belief.

#### ***Common features in Sufi poems***

It is quite common in Sufi poems to find controversial nature of love, for example, love between the unconventional partners, contravening the societal norms, religious norms, traditions, cultures and code of conduct. In the contemporary world, where clash of cultures seem increasingly apparent, the Sufi poems can often work as a polestar to overcome the imagines boundaries and unite under the banner of humanity. But, one can question as if the

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4 Fariduddin Attar, *The Conference of the Birds* (Translated by Dick Davies and Afkham Darbandi) (Penguin Classics, 1984)

examples of unconventional love were used as a suggestion for humanity, or as a suggestion to sustain the religious sanctities.

On a closer speculation, the love as found in Sufi literature can be dissected to have the following characteristics:

**The Unapproachable beloved:** In all the stories based on love, the lover cannot approach the beloved. The handmaiden who fell in love with the goldsmith of Samarkand (beyond her reach from the King's palace where she lived), the Roman Christian girl (because Sheikh Saman could not marry a Christian girl without breaching religious customs), God (who no man can approach conceivably), and from a certain ambiguous point of view, the sleeping human mind who can never approach the ultimate level of consciousness. All of them are distant from the lover's yearnings.

**Excruciating pain of the lover:** In most Sufi poems, including the ones in question, all depict extreme pain and suffering that the lover has to suffer before s/he could get a glimpse of the beloved: Majnun for Layla (the separated lovers), Zulaikha for Joseph (for Zuleikha was married to Joseph's employer), Mahmoud for the ailing Ayaz (because homosexuality is forbidden in Islamic teachings), Sheikh Saman for the Christian girl, the King for the handmaiden and the handmaiden for the smith. The suffering denotes that while the love is true, the beloved is there, sometimes known sometimes not, and even if the wayfarer knows the way to the beloved, it is not a smooth path. Often the road confuses the traveller, misleads, and makes the wayfarer suffer to the point that s/he may even doubt the love itself.

However, this pain plays a vital role in the text. The pain works as a filter through which the sincerity, depth and purity of the love is proved.

**Unconventional love:** The predominant love found in the Sufi texts is the unconventional love. As Rumi writes:

Whatever you see as profitable, flee from it!  
 Drink poison and pour away the water of life!  
 Abandon security and stay in frightful places!  
 Throw away reputation, become disgraced and shameless!<sup>5</sup>

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5 Rumi, *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* William C. Chittick (ed.), SUNY Press, 1983, p.229

In Attar's texts, we also find the stories talk about love that contravenes the social, sexual and religious convention, such as the social superior and inferior (King and handmaiden/ Layla and Majnun, Zuleikha/Joseph), or the social rivals (Layla and Majnun are known to have been belonged to different clans), or sexually unacceptable (Rumi and Shams/ Mahmoud and Ayaz).<sup>6</sup>

These repeated metaphors are analogical to the life of a Sufi. The Sufis, having been initiated to the esoteric world, perceive in a way incomprehensible to the ordinary man, and hence Sufis have been doubted upon through ages. Their understandings and ways of life are not that of the ordinary people, and the Sufis do not read on the known path. Afraid of the unknown as the human nature is, the society shuns the Sufi path, and so the stories reflect the discomfort and questions Sufis face every day in their life. This is evident from the passage from Rumi, where he clearly says that if one must attain the beloved, s/he must come out of the comfort zone, challenge oneself and let go of the reputation. All these go against social norms, where people struggle to make a living and an identity. 'Attār accepted Sheikh San'ān's transgression because as a Sufi he believed any love can be true love, and that a true lover does not think about the good or evil but only desires to please the beloved.<sup>7</sup> It is said that after losing Shams to social opposition, Rumi valued his stigma and even more tightly embraced his learning from Shams to write poetry, which was shameful for a scholar.

This rebellion against the convention has also gave rise to the use of imagery in Sufi poetry which is completely against conventional morality: wine and drunkenness is the most common example, where despite wine being prohibited in Islam, the wine of love and drunken ecstasy for God is praised in Sufi literature.

**Destruction of ego:** The love portrayed in the texts depicts an amorous feeling for the beloved where the lover is ready to give up everything for the sake of love. This readiness to become a love's destitute relates to the foregoing of the self, the *nafs*, against which every person has to fight. It is through the destruction of the self that a person can attain *fanaa* (destruction

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<sup>6</sup> See, Dick Davis, Introduction in supra n. 4

<sup>7</sup> Volume 16 Issue 1 (March 2014) Article 8 Claudia Yaghoobi, "Subjectivity in 'Attār's Shaykh of San'ān Story in The Conference of the Birds", *Comparative Literature and Culture*, Vol.16 (March), 2014, pp. 2-9

of ego), and ultimately *baqaa* (the spiritual perfection, the ultimate *manzil* or goal for a Sufi), the true goal of a Sufi. Hence we find that in the Sufi poems, Qais becomes Majnun (literally meaning the lunatic) and dissolves his own self into that of Layla, or Rumi himself transforms into the spirit of Shams so as to become the poet which Shams had seen in Rumi.

**Two characters:** This is another striking feature in the love poems. The texts display the love between two actors, often denoting the Lover (mostly man, sometimes God) and the beloved (mostly God, sometimes man). This two-party focus of the love poems is the central discussion point in this essay. The lover is so much in love that nothing can save him from the self-destruction, not even the mankind, but the texts have not spoken about collective love for the mankind, a love which can salvage the whole mankind as a unit. It does appeal to mankind, but it invites people to act individually, for the Sufi path is a lonely path and each wayfarer has to find his or her own way. It appears that the solitude of the journey has transformed the love into a solitary affair as well. This is interesting because the Quran has numerous references where God speaks to the human race *in toto*, whereas Sufism having been rooted in Quran focuses on the individual.

**Sufi poets as blessed by God:** The poets in Islam are praised as being blessed by God, their gift of language is a divine gift,<sup>8</sup> which shows why in most cases this gift was used for praising God and Islam. Poetry in Islam is no less than a miracle. In these poems, we find repeated reference to Allah and Prophet (PbuH), who is the guide of all the Sufis.

#### *Two different trends in Sufi love*

In these Sufi poems discussed above, a reader can notice two approaches towards God as the beloved. In the Hafiz texts, God is God, there is covert reference to Islam, and the language can be seen as universal, applicable to God Himself and to any believer, irrespective of what s/he practices. The same trend can often be noticed in Rumi's poems. When Rumi talks about love, he refers to god even less than Hafiz does. The subtlety of ambiguous application of God's presence is such that often the language partakes to the

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<sup>8</sup> For example, the famous poet Mirza Ghalib says: "*Heaven inspired are my poetic thoughts*, Ghalib, the scratching of the pen is the voice of an heavenly angel. "Mirza Ghalib, Nawa-E-Sarosh, (Ind-U.S. Pub., 1969)

yearnings for the beloved of flesh and blood, which in itself is an aim for the Sufi poetry.

The second trend, however, makes more direct reference to Islam as the source of the Sufi path. This group of poems makes a clear statement that in order to find the *haqiqa* (the reality), one must find God in the way Islam has ordained. In these texts, the God transforms from the universal God to the God who has clearly sent message to the people to follow Islam as the true path, *siratulmustakim*.

This is the point where the Sufi poems diverge from the notion of a universal love for the average reader. The reader finds that the texts from Attar, for example, repeatedly refer to this matter. The poems from Hallaj are more apparent and clear. The poems directly refer to the tenets of Islam, the Islamic way of life, of worship and philosophy, and mostly shows that the yearnings for love culminates into the knowledge of the *haqiqa*, hence the knowledge of Islam.

Hence the issue a reader finds her/himself dealing with is twofold:

that there is seldom any reference to collective love (by collective love I mean love addressed to or practiced by entire human race), and that there is frequent oscillation in referring to God as either God the Creator or God as perceived by Islamic theology.

What really bewilders the readers is the fact that the Sufi texts were written with the Muslim audience in mind, and as such, even the texts that otherwise seem universal are actually intended to be read from an Islamic perspective. If the hypothesis is proved, then we can deduce that the reason that the Sufi literature today appeals to the international readers is because the fantastic nuance it carries within it- the nuance which does not only create ambiguity regarding the characters but also in the audience.

We will take one poem which can be attributed to each perspective, and then try to find whether it can also accommodate the other perspective.

**The literature is about God in a secular way:** This is best exemplified by Hafiz's poems. These poems are highly nuanced, the focus of the lover and beloved constantly shift, each character appearing to be fit for either one. The allegories and metaphors are secular, seldom referring to Islamic texts. The

meadow and the moon,<sup>9</sup> the tank, the rose and nightingale, the wind, reed, flute, pen etc. although each of these can be in a way argued to have traced back to Quran, but it can be rightly claimed that the appearance is more secular and value it brings is more for the literary beauty it composes.

This notion can be rebutted. It is easy to see that the otherwise secular concepts have a deep Islamic root: the moon is central in Islam as having the lunar based calendar for activities (although in Sufi the moon is the mark of God's beauty), the meadows are a central theme of paradise, the pen is the first revelation of the Quran and hence extremely important. Therefore, we can say that although it may be possible to read the poem with a secular construction, that will not constitute the proper reading, and the average reader might be far from realizing the essence and beauty of the poem.

**The literature is about God as in Islam:** The poem best suited to elucidate this point is the poem of *Sheikh Saman*. The poem is of extraordinary literary nuance because it constantly shifts focus. On first reading the reader can get an idea that the poem suggests what matters is love's true zeal, it matters little whether your love is for another Muslim or not, so long as it is pure, the yearnings are sincere, it reverts to God as such. But towards the end we see that the love was being questioned as a misguided love, and the Christian girl was ordained by God that her lover's sincere sacrifices demanded her then to embrace Islam, the true faith, and accompany the Sheikh as a devoted lover.

However, from a different perception, the story can have a complete new meaning: that when it comes to love, every religion stands on the same footing. On this point, one cannot but refer to Rumi's famous lines: "Be certain that in the religion of love there are no believers or non-believers, Love embraces all." It is not about exalting Islam over Christianity or vice versa, but exalting love and humanity over all else. The Roman Christian girl abused Sheikh Saman, her devout love, in every possible way using religion as a false pretext. She never intended to use the tests she set as a way to ascertain whether the Sheikh's love was pure, which was apparent when even after having done all the sheikh's love remained unrequited. This will stand unjustified from a 'Christian' reading also. Since the girl lacked proper faith

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9 Mentioned in Poem CCCCLXXVII, in Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs, supra n.3 at p.58 where moon is the stages of ego and meadow is the earthly life.

in any sense, she did not esteem Christianity either, and hence she was ordained to pay off her for sins by embracing the way of life she mocked at the cost of her lover's repetition, something that is hardest to let go.

Next is the story of the faithful infidel, which can be seen as a bit of oxymoron for apparent reasons of syntax. Again, the self is in combat here, because the Moslem takes for granted that *his* prayer is prayer, the infidel's is not an act of worship. His intention on the surface level seems a good one: he wants to avenge his religion (we are not given the pretext to the battle, so I am assuming that the combat initiated on the ground of faith and religion). But divine gaze intervenes and awakens his sleeping soul; it reminds him that religion is not about exaltation by force, rather the force of honesty and sincerity, and your love for fellow humans. We can trace this back to Quranic verses, which teach us to keep promises,<sup>10</sup> and that killing one man is equal to killing the entire humanity.<sup>11</sup>

The twist comes towards the end, when the infidel is recounted the story, and he perceives the mercy and majesty of one true God, and acknowledges the worthlessness of idolatry to embrace Islam.

The easy interpretation is that Attar wants to show triumph of Islam over idolatry, which is pure blasphemy in Islam; in fact it is worse than Christianity for not being an Abrahamic religion at all. Two notions are at play: God values his creations, and protects the innocent whatever faith he may belong to. But at the end of the day, we are asked to take back the message that Islam is the true way.

Another interpretation also reverts to the basic notion of God in Islam: that we can do only what God allows us to do. The Quran says that those who don't listen or see the truth have their hearts are sealed by God so they can never see again. In this context, the story can be explained that the Moslem received the divine intervention so that he later recounts the story to the infidel, that it was God all along who designed the whole transaction to *allow* the infidel to see Him, because God wants to be known.<sup>12</sup>

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10 "Oh you who believe! Fulfill your promises." [5:1]

11 "For that cause We decreed for the Children of Israel that whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind." [5:32]

12 Famous hadith e Qudsi accounts that God said, "I was a hidden treasure; I loved to be known. Hence I created the world so that I would be known."

### **The Sufi's love: A Human's Love**

The story of Sheikh Saman, despite its intricate religious nuances and continuous shifting of focus,, can be interpreted in a religion-neutral manner. On first reading, the neutral reader can get an idea that the poem suggests what matters is love's true zeal, it matters little whether your love is for another Muslim or not, so long as it is pure, the yearnings are sincere, it reverts to God as such.

In the poem, when the Sheikh's friend chastises the disciples for abandoning the Sheikh, saying *Friends follow friend to Hell and blasphemy*:<sup>13</sup>

This was no friendship, to forsake your friend,  
To promise your support and at the end  
Abandon him -- this was sheer treachery.  
Friend follows friend to hell and blasphemy –  
When sorrows come a man's true friends are found;  
In times of joy ten thousand gather round

When sorrows come a man's true friends are found: it upholds the universal messages of friendship and brotherhood. The Prophet (PbUH) makes intercession for Sheikh in the end of the poem. This intercession reflects the role of any savior in any other poetry. The friend's love for the Sheikh was analogous to good conscience, rationality and sanity, which intervenes and awakens his sleeping soul. Thus, even though we can trace this back to Quranic verses, which teach us to keep promises, the message is in essence that of love for humanity.

Finally, the Christian girl's dream about God's instructions to accept Islam could be interpreted as natural justice. The story shows that when it comes to love, every religion stands on the same footing. It is not about exalting Islam over Christianity or vice versa, but exalting love and humanity over all else. The Roman Christian girl abused Sheikh Saman, her devout lover, in every possible way using religion as a false pretext. She never intended to use the tests she set as a way to ascertain whether the Sheikh's love was pure, which was apparent when even after having done all the sheikh's love remained unrequited. This will stand unjustified from a 'Christian' reading also. Since the girl lacked proper faith in any sense, she did not esteem Christianity

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13 Fariduddin Attar, *The Conference of Birds* (translated by Dick Davies and Afkham Darbandi) (Penguin Classics 1984).

either, and hence she was ordained to pay off her for sins by embracing the way of life she mocked at the cost of her lover's repetition, something that is hardest to let go. Hence when she is instructed to accept Islam, she is not led to a superior religion, but to faith itself.

On this point, I would like to mention further that the prominent Sufi authors discussed in this essay- Rumi, Khayyam, Hafez, Attar- all of them were working in the transition period between the second and the third age of Sufism, between 1100 and 1300. This was the midpoint between the period of consolidation<sup>14</sup> (c. 900) and the period of formation of *tariqas* (c.1200). The age when these Sufis lived explains a lot about their literary approach.

This converging point meant that the writers in that time would have the impact of both the ages: the preceding and the succeeding. Thus while they dealt with philosophy, humanity and virtue, they also were affected by their predecessors' sharia centrality. Moreover, the primary audience of these texts was the local people of Persia, hence the texts are written in common vernacular language.<sup>15</sup> The Sufi poetry has always been viewed as a medium of spreading the teachings of Islam, especially to the illiterate people not having access to formal education, which also explains the frequent reference to Quranic and hadith sources. When they wrote, they did it in a manner acceptable to the people. These works got translated into European languages only recently.

Rumi, the most celebrated poet put the greatest focus on the philosophical love or the *ishq e haqiqi* (the real love). Rumi lived in the period of utmost turbulence and destruction by the Mongols and the crusaders, and the political incidents of his age must have taken a toll on him, hence his focus on humanity and love for the humans, which translates into the love of God and love for God.<sup>16</sup> His relationship with Shams-e Tabriz was mocked and despised by the people, which also influenced him to go beyond petty boundaries of sex, nationality, ethnicity, status etc. These are experiences that

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14 This era focused on systematizing ideas and practices; compiling books; emphasizing consistency with shari'ah.

15 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "From Poem to Narrative In Sufism", [http://www.allamaiqbal.com/publications/journals/review/apr89/1.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.allamaiqbal.com/publications/journals/review/apr89/1.htm#_edn1), accessed April 1, 2015

16 See, SeficCan, *Fundamentals of Rumi's thought: A Mevlevi Sufi Perspective*, (Tughra, 2014), p.165

differentiated Rumi's language on love from the rest. Although the *Mathnawi* is basically a commentary on the esoteric meanings of the Quran, it is possible for an average reader to read it without keeping Quran in her/his mind at all.

Similar conclusions apply to hafiz, who was a contemporary to Rumi, and who also lived in constant risk and by seeking the political favors of the local kings. He had to exalt the kings, yet write Sufi poems, which explains the superb nuances in his poetry. Again, for the average reader, these poems often hold a divine meaning without much reference to the Quran and hadith.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion points to the conclusion that the Sufi literature was first and foremost intended to aid the spread of Islam, to aid the Muslims in their faith, to aid the understanding of the Quran. From that perspective, the love in these poems was mainly directed towards a Muslim audience. But, the literature has its own power, and that literary strength took this poetry beyond their local and religious boundaries to reveal their universal appeal. That is when these texts become universal and secular. The references to Quran and Islam can be turned into subtlety, and an average reader can either be annoyed at such mentioning or simply ignore to focus on the emphasis on humanity. It is then we require the conscious reader to delve deeper to grasp their true meanings, and then these texts again return, to borrow from the Sufi tradition, their 'primordial form', which was for Islam, for the initiated mind, for the one who seeks the *haqiqa* to attain their *fanaa* and *baqaa*. This, also, contains the ambiguity of the Sufi essence: universal, secular, yet purely Islamic!