"At Dawn the Friend came to my bed"

An early fruit of the Supreme Pen[1]

Julio Savi

At dawn the Friend came to my bed (*Saḥar ámad*)[2]

He is the Provider in all circumstances

At dawn the Friend came to my bed: [1]
"O fool for love, O broken heart,
O thou, who pinest for Me wherever thou art,
And wherever thou art, liest in prison for Me,
Now an asp twisted at thy foot,
Now a rutilant chain at thy neck.
O thou, who didn't spend a night on a bed of ease, O thou,
Who didn't find a moment of relief from the woes of the world.
The heart of the world was burnt by the fire of thy wails, [5]
The eye of the universe was consumed by the fire of thine afflictions.
Now is placed in fetters thy neck, as if thou werest a rebellious
Servant, now, bound in chains, thou art hurried to the bazaar.
Now thou art wronged in the hands of the oppressor,
Now thou spendest days and nights in the prison of cruelty.

Thy pains set on fire the hearts of the friends,
Thy groans darkened the faces of the lovers.
Thine eyes shed rubies of blood, whereby
The eye of the twilight hath turned pomegranate red.
After so many toils thou met in My path,
Thou doest not cool down, nor bitterly regret.
Wherefore art thou restless tonight? Wherefore
Hath thy body become as thin as a thread?
In the night thou tossest and turnest on thy couch,
Thou tossest and groanest, as bitten by a snake.
Why doest thou turn and groan, now?
Why doeth thy face turn pale?"
I answered: "O Friend! O Healer of my soul!
How is it that Thou camest to this sick bed?
O Thou, by Whose Face the sun is enlightened in the sky,
O Thou, by Whose love the essence of peace is unsettled.
The sky hath filled its skirt with pearls,
That it may lay it down at the feet of Thy Majesty.
Doest Thou wonder about Thy lover's plight?
Thou wilt discover its secrets in the pallor of his face.
My groans proclaim the secret of my heart;
My tearful eyes reveal the riddle of my soul.
In my love for Thee I received many an arrow
Of cruelty, I fell into infidel hands.
I was dragged through mountains and plains,
I was drawn in front of the wicked.
Should I tell what I saw in my love for Thee,

My tongue would grow weary of speaking.
I don't complain, O Friend, for Thy pitiless sword
And I cherish my pains for Thee as my own heart.
I embrace Thy decree with heart and soul,
My spirit yearns after Thy tribulations.
My soul won't cut the lace of Thy love,
Should it be beheaded with a deadly blade.
I tied my heart to the curl of Thy tresses, [25]
That it may not be unloosed till the Judgement Day.
Should I be slaughtered a myriad times, with every
Moment, still I wouldn't rebel against Thy love.
In the night season I burn in the fire of anguish,
'Cause my head hasn't been, O Friend, hung on the gallows.
I come with no veil before Thee to behold, O Almighty,
Thy Face beyond any mortal frame, O Unique One.
The Birds of Eternity returned to their nest,
We remained downtrodden and wretched on earth.
The time hath come for the banner to be hoisted. [30]
O Mystery of God! Draw forth Thy hand from the Unseen,
That Thou mayest discharge the mortals from their clay,
And cleanse the mirrors of their hearts from their rust.
From the shackles of the world, O Thou,
Release all these pilgrims and companions
Attire their heads with the crown of acceptance,
Gird up their temples with the girdle of love."
That's enough, O Dervish! Don't torment us any longer,
'Cause many sparks have fallen from these words.

"At Dawn the Friend came to my bed"

Bahá'u'lláh's poem which begins with the verse *Saḥar ámad bi bistar-am Yár,* "At dawn the Friend came to my bed," is one among eight Persian poems signed "Dervish," and published by the Iranian Bahá'í scholar 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd Ishráq Khávarí (1902–1972) in his multi-volume anthology of the Writings of the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith *Má'idiy-i-Asmání* (4:176-211).[3]

Literary aspects

As to the perspective of the form, this specific poem may be defined a poem in the light of the following definition of poetry, given by Franklin D. Lewis, an expert in Persian Language and Literature, as to Nineteenth century Persia: "rhymed speech (*moqafâ*) composed in lines (*bayt / abyât*) following one of the established quantitative meters (*bahr / bohur*) and arranged according to a particular form" ("Poetry as Revelation" 102). Specifically, *Saḥar ámad bi bistar-am Yár* conforms to the traditional Persian verse form of the *qaṣídih*.

The *qaṣídih* is a poem "always designed to be chanted or sung" (Lane 7:60), born among the Arabs, of whose lyrics it was "the primary instrument" (Bausani, "Letteratura neopersiana" 176), and later introduced into Persia. Its name derives from the Arabic root *qaṣada*, that is, "he made him, or it, his object; he aimed at him, or it: he sought, endeavored after, pursued, or endeavored to reach or attain, or obtain, him, or it: he desired it, or wished for it: he intended it; purposed it; or meant it" (Lane 7:59). As Fritz Johann Heinrich Krenkow (1872–1953), a German scholar in Arabic, Persian and Islamic Studies, and Gérard Lecomte (1926–1997), a French scholar in Arabic and Islamic studies, explain in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, the primitive *qaṣídih* "was intended to eulogize the tribe of the poet and denigrate the opposing tribes. Later it was concerned with the eulogy of a personality or a family from whom the poet was soliciting help or subsidies." Probably on the ground

of this etymology, Edward G. Browne (1862–1926), the renowned British Orientalist, called the *qaṣídih* "purpose-poem" (Literary History 2:22). In Persia it came to be mainly used as "an instrument of panegyric or philosophic and moralizing poetry" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 176). The most important formal aspects of Persian *qaṣídih*, as listed in the Encyclopaedia of Islam (de Fouchécour), the Encyclopaedia Britannica ("Qasida"), and other sources, are as follows:

Length: "the number of its distiches exceeds 15 and does not exceed 30" (de Fouchécour). However, according to other sources, *qaṣídih* may have from "60 to 100 lines" ("Qasida"). Henri Wilberforce-Clarke (1840-1905), first translator of the *Bústán* of Sa'dí and of the *Sikandar Námih* by Nízamí, remarks: "This kind of poem is read in the presence of him in whose honour it is composed; and therefore should not be so long as to weary him" (xv).

Rhyme: the ending of the first hemistich of the first distich of the *qaṣídih* "had to supply the one single rhyme for the whole poem. The rhyme was repeated in each *ḍarb*, the final part of the second hemistich of each distich, according to complex rules" (de Fouchécour).

Metre: "virtually any metre is acceptable for the *qasida* except the *rajaz*,[4] which has lines only half the length of those in other metres" ("Qasida"). Lewis reminds us that according to "traditional metrics ... a poem should follow the same meter throughout" ("Short Poem" 85).

Contents: "as a general rule, the poet must ensure that the meaning of each *bayt* is independent of its neighbours" ("Qasida").

Three parts: all authors agree in saying that classical *qaṣídihs* are divided into three parts, however they differ from one another in explaining the features of the three parts. We will follow the model offered by the French Iranianist Charles-Henri de Fouchécour. The first part, "the exordium, must

command attention by touching the hearts of the listeners, an effect which is often achieved by a *ghazal*, a courtly song,[5] either by describing the beauty of the beloved and the state of the lover (*nasíb*), or through the amorous poet making his listeners share in his condition (*tashbíb*)" (de Fouchécour). The Italian Islamicist Alessandro Bausani (1921–1988) comments that in the first part "the poet laments his separation from his beloved one or describes her abandoned home or springtime." He also writes that at the end of this part the poet uses "some skilful devices of one or two verses," called *gurízgáh*, to pass "into the second and most important part" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 176). The second part (*madḥ*), an

> eulogy for a prince or protector, is the central portion of the *ḳaṣída*; put into a sensitive frame of mind by the exordium ... the listener will be carried away by the poet's skill; all that is required is a degree of rhythm in the eulogy, a strong effect of *balágha* (a wealth of meaning in a few words) but an uncontentious one, and the transport of the soul out of its ordinary element. (de Fouchécour)

The third part is "the petition: the poet must know how to 'wrap up' his request ... stirring the person being praised to reward him by the charm of his poem and the renown it engenders" (de Fouchécour).

Important verses: three distiches require particular care: the first one, because "it opens the poem and signals all the areas of expression"; the transitional verse between the first and the second part, the eulogy, "which must skilfully introduce the name of the person being eulogised"; and the final verse (*maqta'*), "which must be of a quality that redeems any mediocrities in the work" (de Fouchécour).

The pen name of the poet (*takhalluṣ*) is included in the final verse (*maqta'*).

In this poem Bahá'u'lláh adopts a loose form of *qaṣidih*, introducing formal and thematic innovations and making several exceptions to the classic model of this poetical form. As to its length, this poem has 34 distiches (15-30 is the average length of a classical *qaṣidih*). As to its rhyme, it is classically one-rhymed (in *-ár*). As to its metre, it seems that Bahá'u'lláh does not use the same verse throughout His poem, although the prosodic rules of *qaṣídih* require the poet to follow the same metre throughout. As to an independent meaning in each verse, this rule has an exception in verses 30-1, which together convey a single meaning.

The time hath come for the banner to be hoisted.
O Mystery of God! Draw forth Thy hand from the Unseen,

That Thou mayest discharge the mortals from their clay,
And cleanse the mirrors of the hearts from their rust.

Besides, the whole poem is a kind of dialogue between the Beloved and the Poet as a lover, and thus no verse is wholly independent from the other ones. All verses are connected to one another by the special form adopted by Bahá'u'lláh, as if He intended to endow this poem with a unitary structure. He describes a dialogue between the lover and the Beloved, Who at dawn goes to the lover's bedside. It is a loose form of the rhetoric device, typical of the *qaṣídih* and *ghazal*, called *su'ál-u-javáb* (question and answer). There are several poems totally written on this base. Bahá'u'lláh also uses *su'ál-u javáb* in two other poems, *Ishq az Sidriy-i-A'lá ámad* and *But-i-má ámad bá baṭṭí-u bádih*. In this respect these three poems have illustrious precursors, for example numbers 50 and 166 of the poems by Jalalu'd-Dín Rúmí (1207–1273) translated by Arthur John Arberry (1905–1969), the well-known British orientalist (*Mystical poems* 1:44-45 and 138), and numbers 136 and 194 of the poems by Shamsu'd-Dín Ḥafiẓ (ca.1318–1390) translated by Wilberforce-Clark (see *Díván* 280 and 366-7). Rúmí writes:

> He said, "Who is at the door?" I said, "Your humble slave." He said, "What is your business?" I said, "Lord, to greet you."

And he goes on in this vein for 12 verses. Ḥafiẓ writes:

> To the (true Beloved), I said: "Grief for Thee, I have." He said: "To the end (when union is attained), thy grief cometh:

And he continues in this fashion for 8 verses.

As to the three parts in which each *qaṣídih* is usually divided, the three parts of this poem are not so well distinguished from one another as in a classical *qaṣídih*, and rather follow one another without a precise neat line. The first part comprises verses 1-14. The second hemistich of verse 1, which mentions the state of the lover, "*fool for love*" and "*broken heart,*" loosely resembles a *nasíb*, a verse describing the beauty of the Beloved and the state of the lover. We cannot say whether the Poet really wants "his listeners share in his condition," as it usually happens in a *tashbíb*. Verse 14 may be loosely considered as a *gorízgáh*, or passage, using "some skilful devices of one or two verses," to pass "into the second and most important part." The Poet asks the Beloved: "*How is it that Thou camest to this sick bed?*" This question introduces the second part, which comprises verses 15-29, and should be a *madḥ*, that is an eulogy of the Beloved. However, only two verses, 15 and 16, are devoted to a direct description of the Beloved, "*by Whose face the sun is enlightened in the sky*" and "*by Whose love the essence of peace is unsettled.*" The other verses continue describing the Poet. This second description of the Poet is different from that of the first part, because it dwells on the relation between the Poet and the Beloved, and especially the Poet's faithfulness to His own love for the Beloved. Obviously, when the Poet describes His own faithfulness to the Beloved, somehow He implicitly hints to the Beloved's greatness, beauty and power. Could such a description

be considered as an eulogy of the Beloved? Verse 29 also seems to meet the prerequisites of a *gorízgáh*, a passage. It says:

The Birds of Eternity returned to their nest,
We remained downtrodden and wretched on earth.

It describes the feelings of lover: he is "*downtrodden and wretched,*" and lonely, because all His companions have offered their lives in their love for their Beloved. This description prepares the petition voiced in the third part, verses 30-4. The Poet's petition is absolutely unselfish. The Most Great Spirit is implored, His advent is invoked, for the good of all "*mortals*," "*pilgrims and companions*" on the spiritual path.

As to the three important verses of this ode, the first (*maṭla*ʿ) connotes the whole poem: "*At dawn the Friend came to my bed.*" As to the transitional verse between the first and the second part, verse 14,

I answered: "O Friend! O Healer of my soul!
How is it that Thou camest to this sick bed?"

may be loosely considered as a transitional verse (*gurízgáh*). The Beloved is called: "*Friend*" and "*Healer of my soul,*" an especially intimate description of the Most Great Spirit, to Whom Bahá'u'lláh seems to address this poem. As to the last verse, *maqt*aʿ, "which must be of a quality that redeems any mediocrities in the work," it will be commented upon later on. As to the *nom de plume* (*takhalluṣ*), as has been said, Bahá'u'lláh adopts the name of "*Dervish*," and this appears in the final verse.

Rhetorical devices

Bahá'u'lláh uses in this ode a number of rhetorical devices typical of Persian poetry. The most important of them are as follows.

Tajnís, literally "alliteration" (Steingass 283), or *jinás*, literally "play on words, pun" (Aryanpur Kashani 376), are "actual graphic or phonetic play on words ... of various kinds which the reader can easily imagine" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 177). Strictly connected as it is to the phonetic feature of the language in which the poem has been written, the alliteration cannot be usually preserved in translations. For example Bahá'u'lláh writes:

> "*with no veil* (bí-ḥijáb) ... *beyond any mortal frame* (bí-jassab)" (v.28) – the alliteration "*bí-ḥijáb ... bí-jassab*" is obviously lost in the English translation;
>
> "*That You may discharge the mortals from their clay* (Tá rahání **kh**á**k**yán-rá Tú zi **kh**á**k**)" (v.31) – also in this verse the alliteration "*kh*á*k*yán ... *kh*á*k*" is lost;
>
> "*From the shackles of the world ... release* (zi qayd-i-**ín jahán bi-rahán**)" (v.32) – the alliteration "*ín jahán* (the world) *bi-rahán* (release)" is lost.
>
> "*Attire their heads with the crown of acceptance* (Bar sar-ishán nih az **t**á**j**-i-qabúl **t**á**j**í)" (v.33) – the alliteration "*t*á*j* ... *t*á*j*í" is lost.

Isti'arih is "a metaphor, like 'the eye of the intellect will not use any collyrium to purify its sight but the dust of thy battles'" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 177). *Saḥar ámad bi bistar-am Yár* is rich in such metaphors, as are all Bahá'u'lláh's poems. These are the most important examples:

> "*bed of ease* (bistar-i-ráḥat)" (v.4);
>
> "*the heart of the world* (kabid-i-'álam) ... *the eye of the universe* (chashm-i-jahán)" (v.5);
>
> "*the prison of cruelty* (sijn-i-jafá)" (v.7);
>
> "*an arrow | Of cruelty* (tír-i-jafá)" (v.19);

"*Thy pitiless sword* (tígh-i-jafá-t, lit. the sword of Your cruelty)" (v.22);

"*the lace of Thy love* (rishtiy-i-ḥubb-i-Tú)" (v.24);

"*the fire of anguish* (átash-i-gham)" (v.27);

"*Draw forth Thy hand from the Unseen* (dastí az Ghayb bar ár)" (v.30);

"*the mirrors of their hearts* (áyiniy-i-dil)" (v.31);

"*the crown of acceptance* (táj-i-qabúl) ... *the girdle of love* (az ḥubb zunnár)" (v.33).

Tashbíh, "similitude, likeness" (Steingass 302), is "our comparison, of various, easily to guess, kinds" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 177-8). For example Bahá'u'lláh writes:

"*thy body ... as thin as a thread* (gashtih badan-at chún tár)" (v.11);

"*as bitten by a snake* (kih gazíd-ash már)" (v.12).

Ḥashv, or redundancy, is the "juxtaposition of synonymous words to reinforce a poetical concept" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 177). For example, Bahá'u'lláh writes

"*thou tossest and turnest* (ghalṭí-u píchí)" (v.12);

"*the secret of my heart* (Sirr-i-dil) ... *the riddle of my soul* (Ramz-i-ján)" (v.18);

"*downtrodden and wretched* (dhalíl-u khwár)" (v.29).

Tanásub, "relation, conformity" (Steingass 326), is the introduction of "things naturally associated, as for example arch and arrow, night and day, etc." ("Letteratura neopersiana" 178). Bahá'u'lláh associates

"*sun ... sky* (shams ... samá')" (v.15);

"*mountains and plains* (kúh ... dasht)" (v.20);

"*Birds ... nest* (aṭyár ... áshyán)" (v.29).

In verse 32 He mentions "*pilgrims and companions* (muhájarín-u anṣár)." The association of these two words goes back to Koran 9:101:

> *As for those who led the way, the first of the Mohadjers, and the Ansars, and those who have followed their noble conduct, God is well pleased with them, and they with Him: He hath made ready for them gardens under whose trees the rivers flow: to abide therein for aye: this shall be the great bliss.*

and to Koran 9:18:

> *Now hath God turned Him unto the Prophet and unto the refugees* (Mohadjers), *and unto the helpers* (Ansars), *who followed him in the hour of distress, after that the hearts of a part of them had well nigh failed them. Then turned He unto them, for He was Kind to them, Merciful.*

Ḥusn-i-ta'líl is a "fantastic aetiology, that is ascribing fantastic, poetical causes to real facts and things" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 178). Bahá'u'lláh writes in this vein:

Thy pains set on fire the hearts of the friends;
Thy groans darkened the faces of the lover. (v.8)

Thine eyes shed rubies of blood, whereby
The eye of the twilight hath turned pomegranate red. (v.9)

Mubálighih, "exaggeration" (Steingass 1149), is our hyperbole, which in Persian poetry "takes incredibly extreme forms" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 178). Bahá'u'lláh writes in this vein:

Should I tell what I saw in my love for Thee,
My tongue would grow weary of speaking. (v.21)

I tied my heart to the curl of Thy tresses,
That it may be not be unloosed till the Judgment Day. (v.25)

Should I be slaughtered a myriad times, with every
Moment, still I wouldn't rebel against Thy love. (v.26)

Raddu'l-'ajiuz 'ala'ṣ-ṣadr "consists in using the same word in two different parts of the verse, that which confers a sense of rhythm to the whole" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 178). Like *tajnís*, also this rhetorical device is strictly connected to the phonetic features of the Persian language, and thus it cannot be usually preserved in translations. For example Bahá'u'lláh writes in this vein:

The heart of the world was burnt by the fire of Thy wails (átash-i-áh),
The eyes of the universe was consumed by the fire (átash-bár, lit. *inflamed*) *of thine afflictions.* (v.5)

"'*Cause my head* (sar-am) *hasn't been ... hung on the gallows* (sar-i-dár)" (v.27).

Ḥusn-i-maqṭa', or beautiful final verse, "consists in a skilful request for a prize written by the poet who puts his signature in the last verse of his qaṣídè" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 178). The poems written by Bahá'u'lláh have not a human addressee, to whom He might ask something. Therefore this device does not appear in this form in His poems. At most Bahá'u'lláh addresses His "beautiful final verse" to Himself, as for example verse 34, in which He urges Himself not to reveal Himself to the world, because the times are not yet ripe:

That's enough, O Dervish! Don't torment us any longer,
'Cause many sparks have fallen from these words.

Taḍádd, which Haïm translates "Contrast ... antilogy" (1:445), but would more precisely be translated "antithesis," is "the rhetorical opposing or contrasting of ideas by means of

grammatically parallel arrangements of words, clauses, or sentences" (Webster's 96). Bahá'u'lláh uses this rhetorical devise in the first hemistich of verse 15:

O Thou, by Whose love the essence of peace is unsettled.

The contents of the poem

The first person narrator is always Bahá'u'lláh, the lover. This poem seems to describe the mystical experience of His encounter with the Most Great Spirit, the Friend, in Teheran's Síyáh-Chál. The lover is sleepless, pale and thin. So faithful is he to his Beloved that he will willingly suffer for Him to the Day of Judgment. The Beloved, so caring that He goes to the bedside of His lover (v.1), does not appear ironic and cruel, as it usually does in Persian mystical poetry. He is even tender-hearted, when He asks the lover the reasons of his sleeplessness and faithfulness (vv.11-13):

Wherefore art thou restless tonight? Wherefore
Hath thy body become as thin as a thread?

In the night thou tossest and turnest on thy couch,
Thou tossest and groanest, as bitten by a snake.

Why doest thou turn and groan, now?
Why doeth thy face turn pale?

If we read this poem according to the classical standards of Persian mystical poetry, we could think that the Beloved is so cruel that He mocks His lover, because of his acceptance of the pains he is meeting in his love for Him. An example of this kind of scorn may be found in the following verse of a *ghazal* by Rúmí:

> My idol scolds, saying, "Why have you fallen in the middle of the road?" (*Mystical Poems* 2:121, no.366, v.1)

But if we read verses 11-13 in a Bahá'í perspective, they seem to say that the Beloved worries for His lover and sympathizes with him. In this respect, they are reminiscent of the dialogue between Bahá'u'lláh and the Maid of Heaven as described in Lawh-i-Ḥúríyyih. In this Tablet the Maid of Heaven perceives such a pain in Bahá'u'lláh that She lifts "*Her gaze to the heavens with grief and misery,*" and looks "*at the earth in confusion and regret*" ("Tablet of the Maiden," provisional translation by Juan R. Cole).

The figure of the Beloved is just outlined in verses 15-6. He seems an exalted spiritual Entity, "*Almighty* (Kirdigár)" (v.28), "*Unique One* (Aḥad)" (v.28), a "*Mystery of God* (Sirr-i-Khudá)" (v.30). Later on, verse 31 describes Him as capable of relieving "*the mortals from their clay*" and of cleansing "*the mirrors of the hearts from their rust.*" The lover does not suffer for his remoteness from the Beloved, because the Beloved is beside him. He suffers because his love is exposed to the wickedness of his fellow-beings, who oppress him in several ways. The autobiographical reference is very clear. In His love for the Beloved, Bahá'u'lláh has renounced whatever may interest a common human being: home, wealth, social position, connections, even His country. It is not the Beloved the cause of His pain. His own faithfulness to love is the cause of his pains.

Major themes

Of the four major themes of Persian lyrical poetry as described by Bausani, that is "wine, love, springtime and mystics" ("Letteratura neopersiana" 176), only wine is absent. Springtime motifs mostly appear as nature tropes. Mystical themes appear sometimes as theological and scriptural motifs. They also appear as didactic themes, the early seeds of the new mystical way that Bahá'u'lláh was opening to His lovers. Last but not least, this poem has many autobiographical references.

Love

The whole poem is based on this uplifting theme. It may be viewed as a passionate conversation between two lovers. Many of the clichés of the lover language of Sufi poetry appear in these verses. The lover is "*fool for love,*" broken hearted, pining away for his Lover, sleepless, thin and pale. He suffers, as the lovers of traditional Sufi poems. Bahá'u'lláh typically writes:

My groans proclaim the secret of my heart;
My tearful eyes reveal the riddle of my soul. (v.18)

However, whereas the Sufi lover suffers because his Beloved is cruel, remains far from him, and often mocks him for his love, in this Poem the Beloved is close to His lover, and has pity for him, and welcomes his faithfulness. As has been said, it is the hostility of his fellow-beings, that makes the lover suffer. Wherever the lover goes, he is a prisoner, a description reminiscent of other words written by Bahá'u'lláh about Himself: "*At all times He was at the mercy of the wicked doers. At one time they cast Him into prison, at another they banished Him, and at yet another hurried Him from land to land*" (Súriy-i-Haykal: Queen Victoria 92, sec.1, para.177). He wrote moreover in the Kitáb-i-Íqán: "*All this generation could offer Us were wounds from its darts, and the only cup it proffered to Our lips was the cup of its venom. On our neck We still bear the scar of chains, and upon Our body are imprinted the evidences of an unyielding cruelty.*" [KI 190]

Springtime motifs and nature tropes

The opening verse of this ode recites: "*At dawn* (saḥar) *the Friend came to my bed.*" This beginning resembles a *maṭla*', the first verse of a *ghazal*. The Beloved visits the lover at dawn, when he is still asleep. It is a common poetical device among the Sufis. For example Rúmí wrote:

> Yesterday at dawn (*saḥarí*) passing by the Beloved said to me, "You are distraught and unaware; how long will this go on?" (*Mystical poems* 1:110, no.130, v.1; Díván, "Ghazalyát," no.1022, v.1)

Rúmí writes moreover:

> One morning (*saḥarí*) He whose sleep
> The angels envy came and looked into my heart.
>
> He wept and I wept, as long as the dawn arrived.
> They asked: "Of the two, who is the lover?" (*Díván*, "Rubá'yát," part. 2)

Also Fátimih Zarrín-Táj Baraghání (ca.1817–1852), known as Qurratu'l-'Ayn, Consolation of the Eyes, or more frequently as Ṭáhirih, the Pure, famous among the Bahá'ís as one of the Báb's Letters of the Living, and among the Persians as a refined poetess, writes in one of her poems:

> As in sleep I lay at the dawn of day that cruel Charmer came to me,
>
> And in the grace of His form and face the dawn of the morn I seemed to see. (qtd. in Browne, *A Persian Anthology* 70-1)

Dawn, "in the Islamic tradition, time par excellence of ecstasy and visions" (Saccone, "Sensi e soprasensi" 41), associated as it is to the rising sun after the nocturnal darkness, symbolizes the return of spirit in a lifeless world. Bahá'u'lláh was born in Teheran on 12 November 1817 at dawn and seems to have a strong personal tie with this time of the day. Rúḥíyyih Rabbani (1910–2000), the wife of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, writes in this regard:

> He had, evidently, a deep association with that hour of the day when the life of the world is repoured into it. How could He not have? Was He not the Hermit of Sar-Galú, where He spent many months in a lonely stone hut

> perched on a hilltop; the sunrise must have often found Him waiting and watching for its coming, His voice rising and falling in the melodious chants of His supplications and compositions. At how many dawns He must have heard the birds of the wilderness wake and cry out when the first rays of the sun flowed over the horizon and witnessed in all its splendor the coming alive of creation after the night. (*Bahá'í World* vol. 9, 792)

The time of dawn has deep spiritual meanings in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. It is the beginning of the manifestation of the potentialities of the new Day of God, it is the beginning of a new, personal and collective, spiritual journey. And, since advanced mystics "*see the end and the beginning as one*" (SV15), dawn is a precious time of multi-potentiality, a special time of communion with the Divine. Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

> *For Thine ardent lovers Thou hast, according to Thy decree, reserved, at each daybreak* (asḥár)*, the cup of Thy remembrance, O Thou Who art the Ruler of rulers! These are they who have been so inebriated with the wine of Thy manifold wisdom that they forsake their couches in their longing to celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy virtues, and flee from sleep in their eagerness to approach Thy presence and partake of Thy bounty.* (PM142, sec.85, para.2; Munáját 87)

Verse 9 also is significant for its nature tropes:

> *Thine eyes shed rubies of blood, whereby*
> *The eye of the twilight hath turned pomegranate red.*

The tears of blood similar to rubies are part of the clichés of Persian mystical poetry. For example Majdúd Saná'í (d. ca.1141), the earliest Persian mystical lyric poet, writes:

> When that purest pearl moves away from me,

> It befits me to shed rubies from my eyes. (*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.241, v.7)

This distich is a play on colours: the lover sheds tears similar to rubies and the twilight shares his pain taking on the hues of a pomegranate. Many Persian poets use these images. For example Ḥafiẓ writes:

> O gardener (God, the Creator)! drive me not away like the wind (portionless) from the door of the garden (of existence);
>
> For the water (of dominion and of creation) of the rose-bed, like the ruddy pomegranate (*gulnár*), with the (bloody) tears of mine is. (*Díván* 104, "Ghazalyát," no.40, v.6)

As to colours, in the Bahá'í Writings the adjective "Crimson," that is "a rich deep red colour inclining to purple" (OED4:23), is often associated with the Manifestation of God or with exalted spiritual realms. Bahá'u'lláh mentions the

> *crimson Tree* (sidratu'l-ḥamrá) (Lawḥ-i-Siyyid-i-Mihdíy-i-Dahájí 196; *Majmú'ih* 121, para.6);
>
> *Crimson Pillar* (rukni'l-ḥamrá') (GDM72, para.05; *Jawáhir* 82);
>
> *crimson sea* (al-baḥra'l-lujjí al-ḥamrá'), to refer to Himself (GDM60, para.83; *Jawáhir* 69);
>
> *crimson wine* (khamru'l-ḥamrá') proffered by Thy snow-white hand, to refer to His own Words (Súriy-i-Haykal 13, 1:23; *Áthár* 1:7);
>
> *Crimson Ark* (as-safínatu'l-ḥamrá'), to refer to His Cause (KA50, para.84);
>
> *Crimson Book* (ṣaḥífiy-i-ḥamrá'), to refer to the Book of His Covenant (ESW32; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-Khaṭáb* 24);

Crimson Light (núru'l-ḥamrá') enveloping the Sinai of Our Revelation (Súriy-i-Bayán 280, sec. CXXIX, para.7; *Muntakhabátí* 180);

crimson cloud (ghamámu'l-ḥamrá'), upon which "*The Promised One Himself hath come down from heaven, seated ... with the hosts of revelation on His right, and the angels of inspiration on His left*" (Súriy-i-Vafá 182; *Majmú'ih* 113, para.7);

crimson land (arḍu'l-ḥamrá') (GDM21, para.26; *Jawáhir* 26; Lawḥ-i-Fu'ád 173, sec.4, para.1);

Crimson Hill (arḍi kathíbi'l-ḥamrá'), to refer to exalted spiritual realms (Súriy-i-Mulúk 185, sec.5, para.2; Súratu'l-Mulúk 2);

crimson Spot (al-baq'atu'l-mubárakatu'l-ḥamrá') (KA56, para.100);

crimson ink (midáda'l-aḥmari) (HW, Arabic. no.71), to refer to the blood of the martyrs.

Verse 16 recites:

The sky has filled its skirt (dámán) *with pearls* (gawhar),
That it may lay it down at the feet of Thy Majesty.

The skirt filled with pearls is among the clichés used by Persian mystical poets. For example Rúmí writes:

> She filled her skirt (*dámán*) with pearls (*gawhar*) and sat down at his bedside. (Díván, "Ghazalyát," no.2041, v.5)

This poetical description of the Beloved's beauty, evoking a nocturnal sky spangled with stars, is reminiscent of the following words in a meditation by Bahá'u'lláh: "*Every time I lift up mine eyes unto Thy heaven, I call to mind Thy highness and Thy loftiness, and Thine incomparable glory and greatness*" (PM271, sec.76, para.15). While writing this verse, Bahá'u'lláh may

have gone with His mind back to the clear night skies of His adolescence, when He visited the mountain villages of Afchih and Tákur, where His family had two Mansions, or Yálrúd, the native town of His beloved wife Ásíyih (ca.1820–1886), known as Navváb, located in the Alborz range.

Mystical themes

Verse 28 recites:

I come with no veil before Thee to behold, O Almighty,
Thy Face beyond any mortal frame, O Unique One.

This distich has strong mystical connotations. The Beloved is invoked as "*Unique One* (Aḥad)" and "*Almighty* (Kirdigár)." The lover goes "*with no veil*" in front of the Beloved, so that he may behold Him "*beyond any mortal frame* (bí-jasad, lit. without body)." This image also belongs to the *malámatí* vein, because the Persian adjective *bí-ḥijáb* has a connotation of immodesty. The German Orientalist Annemarie Schimmel (1922–2003) remarks that Islam "strictly prohibits nudity" (Deciphering 93). She then adds:

> As contrary as nudity is to strict Islamic prescriptions, it is nevertheless used as a metaphor in mystical language, and authors like Bahá-i Walad (d. 1231) and his son, Jaláluddín Rúmí, as well as Násir Muhammad ʻAndalíb and Siráj Awrangábádí in eighteenth-century India (to mention only a few), used this term to point to the moment when the everyday world and its objects have, as it were, been discarded and only God and the soul are left in a union attained by the absolute "denudation" of the soul. (Deciphering 94)

The strong mystical hues of this distich suggest that this locution, "*with no veil,*" or naked, could be interpreted as wholly detached from anything but the Beloved, "*detached from*

all else but Him" (Súriy-i-Mulúk 204, sec.5, para.47). It is reminiscent of an aphorism of the Persian Hidden Words reciting: "*Pass beyond the baser stages of doubt and rise to the exalted heights of certainty. Open the eye of truth, that thou mayest behold the veilless Beauty* (Jamál-i-mubín) *and exclaim: Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!*" (no.9; Kalimát-i-Maknúnih 426). If the lover wants to behold the Beloved without veils, first he must remove his own veils, that is detach himself from whatever may bind him to the lower, animal, level of his existence and separate him from his higher, spiritual, level.

Theological themes

Verse 15 says:

O Thou, by Whose Face the sun is enlightened in the sky,
O Thou, by Whose love the essence of peace is unsettled.

The description of the Beloved takes in this verse mystical and theological connotations. When the Most Great Spirit shows Its face, that is reveals Itself, the Sun of Reality, the Manifestation of God, rises in the world. His light enlightens the sun itself in the sky. The Manifestation of God is "*the central Orb of the universe, its Essence and ultimate Purpose*" (KI99-100, para.106). Because of Him "*the essence of peace is unsettled.*" In the Beloved the opposites coincide. According to the Sufis the coincidence of opposites is only realized in Being in Itself, bringing "all opposites together in a single reality" (Chittick 112). An aspect of this coincidence is the harmonious balance between elements which human beings often see as conflicting with one another, as for example love and reason, war and peace. Rúmí writes:

> The mind cannot compass its [the pen of the Beloved] description, for in it is the union of opposites, a composition without composition, amazing! – constrained yet with free will. (*Mystical Poems* 2:94, no.324, v.9)

Bahá'u'lláh explains that the coincidence of opposites is realized in the Manifestation of God: "*I bear witness that in His person solidity and fluidity have been joined and combined*" (PM48, sec.38, para.3). He explains moreover in the Kitáb-i-Íqán:

> *These Prophets and chosen Ones of God are the recipients and revealers of all the unchangeable attributes and names of God. They are the mirrors that truly and faithfully reflect the light of God. Whatsoever is applicable to them is in reality applicable to God, Himself, Who is both the Visible and the Invisible ... Through the manifold attributes of these Essences of Detachment, Who are both the first and the last, the seen and the hidden, it is made evident that He Who is the Sun of Truth is "the First and the Last, the Seen, and the Hidden."*[6] (KI142-3, para.151)

He alludes to this concept in the following verse in another Poem:

> *Through His wisdom, the coincidence of opposites is made manifest,*
>
> *Now Love becomes a servant, now the Intellect a porter.*
>
> (*Sáqí, bi-dih ábí,* verse 19)[7]

Verse 15, however, can also have a simpler interpretation. Such is the ardour of the lover's love for the Beloved, that his heart is disquieted. Bahá'u'lláh uses a similar metaphor in His Lawḥ-i-Ḥikmat describing Apollonius of Tyana, a philosopher and an ascetic of the first century AD, to whom He ascribes the following words: "*My heart is seized with alarm, my limbs tremble, I have lost my reason and my mind hath failed me*" (148).

Scriptural themes

Bahá'u'lláh mentions "pilgrims and companions" (v.32). Moreover He writes in verse 30:

O Mystery of God! Draw forth Thy hand from the Invisible.

As to "*pilgrims and companions* (muhájarín-u anṣár)," it is a reference to the followers of Muhammad, immediately after the Hegira. Pilgrims are those followers who accompanied Him in His relocation from Mecca to Medina. Companions are the inhabitants of the town who supported Him.[8] As has been previously said, these two words are mentioned together in the Koran (9:18 and 101). Bausani explains the meaning of the Hegira,

> erroneously sometimes called "flight" to Medina. The Arabic word *hiğra*, from which our vulgar hegira comes, mainly conveys, beside the concept of "leaving" and "emigrating," the idea of "rescission of tribal ties;" in other words it has technical and juridical connotations. ("Religione islamica" 376)

Distich 32 seems to imply that the effects of the Revelation will become manifest in all those who will accompany the new Manifestation in His new "Hegira" and will assist Him, cutting all ties with their former tradition. This verse also conveys an autobiographical reference. Bahá'u'lláh also has left His Mecca, Teheran. He has been followed by a few faithful relatives, His first wife Navváb, His nine years old son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His seven years old daughter, Báhíyyih Khánum (1846-1932), His loyal true brother, Mírzá Músa (ca.1819-1887), known as Áqáy-i-Kalím, and His young half-brother, Mírzá Muḥammad-Qulí (1837-1910), who was faithful to Bahá'u'lláh even after His passing (see GPB108, sec.7, para.10). In Baghdad He found only a handful of faithful companions who assisted Him. Otherwise He was completely alone. He describes His loneliness as follows: "*Upon Our arrival in 'Iráq We found the Cause of God sunk in deep apathy and the breeze of divine revelation stilled.*

Most of the believers were faint and dispirited, nay utterly lost and dead" (Ishraqát 130).

As to hemistich 30, it is an allusion to the white hand outstretched by Moses (see Savi 184-6) and it can be more easily understood in the light of the Koranic episode to which it refers. As in the Bible (Ex. 4:2-9), the Koran relates that, when God assigned to Moses the mission of rescuing the Jews from their Egyptian captivity, He vouchsafed upon Him a thaumaturgic power as a proof of His divine mission.

"... Now, what is that in thy right hand, O Moses?"

Said he, "It is my staff on which I lean, and with which I beat down leaves for my sheep, and I have other uses for it."

He said, "Cast it down, O Moses!"

So he cast it down, and lo! it became a serpent that ran along.

He said, "Lay hold on it, and fear not: to its former state will we restore it."

"Now place thy right hand (yad) *to thy arm-pit: it shall come forth white, but unhurt:- another sign! -*

That We may shew thee the greatest of our signs
Go to Pharaoh, for he hath burst all bounds." (20:17-24)

The Sufi masters maintained that "Whiteness signifies the First Intellect, which is the center of the primal cloud (*'amá'*). It is the first thing that emerges from the blackness of the unseen and is the greatest source of light within that realm, being described as whiteness, in juxtaposition to the blackness of the unseen" (Nurbakhsh 4:54).

Bahá'u'lláh offers a key for the explanation of the episodes of Moses' life in the Kitáb-i-Íqán. He writes: "*Armed with the rod of celestial dominion, adorned with the white hand of*

divine knowledge, and proceeding from the Párán of the love of God, and wielding the serpent of power and everlasting majesty, He [Moses] *shone forth from the Sinai of light upon the world*" (KI11, para.12). In other Tablets Bahá'u'lláh ascribes to Himself the sign of the White Hand: "*This is Mine hand which God hath turned white for all the worlds to behold*" (qtd. in GPB 169, sec.10, para.12).

Didactic themes

The importance of three main concepts emerges from this poem: faithfulness, tribulations and acceptance.

As to faithfulness, the covenant of love that binds the lover to his Beloved is eternal. The lover has tied his "*heart to the curl of Thy tresses,*" so "*That it may not be unloosed till the Judgement Day*" (v.25). This covenant implies for the lover to entirely forgets his self, and to make whatever his Beloved wishes. Historical examples of people who betrayed this covenant of love are, in the Christian Dispensation, Judas Iscariot and, in the Bahá'í Dispensation, Muḥammad 'Alí (ca. 1853–1937), the unfaithful son of Bahá'u'lláh, who did not accept the last will clearly set down by his Father, and rebelled against 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His appointed Successor. In this man the selfish love for power, that in him took the form of a desire of being the successor of his Father in the place of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prevailed over his love for the divine Beauty of his own Father. Bahá'u'lláh also writes:

My soul won't cut the lace of Thy love,
Should it be beheaded with a deadly blade. (v.24)

Should I be slaughtered a myriad times,
Still I wouldn't rebel against Thy love. (v.26)

It is another symbolic and hyperbolic description of the lover's faithfulness. This prerequisite is mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh in

the introduction of the Four Valleys: "*Have they not told thee that faithfulness* (istiqámat) *is a duty on those who follow the mystic way, that it is the true guide to His Holy Presence?*" (FV74, Chihár Vádí 141). It is also mentioned in the Persian Hidden Words:

> *The first call of the Beloved is this: O mystic nightingale! Abide not but in the rose-garden of the spirit. O messenger of the Solomon of love! Seek thou no shelter except in the Sheba of the well-beloved, and O immortal phoenix! dwell not save on the mount of faithfulness. Therein is thy habitation, if on the wings of thy soul thou soarest to the realm of the infinite and seekest to attain thy goal.* (HW no.1)

Rúmí writes in this vein:

> He said: "Where is calamity?" Said I: "In the neighborhood of thy love"
>
> He said: "How fare are you there?" Said I: "In steadfastness (*istiqámat*)." (*Selected Poems* 57, 14:11)

Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (1868–1945), the well-known eminent English orientalist, remarks that the Sufis ascribed many meanings to the word faithfulness (*istiqámat*), as for example "Continuance, the non preference of anything to God" (237). This meaning seems pertinent in this verse. The lover does not put anything before God, not even His life. Ḥafiẓ writes in this vein:

> If desire be thine that the (true) beloved should not (by severing asunder attachments to thee) break the covenant,
>
> Keep (with respect) the end of the cord so that (the covenant) he may preserve. (*Díván* 294, "Ghazalyát," no.146, v.2)

Ḥafiẓ moreover ascribes the following words to the Beloved: "respect the bond: be faithful in love, and I will not fail" (qtd. in Nicholson 275).

As to tribulations, Bahá'u'lláh writes: "*my spirit yearns after Thy tribulations*" (v.23). A Sufi cliché of the lover is that he is willing to face every kind of pain and tribulation for his Beloved's sake. This concept is expressed by many Persian mystical poets, as for example Saná'í, who wrote:

> *That heart which stands aloof from pain and woe*
> *No seal or signature of Love can show.* (qtd. in Browne, *A Literary History* 2:322)

Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly expounded this idea in His Writings:

> *But for the tribulations which are sustained in Thy path, how could Thy true lovers be recognized; and were it not for the trials which are borne for love of Thee, how could the station of such as yearn for Thee be revealed? Thy might beareth me witness! The companions of all who adore Thee are the tears they shed, and the comforters of such as seek Thee are the groans they utter, and the food of them who haste to meet Thee is the fragments of their broken hearts.* (PM155, sec.92, para.1)

The lover accepts everything out of his love for the Beloved. He accepts the "*pitiless sword*" (v.22) or as He later said: "*Behold Thou my head ready to fall before the sword* (sayf) *of Thy Will, my neck prepared to bear the chains of Thy Desire, my heart yearning to be made a target for the darts of Thy Decree* (*qaḍá*) ..." (PM95, sec.60, para.1; Munáját 69). He loves suffering (*dard*), because He knows that "*But for tribulations* (baláyá), *how could the assured be distinguished from the doubters among Thy servants? They who have been inebriated with the wine of Thy knowledge, these, verily, hasten to meet every manner of adversity* (baláyá) *in their longing to pass into*

Thy presence" (PM9, sec.6, para.2; Munáját 11). The lover clings to the decree (*qadá*) of God and his heart yearns "*to be made a target for the darts of ...* [His] *Decree* (qaḍá')" (PM95, sec.60, para.1; Munáját 69), a decree (*qaḍá'*) that is "*the sole hope of them that have recognized Thy truth*" (PM220, sec.133, para.1). He wants to suffer (*balá*), because He is aware of the beneficial effects of the pains of mystical love. Later on He went so far as stating: "*Perish that lover who discerneth between the pleasant and the poisonous in his love for his beloved! Be thou satisfied with what God hath destined* (qaḍay) *for thee*" (PM11, sec.8, para.2; Munáját 13).

Submission to the Decree of God is emphasized as a sign of love in many other Writings by Bahá'u'lláh, as for example: "*O Thou Whose tests* (balá') *are a healing medicine to such as are nigh unto Thee, Whose sword* (sayf) *is the ardent desire of all them that love Thee, Whose dart is the dearest wish of those hearts that yearn after Thee, Whose decree* (qaḍá') *is the sole hope of them that have recognized Thy truth!*" (PM220-1, sec.133, para.1; Munáját 148). In *Gems of Divine Mysteries,* in the City of Love and Rapture, He writes that the lover "*standeth ready to obey whatsoever His Lord should please to decree as to his beginning and his end*" (GDM29, para.38). This verse is reminiscent of Psalm 119:31 (KJB): "*I cling to your decrees; LORD, do not put me to shame. I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.*" This Psalm is described in the Italian Catholic Jerusalem Bible [Bibbia di Gerusalemme] as "A Praise of the Divine Law" (1256).

As to acceptance, Bahá'u'lláh writes in verse 33:

Attire their heads with the crown of acceptance,
Gird up their temples with the girdle of love.

The word acceptance (*qabúl*) seems to be used in Bahá'u'lláh's Writings with at least three different connotations. The most frequent meaning is God's acceptance of human deeds:

> *Thus with steadfast steps we may tread the Path of certitude, that perchance the breeze that bloweth from the meads of the good-pleasure of God may waft upon us the sweet savours of divine acceptance* (qabúl), *and cause us, vanishing mortals that we are, to attain unto the Kingdom of everlasting glory.* (KI134, para.146; KMI104)

> *Occupy thyself, during these fleeting days of thy life, with such deeds as will diffuse the fragrance of Divine good pleasure, and will be adorned with the ornament of His acceptance* (qabúl). (ESW76; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-Khaṭáb* 51)

The second meaning is man's acceptance of God's decrees:

> *What is it that could have induced them to reconcile themselves* (qabúl namúdih-and) *to these grievous trials, and to refuse to put forth a hand to repel them?* (ESW75; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-Khaṭáb* 51)

Thus this verse could mean that the Beloved will adorn all heads with the crown of acceptance (*qabúl*), so that everyone "*instead of complaining,*" will render "*thanks unto God, and amidst the darkness of their anguish*" will reveal "*naught but radiant acquiescence to His will*" (KI235, para.264).

The third meaning is the human acceptance of the Manifestation of God:

> *Hath, from the foundation of the world until the present day, any Light or Revelation shone forth from the dayspring of the will of God which the kindreds of the earth have accepted* (qabúl namúdih), *and Whose Cause they have acknowledged?* (ESW92; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-Khaṭáb* 61)

When the Manifestation of God reveals Himself to the world, the highest form of acceptance (*qabúl*) is to accept the fact that God has decreed the beginning of a new Dispensation.

Bahá'u'lláh writes in this regard: "*True belief in God and recognition of Him cannot be complete save by acceptance* (tabaṣṣur) *of that which He hath revealed and by observance of whatsoever hath been decreed by Him and set down in the Book by the Pen of Glory*" (Tajallíyát 50; *Majmú'ih* 27, para.11). Interestingly, in this verse acceptance is associated with love, the central theme of the whole poem.

Autobiographical references

This poem is also rich in autobiographical references, see for example the following verses:

Now is placed in fetters thy neck, as if thou werest a rebellious

Servant, now, bound in chains, thou art hurried to the bazaar.

Now thou are wronged in the hands of the oppressor,

Now thou spendest days and nights in the prison of cruelty. (v.6-7)

I was dragged through mountains and plains (v.20)

The Birds of Eternity (Aṭyár-i-Baqá) *returned to their nest*

We remained downtrodden and wretched on earth. (v.29)

As to the words "*Now is placed in fetters thy neck, as if thou werest a rebellious Servant,*" Bahá'u'lláh wrote in His Tablet to Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh:

> *For them who are endued with discernment, and whose eyes are fixed upon the Sublime Vision, it is no secret that I have been, most of the days of My life, even as a slave, sitting under a sword* (sayf^{un}) *hanging on a thread, knowing not whether it would fall soon or late upon him.* (Súriy-i-Haykal 136, sec.1, para.273; *Áthár* 1:87)

As to the sentence "*now, bound in chains, thou art hurried to the bazaar,*" it is reminiscent of that terrible day, in August 1853, when Bahá'u'lláh was brought to the prison of Síyáh-Chál, a day He Himself described as follows:

> *We were in no wise connected with that evil deed, and Our innocence was indisputably established by the tribunals. Nevertheless, they apprehended Us, and from Níyávaran, which was then the residence of His Majesty, conducted Us, on foot and in chains, with bared head and bare feet, to the dungeon of Ṭihrán. A brutal man, accompanying Us on horseback, snatched off Our hat, whilst We were being hurried along by a troop of executioners and officials. We were consigned for four months to a place foul beyond comparison.* (ESW20)

The "*oppressors*" could be all His adversaries about whom He wrote in those days, that "*with one consent* [they] *have fallen upon me*" (PM234, sec.145, para.1). And the prison of cruelty could be the Síyáh-Chál, "*a place foul beyond comparison*" (ESW20). And also in later years He was imprisoned, as He wrote about Himself: "*He hath, during the greater part of His life, been sore-tried in the clutches of His enemies. His sufferings have now reached their culmination in this afflictive Prison, into which His oppressors have so unjustly thrown Him*" (GWB58, sec. XXIII, para.4). As to verse 20, it is reminiscent of Bahá'u'lláh's travel from Teheran to Baghdad, which began in the heart of winter (12 January 1853–8 April 1853). First He passed through barren "*plains* (dasht)," but later on His caravan crossed the Saveh Pass and then the Sháh Pass through the Nahavand Mountains and finally Mount Zagros (see Ruhe 165-74). In this verse Bahá'u'lláh writes that the lover is "*dragged through mountains* (kúh) *and plains* (dasht)," a condition He later described in the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*: "*At one time I found Myself on the heights of mountains* (jibál)*; at another in the depths of the prison* (sijn) *of Ṭá* (Ṭihrán)*, in chains and fetters*" (ESW78; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-Khaṭáb* 53).

The lover is "*drawn in front of the wicked* (fujjár)," a condition He later described as follows: "*At one time they cast Him into prison, at another they banished Him, and at yet another hurried Him from land to land*" (ESW63-4). As to verse 29, it has both mystical and historical connotations. In this verse Bahá'u'lláh uses a locution very similar to a locution used in the Kitáb-i-Íqán, "*Birds of Eternity* (Aṭyár-i-Baqá ... Ḥamámát-i-Azalíyat)" (KI17, para.16; KMI14; see also KI24, para.24, KMI 19). In those contexts the locution refers to the Manifestations of God. Perhaps in verse 29 it refers not only to the Báb, martyred in Tabríz on 9 July 1851, but also to all those believers who "*with ... love ... devotion ... exultation and holy rapture ... sacrificed their lives in the path of the All-Glorious*" (KI226, para.251), the Bábí martyrs. Bahá'u'lláh wrote about them:

> *Their breasts were made targets for the darts of the enemy, and their heads adorned the spears of the infidel. No land remained which did not drink the blood of these embodiments of detachment, and no sword that did not bruise their necks.* (KI224, para.250)

This verse seems to reflect the feelings of a Person Who, after having seen all those companions being slaughtered in the path of God and the following, almost immediate, decline of the Bábí Community, perhaps wished to have gone He Himself together with them. It seems to convey the same discouragement described in the Fire Tablet, revealed many years after in 'Akká. But it is only a flash. Immediately after He claims:

> *The time hath come for the banner to be hoisted.*
>
> *O Mystery of God! Draw forth Thy hand from the Unseen.*

And the atmosphere of certitude and eagerness, typical of this poem is immediately renewed.

A slow reading of the poem

The following thoughts are offered only as personal reflections on the verses revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, whose perusal may evoke remembrances of His own Writings as well as of verses of earlier poets.

0

Huva'l-Mughní fí kull-i-shá'n[9]

He is the Provider in all circumstances

The poem is preceded, as often happens in the Muslim as well as Bahá'í literature, by an invocation of a name of God. In this case Bahá'u'lláh uses the attribute of God *al-Mughní,* the Enricher, defined by the British Orientalist, translator and lexicographer Edward William Lane (1801–1876) as "as a name of God ... He who satisfies, or contents, whom He will, of his servants" (Lane 6:87). It is one of the ninety-nine "Most Beautiful Names" that Muslim theologians have discovered in the Koran, and precisely the 89th. It is a direct acknowledgment of the Divine Providence, which suffices to everything in any circumstance of life and an indirect statement of submission to the Divine Decree, as befits One Who has just received the intimation of such a momentous Mission. Bahá'u'lláh proclaims His submission to the Divine Will in many Writings. For example He writes:

> *Every time I hold my peace, and cease to extol Thy wondrous virtues, Thy Spirit impelleth me to cry out before all who are in Thy heaven and on Thy earth; and every time I am still, the breaths wafted from the right hand of Thy will and purpose pass over me, and stir me up, and I find myself to be as a leaf which lieth at the mercy of the winds of Thy decree, and is carried away whithersoever Thou dost permit or command it. Every man of insight who considereth what hath been revealed*

> *by me, will be persuaded that Thy Cause is not in my hands, but in Thy hands, and will recognize that the reins of power are held not in my grasp but in Thy grasp, and are subject to Thy sovereign might.* (PM306-7, sec.79, para.10)

> *Grievous as is My plight, O God, My Well-Beloved, I render thanks unto Thee, and My Spirit is grateful for whatsoever hath befallen me in the path of Thy good-pleasure. I am well pleased with that which Thou didst ordain for Me, and welcome, however calamitous, the pains and sorrows I am made to suffer.* (Súriy-i-Damm 89-90, sec. XXXIX, para.1)

The Persian-Arabic script مغنی (*M-gh-n-í*) could also be read as *Mughanní*, "A singer" (Steingass 1282). Ḥafiẓ ascribes this attribute to God Himself. He writes:

> Saki by the independence of profligates, (I conjure thee) drink wine.
>
> So that, thou mayst hear the song of the Singer (*Mughanní*), God, the Independent One (*Huva'l-Ghaní*) (Díván 906, "Ghazalyát," no.557, v.6; Divan, "Ghazalyát" 494, no.479, v.6)

Ḥafiẓ wrote a 44 verse *Mathnaví* entitled *Mughanní Námih,* translated by Wilberforce-Clark "The Minstrel Rhyme" (*Díván* 993-6). Carlo Saccone, a refined Italian translator of Ḥafiẓ's *opera omnia,* remarks: "The cantor (*moghanni*) is similar in his meanings and functions to the cupbearer" ("Note" 218n1) in the *Sáqí Námih,* that is, "the initiator into the mysteries of wine and Love" (ibid. 216n1).

1

Saḥar ámad bi bistar-am Yár káy[10]
Shúrídih zi 'ishq vay dil-afkár.

At dawn the Friend came to my bed:
"O fool for love, O broken heart,

The trope of dawn has been previously explained. In the second hemistich the lover is described as *shúrídih*. This adjective comes from *shúr*, a term described by Javad Nurbakhsh (1926–2008), the Master of the Nimatullahi Sufi Order, as: "*shur* ... frenzy ... a state which accompanies excitement and sometimes out-of-self-ness, occurring to the wayfarer on hearing God's utterance or in the state of dancing" (15:121). Francis Joseph Steingass (1825–1903), the German linguist expert on Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit who authored the most famous Persian-English dictionary, defines *shúrídih* as "Disturbed; mixed; mad, frantic, desperately in love; faint, dejected" (766), that is crazy of love according to the traditional canons.

The image of the lover as a mad man is a typical motif of the love language of Persian lyric poetry. Whoever accepts such a painful feeling as love cannot be but insane, for he has renounced the primacy of reason and decided to follow the rules of the heart, which are quite different. ʻAṭṭár writes:

Love is the fire (*átash*) here; but reason is the smoke.
When love has arrived, reason quickly takes to flight.

Reason in the madness of love (*sawdáy-i-ʻishq*) is no expert:
Love is not the business of native wit. (*Speech* 300, lines 3346-7; *Conference* 98)

Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly alludes to the madness of love in the Seven Valleys. For example, He writes: "*when the fire of love is ablaze, it burneth to ashes the harvest of reason*" (SV8); and also "*To merit the madness of love, man must abound in sanity; to merit the bonds of the Friend, he must be full of spirit*" (SV9). He also writes: "*The leviathan of love* (nahang-i-ʻishq) *swalloweth the master of reason* (adíb-i-ʻaql) *and destroyeth the*

lord of knowledge (labíb-i-dánish)" (SV10; Haft Vádí 101). He refers to this concept in the following quotations from Sufi literature: the story of Majnún seeking for Laylí in the dust (SV6; see also ʻAṭṭar, *Speech* 295, lines 3288-91) and the following couplet by Rúmí:

Love's a stranger to earth and heaven too;
In him are lunacies seventy-and-two. (SV10; FV54)[11]

He also mentions love as madness in the Four Valleys through two quotations:

Each moon, O my beloved, for three days I go mad;
Today's the first of these — 'Tis why thou seest me glad. (Rúmí, qtd. in FV49)[12]

The story of Thy beauty reached the hermit's dell;
Crazed, he sought the Tavern where the wine they buy and sell.
The love of Thee hath leveled down the fort of patience,
The pain of Thee hath firmly barred the gate of hope as well. (Saʻdí qtd. in FV55-6; Chihár Vádí 148)

More details on this subject may be found in Savi, *Towards the Summit* 112-5.

The lover is also described as *dil-afgár,* defined by Steingass as "heart-sore, heart-broken" (531), that is he is in that spiritual condition about which Bahá'u'lláh writes: "*the food* (ghidhá) *of them who haste to meet Thee is the fragments* (qaṭaʻátu) *of their broken hearts* (ikbádi-him)" (PM154, sec.92, para.1; *Munáját* 106).

2

Ay az[13] *baráy-am futádih bi-har sú'í,*[14]
Vay dar ráh-am gashtih asír-i-har dyár.

O thou, who pinest for Me wherever thou art,
And wherever thou art, liest imprisoned for Me,

The lover suffers not only for the pains of his love, but also for the hostility of his fellow-beings, perhaps an autobiographical hint. Wherever he goes, he is a prisoner (*asír*), a description reminiscent of other words written by Bahá'u'lláh about Himself: "*At all times He was at the mercy of the wicked doers. At one time they cast Him into prison, at another they banished Him, and at yet another hurried Him from land to land*" (Súriy-i-Haykal: Queen Victoria 92, sec.1, para.177). He wrote moreover in the Kitáb-i-Íqán: "*All this generation could offer Us were wounds from its darts, and the only cup it proffered to Our lips was the cup of its venom. On our neck We still bear the scar of chains, and upon Our body are imprinted the evidences of an unyielding cruelty*" (KI190, para.208).

3

Gah bar páy hamí pích́ídih[15] *af'í,*
Gah bar gardan-at zanjír-i-sh́arar-bár.

Now an asp twisted at thy foot,
Now a rutilant chain at thy neck.

Also in this distich the metaphors seems to suggest events of Bahá'u'lláh's life. The *af'í,* "A large venomous serpent; viper; asp; basilisk" (Steingass 84), that is the asp around His foot, could be a hint at His many enemies within the Bábí Community, in the first place His half-brother Yaḥyá, about whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote:

> *And still another of His trials was the hostility, the flagrant injustice, the iniquity and rebellion of Mírzá Yaḥyá. Although that Wronged One, that Prisoner, had through His loving-kindness nurtured him in His own bosom ever since his early years, had showered at every*

> *moment His tender care upon him, exalted his name, shielded him from every misfortune, endeared him to them of this world and the next, and despite the firm exhortations and counsels of His Holiness, the Exalted One* (the Báb) *and His clear and conclusive warning; — "Beware, beware, lest the Nineteen Letters of the Living and that which hath been revealed in the Bayan veil thee!" yet notwithstanding this, Mírzá Yaḥyá denied Him, dealt falsely with Him, believed Him not, sowed the seeds of doubt, closed his eyes to His manifest verses and turned aside therefrom. Would that he had been content therewith! Nay, he even attempted to shed the sacred blood* (of Bahá'u'lláh) *and then raised a great clamor and tumult around him, attributing unto Bahá'u'lláh malevolence and cruelty towards himself. What sedition he stirred up and what a storm of mischief he raised whilst in the Land of Mystery* (Adrianople)*! At last, he wrought that which caused the Day-Star of the world to be sent an exile to this, the Most Great Prison, and sorely wronged, and in the West of this Great Prison He did set.* (WT4-5)

Bahá'u'lláh wrote moreover about his faithless relatives and companions in one of His Tablets to Maryam: "*O Maryam! From the land of Ṭá* (Teheran)*, after countless afflictions, We reached 'Iráq at the bidding of the Tyrant of Persia, where, after the fetters of Our foes, We were afflicted with the perfidy of Our friends. God knoweth what befell Me thereafter!*" (qtd. in GPB118, sec.7, para.31). He wrote in another passage: "*I advance with My face set towards Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Bounteous, whilst behind Me glideth the serpent* (ḥubáb)" (Lawh-i-Haykal: Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh 132, sec.1, para.265; *Áthár* 1:85).

The *sharar-bár,* "raining sparks, scintillating" (Steingass 741), that is rutilant chain could be a remembrance of the terrible

chains that were put at His neck in the Síyáh-Chál. He wrote about them:

> *Shouldst thou at some time happen to visit the dungeon of His Majesty the Sháh, ask the director and chief jailer to show thee those two chains, one of which is known as Qará-Guhar, and the other as Salásil. I swear by the Daystar of Justice that for four months this Wronged One was tormented and chained by one or the other of them.* (ESW 77)

'Abdu'l-Bahá describes Bahá'u'lláh's sufferings in those days as follows:

> *... in Mázindarán, the blessed feet of the Abhá Beauty (may my life be offered up for His loved ones) were so grievously scourged as to bleed and be sore wounded. His neck also was put into captive chains and His feet made fast in the stocks. In every hour, for a period of fifty years, a new trial and calamity befell Him and fresh afflictions and cares beset Him. One of them: after having suffered intense vicissitudes, He was made homeless and a wanderer and fell a victim to still new vexations and troubles. In 'Iráq, the Day-Star of the world was so exposed to the wiles of the people of malice as to be eclipsed in splendour.* (WT 4)

4

Ay na-khuftih yik shabí bar[16] *bistar-i-ráḥat,*
Vay na-yásúdih damí az fitniy-i-rúzgár.

O thou, who didn't spend a night on a bed of ease, O thou
Who didn't find a moment of relief from the woes of the world.

This description of the lover, sleepless and afflicted by the travails of the world, beside meeting traditional poetical

criteria, seems a biographical reference to the ascetic life led by Bahá'u'lláh in those days of isolation. He wrote about those days: "*Many a night We had no food for sustenance, and many a day Our body found no rest*" (KI250, para.278). And in one of His Tablets to Maryam He wrote: "*There was not a night during which I rested in a safe place, not a morning in which I lifted My head from My couch with ease*" ("Lawḥ-i-Maryam" 357, v.6). Finally He wrote in His Tablet to Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh: "*How many the nights which found the beasts of the field resting in their lairs, and the birds of the air lying in their nests, while this Youth languished in chains and fetters with none to aid or succour Him!*" (Lawh-i-Haykal: Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh 97, sec.1, para.187)

5

Zátash-i-áh-at[17] *kabid-i-'álam súkht,*

Vaz dard-at chashm-i-jahán átash-bár.

The heart of the world was burnt by the fire of thy wails,

The eye of the universe was consumed by the fire of thine affliction.

The locution *kabid-i-'álam súkht,* that literally means "the world burnt its liver out," has been translated "*the heart of the world was burnt.*" In the Islamic world liver is the seat of passions, with love among them, whereas the heart is the seat of mystical knowledge. Therefore the Persian *kabid*-liver corresponds to the English heart (see Savi 107, Table 5, and 108). The locution *jigar súkhtan bar kasí* is explained by Steingass as "to feel pity for, to commiserate" (Steingass 366). Since *jigar* and *kabid* are synonyms, *kabid súkhtan* has the same meaning as *jigar súkhtan.* Therefore this locution could mean that the heart of the world was moved to pity. The image of the universe sympathizing with the lover for his pains of love is one of the clichés of Persian mystical poetry. Bahá'u'lláh writes in one of his Tablets to Maryam:

> *I roamed the wilderness of resignation* (ṣaḥrá-háy-i-taslím), *traveling in such wise that in My exile every eye wept sore over Me, and all created things shed tears of blood* (khún-i-dil) *because of My anguish* (kurbat). *The birds of the air were My companions and the beasts of the field My associates.* (qtd. in GPB120, sec.7, para.35; in Ishráq Kháváriḥ, *Risálih* 367)

He also writes elsewhere: "*Should any one incline his inner ear, he would hear the cry and the wailing of all created things over what hath befallen Him Whom the world hath wronged*" (PM285, sec.176, para.44).

6

Gah ṭawq bi-gardan chú ʻabdí[18] *ʻáṣí,*
Gah bá silsilih burdand hamí bar sar-i-bázár.

Now is placed in fetters thy neck, as if thou werest a rebellious
Servant, now, bound in chains, thou art hurried to the bazaar,

Also the words of this distich seem a biographical reference (see above). Bahá'u'lláh was repeatedly put in chains. He wrote: "*At one time I found Myself on the heights of mountains; at another in the depths of the prison of Ṭá* (Ṭihran), *in chains and fetters*" (ESW78).

7

Gah maẓlúm futádí tú[19] *bi-dast-i-ẓálim*
Gah dar sijn-i-jafá basí layl-u nahár.

Now thou art wronged in the hands of the oppressor,
Now thou spendest days and nights in the prison of cruelty.

This distich has already been commented upon.

8

Az dard-at dil-i-dústán dar átash,
Vaz áh-at rukh-i-'áshiqán tírih-u tár.

Thy pains set on fire the hearts of the friends,
Thy groans darkened the faces of the lovers.

This distich conveys concepts similar to those expressed in verse 5. Likewise Bahá'u'lláh wrote in one of His Tablets to Maryam: "*Were thou to examine carefully the matter, the eyes of might are weeping behind the Tabernacle of sinlessness and the people of glory are moaning in the precincts of loftiness. Unto this beareth witness the Tongue of truth and glory*" ("Lawḥ-i-Maryam" 357-8, v.8).

9

Chashm-at az khún yáqút bar-afshásuch,
Zán gashtih hamí chashm-i-shafaq gulnár.

Thine eyes shed rubies of blood, whereby
The eye of the twilight hath turned pomegranate red.

This distich has already been commented upon.

10

Bá ín hamih miḥnat kih bi-ráh-am dídí,
Sard na-gashtí-u na-nálídí zár.

After so many toils thou met in My path,
Thou doest not cool down, nor bitterly regret.

Bahá'u'lláh hinted very often at His unswerving love in His Writings. He wrote for example:

> *... how numerous the days whereon I had to face the assaults of the peoples against Me! At one time I found Myself on the heights of mountains; at another in the depths of the prison of Ṭa* (Ṭihrán), *in chains and fetters. By the righteousness of God! I was at all times thankful unto Him, uttering His praise, engaged in remembering Him, directed towards Him, satisfied with His pleasure, and lowly and submissive before Him.* (ESW 78-79)

The originality of the description of the Beloved in this verse has been previously commented upon (see above *Love*).

11

Az chíst kih imshab tú na-yásá'í,
Vaz chíst kih gashtih badan-at chún tár.

Wherefore art thou restless tonight? Wherefore
Hath thy body become as thin as a thread?

Sleeplessness and loss of weight are signs of love. As to sleeplessness, according to the Sufi masters

> whenever the heart of God's chosen one is stolen away by the beauty of the face of the Eternal and is burned by the fire of love, such a one cannot sleep at night, being overcome with a state of insomnia.
>
> The gnostic said, "The lover's insomnia comes from the building up [accelerated alternation] of losing and finding." (Nurbakhsh 12:9)

In this vein Rúmí writes:

> Love (*'ishq*) took away sleep (*khwáb*) from me – and love takes away sleep, for love purchases not the soul and mind (*ján-u khirad*) for so much as half a

> barleycorn. (*Mystical Poems* 102, no.119, v.1; *Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.919)

As to weight loss, Rúmí writes:

> I am like a chalice (*sághar*), my heart is bloody and my body emaciated. (*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.478)

In this vein Bahá'u'lláh describes in the Seven Valleys "*a lover who had sighed for long years in separation from his beloved, and wasted in the fire of remoteness*":

> *From the rule of love, his heart was empty of patience, and his body weary of his spirit; he reckoned life without her as a mockery, and time consumed him away. How many a day he found no rest in longing for her; how many a night the pain of her kept him from sleep; his body was worn to a sigh, his heart's wound had turned him to a cry of sorrow.* (SV13)

This distich presents clear biographical references. It is reminiscent of the following words by Bahá'u'lláh: "*During the days I lay in the prison of Ṭihrán ... the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep*" (ESW22).

12

Shab ghalṭí-u píchí tú hamí bar bálín,
Ghalṭídan-u zárí[20] *kih gazíd-ash már.*

In the night thou tossest and turnest on thy couch,
Thou tossest and groanest, as bitten by a snake.

The sleeplessness of the lover has already been explained while commenting upon verse 11. Bahá'u'lláh uses the locution "*as bitten by a snake*" in a later Writing:

> *Recall thou to mind My sorrows, My cares and anxieties, My woes and trials, the state of My captivity, the tears that I have shed, the bitterness of Mine anguish, and now My imprisonment in this far-off land. God, O Muṣṭafá, beareth Me witness. Couldst thou be told what hath befallen the Ancient Beauty, thou wouldst flee into the wilderness, and weep with a great weeping. In thy grief, thou wouldst smite thyself on the head, and cry out as one stung by the sting of the adder.* (GWB118, sec. LXII, para.1)

13

Aknún zi-chih mí-píchí-u mí-nálí
Vaz chih paríd-at-rang[21] *hamí az rukhsár.*

Why doest thou turn and moan, now?
Why doeth thy face turn pale?"

Like sleeplessness and weight loss, also paleness is a typical cliché of Persian mystical poetry. Nurbakhsh explains: "The 'pallid face [*zard-i-rú'í*]' represents the suffering and anxiety experienced on the Path" (2:89n1). He explains moreover: "Yellowness is said to represent weakness in the travelling of the Path" (4:53). Rúmí writes:

> In the hands of love (*'ishq*) who is not pale (*zard*), weak (*nazár*) and thin (*lághar*)? (Díván, "Ghazalyát," no.478)

And Ḥafiẓ says:

> The yellow (grief-stricken) face (*rúy-i-zard*), and the grief-stained sigh are
> For lovers, the evidence of affliction. (*Díván* 827, "Ghazalyát," no.503, v.4; *Diván* 467, "Ghazalyát," no.403, v.4)

Saná'í explains:

The sun is ashamed before Her beauty;
The yellowness of its face displays the pain of its heart.
(qtd. in Nurbakhsh 4:53)

Bahá'u'lláh also uses this image in other Writings. He wrote in the Seven Valleys: "*He hath bound a myriad victims in his fetters, wounded a myriad wise men with his arrow. Know that every redness in the world is from his anger, and every paleness* (zardí) *in men's cheeks* (rukhsár) *is from his poison*" (SV10-1; Haft Vádí 102). In this poem He writes:

Do You wonder about Your lover's plight?
You'll discover its secrets in the pallor of his face (zardíy-i-rukhsár). (v.17)

14

Guftam: "Ay Yár, Ay Ṭábíb-i-ján-am,
Chih 'ajab kih[22] *ámadí bar sar-i-bímár.*

I answered: "O Friend! O Healer of my soul!
How is it that Thou camest to this sick bed?

The lover, aware of his abasement in front of the Beloved, is amazed by His morning visit. The Beloved's visit at the bedside of the lover has been explained while commenting upon verse 12. In Sufi poetry, the Beloved is cruel, but He also is a *ṭabíb*, "a physician, doctor" (Steingass 810), that is a healer. 'Aṭṭár writes:

bestow a remedy [*darmán*] upon him who is so sorrowful out of love. ("Il diletto degli amanti" 100, v.133)

Saccone remarks: "In Persian poetry the beloved is often called "the healer" (*tabib*), the only one who finds the "remedy" (*darmân*) for the pain or sickness of the lover" ("Il diletto degli amanti" note 119n49). Saccone writes moreover in this regard:

the poet-lover knows that the friend can hurt him, but he also is the only remedy that can heal the wounds of love. Therefore the beloved also wears the mask of the physician, in a verse reminiscent of the famous "love, that to no loved one remits his fee:"

> Who became a lover and did not see the beloved in his condition?
>
> O thou, I do not see any pain in thee, or else I would also see the healer
>
> ...
>
> In the name of God, ask one day to my healer
>
> When will this sick one have a nicer look?

In conclusion, the beloved sung by Hâfez wields full power, he kills and at the same time quickens, makes the lover sick and heals him, is cruel and bloodthirsty, but he alone appeases the anguish of the lovers. (*Maestro* 216)

Bahá'u'lláh uses the metaphor of the Friend, God, as a Healer in other Writings as well. For example, he writes in the Persian Hidden Words: "*The healer* (ṭabíb) *of all thine ills is remembrance of Me*" (no.32; Kalimát-i-Maknúnih 443). And He turns to God in prayer saying: "*O Thou Who art most dear to the hearts that long for Thee, and the Healer* (ṭabíb) *of the souls that have recognized Thee*" (PM299, sec.178, para.9; *Munáját* 200).

15

Ay az rúy-at shams-i-samá' mushriq
Vay az 'ishq-at nafs-i-sukún bí-qarár.

O Thou, by Whose face the sun is enlightened in the sky,
O Thou, by Whose love the essence of peace is unsettled.

This verse has already been commented upon.

16

Ásmán dámán-i-gawhar zán girift
Tá kunad bar maqdam-i-'izzat nithár.[23]

The sky has filled its skirt with pearls,
That it may lay it down at the feet of Thy Majesty.

This verse has already been commented upon.

17

Gar Tú az ḥál-i-ḥabíb-at pursí
Az zardíy-i-rukhsár shinú asrár.

Doest Thou wonder about Thy lover's plight?
Thou wilt discover its secrets in the pallor of his face.

This verse continues the description of the sickness and paleness of the lover of verse 13. Zard literally means yellow, but, as Nicholson remarks, "yellow (*zard*) is the hue of paleness in the East, as in Italy" ("Notes" 294nXXXVII.10). Rúmí writes in the same vein:

Love has conquered the world, it has no colour.
But if it touches a body, that face turns yellow (*zardí*).
(*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.544, v.6)

18

Sirr-i-dil báshad zi áh-am mushtahar
Ramz-i-ján ẓáhir zi chashm-i-ashgbár.

My groans proclaim the secret of my heart;
My tears reveal the riddle of my soul.

The lover cannot be other but sorrowful. His groans reveal his love, like his tears reveal the pains of his spirit. In this vein Ḥafiẓ writes:

To such a degree, I wept that every one who passed (by me),
When he beheld running the pearl of our tears, spake saying: "This stream what is?" (*Díván* 79, "Ghazalyát," no.25, v.3)

Bahá'u'lláh writes in this vein: "*My sighs, O my God, proclaim the bitterness of mine anguish* (balá'í), *and the tears I shed attest my love for Thee* (ḥubbí)" (PM29, sec.26, para.1, *Munáját* 26).

19

Gar chih zi 'ishq-at basí tír-i-jafá khúrdam
Ham gashtih[24] *asír-i-dast-i-kuffár.*

In my love for Thee I received many an arrow
Of cruelty, I fell into infidel hands.

The lover hit by the cruel arrows (*tír-i-jafá*) of the Beloved is a common image of Persian mystical poetry. For example Rúmí writes:

Thou art the falconer of heaven. Hit my heart with Thine arrow (*tír*).
If Thou hittest me with thy cruel arrow (*tír-i-jafá*), I am defenceless as the earth. (*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.1394, v.16)

O friend, each word Thou utterest with Thy harp
Hits my troubled heart with a hundred cruel arrows (*tír-i-jafá*). (*Díván*, "Rubá'yát," part. 15)

Bahá'u'lláh used this image in other Writings: "*The arrows* (as-sahám) *that transfix us in Thy path are the ornaments of our temples, and the spears* (ramaḥ) *which pierce us in our love for*

Thee are as silk unto our bodies" (PM217, sec.130, para.2; *Munáját* 146). He has "*fallen into the hands of the infidels* (kuffár)," or, as He wrote in a prayer: "*Thou seest, therefore, O Thou Beloved of the world, Him Who is dear to Thee in the clutches of such as have denied Thee, and beholdest Thy heart's desire under the swords* (suyúf) *of the ungodly*" (PM38, sec.32, para.3; *Munáját* 32). We may find also in this verse biographical references. Bahá'u'lláh described in the Kitáb-i-Íqán the tribulations that befell Him in that period: "*a number of people who have never inhaled the fragrance of justice, have raised the standard of sedition, and have leagued themselves against Us. On every side We witness the menace of their spears, and in all directions We recognize the shafts of their arrows*" (KI249, para.277).

20

Gah bi-kashand-am bi-sar-i-kúh-u dar dasht[25]
Gah bi-barand-am dar maḥḍar-i-fujjár.

I was dragged through mountains and plains,
I was drawn in front of the wicked.

This distich has already been commented upon.

21

Gar gúyam án-chih bi-dídam az 'ishq-at,
Al-battih zabán bi-mánad az guftár.

Should I tell what I saw in my love for There,
My tongue would grow weary of speaking.

Bahá'u'lláh used a similar language also in other Writings to say that His trials are so dire that no one can describe them. For example:

The pen (qalam) *is powerless to depict and the tongue* (lisán) *faileth to describe the trials which We have suffered.* (Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís 177, sec.3, para.28; *Alváh-i-Mubárakih* 115)

Thou seest what hath befallen this Wronged One (maẓlúm) *at the hands of them that have not associated with Me, and who have arisen to harm and abase Me, in a manner which no pen can describe, nor tongue recount, nor can any Tablet sustain its weight.* (ESW35; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-khaṭáb* 26)

I beseech Thee by Him Who is Thy Most Great Name, Who hath been sorely afflicted by such of Thy creatures as have repudiated Thy truth, and Who hath been hemmed in by sorrows which no tongue can describe. (PM5, sec.3, para.1)

Thou beholdest my dwelling-place, and the prison into which I am cast, and the woes I suffer. By Thy might! No pen can recount them, nor can any tongue describe or number them. (PM10, sec.8, para.1)

22

Líkin na-nálam az tígh-i-jafá-t,[26] *ay Dúst,*
Dard-at-rá chú dil[27] *gíram hamí andar kinár.*[28]

I don't complain, O Friend, for Thy pitiless sword
And I cherish my pains for Thee as my own heart.

This distich does not meet only poetical exigencies, it also expresses concepts that have been examined above: the lover is ready to face every kind of pain and tribulation for his Beloved's sake.

23

Qaḍáy-at-rá chún ján gíram dar ághúsh,

Baláy-at-rá raván báshad kharídár.[29]

I embrace Thy decree with heart and soul,
My spirit yearns after Thy tribulations.

This verse has already been commented upon.

24

Ján rishtiy-i-ḥubb-i-Tú hamí na-gusilad,
Gar bi-burand-ash sar az khanjar-i-jarrár.

My soul won't cut the lace of Thy love,
Should it be beheaded with a deadly blade.

The theme of this verse has been explained while commenting upon verse 22.

25

Nah chunán bastam dil bi kham-i-gísúy-at
Kih shavad báz hamí tá Rúz-i-shumár.

I tied my heart to the curl of Thy tresses,
That it may not be unloosed till the Judgment Day.

The image of the hair of the Beloved is very common in Persian poetry. Laleh Mehree Bakhtiar, an Iranian-American Muslim author and clinical psychologist, writes:

> The hair symbolizes the Divine Essence in Its aspect of the Hidden, the Inward; it is the symbol of multiplicity which hides unity. Multiplicity conceals the non-existence of things and thereby veils the Heart; but at the same time as the hair veils, it attracts Divine Grace and Divine Gifts. Like the face, the hair is veiled because of the sacred power it holds within itself. (68)

Persian poets describe the hair through several words. In this poem Bahá'u'lláh uses the locution *kham-i-gísú.* The word *gísú* means "A ringlet of hair, a forelock, a sidelock, curl" (Steingass 1109). Among the Sufis

> This metaphor symbolizes the way of search for Union and Oneness with Absolute Beauty and the Divine Visage, to which terms such as "the invisible world," "the unbreakable chord" (*'orwat'ol wothqâ*), and the "strong rope" (*ḥabl al-matin*)" also allude. "And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of God ..." (Koran, 111:103). (Nurbakhsh 1:111)

'Aṭṭár writes in this regard:

> In expectation of the musk (*mushk*) shed from the locks (*gísú*) which frame the sides of her face,
>
> A hundred eyes looked eagerly upward,
> fixing their gaze upon the lofty heavens. (qtd. in Nurbakhsh1:111; *Díván*, "Qaṣídih," no.1, v.49)

As to the word *kham,* it means "Crooked, bent, twisted, curled, curved; a curl, knot, ringlet ... that part of a noose which encircles the neck" (Steingass 473). In the Sufi world the locution *kham-i-zulf,* very similar to *kham-i-gísú,*

> represents a Divine mystery of an abstruse and enigmatic nature, encountered by the mystic on the Way, and which he succeeds in surmounting only after great hardship. In this instance, it is absolutely necessary that the traveller be guided by a Perfect Master, lest he go astray. (Nurbakhsh 1:79)

Ḥafiẓ writes in this vein:

> Thou spakest saying: "O Ḥáfiẓ! Thy distraught heart is where?

In the meshes of that curl of tresses (*kham-i-gísú*), (it) we have placed (Díván 700, "Ghazalyát," no.413, v.14; *Diván*, "Ghazalyát" 379, no.365, v.9)

ʻAṭṭár writes:

My heart (*dil-am*) on your tresses' twists (*zulf bi-kham*)
Was caught, not just my heart,

My soul (*ján*) too, in the same crux
Became entangled. (*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.253, v.1; qtd. in Nurbakhsh 1:80)

Bahá'u'lláh uses the same locution *kham-i-gísú* in another poem:

Marvel not that the lover hath fallen into His snare (kamand),
The necks of the Monarchs of the Spirit are caught in His wavy locks (kham-i-gísú). (*Bi-Jánán ján hamí dar-yáft rah*, verse 6, provisional translation by the author and Ms. Mardani)

The covenant of love that binds the lover to his Beloved is eternal. The lover has tied his "*heart to the curl of ...* [His] *tresses* (kham-i-gísú)," so "*that it may not be unloosed till the Judgment Day* (rúz-i-shumár)." This covenant implies that the lover entirely forgets his self, and yearns to make whatever his Beloved wishes. Historical examples of people who betrayed this covenant of love are, in the Christian Dispensation, Judas Iscariot and, in the Bahá'í Dispensation, Muḥammad ʻAlí.

26

Man án nay-am kih pícham sar az ʻishq-at,
Gar bi-kushand-am bi-damí sad hizár.[30]

Should I be slaughtered a myriad times,
Still I wouldn't rebel against Your love.

This verse has already been commented upon.

27

Shab dar átash-i-gham zán[31] *mí-súzam,*
Kih na-dídí sar-am, ay Dúst,[32] *hamí bar sar-i-dár.*

In the night season I burn in the fire of anguish,
'Cause my head hasn't been, O Friend, hung on the gallows.

The theme of the gallows (*dár*), a sign of ignominy in the Muslim world, is introduced in this verse. Bausani explains that the wish to die on the gallows, that is ignominiously, for the Beloved "is not the "redemption" or expiation or more or less hypothetical sins in the Christian sense but is felt primarily as "supreme ignominy" and therefore, in the metaphysical capsizing of values, as supreme glory and joy" (*Religion in Iran* 279). This image falls within the *malámatí* vein of Persian mystical poetry, which also comprises the image of wine and drunkenness, immoral in the Islamic world that interdicts any kind of alcoholic beverage.[33] As to the wish to die for the Beloved, it has been discussed while commenting upon verses 22 and 24.

28

Tá bí-jasad bi-bínam Rúy-at, ay Aḥad,
Bí-ḥijáb áyam bar-at, ay Kirdigár.[34]

I come with no veil before Thee to behold, O Almighty,
Thy face beyond any mortal frame, O Unique One.

This distich has been already commented upon.

29

Aṭyár-i-Baqá bi-áshyán bar-gashtand,
Má mándih dar ín turáb basí dhalíl-u khwár.[35]

The Birds of Eternity returned to their nest,
We remained downtrodden and wretched on earth.

This distich has already been commented upon.

30

Vaqt-i-án ámad kih bi-farází ʻalam.[36]
Ay Sirr-i-Khudá, dastí az Ghayb bar ár.

The time hath come for the banner to be hoisted.
O Mystery of God! Draw forth Thy hand from the Unseen,

Bahá'u'lláh's discouragement as voiced in verse 30 has lasted for just a verse. In distich 30 the Poet shows once again the courage and strength that characterized Him throughout His life. This distich also has strong mystical connotations. The first hemistich is a call to revelation:

The time hath come for the banner (ʻalam) *to be hoisted.*

The call continues in the second hemistich,

O Mystery of God! Draw forth Your hand from the Unseen (Ghayb)

with its allusion to the white hand outstretched by Moses, that has already been commented upon. As to the raising of His standard, He wrote later on: "*He it is at Whose bidding the standard* (ráyat) *of the Most Exalted Word hath been lifted up in the world of creation, and the banner of "He doeth whatsoever He willeth" raised amidst all peoples*" (ESW 1; *Lawḥ-i Mubárak-i-khaṭáb* 1).

31

Tá raháni[37] *khákyán-rá Tú*[38] *zí*[39] *khák,*
Ham zidá'í[40] *záyiniy-i-dil zangár.*

That Thou mayest discharge the mortals from their clay,
And cleanse the mirrors of their hearts from their rust.

As the Beloved will manifest Himself to humankind, He will discharge all the mortals (*khákyán*) from their clay, khák, defined by Steingass as "Earth, dust, soil, mould, dirt ... the earth as element; the grave; anything of little value, or useless" (Steingass 440), or, as Bahá'u'lláh wrote later on: "*He, in truth, hath offered up His life as a ransom for the redemption of the world*" (GWB315, sec. CXLVI, para.1). He will "*cleanse the mirrors of their hearts* (áyniy-i-dil) *from their rust* (zangár)," that is from "*the obscuring dust* (ghubárát-i-tírih) *of all acquired knowledge, and the allusions of the embodiments of satanic fancy*" (KI192, para.213; KMI149). He will "*cleanse the mirrors* (mirát) *of* ... [human] *hearts from the dross of the world* (dunyá) *and all that is therein, that they may reflect the resplendent light of God*" (Súriy-i-Mulúk 210, sec.5, para.57, Súratu'l-Mulúk 52). The image of the human heart as a mirror may be found in a number of poems by Rúmí who writes:

> The soul (*ján*) resembles a clear mirror (*á'íniy-i-ṣáfí*); the body (*tan*) is dust (*gard*) upon it ... (*Selected Poems* 236nXIII.15; *Díván*, "Tarjí'át," no.21, v.8)

It may be also found in the Seven Valleys where Bahá'u'lláh writes:

> *A pure heart is as a mirror* (á'ínih)*; cleanse it with the burnish of love and severance from all save God, that the true sun may shine within it and the eternal morning dawn. Then wilt thou clearly see the meaning of "Neither doth My earth nor My heaven contain Me, but the heart of My faithful servant containeth Me." And thou wilt take up thy life in thine hand, and with infinite longing cast it before the new Beloved One.* (SV21-22; Haft Vádí 113)

32

Ham Tú zi qayd-i-ín[41] *jahán bi-rahán,*
Ín jumlih muhájarín-u[42] *anṣár.*

From the shackles of this world, O Thou,
Release all these pilgrims and companions.

The divine Revelation delivers all men "*from the narrow confines of ...* [their] *prison in this gloomy plane*" (GDM49, para.67), releases "*the necks of men from chains* (salásil) *and fetters* (aṭnáb)," and causes "*them to turn, with sincere faces, towards His face, Who is the Mighty, the Bounteous*" (Súriy-i-Haykal: Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh 133, sec.1, para.268; *Áthár* 1:85). As to "*pilgrims and companions*" the locution has already been explained.

33

Bar sar-ishán nih az táj-i-qabúl[43] *tájí,*
Bar haykal-ishán bar-band zi ḥubb[44] *zunnár.*

Attire their heads with the crown of acceptance,
Gird up their temples with the girdle of love."

The first hemistich has already been commented upon. As to the image of the crown in the first hemistich, the image "*the crown of acceptance* (táj-i-qabúl)" falls within the symbolism of royalty often associated with the worlds of God. The Manifestation of God is often described as a Sovereign and all such symbols of royalty, as the reign, the throne, the sceptre, the crown, the ring, the treasuries, the court, etc., are associated with Him. Bahá'u'lláh wrote in two of His prayers: "*O God, my God! Attire mine head with the crown of justice, and my temple with the ornament of equity*" (ESW12-13); and: "*Attire my head with the crown of martyrdom, even as Thou didst attire my body with the ornament of tribulation before all that dwell in Thy land*" (PM20, sec.17, para.1). As to the locution

the "*girdle of love* (ḥubb zunnár)," the highest form of love is one's love for the Manifestation. Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "*The essence of love* (ḥubb) *is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord*" (Aṣl-i-Kullu'l-Khayr 155; *Majmú'ih* 92, para.6).

The motif of the *zunnár* is usually part of the *malámatí* vein. Browne writes that the *zunnár* "(Zonarium), regarded by the Muslim poets as the symbol of misbelief, represents the Kushtí, or "Kosti," of the Zoroastrians, the sacred thread of the Brahmins, and presumably the cord worn round the waist by Christian monks" (*Literary History* 3:342n1). Bausani explains that the *zunnár* is "the mark of heresy non-Muslims wore" (*Religion in Iran* 268). Ḥafiẓ specifically writes, in a *malámatí* vein, that he wears the *zunnár* under his frock:

> A darvish garment (*dalq*), I had; and it concealed a hundred faults:
>
> For wine (*may*) and the minstrel (*muṭrib*), the khairka (*khirqih*)[45] was pawned; and the mystical cord (*zunnár*) (of a hundred faults) remained. (*Díván* 341, "Ghazalyát," no.177, v.3; *Díván* 186, no.178, v.9)

However, Nurbakhsh writes: "In Sufi terminology, the cincture indicates strength and steadfastness of service, integrity of inner and outer being, adherence to the way of certitude, and service to the Master. It also alludes to the girdling of one's loins in the service of God" (3:238). The Sufi poet Mahmúd Shabistarí (ca.1288–ca.1339) writes in this vein in his *Garden of Mystery* (*Gulshan-i-Ráz*): "The tying of the belt signifies service and obedience" (158, v.881).

34

Bas kun, Darvíshá, zín bísh ma-zan nish[46]
Kuftád sharar hamí az ín[47] *guftár.*

That's enough, O Dervish, don't torment us any longer,
'Cause many sparks have fallen from these words.[48]

This poem, like others of His poems, ends with a call to silence. The same formula, "*enough* (bas kun)," is also used by Rúmí. For example, he ends a *ghazal* as follows:

> How long will you essay to describe Him? For He comes not within description; Make enough (*bas kun*), that I may ride over my commotion. (*Mystical Poems* 1:60, no.66, v.13; Díván, "Ghazalyát," no.543, v.13)

He writes moreover:

Enough (bas kun), *why are you so attached to words?*
Love ('ishq) *has many expressions* (bayán) *that transcend any utterance.* (*Díván*, "Ghazalyát," no.410, v.13)

This distich may hint at the fact that the time had not yet arrived when He could announce His Divine Mission. And the sentence "*Many sparks* (sharar) *have fallen from your discourse*" may also mean that the words He had already written and partly spread among His Sufi admirers, could have kindled a premature fire, revealing His true identity as a Manifestation of God in a time when people was not ready to receive the revelation of His Word. As He later wrote, "*a spark* (jidhvih) *of the fire of Thy love* (muḥabbat) *is enough to set ablaze a whole world*" (PM244, sec.153, para.1; *Munáját* 165).

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NOTES

[1] For a general introduction to this and other poems by Bahá'u'lláh see Julio Savi, "Bahá'u'lláh's Persian poems written before 1863," in *Lights of Irfan* 13 (2012): 317-361.

[2] (Saḥar ámad) A poem composed by Bahá'u'lláh. The Persian text used for this provisional translation is published in Ishráq-Khávarí, *Má'idiy-i-Asmání* 4:181-84. The poem also is published in *Majmú'iy-i-Áthár* 30:163-65. This translation has been done with the precious assistance of Ms. Faezeh Mardani Mazzoli, lecturer of Persian language at the University of Bologna, translated by Julio Savi.

[3] For more details see Julio Savi, "A Hymn to Love (*Sáqí bi-dih ábí*)."

[4] One of the four Arabic iambic metres.

[5] See Julio Savi, "A Hymn to Love (*Sáqí bi-dih ábí*)" 4-6.

[6] Koran 57:3.

[7] See Julio Savi, "A Hymn to Love (*Sáqí bi-dih ábí*)" 24-5, provisional translation by the author and Ms. Mardani.

[8] Steingass defines *muhájarín* as "The fugitive followers of Muhammad from Mecca to Madínah" (Steingass 1351). He defines *anṣár* as "Assistants, friends, helpers, auxiliaries, applied particularly to the citizens of Madína, who assisted Muhammad when obliged to fly from Mecca" (Steingass 111).

[9] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits this invocation.

[10] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *kay* at the beginning of the second hemistich.

[11] Nicholson gives the following translation: "Love hath estrangement with (is a stranger to) the two worlds: in it are two-and-seventy madness" (M3:4719).

[12] Nicholson gives the following translation: "Beyond doubt, O worshipful one, I must become mad for three days at the beginning of every month. // Hark, to-day is the first of the triduum: 'tis the day of triumph (*pírúz*), not (the day of) turquoise (*pírúzá*)" (*Mathnavi* 5:1888).

[13] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits *az*.

[14] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *súy*.

[15] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Gah páyat píchídih hamí*.

[16] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *dar*.

[17] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Az átash-i-áh-at*.

[18] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *'abídí*.

[19] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits *tú*.

[20] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Ghaltídan-i-zárí*.

[21] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *rangí*.

[22] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits *kih*.

[23] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits this verse.

[24] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *bi-ráh-at*, that is "in Thy path."

[25] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *bar kúh-u dar-u dasht*, that is "through mountains, wastes and plains."

[26] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *jafáy-at*.

[27] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *jám*, that is "a cup."

[28] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *gíram bi-kinár*.

[29] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits this verse.

[30] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits this verse.

[31] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *az án*.

[32] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits *ay Dúst*.

[33] Marcello Perego, an Italian expert on Sufism, defines the *malámatí* Sufis as "persons who observe a perfect religious conduct, but carefully hide any ecstatic state (*Aṭwál*) and grace (*Wáridát*) which the One Being bestows upon them; they dissemble their good deeds, so that none but God may know them" (151). Most Sufis of the *malámatiyya* tried to appear blameworthy in the eyes of common people.

[34] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits this verse.

[35] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *dar ín 'álam-i-fání bas khár*, that is "downtrodden in this ephemeral world."

[36] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Ámad vaqtí kih 'alam bi-farází*.

[37] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *bi-rahání*.

[38] *Majmú'ih* 30 omits *Tú*.

[39] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *az*.

[40] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *bi-zidá'í*.

[41] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Ham az qayd-i-dú*.

[42] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *Ay Dúst, Tú ín muhájirin-i-*.

[43] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *táj-i-laqá*, that is "the crown of Thy presence."

[44] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *ṭubbat*.

[45] 'The Sufi cloak used to be the dress of the dervishes of a *khánaqáh* (Sufi house). It was a patched garment given by the master to the disciple to wear ... [it] was ... the sign of submission to God" (Nurbakhsh 5:32).

[46] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *nísh*.

[47] *Majmú'ih* 30 writes *bi-ján zín*.

[48] After this distich, Ishráq-Khávarí's text, *Má'idih* 4:181-4, records the word *intihá....,* "Termination, end, extremity; utmost point or limit, summit; utmost extent; completion" (Steingass 105).