

## **In Search of a Remedial Philosophy: A Consecutive Study of Hafez and Goethe.**

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### **Abstract**

Despite a sharp gap historically segregating Hafez and Goethe from each other, the researcher justifiably finds them to merit sharing common spiritual, social, cultural and literary characteristics. This advocacy mainly stems from the fact that the former (Hafez) exercised an unfathomable strand of multi-dimensional impact on the latter (Goethe). Admittedly, based on findings approached in this study, the occidental Europe, at the time of Goethe, bitterly suffered from the absence of a remedial philosophy to make up for the ethical disadvantages befall upon the Europeans then.

The researcher accordingly asserts that Goethe intelligently took Hafez's oriental and Islamic tenets and values and had them frankly and furtively included in his mystical and transcendental expectations in poetry. He efficiently worked them out as a healing remedy for the losses and damages incurred upon the fellow-Europeans due to some utilitarian wars almost ravaged the whole continent. On the whole, exponent gurus such as Hafez and Goethe are undeniably privileged to be the inevitable product of some historical, cultural and social exigencies. They themselves have been indispensably trapped into such a narrow shave to eventually emerge in the scene as a couple of unforeseen sublimes consecutively matching up each other in every true sense of the word and practice.

Never was the saying "great men think alike" more aptly rendered applicable than it is of the immortal Hafez of Persia (Iran) and Goethe, the multi-dimensional genius of Germany. Hafez was born about the year A.H. 720/C.E. 1320<sup>1</sup> in the city of Shiraz the capital of Pars (from which the name of Persia itself is derived) at a distance of about 38 miles (about 57 Kilometers) from the ancient Achaemenian Capital, Perspolis (Takht-e-Jamshid). He then lived there all his life of above 70 years till his death about the year A.H. 792/ C.E. 1390. Goethe, on the other hand, was born in 1749 (28<sup>th</sup> August) at Frankfurt-am-Main and died in 1832 (22<sup>nd</sup> March) at Weimar, formerly in East Germany. Although there is a time gap- distance of about four and quarter centuries between the two, there is a remarkable likeness of thinking amongst them. Further, the circumstances of their life-spans are also notably similar. For instance:

1- Both Hafez and Goethe lived during periods of great political turmoil and disturbance. About half a century earlier Shiraz, and for that matter, the whole of Iran

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<sup>1</sup>The abbreviation C.E. stands for the Christian Era

had seen the devastations of the Mongol invasions, and their wars of consolidation. Even the local dynasty (the Injus) had indulged in much fratricidal wars, and his patron Shah Shuja to whom he has made references in his poetry, was himself the product of much intrigue, crime and bloodshed. Then the vicinity of Shiraz was infested by bands of ferocious and heartless robbers who presented a great problem of law and order to the local rulers. To crown, above all, hardly had Shah Shuja settled down to a peaceful life when the country had to face the ravages of the invasions of the world conqueror, Timure-Lang. Goethe, in this respect, was far more fortunate than his 'twin' Hafez, whose began when he was about 45 (in 1364 A.D.), and ended nearly twenty years later when his patron Shah Shuja was deterred by the expanding empire of Timur (early 1380s). Based on poems and anecdotal accounts during Shah Shuja's reign, Hafez served as a teacher at the local madrasa, to provide a modest living for himself, and some additional revenue from the panegyric in his oeuvre. Thus, similar to Goethe, he enjoyed a reasonably stable pattern of occupation. Hafez and Goethe both enjoyed considerable international reputation in their own lifetime, and the privilege with which he was sought after by rulers as far abroad as Baghdad and India.

Equally tumultuous were the conditions in Europe during Goethe's age and the boundaries of the countries were constantly changing. There had been wars of the Polish succession, the Restoration of large territories to the Turkish Sultan, the bloody consequences of the claims of the stubborn Maria Theresa which dragged on till seven years in Europe (1756-63): Russian troops invaded East Prussia; and Hanover (North Germany) was attacked and occupied by France. In the mean time, the storm of the French Revolution was brewing and although it brought ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity amongst educated classes in Germany, but it brought it also tiding of untold horror, across their border and of slaughter; guillotine and bloodshed in France, which tended to propagate anarchical ideas in the rest of Europe and which seemed to present serious problems of law and order. Force let loose in consequence of the French Revolution culminated in another force which enveloped the whole of Europe in the shape of Napoleonic Wars.

2- It has been observed that great epochs in literature, so rare in their occurrence, have had a peculiar relationship to periods of extra ordinary political commotion. Both Hafez and Goethe were not only inheritors of sublime literary tradition but themselves became the culminating points in their respective literary achievements unsurpassed by

posterity. Hafez as preceded by the luminous stars of the unmitigated glory in the galaxy of the Persian sky like, Anwary, Sa'adi, Attar, Sanai, and the towering personality of Rumi. Moreover, the atmosphere of Shiraz in which he was born and bred was itself permeated with literary genius.

Western scholars, during the enlightenment phase, endeavored to impartially view east to prove that the world of east is no longer a world of war and bloodshed, violence and invasion, and anti-Christian or anti-European. On the contrary, they invited their audiences to review their position and discern east as a world of beauties, narratives, expectations as well as wonders (Schimmel, 1990). In the same vein, Goethe who was a sublime close to the versatile and fertile genius of Renaissance Period lived and moved in a highly intellectual atmosphere. His direct constant with classical culture during his Italian sojourn of 1786 deeply influenced him. A part expression of this can be seen in the shaping of his plays 'Iphigenie auf Tauris' (1793) and 'Torquato Tasso' (1790) and the poems 'Romische Elegien' (published in 1793). His friendship and correspondence with the poet Schiller sharpened his aesthetic theories, heightened further by his sensitive mind so amenable to female beauty. In addition, far more important, was his receptivity to foreign literature including the English poet Shakespeare and many Iranian poets out of whom the great Hafez of Shiraz cast a peculiar spell on him and resulted in the production of the immortal 'West-Ostlicher Divan.' Moreover the influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Edward Young and James McPherson were also profound influence over him. But the chief impetus came from the oracular utterances of Johann George Hamann (1770-88)<sup>2</sup>, the "Magus in Norden" wherein he observed that the basic varieties of existence are to be apprehended through faith and the experience of senses and pointed out the value of primitive poetry. Poetry, he declared, was the mother tongue of the human race and not product of learning and precept. Similarly, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803)<sup>3</sup> who

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<sup>2</sup> Hamann had a profound influence on the German 'Storm and Stress' movement ,and on other contemporaries such as Herder and Jacobi; he impressed Hegel and Goethe (who called him the brightest head of his time) and was a major influence on Kierkegaard. His influence continued on twentieth century German thinkers ,particularly those interested in language. His popularity has increased dramatically in the last few decades amongst philosophers, theologians, and German studies scholars around the world. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

<sup>3</sup> German philosopher, critic, and clergyman, b. East Prussia. Herder was an enormously influential literary critic and a leader in the *Sturm und Drang* movement. After an impoverished childhood ,he studied theology at Königsberg and came under the influence of Kant. During an appointment at Riga, Herder gained attention with his *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Literatur* [fragments concerning current German literature (1767). In 1776 he became court preacher at Weimar through the influence of Goethe, whose work was greatly affected by Herder's ideas, particularly by his *Über den Ursprung der Sprache*] on the origin of language] (1772). In this treatise Herder held that language and poetry are spontaneous necessities of human nature, rather than supernatural endowments. At Weimar, Herder became the leading theorist of German romanticism and a contributor to the most brilliant court of the era. There he produced his anthology of foreign folk songs ,*Stimmen der Völker* (79–1778) and also made some of the earliest studies of comparative philology, comparative religion, and mythology. His vast work *Ideen zur Philosophie*

regarded, and no thinker before him, the idea of historical evolution, likewise interested Goethe in foreign literature including that of the East. Thus, Goethe's intelligence, so free, insatiable and unconfined, set the ideal for comparative study and he predicted a Welt-literature in which all nations have a voice.

3- Both Hafez and Goethe deeply impressed the powerful conquerors of their times. Thus, Hafez impressed Timur-e Lang while Goethe impressed Napoleon.

The following famous couplet of Hafez has been the subject of much interest and many are the versions of an interview of Hafez with Timur about it:

اگر آن ترك شيرازي بدست آرد دل ما را      به خال هندويش بخشم سمرقند و بخارا را

(If that Shirazian Turk is able to capture my heart, I will give the entire territories of Samarqand and Bokhara in return for the black mole on her face)

About the interview, which seems to have taken place between Hafez and Timur and in which Timur seems to have questioned Hafez about the above couplet, the account given by Dr. Zarinkub in his 'Dar Kucheye-Rindan' seems to be more worthy of credence. It is said that Zaynu'l Abidin, the younger brother of Shah Shuja, who assumed the reigns of authority over Shiraz after the sudden death of Shah Shuja, while all the princesses of the territory acknowledged Timur as their overlord, Zaynu'l Abidin still held out his own. Therefore, three years after Shah Shuja's death, Timur came to chastise him in A.H. 789, and stayed in Shiraz for two months. In spite of his illiteracy and violent temperament, the world conqueror had the habit of showing the utmost regard and deference to men of learning and piety. He used to converse with them kindly and freely and every one in locality believed that if Hafez meets Timur, the poet will be well received had he been deeply moved by the ravages of the Samarqandian Turks (armies of Timur-e-Lang) over the territories of the Khwarezm. Consequently he had written a ghazal deprecating the cruelty and faithlessness of the Timurid forces. Also, in order to gain favour with the recalcitrant Zaynu'l Abidin, who had not submitted to Timur, he wrote his famous couplet already, quoted. In this, Hafez means to call Zaynu'l Abidin as the Shirazian Turk *ترك شيرازي* as against Timur whom he called Turk-e Samarqandi. The rightful ruler of Samarqand and Bokhara (Timur) summoned the aged poet to his presence. As was his wont in Ispahan and elsewhere Timur, says the contemporary historian Abdur-Razak, demanded ransom from Hafez for the lives that had been spared in his locality. Hafez, who was leading a

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*der Geschichte der Menschheit* :91-1784) tr. *Outlines of the Philosophy of Man* (1800, developed a major evolutionary approach to history in which he propounded the uniqueness of every historical age. (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2004: 21789)

life of abject poverty pointed to his tattered clothes and said he was so poor that he had nothing to offer. At this, Timur reminded him of his couplet and said, “How can one, who can give away Samarqand and Bokhara in return for a mole, be penniless.” At this, Hafez wits seemed to have returned to him and he replied “It is my unbounded bounty, Sire that has led me to this condition.” The witty answer not only spared Hafez of any demands, it won for him a robe and a generous amount of money.

As for Goethe, Napoleon was likewise not too happy with him because of Goethe’s outright condemnation of the use of force by Napoleon in subduing and chastising the greatest European emperors of his time and in the wake of persistent wars, bringing about misery to people, whom Napoleon himself once pitied and called “Bleeding humanity”<sup>4</sup>. Napoleon regarded Goethe with his towering intellect and pervasive pen, as one of his greatest enemies. When in 1808 Napoleon granted an interview to Goethe, they discussed many subjects including religion and philosophy. Napoleon was mightily impressed with Goethe’s political opinions; he said, “Our enemy is wiser than us. He is a real man<sup>5</sup> in all implications of this world.”

Napoleon had himself a great faith in the powers of the human intellect, and deprecating brute force he had once said, “It is not arms that win the battle. In war, all is mental. It is the mind that wins the war”. Goethe and Napoleon talked about thought and belief concerned with the inter-related concepts of God, reason, nature and man. They talked about Islam and Holy Muhammad, and both expressed great reverence for the greatest man (Muhammad) and affirmed the truth of the Message of God as in Holy Quran. They condemned those ill-informed men like Voltaire who had talked irreverently and scoffingly about the Holy Messenger of Allah. The interview was a great enlightenment for Napoleon, who continued to have great regard not only for Islam but also for Goethe. Later Goethe wrote his play “Muhammad” and therein gave details of his interview with Napoleon.

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<sup>4</sup> From J.S.C. Abbot’s translation of Napoleon’s letter to king George III of England of Napoleon’s assumption of his office of the first consul of France, when Napoleon wrote as under, “called, Sire, by the wishes of the French people to occupy the first magistracy of this illustrious nation, I do hereby deem it fit to address your Majesty in person and to appeal to you in the name of bleeding humanity to put an end to this war .....

<sup>5</sup> For knowing the implication of ‘real man’ we have to go to the most ancient thought-back to the days when Greek philosophers discovered a regularity in nature and concluded that its governing principle was reasoning mind. And, when under the prompting of Socrates, they turned to consider man and ascribed a high value to his intellectual powers. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period which overlaps the age Goethe, there was a movement of thought and belief. It claimed assent among Europeans intellectuals of that known as “Enlightenment”, and which attacked established ways of European liege and in its conviction that right reason could discover useful knowledge, aspired to the conquest of man’s happiness through freedom. This movement was concerned with the inter-related concepts of God, reason, as seen through the light of ancient thought and philosophy. By calling Goethe a ‘real man’ he praised his right reason and high intellectual power.

4- The enduring quality. Both Hafez and Goethe have that profundity of thought and feeling, that deep comprehension of the facts of life, which has an enduring and a lasting effect. The grand power of their poetry is its interpretative power; the power of so dealing with ideas, to use the words of Wordsworth- 'on Man, on Nature, and on Human life' as to awaken in use a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them, and the relation of the individual to them. Mathew Arnold rightly observes that "the poet ought to know the life and the world than an average poet and this accounts for their lasting effect. Every person, who knows Persian tight from the highest scholarly adept to the humblest villager, sings the songs of Hafez, and the same is true of Goethe. The greatest scholar of German literature to the humblest beginner takes pleasures and pride in knowing and reading Goethe. Both are inspired poets and are the "Lisanul Ghayb" [the Tongue of Mysteries (Unknown)] of the East and West respectively.

5- Both were heavy wine-drinkers. Goethe drank wine to an excess and did not desist the admonitions of his friends to the contrary. So did Hafez. In his Divan metaphorically and figuratively begins addressing the waiter a couplet rehearsed as:

الا يا ايها الساقى ادر كاساً و ناولها      كه عشق آسان نمود اول ولي افتاد مشكلها

(Hello! O Cup-bearer, pour the wine in to the cup and let us drink; for though love seems easy first it soon embarks on hazards.)

so does Goethe say in Wanderer's Equanimity:-

"We must all be drunk! Youth is wineless drunkenness and old age that drinks itself young again is marvelous virtue. Life, bless if, takes care to supply us with cares, and the caster, out of cares, is the vine (grape plant from which wine is derived). As long as we are sober, we like what is inferior, but when we have drunk, we know what is what. Yet excess, too lurks near at hand; oh teach me Hafez, what your wisdom thought you".

For I hold not unjustly, that if a man can not drink, neither should he love ... If a man can not love, neither let him drink.<sup>6</sup>

#### To the Waiter

Don't slam the jug down in front of my nose like that you curmudgeon <sup>7</sup> I want friendly looks from any one who brings me wine...etc. And so says Hafez:-

<sup>6</sup> See also the following couplets from Hafez.

عاشقي را كه چنين باده شبيگر دهند      كافر عشق بود گر نشود باده پرست  
Nightly drinks of wine are the food of lovers. If a lover is not fond of drinks, he is an unbeliever in the domain of love.

مکن به چشم حقارت نگاه در من مست      که نیست معصیت و زهد بی مشیت او

Don't cast a glance with contempt on a poor intoxicated fellow like myself. Please realize that no vice or virtue can take place without God's will.

حدیث چون و چرا در دسر دهد ای دل      پیاله گیر و بیاساز عمر خویش دمی

All these talks about 'how and why' gives you a headache! O heart, hold the cup and let your life rest for a moment.

In fact, Hafez's poetry in reference to wine is so voluminous that it would be idle to recount the whole of it. It should almost amount to rewriting the Divan. He even wants to merge the distress of his poverty, want, and worldly afflictions in the intoxication of wine when he says:

هنگام تنگدستی در عیش کوش و مستی      کاین کیمیای هستی قارون کند گدا را

(In times of want and poverty, strive to drown your worries in wine and intoxication. For this alchemy is such that it can make a Qaroon<sup>8</sup> out of a beggar).

6- Be that as it may, both Goethe and Hafez regarded wine as their sincerest friend and confided in their respective cups as in no one else.

Goethe acknowledges in one of the pieces in Ranj-Nama (Tale of Woe) and Saghi-Nama (the story of the cup-bearer), both of which are chapters in Goethe's Divan, which is used to keep his innermost feelings hidden from the hypocrites and self-seekers. The cup of wine was his only companion. Precisely in the same manner, Hafez says,

روز واقعه غم با شراب باید گفت      که اعتماد به کس نیست در چنین زمانی

(We relate our grieves only to wine; as we can not rely on any one else in such matters)

7- Both Goethe and Hafez had a stoic forbearance of the sufferings and miseries wrought by wars and bloodshed. Von Hammer wrote in his introduction to Hafez, "During the life-time of Hafez, the land of Pars saw repeatedly upheavals and fluctuations. Kings and chieftains recurrently fell out with each other; and as a

<sup>7</sup> Curmudgeon is a bad tempered, miserly person. Goethe is referring to the dislike of others for his over drinking. When he asks for more wine the angry waiter almost bangs the jug in front of him. Goethe enters, with sympathetic ease, into the spirit of Hafez's drinking songs, for he was a heavy and enthusiastic wine-drinker even by the standards of his age.

<sup>8</sup> **Korah, named Qaroon** in the Quran, was one of the **Levites**, as was Moses, and shared a grandfather, **Kohaith**. This meant he was one of Moses' cousins. He was a leader among the rebellious Levites, according to the Bible, because of his immense wealth. He was so wealthy that even the keys of his treasury needed several men to carry them. He was also an arrogant person given to spreading mischief and corruption among the people. According to the Bible, he went as far as to incite his followers to question Moses' authority, claiming that he usurped the priestly right to transmit God's message to the people. According to the Quran and Prophetic narrations, he assumed he had been blessed with wealth because of his intrinsic worthiness as a man of knowledge.

consequence, lost their governments to one another. And, in these ups and downs; comings and goings, blood was inevitably shed in profusion.

With all this Hafez did not lose the composure of his temperament, nor his native good honour and maintained his interest in the song of the nightingale, the sweet-smell of the flower, the intoxication of the mystical wine and his love for beauty. He saw divine beauty in every comely form and these faculties of his nature never faded till the last.

Goethe, in this approach of Hafez to the things of life, saw a reflex of his own nature. He too had, since his earliest youth till his most advanced years, appreciated beauty and light of the sun, the song of the Nightingale and felt the intensity of love very much like what Hafez says in the following verse:

به گوشه آ و بنشین سرخوش و تماشا کن      ز حادثات زمانی و رخ شکر دهنی

Of Hafez's celebration of wine and love, it was disputed from the onset whether they should be interpreted hedonistically or mystically. As for Goethe, certain passages in the Divan suggest that he found the oriental style and setting particularly appropriate to the expression of a sense (increasingly characteristic of his old age) of dissolving of boundary between earthly love and the love of God.

(Come into the secluded corner, sit merrily and watch the happenings of the world with a contented, smiling face)

8- From this flows another conclusion namely that both Goethe and Hafez, although optimistic, were not necessarily optimists as Hafez beautifully sums up.

ده روزه مهر گردون افسانه است و افسون      نیکی بجای یاران فرصت شمار یارا

A few days' love of the revolving sky is just a matter of fiction or a magical spell. Thus if the friends show kindness towards you, you may just take it a brief spell of good fortune.

9- Both believed in a life of freedom of thought and action and waged an endless war against cant and hypocrisy. When Goethe first thought of collecting together poems and verses inspired by Hafez and naming them the 'Divan' (14<sup>th</sup> December 18<sup>th</sup>), he wrote as under:

"I want to produce this Divan in the shape of a world reflecting mirror, like a cup as that of Jamshid, where I would see the reflexes of the eternal world as distinguished from the world of cant and hypocrisy; and I will discover the way to that everlasting paradise which is the abode of Ghazal-singing poets, so that I may be able to find my place by the side of the Hafez of Shiraz".



Here Goethe speaks in much the same way as Hafez did in the following couplet:

جام مي گيرم و از اهل ریا دور شوم      يعني از خلق جهان پاکدلي بگزینم

(I take my cup and seek aloofness from the hypocrites. In other words, I choose a pure-hearted companion out of all the things of the world)

Hafez goes on to say:-

زاهد و عجب و نماز و من و مستي و نیاز      تا ترا خود زمیان با که عنایت باشد

Again he says:-

ریا حلال شمارند و جام باده حرام      زهي طریقت و ملت زهي شریعت و کیش

They regard hypocrisy as permissible and the cup of wine as forbidden by religion.

What a path and a community! What a law and a belief!

تو خرقة را ز براي ریا همي پوش      تا به رزق بري بندگان از راه

You wear the cloak to hide your hypocrisy. So that you may earn your living and yet keep God's men away from the Divine path.

خدا زان خرقة بیزار است صد بار      که باشد صد بتش در آستیني

God is displeased a hundred times with the cloak, which has a hundred, idles up its sleeve.

or

آتش زهد و ریا خرمن دین خواهد سوخت      حافظ این خرقة پشمینه بینداز و برو

The five of Cant mixed with prayer will burn off the property of Religion. Hafez, throw away this woolen cloak and go your way.

or

خرقة پوشي من از غایت دینداری نیست      پرده اي بر سر صد عیب نھان مي پوشم

My donning of cloak is not due to my excess of religious-mindedness. I am only throwing curtain over hundreds of my hidden faults and sins.

or

بیا که رونق این کارخانه کم نشود      به زهد همچو تویی یا به فسق همچو مني

Come! So that the hustle-bustle of this workshop may not diminish and let there be the playfulness of men like you and the sinfulness of men like me.

or

نام حافظ رقم ننگ پذیرفت ولي      پیش رندان رقم سود و زیان این همه نیست

Name of Hafez got somehow connected with sinfulness, otherwise in the code of the merry-makers, the writing of good and bad is not there.

Sometimes Hafez feels that his community is unable to appreciate his ways and says;

معرفت نیست در این قوم خدایا مددی تا یرم گوهر خود را به خریدار دگر

These people lack insight and understanding. Help me O God so that I may take my genius to some other buyer (customer).

Happily this buyer came out to be Goethe himself.

10- Both Hafez and Goethe are passionate lovers and see the reflex of Eternal Beauty in the worldly beauty. To both, to use the words of Keats, “beauty is truth, truth is beauty” and likewise to them “a thing of beauty is a joy for ever”.

Goethe says:<sup>9</sup>

“I will remember you, Holy Hafez in both abodes and taverns; then my sweetheart.<sup>10</sup> lifts her veil and shakes the sandalwood scent from her hair. Yes, the poets’ whisperings of love shall fill the very hours with desire.

And if you would envy him this, or even try to spoil his pleasures, let me tell you that the words of poets are for ever hovering round the gate of paradise, softly knocking on it, begging and winning everlasting life”.

Though you may hide yourself in a thousand shapes, yet, All-Beloved! at once I recognize you. You may cover yourself with magic veils, at once, all present one, I recognize you.

In the young cypress-trees purest upward growth, all-shapeliest one, at once I recognize you; in the pure living moving waters of the canal, All-Flattering one, How well I recognize you.

When the leaping fountain-jet unfolds, All playful one, joyfully I recognize you; when clouds form and re-form themselves, there too, All-Manifold one, I recognize you.

In the flowery veil, the tapestry of fields, All-Starry-Many-coloured one in your beauty, I recognize you; and when ivy stretches forth its thousands arms, there, All embracing one, I know you

. When morning catches fire on the mountains, at once All Gladdening one, I salute you; then the sky grows pure and round above me, and then, lifts of All Hearts, I draw breath in you.

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<sup>9</sup> West-Ostlicher Divan Hejra-migration. Translation by David Luke P. 232 from Her Omnipresence

<sup>10</sup> The sweetheart Goethe is referring to is Frau Marianne Von Willmer. As the visit he is talking about is vicarious, he imagines Marianne also in the garb of an eastern beauty

All that I know by outward and inward sense, teacher of All Men, I have learned from you; and when I name the Hundred Names of Allah, each of them is echoed by a name for you.

To this Zuleikha adds:

“The mirror tells me I am beautiful! You all say I am also destined to grow old. Before God all things must stand still for ever. Love Him in me for this moment.”

What a likeness the above is to an immortal thought expressed by Keats in the ‘Ode to the Grecian Urn’, where the poet consoles the forward bending lover on the Urn, the lover arrested and presented in immortal relief by the sculptor’s hand before he can kiss, with the line, “for ever wilt thou love and she be fair”

Similarly Hafez says:

ما در پیاله عکس رخ یار دیده ایم      ای بی خبر ز لذت شرب مدام ما<sup>11</sup>

Listen, O one, who is so unaware of the bliss of our continuous drinking, we have seen the reflex of the face of The Beloved in our cup.

Again he goes to say:

در نظر بازی ما بی خبران حیرانند      من چنینم که نمودم دگر ایشان دانند<sup>12</sup>

The un-initiated are in wonderment about our eye’s interest in beauty. Actually I am what I look; as for the rest, they all know best. When Hafez was writing this fond verse, the bird of his fancy had been caught up in the slip-knot of Divine Love.

Goethe also saw his own picture in the above writing of Hafez, as he himself said in his “Memoirs” I have appreciated beauty, youth and sunlight right till my eldest age, and seen Divine Beauty and Love in the sweet smell of flower, the song of the nightingale and the love of the world of beauty. And a most burning verse of Hafez opens up the floodgate of great spiritual knowledge.

It says:

از آن به دیر مغانم عزیز می دارند      که آتشی که نمیرد همیشه در دل ماست<sup>13</sup>

They hold me in high esteem in the Fire-Temple for this specific reason, that the fire that never dies resides within my soul always.

<sup>11</sup> Ghazal 142, couplet 2

<sup>12</sup> Ghazal 237, couplet 1

Divan-e-Hafez, Reza Jalali & Nazir

<sup>13</sup> Ali Dashti’s Naghshi az Hafez

He is thus proud of the eternal fire of love within his heart.

At another place Hafez says:

بعد از این نور به آفاق دهم از دل خویش      که به خورشید رسیدیم و غبار آخر شد<sup>14</sup>

Hereafter, I will draw light from my heart and shed it on the expanse of the horizons as the dust subsided when we reached the sun.

حسن روی تو چو در آینه جام افتاد      صوفی از خنده می در طمع خام افتاد<sup>15</sup>

When the reflex of the face fell into the cup, the Soofi became confused for the bubbles in the wine showed him many faces.

At yet another place, he explains the same idea in these words.

عکس روی تو به یک جلوه که در آینه کرد      اینهمه نقش در آینه او هام افتاد<sup>16</sup>

Your face had only one appearance in the mirror but the multiplicity of mirrors caused it to appear in the shape of so many faces.

Again, deeply conscious of his own spiritual height, Hafez says:

غزل سرایی ناهید صرفه ای نبرد      در آن مقام که حافظ برآورد آواز<sup>17</sup>

The music of the stars can not make a mark at those heights where Hafez reaches his voice.

He sums up his mystic comprehension with great self-confidence, which the following verse explicitly, reveals:

کس چو حافظ نگشود از رخ اندیشه نقاب      تا سر زلف عروسان سخن شانه زدند<sup>18</sup>

No one lifted the veil of doubts and errors and reached the Ultimate Reality as did Hafez, but this truth could not dawn upon their minds until the seekers of truth combed the hair of the brides of my speech.

11- The above also shows that both Hafez and Goethe are mystics of a very high order, and this fact is fully illustrated above.

<sup>14</sup> Ghazal 170

<sup>15</sup> Ghazal 194 couplet 1, Diwzn Hafez, Reza Jalali & Nazir

<sup>16</sup> Ghazal 194, couplet 2

<sup>17</sup> Ghazal 255, couplet 11

<sup>18</sup> Ghazal 157, couple 7

12- Both are profoundly lyrical poets. This perhaps needs no illustration so far as Hafez is concerned, because the ghazal style of poetry is essentially lyrical. The following verses may however be quoted as an illustration:

صد ملك دل به نيم نظر مي توان خريد      خوبان در اين معامله تقصير مي كنند  
مي خور كه شيخ و حافظ و مفتي و محتسب      چون نيك بنگري همه تزوير مي كنند

A hundred realms of heart can be purchased by half a glance of the eye. Only the beautiful ones are miserly in giving the glance.

Drink wine, because if you observe a little more closely, all are guilty of this sin of hypocrisy whether there be the scholar, the Hafez, the Judge or the city police Chief himself.

Authors and poets of romantic school highly aspired for recognizing the root of languages. Moreover, they came to accept and prove to see that all natural languages of the world are deeply rooted in the east. The poets and authors of this period were in search of their lost self and Human being's essence and innateness amongst classical eastern works (Hadadi, 2006:9). Admittedly, lyrical poetry, in its broadest definition, is basically romantic due to the fact that it tends to give a colouring of its own mind over a basic reality, as has been claimed:

“Distance lends enchantment to the view.”

or

“distance presents the object fair.”

But there is subtle difference between the two: in as much as ‘lending enchantment to the view’ is true romanticism; but when an object is relevant there and only the distance is presenting it fair, it is wonderfully poetic, has a romantic element but it can not strictly be called romantic as romanticism does not predominate in it but is subdued.

Goethe was a poet who falls in the latter category. Goethe did not like romanticism due to its unreality and he defined it in ‘das Romantische’ in a much quoted saying, as a disease (das Kranke). Nevertheless a substantial part of the West Ostlicher Divan as also that of “Faust” can be called as much romantic as are the work of poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge. Goethe's unique production, “Faust” has an exceptionally pervasive lyricism.

A significant point to mention is that Goethe in his terminal literary chronology, coinciding with Romantic period in Germany, paid meticulous heed to literary works of other countries, in particular the oriental literature. That is why besides “Sturm und

Drang”<sup>19</sup>, encounter with letters of other nations and alien cultures occupied a particular position within his literary activities (Hadadi, 2006:6).

13- That both Goethe and Hafez are freedom lovers and much aggrieved with the fault-finding “traders in religion” has already been partly explained and will be explained more fully when we discuss ‘The West Ostlicher Divan’. In passing however a few of Hafez’s verses may be quoted to illustrate his bitter resentment of the intolerant Sufi and Hafez’s revenge of him. He says:

نقد صوفي نه همه صافي و بي غش باشد      اي بسا خرقة كه مستوجب آتش باشد

the quality of Sufis is not always purity and piety. There are many a cloak that deserve to be burnt off outright.

گر چه با دلق ملمع مي گلگون عيب است      مکنم عيب کز آن رنگ ريا مي شويم

Although even with a hypocritical cloak, to drink red coloured wine looks highly objectionable; but at least I do no sin, I wash off the colour of cant with that liquid.

The above is somewhat apologetic. But Hafez falls heavily on his fault finders in the following verses:-

به کوي ميکده دوشش به دوش مي بردند      امام شهر كه سجاده مي کشيد به دوش

The same chief imam of the city (who leads prayer in the Cathedral mosque) and was carrying his prayer rug on his shoulders, was himself being carried by people on their shoulders the day before in the tavern lane.

بيا به ميکده و چهره ارغواني کن      مرو به صومعه کانجا سپاه کارانند

Come to the tavern and let your face flush with drinks of wine. Don’t go to the prayer-house (mosque) because there are men of black deeds there.

در ميخانه ببستند خدايا مپسند      كه در خانه تزوير و ريا بگشايند

They have closed the door of the tavern. O, God, also disapprove the keeping open of the door of cant and hypocrisy.

گر پير مغان مرشد ما شد چه تفاوت      در هيچ سري نيست كه سري ز خدا نيست

<sup>19</sup> Storm and Stress, movement in German literature that flourished from c.1770 to c.1784. It takes its name from a play by F. M. von Klinger, *Wirrwarr; oder, Sturm und Drang*. (1776) The ideas of Rousseau were a major stimulus of the movement, but it evolved more immediately from the influence of Herder, Lessing, and others. With *Sturm und Drang*, German authors became cultural leaders of Europe, writing literature that was revolutionary in its stress on subjectivity and on the unease of man in contemporary society. The movement was distinguished also by the intensity with which it developed the theme of youthful genius in rebellion against accepted standards, by its enthusiasm for nature, and by its rejection of the rules of 18th-century neoclassical style. The great figure of the movement was Goethe, who wrote its first major drama, *Götz von Berlichingen*, (1773) and its most sensational and representative novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. (1774) Other writers of importance were Klopstock, J. M. R. Lenz, and Friedrich Müller. The last major figure was Schiller, whose *Die Räuber* and other early plays were also a prelude to romanticism. (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2004: 45694)

If the Magian priest (here it means the old man of the tavern) became our guide and instructor, what is the harm? After all every one, apparently even the most sinful, can still have a spark of Divine Inspiration in his head. And Goethe in his *Divan* (*Wanderer's Equanimity*) says: let no one of forces. It rules amid rottenness with great profit to itself, and manipulates righteousness exactly as it pleases. We must be drunk! Youth is wineless drunkenness and old age which drinks it self into youth is a great virtue etc.

14- Both Hafez and Goethe are international poets. They stepped far beyond the bounds of their own countries and have achieved universal appeal. We all know that Hafez has been translated into nearly all the languages of the world, and his poetry is read and appreciated in all the nooks and corners of this globe. The very fact that his *Divan* could inspire as great a genius as Goethe and because a direct cause and source of Goethe's *West-Ostlicher Divan* which is itself proof-conclusive of Hafez's Universality of appeal. Goethe has left indelible marks on the sands of time and is by Universal consent a man of all times and of the whole world. His fame transcended the boundaries of his country and time due to his, (to use the words of T.S. Eliot), "amplitude, abundance, universality, representativeness and wisdom. "in his *Divan* Goethe's language reaches never surpassed heights of sensuous power. Professor Barker says, Goethe's was probably "the most wide ranging body of lyrical poetry that ever came of a single mind", although his humanism was even greater than his poetry; which Goethe in his wonderful statement said, "what you lose at a poet, you will gain as a human being" (*Der Mensch gewinnt, was der poet verliert*).

Goethe never rested at familiarising himself with learning only the poetry of his time. He mastered classics of all countries and of all times-Latin, Greek, Indian, Persian, Arabic and even Chinese. He undoubtedly, in the words of Matthew Arnold, "knew a great deal of life, without doubt a great deal more than his contemporaries". And as genius can not soar, to use the words of Maulana –e Rumi, without "the wings of knowledge"<sup>20</sup>, Goethe took his art to a perfection due to this all-pervasive knowledge which he always sought after and reached closest to perfection. Besides being an unsurpassed poet, and a genius whom even Shakespeare can only equal when he is at his highest Goethe is versatile and many sided. He is the sage and the aphorist:

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<sup>20</sup> Ref. To Rumi's famous poem beginning with *است پر است* *علم را دو پر، گمان را یک پر* in which he explains that mere talent has but one wing whereas knowledge has two wings and that talent without knowledge is like a bear-shouldered flying creature which faces all the horrors of falls and pitfalls; but whose wings are fledged when he gains all pervasive knowledge and he goes into space with ease and felicity.

one of his most famous aphorisms is, "I place the faculty of speech at the pinnacle of all human arts. It is undoubtedly the greatest of God's gifts to man." Goethe is a great many things more. He is the scientist, the critic, the statesman, the theater and director, and the man of the world.

In the field of poetry however, he not only holds a most eminent place in the European elite but also in the world elite. And nevertheless, Goethe the poet is the least European of all because he crossed all frontiers and obtained a place of glory amongst the world galaxy of poets.

Goethe's great love of Persian poetry can also be seen diverging from the conventional rhyming and prosody of European Writers and attempting some versification like that of Hafez as in the ghazal couplets [though in Goethe's poetry rhyme is observed, but it is merely the recurrence of rhymes that are utilized, not what usually seen in ghazal. They can be accounted for nothing but as quasi-ghazal (2003:70)].

GOETHE

VERSUKKEH

Here is an example:

Voll Lochen Kraus ein Haut so rund:-  
 Und darf ich dann in solchen reichen haaren  
 Mit vollen Händen hin und wider fahren,  
 Da fühl ich mich von Herzensgrund gesund.  
 Und kuss ich Stirne, Bogen, Auge, Mund,  
 Dann bin ich Irisch und immer wieder wund.  
 Der funfgezackte Kamm, wo sollt er stocken?  
 Er Kehrt schon wieder zu der locken.  
 Das ohr versagt sich nicht Haut,  
 So zart zum scherz, so liebeviel!  
 Doch wie man auf dem kopfchen kaut,  
 Man wird in solchen reichen Haaren  
 Fur ewig auf und nieder fahren.  
 So hast du, Hafis, auch getan,  
 Wir fangen es von vornen an.

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### **Immersed**

A head so round and full of curly locks!-And when she lets me fill my hands with this abundance of hair and run them to and fro in it, I am filled with well-being, from the bottom of my heart. And when I kiss her forehead, her eyebrows, her eyes, and her mouth, I am stricken afresh and ever again. The five-pronged comb, where should it



come to rest? Back it goes to her hair already, her car joins in the game too; this is no flesh, this is no skin, delicate to the playful touch, so rich with love! He who strokes this little head will be moving up and down in its abundance of hair forever. All this, Hafez, you also did, here we are, doing it all over again.

\*\*\*\*\*

Having said this much about the various similarities between Hafez and Goethe we may now directly touch upon the manner in which the former's thought lyricism influenced the later and which ultimately led Goethe to write his immortal Divan (West-Ostlicher Divan) wherein his personality into the East. He broke off from formal Christianity and read the Holy prophet of Islam.

### **Communicating Vessels: Goethe Herder, Hamann and Hafez**

As we have already said, Goethe was since his Strasburg days, interested in literature of other countries and had in fact, predicted a weltliteratur (World literature). The idea of historical evolution<sup>21</sup> was firmly believed in by Herder and he too was instrumental in Goethe's oriental studies. Goethe, under the influence of Herder, sees poetry not merely as the spontaneous outburst of an isolated soul, but as the natural outgrowth of individuality that uses for its own ends the rich inheritance of culture and tradition. To belittle, learning rightly used would be to belittle the food we eat and the air we breathe. There is no clash of issues here, but rather the problem of a working adjustment. The question of originality versus imitation as it was posed in Goethe's day called for tact rather than dialectical subtlety. Against the mechanical imitation of the neo-classicists it was necessary to present one front; against the robust fellows who proclaimed themselves invincibly original it was necessary to present another. It is characteristic of Goethe's career that he usually found the teachers he needed, in science, literature, and the fine arts. During the months when he sat at the feet of Herder in Strasburg, he was learning how a poet might rightly draw inspiration from the literature of the past. Herder was an enthusiast for the primitive. He had learned from older contemporaries the gospel of a return to nature. But the modern way of returning to nature is not to reject tradition altogether, but to seek the recovery of an

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<sup>21</sup> An early explanatory proposal of development by Johann Gottfried Herder's (1744 - 1803), is an analogous model for historical evolution, presented in the book *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1791). He explained that human history is to be regarded as a set of independent "cultures" which are born, grow up, bloom, decay and die.

uncontaminated tradition .It was in this spirit that the early Renaissance had exalted Greek literature; it was in this spirit that the leaders of the Reformation had tried to return to the very letter of the Bible. Moreover, to Goethe's generation, the generation that came after the Enlightenment, the Renaissance itself offered a great tradition to which ardent youth might return. The enthusiasts of the late eighteenth century were continuing the quest for an art that should be not merely artistic, but the original and authentic utterance of humanity.

The Renaissance was one of the great foci for Goethe and his comrades of the Storm and Stress .But the Renaissance was also the period of heightened national feeling. In all this welter of themes, those that were both Renaissance and German took the strongest hold on the poet, and came so close to him that he hid his concern with them even from his master Herder.

I most carefully concealed from him my interest in certain subjects that had rooted themselves within me, and were, little by little, molding themselves into poetic form. These were **Gota oon Berlichingen** and **Fauri** .The biography of the former had seized my inmost heart. The figure of a rude, well-meaning self-helper, in a wild anarchical time, awakened my deepest sympathy. The significant puppet-show fable of the latter resounded and vibrated many-toned within me .I too had wandered about in all **sorts** of science, and had early enough been led to see its vanity .I had, moreover, tried all sorts of ways in real life, and had always returned more unsatisfied and troubled.

So were the oracular utterances of Hamann, who among other things had pointedly emphasizes the value of primitive poetry. But it was on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1816 that he first heard the name of Hafez. Johann Von Hammer who had been working in the Austrian Embassy in Istanbul a number of years picked up a fairly good knowledge of Persian, and on his return to Wein, West Germany he produced in 812 a translation for the first time, of the whole of "Divan of the Ghazals of Muhammad Shamsuddin Hafez, the poet of Iran". The publisher of Goethe's works, Kota, sent to Goethe (probably for review) two complimentary copies of the translated Divan-e-Hafez. As in the case of all the other new publications, Goethe began to browse the book with interest and care. But hardly had he gone through a few pages of the book when a spontaneous cry of approbation burst forth from his lips. In his own words "he had come across a poetic masterpiece that like of which his eyes had never seen till that day". He in fact, had discovered the rare and talismanic "Cup of Jamshid"-the mirror of the whole world, which he had been seeking after, all his life, and which, in the

words of Nietzsche, “Was a versatile wonder of human art” and which literally bewitched Goethe.

Hafez was to Goethe a new world, a new inspiration, a new message that come from the East and which acquainted him with the real spirit, the real thought, the Philosophy of the East as Heina, a German-Jewish philosopher had remarked, “Having been despaired with cold spiritualism of the west, Goethe’s soul thirsted for the spiritual warmth which he discovered in the bosom of the East”: Goethe says:

There, where life is pure and good, I will go back to the deep origins of the races of men, to the time when God still taught them heavenly wisdom in early tongues and they didn’t have to rack their brains; when they paid high honours to their fathers and resisted all foreign bondage. I will enjoy the limitations of that youthful age.... Those lands where the world carried such weight, because it was a spoken word.

I will mingled with herdsmen and refresh my self at oases, as I travel with caravans and trade in shawls and coffee and musk; I will tread all the paths between the wilderness and cities....

Up and down rough mountains tracks your songs, Hafez, give consolation, when the train leader, high on his mule, rapturously sings to wake the stars and scare the robbers.”

Perhaps the desire to flee from the atmosphere of the turbulent West and look for the serene peace of the East could also be likened to Hafez’s own desire to leave Shiraz and go over to Baghdad when Hafez had said,

آب و هوای فارس عجب سقله پرور است      کو هم‌رهی که خیمه از این ملک برکنم

(The climate of Fars is curiously favourable to the cads. I wish I could find a companion in whose company I could pull off my tent from this country)      and

ره نبردم به مقصود خود اندر شیراز      خرم آن روز که حافظ ره بغداد کند

(I have never, in Shiraz, been able to tread the path of success the achievement of my objectives. Blessed would be the day when Hafez takes his way towards Baghdad.

Nevertheless the beauties and attractions of Shiraz were too dear to be given up and he says”

نمی‌دهد اجازت مرا به سیر و سفر      نسیم باد مصلی و آب رکن آباد<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Ghazal 199, Couplet 7, Divan-Hafez, edited by Reza Jallali & Nazer

the aromatic breeze of the flower bower of Mussalla (A tranquil location in the vicinity of Shiraz) and the charm of the Ruknabad stream do not permit me to undertake any kind of Journey from here.

Similarly, Goethe writes in his biography. "I wanted at any cost to flee from the world of reality which had become unbearable for me and seem to draw my body and soul into a rack. I wanted to take refuge in a world of fancy, which was my foremost objective: a world in which I wished to draw my breath in peace and to enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the Eastern atmosphere. Also he once wrote to Luise on of his lady-friends. "East is indeed acting like a balm which I am using as an anesthesia for my soul in these days of great mental affliction."

Under the little 'Hejrat'<sup>23</sup> in Mughni-Nama (A songster's epistle), a chapter in Goethe's Divan, he says: "North, West and South are in turmoil, crowns are tumbling down and empires are shaking. Come, leave this Hell and commence your journey to the peaceful East, so that its spiritual breeze may blow on you; and in the assembly of love and wine and the pleasing sound of the Caspian sea may revive you to youthfulness."

It may be mentioned here that the West Ostlicher Divan of Goethe which was conceived in the sequence of a direct inspiration from the Divan of Hafez, comprises twelve chapters as under: Mughni Nama, Hafez Nama, Ishg-Nama, Saghi Nama, Suleika (Zuleykha) Nama, Parsi Nama, Timur Nama, Khuld Nama, Takfir Nama, Ranj Nama, Hekmat Nama and Mis'l Nama.

It is already evident that there was an unusual spiritual likeness between Hafez and Goethe. He was, in fact, the Hafez if his age in matters of love for beauty, wine and his lyricism. Like Hafez he too loved deeply and passionately. At least nine ladies can be named who attracted his amours during the various periods of his life. These were (1) Fridderike, the daughter of the country parson. This was rather early in 1770-71. (2) Sudden passion in 1824 for Urilk Von Levetzow who inspired Goethe's poem Marienbad Elegy, a beautiful meditation on Schillers exhumed skull (1826). (3) Louise Snedtler whom he wrote in 1816 about his desire to flee from the disturbed atmosphere of the West, and to look for peace I the East. (4)Lotte Kestner, (5) the elegant Lili Schonmann (Belinda) and above all (6) sisterly Lida, also (7) Christine Vulpius, (8) Frau Von stein, who loves like a wife with him and caused a scandal in Weimer. (9)

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<sup>23</sup> Migration (David Luke's translation)

Christine was his lawfully married wife (10) But the lady who has created history and appeared as Suleka (zuleykha) in Goethe's Divan is Mme. Marianne Von Willmer an opera actress in Frankfurt on Main, a poetess of considerable merit, whose poems have adopted and included by Goethe in his Divan under the heading "Suleka Spracht". She was the wife of a banker of that city. It would be interesting to note that although Frau Marianne Willmer created such an impact on Goethe's heart and inspired some of his finest verses in addition to contributing some wonderful pieces to Goethe's Divan, the fact of her friendship was mentioned by Goethe all his life. As a matter of fact, it remained a complete secret for several years even after his death. He did not disclose his attachment for Frau Marianne even to his closest friends. The fact came to notice for the first time in 1869 when Harman Grimm, a nephew (sister's son) of Marianne, who was himself an eminent writer and critic, disclosed in his article 'Preussische Jardduche' the real name of "Suleika" of the West Ostlicher Divan of Von Goethe. He also produced documentary proof to substantiate that certain pieces of the Divan was sent to Goethe by Marianne herself. In this way, the purely imaginary "Suleika" of the Divan become a tangible, living reality. Frankly speaking, "West Ostlicher Divan" is the most crucial letter of confessions that as been uttered by a westerner towards oriental values" (Schami, 2005).

When Marianne was 14 years of age, her mother had taken her to Frankfurt (am Main) where she learnt ballet dancing and became an opera dancer and actress of considerable repute and popularity. In the height of her fame as an opera actress, an eminent banker, Herr Von Wilmmer proposed to her and they were married. All this time Marianne was only seventeen years of age while Wilmmer was seventy-five. Goethe, who was an old friend of Wilmmer was at that time sixty five. During the courtship of Marianne and Wilmmer, Goethe was staying in Wilmmer's house; when in 1814 and 1815 he had re-visited the Rhein am Main and seen of his youth and had occasion to meet Marianne several times. This developed into a great mutual regard and friendship between the two. Her romantic nature, her intelligence, her poetic talent, and her personal charms and beauty completely bewitched Goethe. But as she became the wife of another man, who was incidentally a great friend and also host of Goethe, the whole affair assume the nature of purest love and personal regard, as will be seen from the fact that although Marianne returned his love, this belief idyll was ended by renunciation and permanent withdrawal on Goethe's part. This sentiment is perhaps very beautifully explained in an Urdu quatrain of Iqbal:

پريشان كار و بار آشنائي  
 پريشان تر مري رنگين نوايي<sup>24</sup>  
 كبهې مين دهوند تا هون لذت وصل  
 خوش آتاهي كبهې سوز جدائي

(This business of attachment (love) is full of bewilderment and confusion. Even more confusing is my colourful verse. There are moments when I yearn after the bliss of Union; yet at others. I equally thirst after the burning desire, be gotten by separation.)

Nevertheless, the unending fire kindled by love continued to smother unabated even up to his very last years and they continued to write to each other with the full knowledge and permission of Marianne's husband, Von Wilmmer, the poem *Dem Aufgehenen vollmonde* written in 1828 refers above all to Marianne; and finally the eight line *Vermachthis* (1831) accompanied the letters which she had written to him and which he returned to her shortly before his death.

Both Marianne and Goethe had a great liking for Hafez and, as has already been said, Marianne was herself a poetess of no mean order. In the *Divan*, when we read verses under the heading 'Suleika speaks', the same were written by Marianne herself and adopted by Goethe with slight alterations, which not necessarily improvements although it is true that Marianne's poetry did get an impetus under the guidance of Goethe.

In the summer of 1814, Goethe shut himself up from every one and devoted himself to the exclusive study of Hafez. He read every ghazal of Hafez once, twice, even ten times, until he thoroughly familiarized himself with the spirit, the thought, and even style and prosody of Hafez, as also his rhetorical devices, his metaphors and smiles etc., which he started adopting in his own poetic expression. Towards the end of summer, he wrote as follows in his autobiography;

I think I will go mad if I do not give expression to my powerful feelings about Hafez. I find myself simply unable to bear the impact of the thought of this extraordinary man who has so suddenly set his foot in my life."

Soon Goethe began to compose some verses whereof the inspiration was drawn from Hafez. At first he had no intention of collecting them in the form of a book, soon their number swelled so that he began to conceive of publishing a German *Divan*. In his own imagination he undertook, a vicarious journey to the East and thought he would carry himself a present to be offered to Hafez. In his autobiography he again

<sup>24</sup> Rubaiyat-e-Bal-e-Gibreel, Iqbal

says, "I prepared myself to visit Shiraz spiritually and to make that city as my permanent abode; whenever the potentates and chieftains of Iran, move their armies around Shiraz to undertake their military campaigns there, I would stage a temporary exit from that city and move back to it again when peace is restored. As regards his intended book he said,<sup>25</sup> "I want to produce my Divan as a mirror of the world or like the world reflecting cup, in contra-distinction to the thinking of the hypocritical and the outwardly religious, I will see the reflex of Beauty and ultimate Reality and will take my place by the side of Hafez in that heart of paradise where the souls of the singing poets rest in eternal peace."

And now to quote from Goethe's Divan:<sup>26</sup>

"And though the whole world sink to ruin, I will enjoy you Hafez;  
you alone! Let us, who are twin spirits share pleasure and sorrow;  
to live like you, and drink like you, shall be my pride and my life long occupation.

"That you can not end is which makes you great and it is your destiny never to begin. Your song moves like the vault of the stars, its beginning and ending is for ever the same...you are the true poetic fountain head of delights; and waters unnumbered flow from you. A mouth for ever shaped to kiss, a deep-voiced sweetly flowing songs, a gullet ever thirsty, a heart of self-out flowing kindness."

"My wandering leads me into confusion, but you can straighten me out. When I act and when I write, may you be the guide of my ways..

he adds, "you weakened this lock in my mind, you gave it to me; for the words I spoke in delight and from your sweet life, rhyme answering rhyme as look answer look."

And may you still hear them even from afar; words reach their goal, though voice and sound may have died away."

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<sup>25</sup> Translated from Persian translation of Dr. Shuja'ud-Din Shafa

<sup>26</sup> Translation by David Luke, P. 237

## Ideas in Goethe's Divzn as inspired by Hafez-Shiraz

I

IN MUGHNI-NAMA  
HEJRE (HIJRAT)<sup>27</sup>

“The North, The West and the South are disintegrating, thrones are bursting, empires are trembling; make your escape, and in the pure Orient taste the air of the patriarchs! Amid loving and drinking and singing, let Khiz'r's fountain (Chisers Quell) renew your youth.”

The expression “Chashme-ye-Khiz'r” or “Ab-e-Khiz'r” used by Hafez in the following couplets:

فیض ازل به زور و زر ار آمدی به دست      آب خضر نصیبه سکندر آمدی

If the eternal benediction could be bought with gold or by worldly might, the water of Khiz'r would have fallen to the lot of Alexander. (thought taken from Nizami –e- Ganjavi's story of Sikendar Zu'l-Qarnain's search for the water of immortality and his failure.)

انفاس عیسی از لب لعلت لطیفه ای      آب خضر ز نوش دهانت کنایتی<sup>28</sup>

The breath of Christ is but a reflex of a fine utterance from your red lips. Similarly Khiz'r's water of immortality is a symbol of the sweetness that drops from your lips.

In another Couplet; (which is not authentic), Hafez is said to have written as under:

نسیم گلشن فردوس و آب چشمه خضر      بخاک پات که از خاک پات میجویم<sup>29</sup>

The breeze of the Garden of paradise, and the water of the fountain of Khiz'r emanates from the dust of your footsteps.

Another reference to the water of immortality can be seen in the following famous couplet:

دوش وقت سحر از غصه نجاتم دادند      واندر آن ظلمت شب آب حیاتم دادند

(Yesterday morning I was freed from mortification and frustration and in the darkness of night I was given the water of immortality.)

Goethe's following verses in Hejre (Hajrat): -

<sup>27</sup> Page 231, The Divan, edited by David Luke

<sup>28</sup> Couplet No.2, Ghazal 428, Divan-e-Hafez, Reza Jalali & Nazer

<sup>29</sup> On the meter of Ghazal 300 ibid



“I will remember you, holy Hafez, in the bath-houses and taverns, when my sweet-heart lifts her veil and shakes the sandalwood-scent from her hair,” remind us of the following couplet of Hafez which seems to have inspired the thought:

اگر رفیق شفیقی درست پیمان باش رفیق حجره و گرمابه و گلستان باش<sup>30</sup>

(If you are a friend inspired by true love and sincerity then be steadfast; be my companion in my hermitage, in the bath-house and in the flower garden (where I be) and;

به بوی نافه ای کاخر صبا زان طره بگشاید زتاب جعد مشکینش چه خون افتاد در دلها<sup>31</sup>

Imagine the sweet smelling musk, which the morning breeze releases from her locks; witness, how hearts bleed to see the curl of her scented hair.

An English poet, Arthur J. Arberry, has translated the above in the following verses:

“So sweet perfume the morning air  
Did lately from her tresses bear.  
Her twisted, musk-diffusing hair-  
What heart’s calamity been there!

(The above is a fine translation except for the fourth line which somewhat spoils the effect.)<sup>32</sup>

“Love is like a fire which can not be concealed. In the day-time, its smoke discloses, its presence and at night its flames reveal the secret of the lover that tries to hide his sentiments, his looks proclaim his heart’s emotions.”

Similarly Hafez in the sixth couplet of the first poem says:

همه کارم ز خودکامی به بدنمایی کشید آخر نهان کی ماند آن رازی کز او سازند محفلها<sup>33</sup>

(All my affairs proceeded from festivity and success to disgrace and infamy. After all how can an affair, which is itself the subject of so much gaiety in merry parties, remain a secret?)

As a direct inspiration from Hafez, Goethe lays down the following four pillars of good poetry in his Divan:

Pillar No. 1-The poet should adopt love as the main subject of his poetry. As

Hafez says:

گنج عشق خود نهادی در دل ویران ما سایه دولت بر این گنج خراب انداختی<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Couplet No.1., Ghazal No.263 Reza & Jalali & Nazer

<sup>31</sup> Ghazal No01, Couplet No.2, ibid

<sup>32</sup> This is the author’s own comment

<sup>33</sup> Couplet 6, Ghazal 1, Divan-e-Hafez

(In the wilderness of our heart, O God, Thou endowed us the Treasure of Thy Love; and shedst the radiance of Thy love in this desolate corner.)

Pillar No.2- One should praise the rose coloured wine.

مبادا جز حساب مطرب و مي                      اگر نقشي زند كلك ضميرم

(May it never be that the pen of my heart should ever write anything other than the account of the musician and the wine.)

Pillar No. 3-The power of the poet's speech should be victorious in its mission, so that the fiery crown that he places on his head should lend him a divine majesty.

This reminds us, unmistakably, of the following couplets of Hafez, who evidently has inspired the thought contained in the above writing:-

بر در ميكده رندان قلندر باشند                      كه ستانند و دهند افسر شاهنشاهي<sup>35</sup>

The saintly wine drinkers stick to the door of the tavern. And such high in their thinking that they can take or give away the kingly crowns.

در خرقه چو آتش زدي اي عارف سالك                      جهدي كن و سر حلقه رندان جهان باش<sup>36</sup>

(O Worshipper who knows and treads the path of divine knowledge, know that you have set fire to the cloak of piety, strive hard and become the chief of the circle of the merry wine-drinkers of the world.)

Pillar No. 4- The poet should eschew evil and put up a fight against it.

Because it is the duty of the poet to rid the world of the darkness of Ahriman and lead them on to the light of Yezdan.

This reminds us of the following couplet of Hafez:

كس چو حافظ ننگشود از رخ اندیشه نقاب                      تا سر زلف سخن را به قلم شانه زدند<sup>37</sup>

(No one lifted the veil from the face of doubts, as did Hafez. This applies to all who combed the locks of poetry with their pens.)

As for his fight against evil, the study of the following couplet of Hafez would be pertinent:

بر اين رواق زبرجد نوشته اند به زر                      كه جز نكويي اهل كرم نخواهد ماند<sup>38</sup>

(It has been written in golden letters on this blue sky that nothing shall subsist except the good deeds of men of noble nature.)

<sup>34</sup> Ghazal 429, Couplet 6

<sup>35</sup> Couplet No. 3

<sup>36</sup> Ghazal 265

<sup>37</sup> Divan-e-Hafez, Reza Jalali and Nazer, Ghazal 157, couplet 7

<sup>38</sup> Ghazal 166, Couplet 7, *ibid*. Another fine on this subject also appears in ghazal 157 and reads as under

Concluding his compliments to the poetry of Hafez, Goethe says, “if a poet is able to achieve the above qualities in his verse, he will be able to produce poetry of everlasting appeal, as that of Hafez; and would find a place in the hearts of all mankind.”

The above also reminds us of the great calibre of Goethe as a critic. But I have deliberately omitted this aspect of Goethe’s genius as may also appear from couplets like the following”

دوش دیدم که ملانک در میخانه زدند      گل آدم بسرشتند و به پیمانہ زدند

I saw yesterday (before Man’s creation) that the Angels were knocking at the door of tavern, thus creating the clay of man and with the same they likewise molded the wine-cup.

خاک مرا چو در ازل با می سرشته اند      با مدعی بگو که چرا ترک وی کنم

As the clay from which my body was molded in the eternal past, was kneaded with wine, I ask my opponents as to why I should give up a thing, which has crept into my creation itself.

In the *Ishq-Nama* (story of Love) Goethe addressed Hafez in these works;

“Forgive me O teacher if I lay down my heart at the feet of a love-some toddling cypress (Die Wandelnde Cypress)”

This thought seems to have been derived from the following hemistiches of Hafez:

سرو چمان من چرا میل چمن نمی کند      همدم گل نمی شود یاد سمن نمی کند

(Why doesn’t the Cyprus of my heart get inclined to visit the garden.... etc.

or

**(It is the cypress which rises vertically )**      سروی است چنین که می رود راست

In *Mughni-Nama* sub-section “Mandane existence” Goethe says:

“O Hafez when you sing your song in the memory of your beautiful beloved, how delightedly you tell the tale of the dust of the path leading to her house!... The very breeze which blows in her path and scatters its dust, smells for you sweeter than the scent of the musk and the rose.” The above thought is inspired by the following couplets of Hafez:

ای صبا نکهتی از خاک ره یار بیار      ببر اندوه دل و مژده دلداری بیار<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Divan-e- Hafez, edited by Reza Jalali and Nazer, Ghazal 240, couplet 1

Oh morning breeze, bring the sweet smell of the dust which lies in the path of the friend, take away the agony of my soul and bring the welcome message from my sweetheart.

In another passage in the chapter of (Moghni Nama), Goethe says “die that you may love”.

Curiously, Hafez also lived in a cultural climate which permitted a certain religious latitude in its poetry, due in particular to the mystical vein of amatory poetry that had been epitomised by his predecessor Rumi and to some extent by his fellow Shirazi Sa‘di, but exactly to what effect Hafez exploited this latitude, and hence just what manner of poet it was that Goethe chose as the locus and inspiration for this encounter with Islam, is to this day a matter of debate (Fennell, 2005: 238). As a point of fact, inspiration from the Holy Quran’s verse It is also directly derived from the following couplet of Hafez:

حافظ صبور باش که در راه عاشقی      آن کس که جان نداد به جانان نمی رسد<sup>40</sup>

(Be patient Hafez! and realize that whosoever did not surrender his life, did not reach the beloved).

In “Ishq-Nama,” the chapter on “Love” Goethe says: “O Hafez, in the same manner as a mere spark is enough to ignite and burn away the capitals of Emperors, your fiery speech has caused such a conflagration in my soul, that the whole person of this German counterpart of yours seems to be in tumult.”

In the like Manner Hafez says:

برق عشق آتش غم در دل حافظ زد و سوخت      یار دیرینه ببینید که با یار چه کرد<sup>41</sup>

The lightening of LOVE ignited the fire of sadness in the heart of Hafez and burnt it off to ashes. See! What an old friend did to his sincerest friend.

In the same chapter, elsewhere, Goethe says, “O Holy Hafez, you have learnt the secrets of life and of mysticism without adopting the methods of the hypocritical and of the seemingly pious; and led men on to their eternal welfare even though your success in this path will not be acknowledge by the temporal heads of law enforcing agencies.”

This again has been suggested by the following verse of Hafez:

<sup>40</sup> Ghazal 197, couplet 7

<sup>41</sup> Ghazal 162, couplet 7

زاهد ظاهر پرست از حال ما آگاه نیست در حق ما هر چه گوید جای هیچ اکراه نیست<sup>42</sup>

(The worshiper who concerns himself only with ostensible virtue; is unaware of my inner self, let him say about me whatever he likes. I can't force him to change his ideas.)

In the poem IM GEGENWARTGEN VERGANGNES (The past in the present) Goethe himself acknowledged his debt to Hafez in these words:

“Roses and lilies full of morning dew blossom in the garden near me; and behind and beyond it the friendly bush-covered rocky slope rises... And at this point in our song we come back to Hafez; for it is fitting to share the joy of the day's completeness with masters of experience.

In Suleika-Nama Goethe says: “I asked for but little.... I have often sat happily and content in a tavern or in a small house. But as soon as I think of you, my spirit expands like that of a conqueror.” This is again inspired by the following couplets of Hafez:

من که ره بردم به گنج حسن بی پایان دوست صد گدای همچو خود را بعد از این قارون کنم<sup>43</sup>

“I who has been endowed with the limitless treasure of beauty of my friend, can now turn into the richest Kings (Qaroons) a hundred beggars like myself.”

Goethe goes on to say: “The kingdoms of Timur-e-Lang should serve you, his all-mastering away obey you, from Badakshan you would receive a trilente of rubies, and of turquoises from the Caspian Sea.

You would have dried fruits sweet as honey from Bokhara, the land of the sun; and a thousand sweet poems from Samarqand, written on the pages of silk. All the above is inspired by the couplet”

اگر آن ترک شیرازی به دست آرد دل ما را به خال هندویش بخشم سمرقند و بخارا را

But, Goethe goes on all this kingly riches will sadden your heart and sicken your soul.

Because the truly loving hearts get no pleasure except when they sit by the side of their sweethearts! These following verses of Hafez inspire this:

اگر به هر دو جهان یک نفس زدم با دوست مرا به هر دو جهان حاصل آن نفس باشد

If in both worlds I can draw one breath in the company of my friend, I will consider that one breath is my most valuable acquisition from the two worlds.

<sup>42</sup> This scene is very much like the flower-bower of Mussalla, so often described by Hafez; as also the landscape of the rising hills of Shiraz beyond Hafezieh

<sup>43</sup> Ghazal No. 328, Couplet No. 6, Reza Jalali and Nazer (Divan-e-Hafez)

Goethe blesses Hafez in these words in the fine poem PHANOMEN (phenomenon):

“When the Sun-God mates with a curtain of rain, an arching rim shaded with  
colours at once appears.

I see this same circle drawn in the mist: your hair may be white, yet you will  
love.

شاهد عهد شباب آمده بودش به خواب      باز به پیرانه سر عاشق دیوانه شد

As a curtain line, following sublime verse of Goethe as contained in his ‘West Ostlicher Divan’, it is a wonderful lyric depicting the great personalities of Goethe and Hafez-e-Shiraz. Moreover it serves as an immortal production that has evoked not only unparalleled learned commentary but has also created unequalled interest both in East as well as West. Obviously, it has inspired Iqbal’s Payame-Mashriq and is as unsurpassed as Goethe’s other masterpiece ‘Faust’.

The East is God’s, The West is God’s, Northern and Southern lands rest in the  
peace of His hands.

He alone is just, wills what is right for every man. Of his hundred names let  
this one be high-extolled. Amen!

## Conclusion

One can accordingly conclude that Hafez served as an archetype that Goethe intelligently adopted to assimilate. He accepted to creatively imitate, flattering someone deserving the act. Goethe, in fact, grasped the happy idea, seized the day, made the best of the occasion, met the moment of truth, by means of which he identified himself to belong to a category of great men; Hafez privileged the rank of an exponent. He discovered who he was precariously and what he vicariously strived for.

A great man should be the product of the past he chose to be ascribed to. Someone who cares about his omni-presence and looks forward to staying in the borderless future truly benefits from a communicating past. Occasionally, whirling wind and shifting sands create versions of great men but some voluntarily try to *become* the historical variety made available to them. Goethe did so tracing his past in Hafez. He could not find it in India, China, Greece or somewhere else. He eventually ran across that justifiable expectation, somewhere serene, the Shiraz of Pars. He perceived the cure for the infectious malady, the reconciliation for the wounds and deformities war

made Europe suffer from. How lucky he was, to heal the mass he roamed around, to love the way he felt to survive.

اي حافظ  
سخن تو همچون ابدیت بزرگ است  
زیرا آن را آغاز و انجامی نیست  
کلام تو چون گنبد آسمان به خود وابسته است  
میان غزلیات تو و تو فرقی نمی توان گذاشت  
چه همه آن در حد کمال است  
اي حافظ  
تو آن سرچشمه فیاض شعر و نشاطی  
که از آن هر لحظه موجی از پس موج دیگر برون می تراود  
دهان تو همواره برای بوسه زدن  
و لبث برای نغمه سرودن  
و گلویت برای باده نوشیدن  
و دلت برای مهر ورزیدن  
آماده است  
اگر هم دنیا به سر آید  
آرزو دارم که تنها حافظ آسمانی  
با تو باشم  
و چون برادری توام در شادی و غمت شرکت کنم  
همراه تو باده نوشم  
و چون تو عشق بورزم  
زیرا که این افتخار زندگی من و مایه حیات من است .  
گوته، دیوان شرقی

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