

**‘The Legacy of Rumi (d. 1273) in Later Islamic
Philosophy and Poetry’**

**A One-Day Seminar at the Institute of Arab
and Islamic Studies, Exeter University**

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CONVENORS:

*The Rumi Institute, Near East University, Nicosia, Cyprus & the Rumi Studies Group
at the Centre for Persian and Iranian Studies, Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies,
University of Exeter, U.K.*

Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Leonard Lewisohn
Senior Lecturer in Persian
Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies
University of Exeter

Seminar Opening Remarks

Mr. Gökalp Kâmil
Founding Director, Rumi Institute
Near East University, Nicosia, Cyprus

Speakers' Titles, Abstracts and Biographies

Boundless Love: Ankaravi's Commentary on the Preface to the Second Book of the *Mathnawi*

by Dr. Alberto Fabio Ambrosio

The preface of the second book of Rumi's masterpiece, the *Mathnawi*, is a turning point for understanding the philosophy of Sufism and especially for a correct interpretation of its Religion of Love. According to Ankaravi (d. 1631), who is one of the most important Ottoman commentators on Rumi and a Mevlevi Sufi master himself, Love (*'ishq*) is exactly (as his master, Rumi pointed out) a Love without any kind of balance for measuring itself. Ankaravi's commentary on this passage represents a great synthesis of Rumi's philosophical thought. My translation of the preface of the second book and comparison of it with comments by Ankaravi on the first eighteen verses of the *Mathnawi* will constitute an introduction to the deep, insightful interpretation of this seventeenth century disciple of Rumi.

DR. ALBERTO FABIO AMBROSIO studied Turkish language and civilization at Marc Bloch University in Strasbourg, where he completed his MA in 2002 in Turkish, the subject of his thesis being the ritual of initiation into the Bektashi Sufi Order. In the same year he completed a second MA in theology with a paper on Hinduism and Sufism (the case of Bistami). In 2007 he finished his doctoral studies at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) on the subject of doctrines and practices of the Whirling Dervishes in the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth century. His publications on Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes include: *Vie d'un derviche tourneur. Doctrine et rituels du soufisme au xvii^e siècle*, (Paris 2010); *Les derviches tourneurs: Doctrine, histoire et pratiques* (2006) with Eve Pierunek and Thierry Zarcone. An ordained Catholic priest, he is currently pursuing his research on Sufi culture and Rumi's order of the Whirling Dervishes in Istanbul where he has been residing since 2003.

The Impact of Rumi on the Later Ottoman Poetry and Music

by Kudsi Erguner

The *Divan* and *Mathnawi* of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi had a close and intimate relationship with the lodges (Mevlevihanes) of the Mevlevi Sufi Order. These Mevlevihanes were also schools where various fine arts were patronised and practiced, especially the arts of poetry, music and calligraphy. In fact, most of the great poets and musicians in the Ottoman Empire were affiliates of one or another of the Mevlevihanes in Istanbul or other great cities of the empire. It is hardly an exaggeration to state that up until the dawn of the twentieth century, the main source of poetry and philosophy in the Ottoman civilization was Rumi's compositions, and the Mevlevihanes and the Tariqat of the Mevleviyya were the main institutional locus where this poetry and philosophy was preserved and propagated. In this lecture, I will demonstrate how the legacy of Rumi's writings and thought was nurtured in the numerous Mevlevihanes scattered throughout the vast territory of Ottoman Empire over the course of several centuries, and how it thus survived through the music, prose and verse of the Mevlevi masters.

KUDSI ERGUNER lives and works in Paris as a musician, composer, musicologist, teacher and author. He is one of the foremost Nay masters of our times, particularly famed for his activities helping to introduce Ottoman and Sufi music to the world with internationally acclaimed projects and recordings. He has made authoritative contributions to world music, having documented and revived nearly forgotten musical traditions and brought them to the attention of the Western public, thus securing them a place within Europe's cultural inheritance. Erguner comes from a family of Turkish musicians, and his involvement with various Sufi brotherhoods, whose music and teachings he studied, left their decisive marks on him. He received his training directly from his father, Ulvi Erguner, who was the last great master of the Nay. Kudsi Erguner also studied architecture and musicology in Paris, has given concerts and played in major festivals throughout the world and has researched the music of India, Pakistan and Turkey, founded diverse music ensembles, recorded numerous albums and has worked with such well-known artists as Peter Brook, Carolyn Carlson, Maurice Béjart, Peter Gabriel, Robert Wilson, Georges Aperghis, Tony Gatliff, Didier Lockwood, Michel Portal, Marc Minkowski, Fazil Say, Mehmet Ulusoy, Cristoph Lauer, Michel Godard, Renaud Garcia-Fons, and many others.

In this way, Erguner has initiated a renaissance in the study and performance of Ottoman Classical and Sufi music in Turkey. He has devised many original projects for the International Istanbul Music Festival, among which can be

mentioned: “From Sufism to Flamenco,” “Ghazals,” “Ferahfeza Whirling Dervishes Ceremony,” “Songs from Vienna and Istanbul: Schubert-Sevki Bey,” “Rembetiko from Istanbul,” “Works of Prince Dimitri Kantemir & Ali Ufki,” “Islam Blues,” “Taj Mahal,” “La Banda Alla Turka,” “Ottomania” and “Fasl- Ottoman court music.” Erguner is regarded as one of the most important pioneers and contributors to Ottoman Sufi and classical music as well as to the world music. He currently lectures on the Ottoman Court and Sufi music at the Rumi Association in Paris, at the Istituto Interculturale di Studi Musicali Comparati di Fondazione Cini in Venice and at the Conservatorium of Rotterdam.

William Hastie's *Festival of Spring*: Hegel, Rumi, and the Cult of Omar Khayyam

by Roderick Grierson

Even though the Hastie Lectures and the Hastie Club were established to preserve his legacy at the University of Glasgow, the Rev. Prof. William Hastie is now remembered with greater clarity and affection in India than in his native Scotland. Indeed he was recently described by an Indian journalist as 'one of the master spirits of this age'. As principal of the Scottish College in Calcutta, Hastie undoubtedly provoked several scandals, was sued for libel, declared bankrupt, and imprisoned, but he was also a formative influence on the career of the famous Vivekenanda, who introduced Vedanta and Yoga to the West. This was not the only occasion in Hastie's career when conventional boundaries between East and West appeared irrelevant. While preparing for ordination in the Church of Scotland, Hastie had become fascinated by the writings of Friedrich Hegel, absorbing along with his Idealist philosophy an admiration for the mystical poetry of Jalal al-Din Rumi. Hastie's enthusiasm for Rumi eventually led him to produce *The Festival of Spring*, a volume of translations published in 1903 and based upon Friedrich Rückert's earlier German versions. While the verses are generally thought to be charming, the most intriguing section of the book is an essay in which Hastie criticizes the contemporary fashion for Omar Khayyam by comparing his 'despairing pessimism' with the spiritual vision of Rumi. Although Hastie's essay may have been ignored in recent decades, the controversy that it provoked allows us to examine Western enthusiasm for Persian poetry during the nineteenth century, including the invention of European versions of Omar or Rumi that survive alongside the Persian originals, as well as the fault lines that emerged between conventional Christian belief and a number of more exotic or even imaginary alternatives, and the ways in which the established Churches responded to these challenges.

RODERICK GRIERSON is currently Menteşezade Research Fellow at the Rumi Institute, Near East University. He was trained in Syriac, Armenian, and Greek at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, and after completing the organization of *African Zion: The Sacred Art of Ethiopia*, which opened at The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore in 1993 with a catalogue of the same title published by Yale University Press, he became a fellow of the DuBois Institute for African and African American Research

at Harvard University. He has recently edited and written an introduction to *Deviant Histories: New Perspectives on Turkish Sufism*, a translation of Ahmed Yaşar Ocak's *Türk Sufîliğine Bakışlar*, which has been published by New East University Press. He has also edited and prepared an introduction and bibliography for a revised version of *The City of the Heart*, the first translation into English of the complete text of Yunus Emre's *Divan* according to the edition published in 1961 by Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı, and written a new introduction for a second printing of *The Scholar and the Saint: Studies in Commemoration of Abu'l-Rayhan al-Biruni and Jalal al-Din al-Rumi*. In 2009, he delivered the Sûha Faiz Memorial Lectures, which will be published as *The Road to the City of the Heart*. Forthcoming publications in 2010 will also include *Mehmed Fuad Köprülü and the Shamanist Legacy in Turkish Sufism* and the exhibition catalogue *See What Love Has Done: 175 Years of Printed Books on Yunus Emre*.

Sultan Walad's (623/1226–712/1312) Role in the Foundation of the Mawlawiyya

by Prof. Hülya Küçük

Sultan Walad's (623/1226–712/1312) name is associated with his establishing the early history of the Mawlawi Sufi Order, by conveying the way and teachings of his father Mawlana Rumi's and his father's teachers in his *Ibtida-nama*, and his other efforts in laying down the foundations of what later became known as the Mawlawiyya. He also composed three *Mathnawi* poems, a *Diwan* and other books commenting on his father's words. It can be said that to a large degree he turned the ecstatic, poetic Sufism of his father into a sober and didactic tradition. All these were fairly enough to regard him as the second *Pir* (Patron Saint) of the Mawlawi Sufi tradition.

The claim that there are two tendencies in the Mawlawi Order: one led by Shams of Tabriz, which tended towards Alawi antinomianism or unorthodoxy, and the other led by Sultan Walad, which tended towards asceticism and orthodoxy, is not correct according to the author. In her opinion, while there were certain schisms in the Mawlawi Sufi tradition, Sultan Walad's path cannot be called simply "a way of asceticism." Rather, like Shams, Sultan Walad can be deemed a representative of ecstatic Sufism, although he was much more exuberant than Shams. Outwardly, Sultan Walad appeared as a more 'sober and reasonable' Sufi, shunning extreme manifestations of love, while struggling to unite exotericism and esotericism by avoiding extremist mystical ideas.

HÜLYA KÜÇÜK is Associate Professor of the History of Sufism at Selçuk University, Konya. She is the author of *The Roles of the Bektashis in Turkey's National Struggle* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), *Kurtuluş Savaşında Bektaşiler* (İstanbul 2003), *Sultan Veled Ve Maarif'i. Kitâbu'l-Hikemiyye adlı Maârif Tercüme ve Şerhi* (Konya 2005); *Sultan Veled ve İntihanamesi*, (İstanbul 2010), *Tasavvufa Giriş* (İstanbul 2010) and *Tasavvuf Tarihine Giriş* (İstanbul 2010). Her current study focuses on the history of Sufism in classical times and today.

Simat al-muqinin: Isma‘il Ankaravi’s Commentary on the Preface to the Mathnawi

by Prof. Bilal Kuşpınar

Simat al-Muqinin is a rare Arabic manuscript written by the renowned Mawlawi thinker, Isma‘il Rusukhi Ankaravi (d.1041/1631), as a commentary on the Preface (*Dibaja*) to the First Book of Mawlana Rumi’s *Mathnawi*. As we learn from his introductory statements, Ankaravi appears to have proposed at least two specific objectives for the composition of this short but original work, which is still preserved in manuscript form and currently being edited and translated into English by myself. One of his objectives in writing the *Simat* is to explain or elucidate certain difficult phrases employed in the Preface, especially the phrases which, as he asserts, had been either inadvertently neglected or inaccurately interpreted by commentators prior to him. His second aim, in parallel to the first one, is to disclose hidden mysteries, symbolic meanings and metaphorical indications of pivotal notions that are articulated by Rumi in the Preface. Another objective one may glean from the opening lines of the *Simat*, although it has not been stated explicitly by Ankaravi, is that he seeks to provide a readily accessible manual or companion for the disciples of the Mawlawi spiritual path in particular and the readers of the *Mathnawi* in general, so that they can better recognize the value of the latter work and benefit from it, accordingly. In our lecture, we shall attempt to establish the place and importance of the *Simat* in the overall context of Ankaravi’s writings and then give an overview of its content, while highlighting its important characteristics.

BILAL KUŞPINAR received his B.A. in theology from Selçuk University, Konya, his M.A. in philosophy, logic and history of science from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, his first Ph.D. in the history of philosophy from Selçuk University, and his second Ph.D. in Islamic philosophy and mysticism from McGill University. He specializes in medieval Islamic philosophy and mysticism. His research investigates into various philosophical and mystical traditions, especially within the context of the Ottoman intellectual history. He taught at several academic institutions, including International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, and Concordia and McGill Universities, Montreal. He is the author of several books including: *Isma‘il Ankaravi on the Illuminative Philosophy* (1996) and *Ibn-i Sina’da Bilgi Teorisi (Ibn Sina’s Theory of Knowledge)* 2nd ed. (2001). And his third book on *Ankaravi’s Commentary on the Light Verse* is forthcoming. Currently, he is professor of history of Islamic philosophy in the College of Arts, Science & Education, Ahlia University, Bahrain.

The Influence of Mawlana Rumi on Mulla Sadra and Fayd-i Kashani

by Prof. Shahram Pazouki

The seventeenth-century Persian thinkers Mulla Sadra (d. 1050/1640) and Muhsin Fayd-i Kashani (d. 1091/1680) are counted as being, respectively, the greatest mystical philosopher and theologian of the entire Shi'ite Islamic world. While each of them had their own distinct understanding of Sufism, theology and philosophy, the works of both was characterized by an admiration and absorption in the poetry and mysticism of Jalal al-Din Rumi. Rumi is the most frequently quoted Persian poet in Mulla Sadra's prose writings. Fayd-i Kashani not only wrote an entire thematic study and synopsis of Rumi's *Mathnawi*, but also composed many ghazals modelled on poems in the *Divan-i Shams-i Tabrizi*, while his Persian treatises feature more citations from Rumi's verse than any other poet. My lecture will discuss and explain why Rumi was so influential on these thinkers in particular and on the seventeenth-century philosophers of the School of Isfahan in general.

SHAHRAM PAZOUKI is Assistant Professor at the Iranian Academy of Philosophy, Tehran, and Editor-in-Chief of *Mawlana Pajuhi* (Rumi Studies), a quarterly journal on Rumi published in Persian.

Naqshbandi Admirers of Rumi in the Late Timurid Period

by Dr. Lloyd Ridgeon

This lecture focuses on the works of three Naqshbandi Sufis (Ya‘qub Charkhi, ‘Abd al-Rahman Jami and Husayn Wa‘iz Kashifi), which analysed, praised and served to propagate Rumi’s *Mathnawi*. Each of the commentaries is unique in that their contents functioned to promote different kinds of Sufism. One of the most interesting features of Charkhi’s offering is that through his interpretation of the *Mathnawi* he advanced and propagated the doctrines of the Naqshbandi Order with frequent references to both the sayings of Baha’ al-Din Naqshband and certain Naqshbandi rituals (especially the visualisation of the shaykh in the heart). Jami’s commentary on the *Mathnawi* is limited to an explanation of its first two lines. However, he included in it a number of his own highly exquisite *mathnawis*, in which he considered the reed (*nay*) from different perspectives. He also attempted to synthesize Rumi’s opening of the *Mathnawi* with the ontology of the *wujudi* school, associated with Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers. Finally, Husayn Wa‘iz Kashifi is represented with an investigation into his anthology of the *Mathnawi*. Anthologies are far from simple or innocent works, because their structure highlights the importance or otherwise of the themes, terms, expressions, people and places contained in the original work. Kashifi’s offering reflects his reputation as a “sober” Sufi who attempted to give structure and clarity to texts that sometimes did not reveal their secrets so easily. These three Sufis then, offered very different ways in which subsequent generations of Sufis were helped in their appreciation of the *Mathnawi*.

LLOYD RIDGEON is Reader in Islamic Studies at Glasgow University, where he teaches courses on Sufism and modern Iran as well as general Islamic Studies. He is author of the only major study in English of the great 13th-century Persian Sufi thinker *Aziz Nasafi* (1998) and editor of *Islamic Interpretations of Christianity* (2001). His recent publications include *Sufi Castigator: Ahmad Kasravi and the Iranian Mystical Tradition* (2006), as well as a four-volume collection of articles by the contemporary scholars of Sufism entitled *Sufism: Critical Concepts* (2008). He has also written a study of spiritual chivalry in the Persian Sufi tradition: *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: A History of Sufi Futuwat in Iran* (2010).