

**“Master Disciple Relationship in the Hindi Poetry of
Amir Khusrow: An Analysis” by Tazeem Imran**



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Abstract: *The Indo-Persian Sufi tradition emphasizes incommunicable, unbound, and unconditioned Divine love, evoking a bridal metaphor as a symbol of divinity. The spiritual path evolves through esoteric contemplation of Fana Fil Shaykh, characterized by complete trust and willingness to discover the miraculous powers of the Holy Guide. The Master emerges as the prime model for the seeker of divine love, and the relationship between the Master and Disciple is characterized by self-subjugation and meditation. Amir Khusrow, a distinguished Sufi poet, transcribed the intimacy and mutual love between Master and Disciple in his Hindi poetic articulations and musical compositions, contributing significantly to Indian art and literature.*

Key Words: Indo Persian, Fana Fil Shaykh, Model, Sufi Poet

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Introduction

Abul Hasan Yamin u din Khusrow was a great Sufi poet, an artist, a prolific author, an intellectual giant of many languages, a genius musician, a versatile composer, a wealthy merchant, a notable noble in the court of Delhi Sultans (Balban up to the time of Muhammad Bin Tughluq), and, above all, the most dutiful and devoted *Murid* of Khwaja Nizam al-Din Awliya (Rahman, 1979).

Amir Khusrow's real name was Abul Hassan Yaminuddin. He was ethnically a Turkish Mongol, born in 1253 A.D. in the Patiala district in UP, India. His father Saifuddin Mahmud was a Turkish general and the chief of the Laachein tribe in Turkistan, who migrated to India due to the invasion of Changez Khan over their land (Sharma, 2006). Saifuddin Mahmud was welcomed by the Sultan Iletmish, entitled Amadul Mulk, granted land at Patiala and underwent a matrimonial tie with Daulat Naz Begum. She was

a lady of Indian origin and thus Khusrow was racially knitted into an ethno-linguistic breed of Indo-Turkish tradition. That couple had three sons, the eldest one was Izzat Din Ali Shah, then Abul Hassan Khusrow and the youngest one was named Hisam Din (Majumdar et al., 1950). It has been quoted from the sources that Saifudin Mahmud brought his son to a Saint, who blessed that newborn with a prediction of being called the Parrot of India in the future years of life (Ansari, 1975).

Although Saifuddin Mahmud was equipped with warfare tactics and court-handling situations, he was not acquainted much with intellectual speculations. Even then he paid special attention to the proliferation of reading, writing and learning skills of his sons. Such an educationally cultivatable environment at home resulted in the well-groomed personalities of all three of them. On one side Izzat Din Ali Shah had

proven himself to be a reputed scholar of Persian and Arabic literature of his times and on the other hand, the youngest one Hisam Din was known to be the man of sword because of his bravery and courageous nature. Amir Khusrow was a poet by virtue of his intimidation with spirituality since his early childhood days. He had a full command over Persian, Turkish, Arabic, Sanskrit and Hindi languages (Sharma, 2006).

The sudden death of his father made him an orphan at the young age of eight, he later grew up under the supervision of his grandfather Immadul Mulk Rawat Arz. He was a devoted follower of Khwaja Nizamuddin and head of war ministry under the reign of Balban. Even this shadow of fortune could not last long due to the death of Immadul Mulk. It was after the incident of his Nana's demise which resulted in a sort of depth in his personality and thus he went into the army of Sultan Balban. His first poetry book was launched, at the age of eighteen named تحفته الصغر (Jaffary, 1979). In 1277, Khusrow was made the court poet of Bengal at the invitation of Balban's son Bughra Khan. He spent two years there and then accompanied Khan Muhammad in Multan (son of Balban and Governor of Multan). His second poetry book named وسط الحيات comprised fifty encomiums in praise of Khan Muhammad. His work حكم الحكم captures a written record of the destruction and horrendous decline of Khan Muhammad in Multan (Jaffary, 1979). Khusrow remained in the court services of Balban, Muiz ud Din Qaiqabad (grandson of Balban), and Shams ud Din Kayumars (three-year-old great-grandson of Balban) (Sharma, 2006). The downfall of the slave dynasty and the rise of Khiljis brought forth no upheaval in the legendary status of Khusrow as his services were not only acknowledged but also honoured and awarded with the title of "Amir" by the new Sultan Jalal ud Din Firuz Khalji (Qureshi, 1994). During the reigning period of Ala ud Din, a number of poetic transcriptions and creative intellectual works were written by Khusrow. The famous work of Khusrow, named "Khaza'in ul-Futuh" (*The Treasures of Victory*) tells the journey of war fairs and administrative policies of Alaudin Khilji. He then composed a quintet (*khamisa*) comprised of five *masnavis*. *Matla ul-Anwar* (*Rising Place of Lights*) was the first out of all five, it deals with ethical and Sufi themes. The second *masnavi*, *Khusrow and Shirin* consisted of 4000 verses. The third, fourth and fifth voluminous

masnavis were named as *Laila Majnun*, *Aina-e-Sikandari* and the *Hasht Bihisht* respectively. Under the impression of these scholarly works, Khusrow rose to the prominence of the intellectual elite of his times (Jaffary, 1979). In 1316, Khusrow wrote *Nuh Sipahr* (*Nine Skies*), describing the poetic manifestation of a reigning period of Mubarak Khalji and called each phase of it as wide as sky. Another historical poetic contribution was the scripting of *Tughlaq Nama*. (Salahuddin, 1972). Khusrow was an author of almost ninety books including prose and poetry works. He had established his recognition as a big leader in the intellectual history of medieval India. His poetry and musical compositions are synthesized formulations of Indo-Muslim identity (Husain, 1975).

Khwaja Nizam al-Din Awliya and Amir Khusrow: A Spiritual Journey

The outer look of the Northwest Frontier Region of medieval India (Present-day Pakistan) was naturally engulfed towards Sufism. The spiritual devotion and by virtue of initiation this land prescribed the peculiar features of identity which was collectively different from the other regions of the Indian Sub-Continent. This hegemonic mystical inclination further intensified with the usage of bridal symbolism in the form of poetry which eventually emphasized mainly on the mystical dimensions of cultural trends and social traditions. Profoundly, the historical context of Sufi literature is preoccupied with the idea of *Pir* as beloved and *Mureed* as beloved. Henceforth, the Poetic genres are overwhelmed with the dominance of bridal themes addressing God as Master, and Father as well as *Lover*, *Muhib*, *Mehboob*, and Beloved (Schimmel, 1997).

Hence, the spiritual journey of Amir Khusrow was well-knitted with the portrayal of God as beloved while presenting himself as the lover (Ernest, 1997). The conceptualization of mystic knowledge depends upon the thought and practice of systematized self-reliance on the Master. Fortunately, this personal orientation of Khusrow grew on a larger horizon due to the favourable circumstances. His father and grandfather both were spiritually inclined towards the Sufistic teachings of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Awliya. Who were the accomplished Sufi Saints and a distinguished figure in the Indian history of Sufism? His Murshid Baba Fareed Ganjshakar

once stated "You will be a shadow under whose soothing shadow people will rest" (Haeiri, 2000).

Few of the experts on Medieval Sufism expressed their agreement that Saifuddin Mahmud along with his three sons took an oath of allegiance in the hands of Hazrat Khwaja and thus Khusrow was knitted into a bond of Master Disciple relationship since his early childhood days. This unbroken chain of holiness grounded the e realms of remembrance through (*Dhikar*)meditation. As described by Renard "*Dhikar* is a meditation on the names of God and selected Quranic sequences, often inducing ecstatic states (*Wajd*). It can be done individually or in a community or silently or aloud: which formulas are used for the invocation, as well as the outer form of a *Dhikar* differs from order to order (Renard, 2009) Eventually, this mutual corporation of mystical acknowledgement was further interrogated and inquired by Khusrow when he rose to the age of eight. Khusrow went and stopped at the door of his *Pir's Khanqah* and wrote these inquisitive verses as he wanted to test him, before a complete subjugation.

تو آن شای کی بر ایوان قصر
کیوترگر نشیند، باز گردد
غریبے مستمندے بردر آمد
بیاید اندرون یا بازار گردد

Translation:

You are that exalted spiritual monarch upon whose palace, if a pigeon sits it must become a lark. Here is an eager soul, searching for truth, seeking your permission to come in or to go away? (Khusraw, Amir: Translated by Masood Qureshi, 1997)

The great saint at once understood the mind of the boy and ordered his attendant to go and read out his own *rubayee*, in answer: (Khusraw, Amir: Translated by Masood Qureshi, 1997)

بیاید اندرون مرد حقیقت
که باہایک نفس ہمزاز گرد

اگر ایلم بود آن مرد نادان
ازاں را ہے کہ آمد باز گردد

Translation:

Yes Please come in, You are a pious soul, So we may get along with each other as worthy friends But you can leave this place if you don't feel an innate purity of truth).

It was a perfect reply to satisfy the inquisitive soul of Khusrow, he found his destination and took an oath of allegiance with a heart full of confession and a mind intruded with devotion. His compassion compelled him to establish his recognition as a Sufi by virtue of his initiation and intimate association with Nizam al-Din Awliya.

Another unique story illustrates Khusrow's unbounded and unconditioned emotional attachment to his Pir. Once a layman visited Nizam al-Din Awliya in the hope of some financial help, but incidentally the great Sufi had nothing in his hands so he offered his own pair of shoes to him. Coincidentally that poor man met with Khusrow, who was coming back to Delhi from Bengal and was carrying a huge sum of money along with him. Amazingly Khusrow felt the fragrance of his Master and bought the pair of shoes by giving away all his wealth. On his arrival at Delhi, Khusrow was carrying those shoes of his Pir upon his head and presented himself in front of Nizam al-Din Awliya. (Rizvi, 2000) The following notable conversation between them gives an apprehensible insight into the existing love between their relations.

Hazrat Nizamuddin: Khusro, what have you brought for me from your business tour?

Amir Khusro: Your honour, a presentation from the spiritual monarch of India.

Hazrat Nizamuddin: How much did you pay for it? Amir

Amir Khusro: All my poor wealth

Hazrat Nizamuddin: Khusro! Bisyar arzaan kharidi. (Khusrow! You paid a very low price for it)

Amir Khusro: Your honour, the man who was lucky to possess it was satisfied with the offer of my wealth alone, had he demanded my life also, I would have given it gladly to possess this sacred and priceless souvenir of my beloved Pir"

It was such a reciprocally infatuated bond of love between the two that Khawaja Nizamuddin

Auliya used to say about his Mureed "If Shariat permitted, I would have preferred to sleep with Khusrow in one and the same grave" (Ram & Khan, 2003).

Master Disciple Relationship in the Hindi Poetry of Khusrow

This exemplary intimacy and mutual love between the Pir and Murid was creatively personified in most of the poetic manuscripts and musical compositions of Amir Khusrow. He used the vernacular literary flavours in the Persian Courtly rituals (Mir, 2010). Moreover, the creation of new dimensions in the field of art and literature put forward the genres freed of traditional constraints. His poetic transcriptions were modified with bridal metaphoric inscriptions and cultural connotations of Indo-Persian literary amalgamations. While using allegorical expression for the articulation of his spiritual love, Khusrow evoked the symbolic description of bride bride-groom relationship and intoxicated himself in the philosophy of Fana fil Shaykh as the embodiment of mystical accomplishment. (Anjum, 2013) In the Indo-Persian Sufi tradition, a Murshid (spiritual mentor, guide, or preceptor) has often been addressed in gendered conceptualization (Eaton, 1974). Thus, while emphasizing the thematic interpretation of divine love terms like Suhagan, Pi, and Piya are introduced by Amir Khusrow. In his poetry, an incommunicable, unconditioned and unbound love for Nizam al-Din Awliya has been employed through the socially acceptable language of *Ishq. i. Majazi*. Therefore, Khusrow presented himself as a seeker and celebrated love and compassion in the form of masculine and feminine positions. (Mir, 2010) The following are best-known Sufi Rung (Poems) of Khusrow, where a spiritual transformation has been portrayed in the form of a symbolic union of the master and disciple. These famous songs of Amir Khusrow are embodied with the spiritual relationship between a master and a disciple (Schimel, 2003).

رنگ

آج رنگ ہے، مہارنگ ہے

ایسویہ پیاوری، نظام الدین اولیا

جگ اجاروں میں ایسارنگ اور نہیں دیکھواری

دیس بدیس ڈھونڈی پھروں ری

ایسارنگ نہیں پیاوری، من بیاوری، نظام الدین اولیا

آج رنگ ہے، مہارنگ ہے۔

ایسویہ پیاوری، نظام الدین اولیا

(Khusrow, Amir: Translated by Masood Qureshi, 1997)

Translation: What a glowing color everywhere I see, what an amazing color.

I have found my Pir Nizam al Din Awliya.

I have never ever seen such manifestation in the entire world

I roamed around door to door

Searching for a beautiful beloved:

Then, a sudden enchantment felt in my heart for his face,

This has proven to be the opening of the spiritual world,

This was all and all all-new colour of life,

Now wherever I look, I find Nizam al-Din Awliya with me now.

چھاپ تلک سب چھینی رے، موسے نیماں ملا کے

نیماں ملا کے، سینا لڑا کے

اپنی ہی کرنی، موسے نیماں مل کے

چھاپ تلک

بل بل جاوں میں تو رنگ رجوا کے

اپنی ہی کرنی، موسے نیماں مل کے

چھاپ تلک سب چھینی رے، موسے نیماں ملا کے

چھاپ تلک

خسرو نظام کے بل بل جاوں

موسے سہاگن کیتی رے موسے نیماں ملا کے

چھاپ تلک سب چھینی رے، موسے نیماں ملا کے

چھاپ تلک

Translation:

You have taken away everything of mine in just one glance

This encounter has made me left with

way to show the love for his Master. Khusrow was such an iconic intellectual giant of the Delhi Sultanate that despite the ups and downs in the dynastic leadership of the empire he enjoyed a prominent status in terms of prestige and honour amongst all contemporaries of his own (Tanvir, 2006). The mutual affection and intense love between the two was so exceptional that Amir Khusrow died within six months of the demise of his Master. At the time of Nizam al-Din Awliya's death; Amir Khusrow was away from Delhi. The scene of his arrival at the tomb of his Murshid was extremely pathetic. He just looked up to the grave of Hazrat Mehboob Awliya and pathetically recited this couplet.

گوری سوئے تیج پر، کھ پر ڈالے کیس
چل خسرو، گھر اپنے، رین بھی سب دیس

Translation:

My beloved sleeps covering her face with the beautiful lock of her hair. Khusrow, go home, the darkness of the evening has engulfed the whole world)

Conclusion

Amir Khusrow was a distinguished Sufi poet by virtue of his initiation and close association with his Master Khawaja Nizamuddin Awliya. Therefore, the exemplary intimacy and mutual love between the *Pir* and *Murid* have been creatively personified in most of the Hindi poetic manifestations and musical compositions of Amir Khusrow (Smith, 2013). His poetical compositions were modified with bridal metaphoric inscriptions and cultural connotations of Indo-Persian literary traditions. In his poetry, an unconditioned and unbound love for Nizam al-Din Awliya has been employed through the socially acceptable symbolism of art and literature. (Sharif, 1983)

Moreover, the blend of Sufi thought and figurative vernacular linguistic trends in bridal metaphor demonstrate the mystical expressions of Hindi kalam and resulted in the unlimited springs of fame (Bakr, 1992). Khusrow was an iconic intellectual giant of medieval India, who sustained the stature of a notable courtier in the reign of seven sultans of Delhi (Pannke, 2014). He was indeed a great poet in the history of the Indian Sub-continent and a great historian of all times.

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