

The Content of Dream in Islamic Mystic Prose Texts (Pre–Seventh AH/13th AD Century)

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Abstract

Dream is one of the important topics of mystic texts and is of great significance in Islamic mysticism. Most writers of such texts have allocated a section of their books to it. Dream could be viewed from different perspectives, but it seems, what attracts mystics the most is the content of dream. The important issues considered the content of dream are seeing God, the Prophet, the Imams, the saints; the state of mystics after death; seeing angels and Paradise *huris* (the beauties); seeing what helps the Wayfarer in his difficulties; gaining knowledge of the future; and, finally, seeing *Iblis* (the Satan). In this article, an attempt is made to analyze the reactions of dreamers to each type of content by comparing the content of mentioned dreams in mystic prose texts of pre-seventh century. The results show that dreaming the beloved (God) is of the most importance whereas dreaming the Satan is the least desirable one. As for the reactions, the most frequent reactions are fear, enthusiasm, hope, confidence, pride, and joy.

Keywords

dream, content of dream, *royaye sadeghe*, *royaye kazebe*, Islamic mystic prose texts

Introduction

Mystics categorize dreams on the basis of the content and, because of this, the content is considered important. The content of true or interpretable dream is mainly on the basis of good tidings or trepidation. In this article, an attempt is made to study such dreams. The mystic prose texts studied in this article are *Sharhe Taarof* (Kelabadi, fourth/11th century; description of self-revelation), *Noor-ol-Oloom* (light of sciences), *Monajatnameh* (invocations), *Rasâel Khâjeh Abdullâh Ansâri* (396/1006; Epistles of Khâjeh Abdullâh Ansâri), *Sad Meidan* (one hundred domains), *Kashf-ol-Asrar* (unveiling the veiled), *Kimiâye Saâdat* (the alchemy of happiness), *The Works of Ahmad Ghazzali* (sixth/12th century), *Tamhidat va Lavayeh* (Hamadâni, 1098; preparations and illuminations) of Ein-ol-Ghozat Hamadâni, *Roobahanname* (the book of Roobahân, translation of Ghosheirie treatise, *Asrâr-ol-Tohid* (secrets of monotheism; Abol-Kheir 357/967), and *Tazkerat-ol-olia* (the book of saints). All of these works belong to the pre-seventh century (AH). When dream is mentioned in Islamic mystic texts, it is meant the type of dream realized in wakefulness. This type of dream is called *royaye sadeghe* (true or veridical dream). According to Ezodin Kâshâni (cited in Sajâdi, 1370/1992),

because of the connection of soul to celestial souls, some impressions are drawn on soul and it gains knowledge of what

will happen in the future. This is done both in dream and wakefulness. When it is done in dream, it is called true dream. (p. 433)

In mystic texts, too, dreams are classified on the basis of their truth or falsity. Mystics, like Khaje Abdullâh Ansâri (396/1006), Abolghasem Qusheiri (fifth/11th century), and Roobahân Baghli (522/1130) consider *royaye salehe* (sound dream) as the most important type of dream and mention the divine inspiration as its origin. They refer to the dreams of Joseph to whom 11 angels and moon and sun prostrated, and this was a sign of his high status in the future (Yusoph/4, 36), and Abraham who dreamed he was sacrificing his son (beheading him), and this was the command of God announced to him in the dream; but the knife did not cut, and God said to Abraham this was just to test his obedience (Sâfât/102). These examples are mentioned in the Quran. True dreams are those kinds of dreams through which an issue is discovered after the interpretation of codes and symbols. The first Imam of Shiite, Ali (Peace be upon him [PBUH]) is quoted, “what soul sees in ascending arc and in the heaven, after separation from the body, is the true dream but

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descending to earth and meeting with Satan generates the false dream” (Noori Tabarsi, 1353/1975, p. 157). The true dream is believed to originate from God and is realized in wakefulness (Ansâri, 1352/1974). It informs man about the future, and its content is good tidings or trepidation. As Roozbahân Baghli (Roozbahân, 1374/1996) puts it “true dream unveils the light of the Unseen for spirit” (p. 336). The true dream refers to something that will happen in the future and paves the way for guiding a person. For this reason, mystics such as Attâr (seventh/12th century) and Qusheiri, along with others, cite a number of such dreams in the biography of mystics. False dreams, however, are daily dreams that have no interpretation. If a person dreams his beloved or something that is related to his profession or daily events, it is considered a false dream. Thinking a lot about something specially before sleep or overeating can cause such dreams that have no interpretation. What is considered important in true dream is its symbols and the interpretation associated with them. Therefore, there are two types of dream in mystic texts. The first type is called *Sâlehe* or *Sâdeghe*, and it can be interpreted and is of importance for mystics. The other type is called *Kâazebeh*, which is not mentioned in those texts and mystics do not pay attention to it.

The Content of Dream

Seeing God in Dreams

According to mystic texts, the mystic sometimes sees God in his or her dreams and gets the answer of a question that had preoccupied him or her for some time. Such dreams are significant because, on one hand, they represent proximity of a mystic to God and, on the other hand, they represent admonition of the mystic. As a result, he or she should abstain from distraction and turn his or her attention to God. If the dreamer sees God in a beautiful form, that dream could be relied on and it deserves to be accepted in its very form. Thus, the interpretation of what God says to a person in his dream is believed to be the same as the words of God in that dream. Bâyezid Bastâmi (261/878) saw God in his dream. He said, “O God! How is the way to you?” God said, “Forget yourself and come” (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, p. 705). Bâyezid dreams God and asks Him about the way. He is a mystic, and his goal is approaching God; thus, when he sees God in his dream, he asks something for which he sought many years and God answers him. The dreams about God could include a number of states such as desire, awe, or hope. However, the words of God are absolute, and thus, such dreams are in the form of absoluteness and the dreamer considers it as his duty to do what God has asked him. Questions and replies that take place between God and a mystic are somehow precautionary. God asks decisively and sometimes reproachfully, and mystic has to answer that question. Therefore, he answers with precaution and in a way that shows awe and desire. In his *Lavayeh*, Ein-ol-Ghozat Hamadâni in 1098 cites a dream about Shah Shoja’ Kermani:

Shah Shoja’ did not sleep for forty years. When he suddenly fell asleep, he saw God in his dream. Being at the climax of love, he said “O God! I sought this glory in wakefulness but I found it in dream.

God answered, “this glory is the result of that wakefulness” (Ein-ol-Ghozat, 1377/1999, p. 71). Shah Shoja’ asks God the reason of this meeting, and God mentions the difficulties imposed on him as the reason of such meeting. It seems that the meeting with God is the most important type of dream in mysticism because the unity with God could be considered the final aim of a mystic. Mystics consider meeting with God as the highest position a man can achieve because nothing of this world is hidden from him, and he gains knowledge of *raison d’être* of everything. The reason of mystic’s happiness and *jouissance* after meeting God is that for him, there is nothing more valuable than this meeting. For Attâr, also, achievement in meeting with God has an important role in determining the status of a mystic. For the mystic, meeting with God is considered a sign of gaining knowledge of all secrets and an answer to all questions as well as an achievement of a very high status. As such, the impact of such dreams on dreamer is more than other types of dream. Sometimes, it generates pride or fear and reclude and with the possible consequence of desire and hope in him. It should be noted, however, such states depend on the person himself and the content of dream. In such dreams, God guides the Wayfarer to find his way or provides an answer to his questions.

Seeing the Prophet

According to mystics, seeing the Prophet in the dream represents goodness and blessing. Because Satan represents evil and badness, it is believed it can never manifest itself in the form of the Prophet. This issue appears mentioned in most mystic texts, and many mystics cite tales in which the Prophet guides the Wayfarer. In such dreams, the mystic asks the prophet a question that has preoccupied his or her mind for some time and receives an answer. Also, there is a kind of intimacy in these dreams that implies the emotional relationship between the mystic and the Prophet. This relationship is of the kind of disciple and master. The master speaks to a certain disciple and guides him or her. The disciple is absolutely modest and, as a student, he or she is obedient to his or her teacher. What is considered obedience to Pir (the Sage) in mysticism is evident in such dreams. It has been stated in interpretations that if a person dreams the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it can be considered a sign that he finds happiness in the two Worlds; if he has a debt, it will be paid, or if he is in jail, he will be released; and if he is poor, he will become rich. The Prophet said if someone dreams me, he has dreamed God, and if the Prophet gives him something, it means that his knowledge and wisdom increase. The Prophet gives good people glad tidings of what they wish, and he beware of bad people of sinning. One

example of Wayfarers' dreams in which the Prophet was observed is mentioned in *Resaleh Qusheirie*: "Abdullah (371/981) cites the Prophet: he who observes me in his dream has observed me since the Satan cannot manifest itself in my form and this means that the dream and its interpretation are both true" (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, p. 697). Also,

Sheikh Abdullah Katâni was considered to be the disciple of Muhammad (PBUH) since he had seen the Prophet in his dreams many times and the exact date of those dreams was known because Sheikh was asked some questions and he got their answer from Muhammad in his dream. (Ansâri, 1352/1974, p. 190)

Such dreams can be considered dreams that have the theme of "guidance and instruction." Moslems consider the prophet as a Perfect Man, as the Patron and Master of the Wayfarer. Hence, the relationship between the mystic and the Prophet in the dream is intimate and more tangible. Questions and answers are like the ones between a teacher and a student because the student is to learn something from his teacher. These dreams, as compared with dreams about God, are more accessible for the mystic. As the Prophet himself says, "I am a person like you but I receive revelation" (Kahf/110). What makes mystics proud of is something that they have learned from the Prophet or he himself has given them as a gift. As observed in such dreams, the Prophet gives good tidings to and guides the mystic who is a good person. What is understood of the dream is exactly the same as what the Prophet has said. The mystic may have some mistakes in his way and in his efforts to achieve his aim. This matter causes him to deviate from the True Path, and in the dream, he is warned about such deviation by the Prophet. One of the reasons for the great importance of true dreams in Islamic mysticism is that through them, many secrets and unsaid issues are revealed for the mystic, and this is a valuable gift. It is said that some scholars such as Avicenna, the famous Muslim scientist and physician, found the solution of some of their problems in the dream. In his first tale (*Pâdeshâh va Kanizak*), Molana states the importance of dream and talks about many people who solve their problems in the dream (Rumi, 1373/1995). In some of these dreams, the Prophet addresses a person or topic and makes it distinguishable from others. These dreams have a general nature. For example, with regard to Semâ' (Sufi audition), the Prophet has said, "its badness is more than its goodness." This is not a personal experience and cannot be considered an individual affair, but the dreamer proposes it as a lawful problem, which is important in the tradition. Thus, the reaction toward the dream in which the Prophet is present brings various states for the dreamer.

Seeing Imams and Saints

Seeing Imams, especially Ali (PBUH), is one type of dream dealt with in some mystic books. In such dreams, the Wayfarer is guided by hearing a piece of advice. It can be

said that in such dreams, Imam, like the Prophet, is considered an example or pattern for mystics. In this regard, Wayfarers and mystics have paid especial attention to Ali as the Perfect Man. If Ali (PBUH) is observed in a dream, it denotes the knowledge, charisma, and bravery of the dreamer. If someone dreams the companions of the Prophet, it denotes his honesty and piety in the way of religion, and he is described by such attributes among people. In *Resaleh Qusheirie*, the number of such dreams is fewer than dreams in which the Wayfarer sees God or the Prophet. Fath Mooseli saw Ali in his dream. He said, "give me a piece of advice." Ali said, "there is nothing better than modesty and nothing makes a Dervish a rich man except the hope of divine recompense." Fath said, "give me another piece of advice." He said, "better than this is the arrogance of Dervish to the rich due to his extreme confidence in God"¹ (Attar Neishâburi, 1382/2004, p. 343). Ali (PBUH) is considered the guide and master of the Wayfarer. Hence, the reaction of a dreamer toward seeing Imams and Saints is asking guidance and help because they believe what they say is proof, and they know something that others do not perceive. As mentioned in the interpretation of these dreams, observation of the Imam means goodness and benefit because what he recommends to a person is all goodness and virtue (according to what they believe). "In a dream, Shâfeie (15/767) saw Ali who put off the ring and put it on his finger to transfer the knowledge of the Prophet to him" (Attar Neishâburi, 1382/2004, p. 250). Ali (PBUH) is believed by the Shiite to represent knowledge and bravery; thus, his observation in the dream is a good sign. What is said to the mystic in a dream should be followed and applied because it makes his path simpler and smoother. The aim of such pieces of advice is goodness, benevolence, helping others, and acquiring knowledge.

Seeing the Mystic After His Death

Such dreams are important for a number of reasons. First, man could gain knowledge about a universe to which he has no access. Second, dreams could be instructive, and people who live in this mortal world can use such experience and try to eliminate their mistakes. Third, people could gain knowledge about the states of dead mystics, and they can gain assurance of their judgment about them. Most of the times, these dreams are mentioned to show the high character of the mystic so that other people could become aware of them. In these dreams, another universe is present, and different questions that exist in the minds of people could be asked from the mystic. These questions are such as, "How did God behave toward you?" and "What was the reason of your absolution?" As a result, goodness and evil that exist in this world could be revealed, and their imaginal truth is shown to mystics. It has been stated in interpretations of dreams that if a person wants to know his status before God, he should first know it among the good dead. If they talk with him in good words, it means that his status is good, but if they talk in bad

words, it means that his status is the opposite. Thus, for a mystic, the most important thing is to know how to behave to gain the acceptance of God, and this is possible by gaining knowledge about the state of dead mystics. When a mystic dreams a dead mystic, he or she is informed about his states and asks the questions in his mind to behave better in this world and gain the acceptance of God.

In a dream, Sufyan Thawri was asked, “how was the behavior of God toward you?” He said, “I received his benevolence.” Again he was asked, “how is the state of Abdullah Mobarak?” He said, “he is among those who have the permission of approaching God two times a day” (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, p. 706). Through these dreams, mystics gain knowledge about the truth of their actions, which lead to their reward or punishment in the Other World. For example, although Abdullah Mobarak has not the status of great mystics in the view of members of this world, he takes precedence over Sufyan Thawri in the Other World. As being observed in these dreams, sometimes a deceased mystic is dreamed, and he is asked about what happened to him posthumously. Most answers are about God’s mercy and remission of sins. Sufyan Thawri is a case in point. The experience is transferred to another mystic, and he does not need to experience or dream it himself. He uses others’ experiences in the best way and achieves his aim faster and in a more efficient way. “Tahurieh was a pious woman. Forty years after her death she was seen in a dream and was asked about her states. She said “still I am in torment since one night I kindled the lamp of the drunk” (Ghazzali, 1358/1980, p. 391). Kindling the lamp of the drunk, which is not considered a major sin in this world, could have a tough punishment in the Other World. These dreams are mentioned at the end of most biographies stated by Attar in *Tazkerat-ol-olia*. It can be said that the number of such dreams is more than any other type of dream. “In a dream, a great man saw Halâj standing with a cup in his hand and beheaded. He said “what is this?” He answered, “he gives cup to the beheaded”² (Attar Neishâburi, 1382/2004, p. 594).

Seeing Angels and Paradise Beauties (Huri)

With regard to the content, seeing angels and *huris* is different from previous types of dream. In this kind of dream, mystics do not ask angels any question, and even in some cases, they themselves answer the questions posed by angels. In such dreams, angels descend from the Heaven and return to it at the end. During this period, a number of questions and replies, which often include some moral or mystical points, are exchanged between the angel and mystic. Paradise *huris* love mystics, and they use the tears of mystics to light up their own face. Observing angels in the dream could be interpreted as the people being spiritual and luminous; thus, a person who dreams an angel is considered pious and obedient to God. If angels talk with and respects him, it means that God will confer a lauded status on him. Dreaming an angel is good tidings from God.

“Junaid (297/914) dreamed two angels came from Heaven. One of them asked ‘what is truth?’ Junaid replied ‘loyalty to vow.’ The other one said, ‘it is correct’ and then both returned to Heaven” (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, p. 715). In these dreams, the superiority of man over angels could be observed. As agents of God, they carry out some duties. However, man knows something that they never know. Thus, citing such dreams suggests a kind of self-confidence to mystic. Kharaghâni (348/965), in his book *Noor-ol-Oloom* (light of sciences), points to seeing angels in dream.

Bayazid had some body sew a fur cloak. Receiving it, he gave it to his son to transfer its graces to him. Arriving at the mosque, he got it back. He put it on and went in to see Buyazid. When he returned home he dreamed that he was dead and angels were around his cemetery in a way that caused him fear. He said I put on Buyazid’s fur cloak. Hearing this, angels escaped fearfully and he got rid of fear. (Kharaghâni, 1373/1995, p. 18).

Kharaghâni cites this dream perhaps because of his admiration for Bâ Yazid Bastâmi. In this dream, he shows the high status of Bâ Yazid, which is possibly even higher than angels. Bâ Yazid is an example for Kharaghâni, and thus, he cites such a dream in his book. Sometimes, angels play the role of a medium to receive what a mystic wants to say to God. Even in some cases, angels have a request from the mystic, and he, as a perfect being, guides them or gives a blessing thing to them. These issues show the perfection of mystic. Also, paradise *huris* show their great desire for seeing the mystic in dream.

Guiding Wayfarer for Solving His Problem

The Path is a dangerous route full of errors and slips. Dreams related to this issue can pave this difficult path to some extent. Sometimes, mystics step into an endless path, and they go astray. In such moments, the dream helps them to show the right path. In *Tazkare* (biography), many instances of such dreams are mentioned not only to express a personal experience but also to be used by other mystics and Wayfarers as a valuable gift. Sometimes, such dreams take place before the mystic goes astray, and a perfect mystic informs him of some valuable points, which are used to find the true path and stepping on it. What is of much importance for the mystic is his guidance in the way to the ultimate purpose. The Wayfarer does what is good for him by the help of Pîr (the teacher of the mystic). At some moments, he cannot solve a problem, and progress in the way becomes difficult for him, or he faces a severe problem. In such cases, he seeks help from the Unseen World to be guided by God, the Prophet, Imam, and Pîr of the path in dream. It is believed if someone dreams one of the scholars or pious people, it denotes a good action, and he gains knowledge because they give him some points or comments. A person whose scientific and religious ideas are

acceptable for the mystic is observed in the dream, and thus, the mystic gains the knowledge of that person. By guidelines given to him in the dream and by his attempts, he approaches that person. In *Resaleh Qusheirie* it has been quoted from Samake Harab that “I became sightless.” In a dream someone told me “go to Forât and open your eyes in the water.” I did so and I gained my sight” (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, p. 721). In such dreams, the mystic is guided by an unknown voice or person to a place that is unknown to him. The veils are removed, and he sees what he could not see before. In such dreams, not only the problems of Progression are discussed but also the problems that can preoccupy the mind of any individual. In such dreams, the mystic is guided by an alive or dead person. The guide is not necessarily known to the dreamer. Because such instructions are necessary for progression, they are very important for the Wayfarer. There are varieties of such dreams, and they give significant points to the Wayfarer. The topic of these dreams is often related to the states of dreamer. Other than God, the Prophet, and Imams, the mystics may observe another mystic who has a higher status than themselves and receive some recommendations about their aim from him. Sometimes, they are even informed about the person who may be their teacher, and they should attend his classes; as a case in point, Emâd-o-din Muhammad went to Mihane and became the student of Abu Saeed Abulkheir (357/967). Generally, what is said to the mystic is good for him and can be used for his progression. Shafighe Balkhi was said in his dream, “anyone who relies on God for his sustenance, his good disposition increases, he becomes generous and there is no doubt in his obedience”³ (Attar Neishâburi, 1382/2004, p. 237).

Informing About Future

In such dreams, the dreamer is informed about something that will happen in the near or far future. It can be related to the person himself or another person. Such dreams are often symbolic and require interpretation. Thus, the interpreter should know the codes and also the states and conditions of the dreamer very well. He should be aware of the dreamer's job, his aim, and the relationship between the dream and his states because dreams are usually linked to the dreamer's states and life, and this is especially true for mystics whose dreams are related to their aims and ways. “Abubakr (13/634) Seddigh (Abubakr the righteous) (the first caliph of Sunnis) dreamed the moon fell beside him and due to this dream he believed in the Prophet”⁴ (Kelabadi, 1366, p. 636). One Tuesday night, a noble man dreamed a tray with a delicate covering was brought to the earth. He asked, “to where is this tray carried?” He was answered, “it is carried to the Inn of Sheikh Roozbahân (522/1130) for poor people who are present there every Tuesday and, indeed, after two times good effects appeared” (Dâneshpazhooh, 1347/1969, p. 148). Such dreams are not often personal, and they may be

related to another person or group; they express something that is unknown to the dreamer or he has not thought about it in the past.

Abuhanifeh (80/696) (one of four Imams of Sunnis), at first, started to live in seclusion. He was paying attention to true Qiblah. Wearing *suf* (the wool garment of Sufis) he turned away from people. One night he dreamed he was gathering bones of the Prophet and separating some of them. Being fearful, he woke up and told one of the disciples of Ibn Sirin about his dream. He said “you will reach a high position in the knowledge of the Prophet and protecting his tradition. Thus you can gain total knowledge of it and distinguish between true and untrue”⁵ (Attar Neishâburi, 1382/2004, p. 241).

These dreams specify an event that will happen in near or far future, and consequently, they make the dreamer surprised and may motivate him or her to investigate that event. After these dreams, the dreamer may become shocked and nervous because he is confident that the event will happen, but he does not express it till it is realized. The dream of Abuhanifeh is an example of such dreams; after that dream, he was attracted to the science of *Hadith* and became one of the Sunni authorities. (Imam Abuhanifeh is an expert of Islamic jurisprudence, and Hadith is subset of jurisprudence.) Such dreams are important because they could inform a person about his future job or life, and exactly because of this, he follows those dreams and tries to interpret them in the correct way.

Seeing Iblis (the Satan)

With regard to theme, seeing Iblis is a type of dream that has the least frequency. The Satan or Iblis is an accursed and banished creature. Such an idea has had significant impact on mystic works, and when discussed, it is repetitive and lacks diversity. In *Resaleh Qusheirie*, there are not many dreams about seeing Iblis. Observing Iblis in the dream denotes the hostility of the Evil who tries to deceive people. If the dreamer observes Iblis weakened and poor, it denotes that good and pious people will become strong and powerful, and if he tries to hit and kill Iblis in the dream, it denotes that he will gain a high status and do justice to people. Junaid dreamed Iblis who was naked. “Aren't you ashamed of people,” Junaid asked. It replied, “these are not considered as man. Those who are in Shonizieh mosque should be considered as man. They burned all of my body and made me sorrowful.” When Junaid woke up, he went to that place. He saw a group of people, heads on their knees and meditating. Seeing him, they said, “be careful not to be proud of the words of this villain”⁶ (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, pp. 708-9). Mystics consider Iblis as the representative of the evil and badness, and they keep away from him. Thus, they do not talk about it unless they want to show its fear of their spiritual status. As mentioned before, dreams with this content are few. Hatred of Iblis and his fear of believers are

completely evident. Also, such dreams show the purity of dreamer because sorrow and anger of Iblis are signs of such events. Therefore, that person gains more confidence of the way he has stepped. It has been cited from Abusaid Kharâz that one night, he saw Iblis in his dream. He took his stick to hit him. It said, "I am not afraid of your stick but of the light which is in your heart"⁷ (Qusheiri, 1387/2009, pp. 457-8). The status of mystics is so that Iblis is afraid of it, and it is anxious that their spiritual states may expand. In such dreams, Iblis shows his anxiety and agitation, although he cannot deceive mystics. In these dreams, it is manifested as a weak and feeble creature, which has no power. As mentioned before, hitting Iblis or his anger is a good sign for the dreamer. Such dreams can be considered a symbol of piety and goodness of the dreamer, and he will gain high positions because he has fought with the evil forces and done his job the best, and consequently, he achieves his aims definitely.

Reaction to the Dream

The reaction of each person to his dream is different, and it depends on his temperament as well as the content of his dream. With regard to aforementioned dreams, the reactions toward each dream could be different.

Reaction to seeing mystic in dream after his death. Because in normal situation man is not able to connect with the Afterworld, he needs to understand and gain knowledge of some issues through dream. These are mainly related to angels who ask human beings after their death or they are related to the reward and punishment which have been determined by God for human beings. Questions such as "How did God behave to you?" are usually present in such dreams, and they may generate surprise and meditation in a dreamer and compel him to keep precaution and control of his deeds and behaviors because there are some principles in these dreams that can be generalized to other people. Benevolence to other people, nightly prayers and doing good things are among the affairs that are effective for the good end of the person seen in the dream.

The Difference Between *Tazkerat-ol-olia* and Other Mystic Books With Regard to Dream

What is most significant in *Tazkerat-ol-olia* is the content of dream, which could give important information about the world, *huris*, and angels to the reader. It also helps knowing mystics better. Due to the content of dreams in *Tazkerat-ol-olia*, it is easier to know which topics are more important in dreams, especially in the field of mysticism. Although issues such as definition, classification, usage, and interpretation of dream are seen less in *Tazkerat-ol-olia*, the content of dream can help the reader understand them. The content of dream can manifest the character of the mystic as well as the issues that are important for him and his problems and difficulties.

Some examples are the knowledge of God, the Prophet, Resurrection, people of Heaven, and so on. These could be teachings for warning other people. The content of other didactic works, which have paid attention to the dream, is different from biographies like *Tazkerat-ol-olia*. Attâr has used several important mystical sources such as *Resaleh Qusheirie* (Hojviri, 1386/2008) and *Kashf-ol-Mahjoob* (Hojviri, 1386/2008), and it can be said his book is perhaps the most complete source about the mystics before him. His prose is full of rhythmic sentences, and he shows his full knowledge about mystical terminology. *Kashf-ol-Mahjoob* is one of the authentic sources of Islamic Sufism, and it seems to be an adaptation of *Resaleh Qusheirie*. There are a number of instances in *Tazkerat-ol-olia* that are similar to these texts, and also, some expressions have been mentioned in that book, which are just a little bit different. It seems that he has read those two books separately and used them. *Resaleh Qusheirie* is one of the most interesting texts of Islamic Sufism. Each section of this book is allocated to one issue of Islamic mysticism. The 55 chapters of this treatise seem to have been used as a source for mystical books of later centuries such as *Tazkerat-ol-olia* and *Kashf-ol-Mahjoob*. Comparing *Tazkerat-ol-olia* and the translation of *Resaleh Qusheirie*, it is revealed that most expressions of this text can be found in the work of Attâr; one thus could conclude that the text could have been the first and the main source for him. Such evidence shows that the similarity between the sentences of the treatise and *Tazkerat-ol-olia* could not be accidental, and he has used the translation of that treatise to write his book. Thus, *Tazkerat-ol-olia* is an amalgamation of works written before Attâr. According to him, he has not mentioned *Revayat* (sayings) and miraculous actions about which he doubted. He has added some comments on sentences that were ambiguous to prevent mistakes and misunderstandings. Definitely, he has used a few Arabic sources because he himself has written, "I wrote them in Persian though they were in Arabic." Therefore, in comparison with mystical books written before it, this book could be considered the most comprehensive biography till seventh century. Attâr has described in detail the life, manner, and mystical dispositions of the mystics before and contemporary with him, and sometimes, he has added some explanations. What he mentions about the miraculous actions of those mystics is very important to know them. He has talked about mystics chronologically, and almost in every chapter, he has mentioned their dreams. These dreams show the aims, desires, and done and undone actions of mystics, and the mystic tries to realize what he observes in his dream and use it in his Way. The beautiful prose of *Tazkerat-ol-olia* makes such aim possible. The examples are quoted from the Quran, Ahâdith (prophetic sayings) and other mystic books. However, examples about the content of dreams stated in didactic mystic works are fewer *Tazkerat-ol-olia*. The books compared are *Kimiâye Saâdat* (Ghazali.1058), *Kashf-ol-Asrar* (Meibodi. sixth/12th century), *Resaleh Qusheirie*, *Tamhidat* of

Ein-ol-Ghozat Hamadâni, *Sad Meidan* (Ansâri.396/1006), *Makâtib of Ghazzali, Sharhe Shathiat* (Baghli.522/1130), *Abhar-ol-Asheghin* (the eye of lovers), and *Al Loma*⁷. The compared topics are the same as the ones explained before in this article; topics such as God, the Prophet, Imams, angels and Paradise *huris*, Iblis, guiding the Wayfarer, gaining knowledge of future, and seeing mystic after his death. As a result, it can be said that *Tazkerat-ol-olia* has cited more examples with regard to the content of dream, compared with other books. What is evident in *Tazkerat-ol-olia* is seeing the mystic after his death in a dream. In almost all biographies, such type of dream can be observed. After seeing the Prophet, guiding the Wayfarer, in which God, the Prophet, Imam, and other mystics guide him in the Path, is of the highest frequency.

Conclusion

Islamic mysticism has allocated a special status to dream, and mystics have had this divine gift during centuries. Royaye Sadeghe is one part of 46 parts of Prophethood. When a Wayfarer is informed about the near or far future or he is warned against some danger, he will step on that way insightfully. Examples, therefore, have been cited in their books. Such examples exist in mystic texts rather than the Divans of poets and mystic verses. In *Tazkerat-ol-olia*, Attar has cited many examples about the content of dream (seeing God, the Prophet, Imam and saints, angels and *huris*; guiding the Wayfarer; gaining knowledge of the future; seeing Iblis; and seeing the mystic after his death), which are too many as compared with other mystic texts of the pre-seventh century. Each type of dream has specific value or significance for the mystic. The most important ones are seeing God, followed by the Prophet and, finally, the Imams and saints. Because for a mystic, seeing the Beloved in dream is considered extremely important, each one of such dreams could motivate a reaction in the dreamer with varying degree of importance. Seeing Iblis (because it is rejected and damned) is of the least value. Although dreams about Iblis represent its weakness, on one hand, and, on the other hand, power of belief and light of heart in mystic, which make him the winner at the end, seeing this wicked being is unpleasant for dreamer. In *Tazkerat-ol-olia*, seeing the mystic after his death is the most frequent. After each biography, Attar has cited a dream of another mystic about that mystic whose biography has been given in that section. The reason for citing such dreams is the high status of the mystic. The content of dream is a clue to determine the truth or falsity of that dream, and consequently, the dream could be interpreted through the content because the true dream most probably has an interpretation. By studying the content, it is possible to gain new and interesting insights about dream, and thereby, people could reform their deeds and behaviors. The reaction toward each type of content shows the significance of it, and also, each dream could have different results in human psyche;

hence, dream could elucidate the way and aim of dreamer's life, guide him, and beware him of dangers. Advice and recommendations about the life and job of a dreamer or others that are heard and observed in the dream can be very important. A human being can never know everything in the world, and thus, the true dream could help him draw off the curtains of mysteries and unravel them. Observing a person after his death or being informed about the future are just some examples. For this reason, mystics consider the dream as a divine gift, which is not conferred on everyone. They mention a number of dreams about important and fundamental issues to give others a lesson, and they are protected against mistakes and wrongdoings. This is especially true for other mystics because perfectness is very important for them, and they are very eager to know which actions are acceptable in the view of God and the Prophet and which are not. Thus, such dreams could be very valuable. In this article, the content of dream and its types were investigated, and in so doing, the original texts were used. Several sections in these texts discuss *Royaye Salehe. Familiarity* with the ideas of mystics could help us become familiar with aims and advantages of such dreams.

Appendix

11. The mystics mentioned in this article:

Abubakr (Death: 13 AH/634 AD): He was one of the companions of the Prophet and his father-in-law and the first caliph of Muslims (Sunni Muslims). Muslim mystics consider him a mystic. His title was *Sedigh* (the righteous).

Umar ibn Khatâb (Death: 23 AH/644 AD): He was one of the companions of the Prophet and one of the *Kholafaye Rashedin* (the orthodox caliphs). He was a smart and intelligent man and conquered many places during his short governance. Sunni mystics have said a lot about him in their books because they admired him a lot.

Abuhanifeh (Death: 150 AH/767 AD): He was one of the great leaders of Islam who lived in *Kufeh* (an Iraqi city). He was Iranian by birth. He was the founder of Hanafi order, one of the four main orders of Sunnis.

Shâfeiee (Death: 204 AH/820 AD): He was one of the four Imams of Sunnis. He learned religious sciences and created a number of rules. He had a great number of followers, and nowadays, Shâfeiee is one of the four orders of Sunnis. Hanafi, Mâleki, Shâfeiee, and Hanbali are the four orders of Sunnis.

Bâyazid Bastâmi (Death: 261 AH/877 AD): He was one of the greatest mystics and Sufi authorities. He is more famous than other mystics, and his deeds and words have affected all men in the Way of Truth. Because of this, his words and tales have been mentioned in mystical texts, especially in the

works of Attâr and Molavi, more than other mystics and Sufis. He had many followers and founded the School of Khorasan (one of the two significant schools of mysticism). This school is based on love. Some people interpreted his words as heretic because they did not understand them. He is among the first Muslim mystics.

Junaid Baghdâdi (Death: 297 AH/913 AD): He was a famous mystic and religious thinker who was born in Baghdad (the present capital of Iraq). He was among the first who talked about the science of monotheism. Due to his knowledge, he founded the School of Baghdad and found many followers. After him, many mystics were attracted to this school. He was among the first Muslim mystics.

Ibrâhim Bokhâri (Death: 256 AH/870 AD): He was one of the famous mystics and Sufis of fourth century. He is famed mainly for composing the book *Alta'arof Lemazhab Altasavof*. His book consists of 75 sections, which investigate mystical terminology and biographies of mystics.

Abulhasan Kharaghâni (Death: 425 AH/1033 AD): He was one of the Sufi masters. At first, he learned religious sciences and became one of the great figures of his age. Then he was oriented toward Sufism and achieved the status of Perfection through lots of attempt. It is said that Abusaid Abulkheir visited him one time and selected him as his successor. He is among the first mystics and one of the followers of Bâyezid Bastâmi.

Abusaid Abulkheir (Death: 440 AH/1048 AD): He was a famous and great Sufi and poet of fourth and fifth centuries. He was guiding and giving advice to Wayfarers in his *Khâneghâh* (a place in which mystics gather). He was among the first persons who propagated Sufism in Khorasan and made *Sema'* prevailed among *Khâneghâhs*. His famous work is *Asrâr-ol-Tohid*, which was gathered by his grandson.

Abuabdullah Khafif Shirâzi (Death: 428 AH/1036 AD): He is known as the Great Sheikh. He saw many of the mystics and Sufis who were contemporary with him and learned from them. Attâr says he was called *Khafif* (little) because his dinner consisted of seven raisins. He died in 371/981. He had knowledge of the sciences of his age.

Khâjeh Abdullâh Ansâri (Death: 481 AH/1088 AD): He was a scientist and mystic who was known as *Pîre Harât* (Harât is a city in Afghanistan). He was born in Harât, and he had a good talent for composing Arabic and Persian poems since childhood. He learned Sufism from Abulhasan Kharaghâni and became his successor. He also learned a lot from other great mystics like Abusaid Abulkheir. He has many books, and some of them have been referred in this article.

Muhammad Qusheiri (Death: 465 AH/1073 AD): He was one of the great Sufis of fifth/11th century. He was skillful at

the sciences of his age, but he chose Sufism and learned religious sciences. He was against Abusaid Abulkheir. He interpreted the Quran by Sufi procedures and composed Arabic poems. He had good knowledge of Sufi mysteries and secrets. Fifty third and 54th sections of his book were allocated to Sufis' dreams, and, overall, his book is one of the most important sources of Sufism.

Abulhasan Ali ibn Osman Hojviri (Death: 465 AH/1073 AD): He wrote the oldest Persian Sufi book. He extended Sufism and investigated Sufi terminology, mystical orders, and mystics' dispositions in his book. Due to this, his book is among the most important mystical texts.

Imam Muhammad Ghazâli (Death: 505 AH/1111 AD): He was a famous scientist and mystic. He was called Ghazâli due to his father's job (Ghazâl means weaver). When he and his brother, Ahmad, were in childhood, their father died, and after that, they started learning religious sciences. Muhammad became teacher and started teaching, but after some time, he stopped teaching and started mysticism. He founded a *Khâneghâh* and guided people. As a result of his travels and progression, he added mysticism to his essays and sayings. He has many works among which the most important is the work mentioned in this article, that is *Kimiâye Saâdat*.

Ahmad Ghazâli (Death: 520 AH/1126 AD): Like his elder brother, he learned religious sciences and taught instead of him. However, after some time, he was oriented toward mysticism, too. Some people consider his status in mysticism higher than his brother. His beautiful works are full of love. He was the also the teacher of Ein-ol-Ghozât.

Ein-ol-Ghozât Hamadâni (Death: 525 AH/1131 AD): He was one of the great Sufis and scientists of the first quarter of sixth/11th century. He was the student of Ahmad Ghazâli in Sufism. He learned mysticism and Arabic literature from him. Due to his great skills in mysticism, Ahmad Ghazâli called him *Ghorat-ol-Ein* (the light of eye). His thoughts and ideas during his short life represent his perfect genius. All of his works are about love, mysticism, faith, prophethood, and essence of God. He was accused of heredity, and for this reason, he was exiled from Hamadân (a Western city of Iran) and jailed in Baghdad. His enemies plotted against him and finally executed him. His Persian writings are full of witty Sufi expressions, and he uses allegories to explain mystical issues.

Roobahân Baghli (Death: 606 AH/1212 AD): He was born in Shiraz. He was a great figure in Quranic sciences and mysticism, and during 50 years, he educated many students in his city. He built a *Khâneghâh* in that city. His works are very valuable in mysticism, and in them, he has discussed love. Some of his works have been corrected by

Dâneshpazhooh, and some of them have been mentioned in this article.

Attâr Neishâburi (Death: 618 AH/1224 AD): He was the famous Persian poet and mystic of sixth and seventh centuries. At first, he was doing his father's job as a druggist. At the same time, he experienced a spiritual revolution and chose mysticism. During some parts of his life, he traveled and met many mystics. His most important work is *Tazkerat-ol-olia*, which has been used in this article. He was killed by Mughul invaders. His discourse is full of strong passions and love.

Meibodi (Death: 911 AH/1517 AD): He was a mystic of sixth/12th century who wrote the most comprehensive Persian Sufi commentary of Quran under the influence of Khâjeh Abdullâh Ansâri. He has first stated the problems of other commentaries and then given his own interpretations.

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1. Also see Attar Neishâburi (1382/2004, p. 134).
2. Also see Attar Neishâburi (1382/2004, pp. 450, 434, 389, 344, 329, 286, 284, 269, 262, 258, 255, 220, 210, 221, 59, 136, 88, 136, 34, 35, 47, and 48).
3. Also see Attar Neishâburi (1382/2004, pp. 311, 225, 50-51, 594, and 210).
4. Also see Meibodi (1361/1983, p. 144).
5. Also see Meibodi (1361/1983, pp. 209-289).
6. Also see M. M. Ghazzali (1345/1967, p. 879).
7. Also see Attar Neishâburi (1382/2004, pp. 457-8).

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